

Brexit Reaction From Across the Pond

By *Heather Zaccaro*



For months now I've watched the surging debate surrounding Brexit. And dismissed it as ridiculous. Economists advised against it. Experts advised against it. President Obama flew his ass to London to advise against it. Even John Oliver threw his hat into the ring in the final stretch. Every single person I've spoken to about the prospect here in London laughed it off.

And every single person I've spoken to about it was young, liberal, educated. Sure, I saw giant billboards plastered across the city advocating for this absurd notion. I received enthusiastic but misguided Brexit campaign emails. And waved them off. These were the doomed notions of old white dudes who couldn't possibly win. The young won't stand for it. The diverse won't stand for it. The informed won't stand for it, I muttered.

And then I woke up this morning and my nicely curated liberal bubble burst. That snug refuge in which I surround myself, my social media, my whole experience of a world inhabited predominantly by like-minded people is no more than an illusion. The people have spoken, and to my disbelief 17.4 million of them have cried out with a resounding "Yes". Even with my head buried deep in the sand, I could still hear them.

If this sounds eerily familiar, it should. I know I've said and heard much of the same surrounding the chaos back home. "Trump can't win. Women won't vote for him. Minorities won't vote for him. Liberals won't vote for him. He'll never win the nomination... Okay but he'll still never win the general."

Wake up. Extract the sand from your ears and the corners of your eyes. Then pop your damn bubble. Go find someone whose political affiliations make you cringe and really listen to them. See the world through their eyes. Hear what their versions of experts and reliable sources have to say. Dismissing those you disagree with, relegating them to some dark unseen corner of the country or the internet does not erase them from existence just because it removes them from your radar. We can't win that way. We can only be taken unawares. Overwhelmed and astonished, defeated before we even recognize a serious threat.

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