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Don't Mourn Hillary's Loss

By Joshua Frank
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We are all tired. Exhausted from what feels like years of election mania. First the primaries, the hilarious, made-for-TV Republican debates, the Democratic talk shows, the Sanders revolt to the months of boring presidential squabbles between Hillary and The Donald. The FBI. The emails. The groping. It's finally over. Time to exhale.

Election Day has come and gone and we are now sitting in an ugly new era, stunned that the Trump revolution won, and won big. Hillary Clinton and whatever she actually stood for, lost, and lost bad. Far worse than any polls suggested, even the few that had Trump squeaking out a victory.

There will be plenty of blame flying around in the weeks and months ahead. Yet, no matter what bullshit excuse Democrats come up with for Hillary's historic embarrassment, they have only themselves to blame. She lost because she deserved to lose. She ran an awful campaign, mired in controversy, and was unable to excite voters to the polls. She believed neoliberalism could carry

the day, but she was wrong. The DNC was wrong. The establishment lost because the establishment deserved its fate.

By no means does this imply Trump will overthrow the status quo, it only means the outsider Trump was better able to exploit the boiling rage of middle America. All the workers who were undercut by Bill Clinton's NAFTA. The hundreds of thousands that never rebounded from the Bush recession. Trump provided an outlet of hope for these lost souls – a fabricated hope no doubt, but hope nonetheless – wrapped in rage. His mastery of social media, of vindictive and racist rhetoric, helped him gut the provincial electorate. Against all odds, against allegations of sexual misconduct, against common sense, being anti-Trump wasn't enough to get Hillary elected.

In many ways, Hillary was her own worst enemy – a poor campaigner, a flat platform and only an ounce more personality than her VP pick Tim Kaine (and that's not saying much).

With no ground game, far less money than the Democrats, nearly zero endorsements from Hollywood and the media, Trump still prevailed. Somehow he understood a fair portion of the American psyche better than Hillary ever could. It seemed she learned little from the branding genius of Barack Obama or the accessibility of her husband Bill. By night's end it was clear she gleaned nothing from Bernie Sanders's movement and cared little about his searing critiques of Wall Street and our corrupt political system that's left so many behind.

Being *against* Trump, in the end, couldn't get the job done. She needed to go further.

The years ahead will be telling. How will Democrats respond to a Trump presidency? Will they view it as an opportunity to reimagine themselves in a progressive light, or will they continue to believe neoliberalism and identity politics are enough to win elections?

Don't hold your breath.

In the end, progressives shouldn't be depressed by this election's outcome (and I'm not talking about legal weed in California and elsewhere, although that might help numb the pain). They should be invigorated. They should be ready for a fight. Where the left failed to oppose the most sordid policies of the Obama administration, from drone strikes to the dreadful ObamaCare, perhaps progressives will be awakened under Trump's reign and fill the streets in disgust at every turn.

One can only hope. Hope and rage against the new Trump machine.