

Ana Navarro: I'm voting for Hillary Clinton -- and against Donald Trump

By Ana Navarro

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Ana Navarro: I voted against Donald Trump 01:31

Story highlights

- Navarro: I'm a Republican who has struggled with my vote but decided to vote for Clinton
- She says Trump has embraced racism, anti-Semitism, mistreatment of women and the disabled

Ana Navarro, a Republican strategist and commentator, was national Hispanic campaign chairwoman for John McCain in 2008, national Hispanic co-chair for Jon Huntsman's 2012 campaign and was supporting Jeb Bush's candidacy for 2016. Follow her on Twitter [@ananavarro](#). The opinions expressed in this commentary are hers.

(CNN) I didn't want to write this. I avoided making a decision as long as I could. I schlepped my absentee ballot all over the country for almost four weeks. I would periodically take it out of the envelope, look at it, shake my head in disgust, and put it back in my suitcase.

I had decided to write-in my mother as a symbolic protest vote against the Democratic and Republican nominees. I didn't want to vote for either of them.

Ana Navarro

I had hoped that a week before the election, Trump would be losing Florida by a large enough margin that my vote wouldn't matter. But darn it, my home state is too close to call. Florida could be the decisive state (again) as to who ultimately becomes the next president of the United States. I thought back to the 2000 election, which was decided by 537 votes in Florida. I thought about how I would feel if the same thing happened in 2016. I thought and I thought and I thought...

Then I cast my vote for Hillary Clinton. Let me rephrase that. I cast my vote against Donald Trump. I did it without joy or enthusiasm. I did it out of civic duty and love for our country.

CNN commentator gets sarcastic and uses 'air violin' 00:52

I voted against Donald Trump because I am an immigrant. Trump has spent this campaign focusing on the very bad things done by a very small group of very bad immigrants. He has portrayed immigrants as criminals, rapists, and murderers. He does not talk about the contributions immigrants have made to America. He does not talk about immigrants who have made this a better and stronger country. He does not talk about the thousands and

thousands of immigrant names that fill the Vietnam Wall in Washington or that are carved on so many headstones in every US military cemetery around the world.

I voted against Donald Trump because I am Hispanic. On [June 16, 2015, the first day of his campaign](#), Trump called Mexicans "rapists." I was not born in Mexico. I am not of Mexican descent. But I knew he was also talking about me.

I voted against Donald Trump for every American who looks and sounds like me. Because we love this country. We are proud of this country. We stand as equals in the United States of America.

(Opinion) GOP haunted by John Boehner's fatal mistake?

I voted against Donald Trump because of 8-year-old Alessia. She is my best friend's daughter. Alessia was born in Miami. Both her U.S.-citizen parents were born in Venezuela. Alessia can't sleep at night. She is afraid that if Trump becomes president, her parents will be forced to leave our country.

I voted against Donald Trump because of Judge Gonzalo Curiel. He was born in the United States to poor Mexican immigrant parents. Judge Curiel is the federal judge assigned to the Trump University case. Trump dismissively called Judge Curiel "Mexican" and attacked his ability to perform his job impartially because of his descent. Attacking another American's qualifications solely based on his ethnic background is bigotry. Plain and simple.

In the midst of the Judge Curiel controversy, I rode a taxicab in D.C. The driver was an African immigrant. He told me he worked 14 hours a day, six days a week, so his three children could one day be professionals. He teared up telling me he feared that if Trump became president, his children's ability to be professionals would be questioned because their father happened to have been born in Ethiopia. I voted against Trump for that man and his three children.

CNN commentator: 'I'm voting, writing in my mom' 02:12

I voted against Donald Trump because of Senator John McCain. I consider him a national hero. Like generations of McCains before and after him, John McCain wore our nation's uniform. He enlisted at the age of 17. He was a prisoner of war in Vietnam. He spent five years in captivity being savagely tortured. Trump doesn't consider him a hero. Trump likes people "who weren't captured." Yes, the same Trump who avoided the draft at least four times because of a foot spur. He doesn't remember on which foot.

I voted against Donald Trump because of Serge Kovalski. That's the name of the reporter with a disability who Trump mimicked and mocked. And I voted against Trump because of Daniel Navarro, my severely disabled brother. My entire life, I have been pained and angered seeing young kids stare at him and mimic his disability. I had never seen a grown man mimic a disabled person. Trump did so in front of thousands of people at one of his rallies. In front of millions of people watching on TV. Most of us would punish our children for exhibiting such behavior.

Fareed Zakaria: Trump is a cancer on American democracy

I voted against Donald Trump because of all women in my life who have been sexually harassed or assaulted and remained silent, bearing the embarrassment, even shame, for years. I heard Trump on tape boast and laugh about being a celebrity and getting away with grabbing women and not being able to contain himself from kissing women. He explained it

away as "locker room" talk. Trump was not a teen-age athlete when he said those words. He was a 59-year-old businessman. Sexual assault is no laughing matter. It is a crime. I voted against Donald Trump because of Megyn Kelly, and Rosie O'Donnell and Alicia Machado and Carly Fiorina and Heidi Cruz and so many other women Trump has called, "bimbo" or "fat," or "ugly" or objectified and demeaned.

Navarro practices her 'listening woman' face 02:03

I voted against Trump because of Mr. and Mrs. Khan, the parents of Capt. Humayun Khan, who lost his life in Iraq in 2004. I voted against Trump because of my friends, Retired General John Kelly and Karen Kelly, who lost their son, 1st Lieutenant Robert M. Kelly in 2010 in Afghanistan. I voted against Donald Trump for all the Gold Star families who have endured the unbearable and incurable pain of losing a child, a spouse, a parent, a sibling fighting for our country. Trump somehow managed to compare the sacrifice of losing a son to the "sacrifice" of erecting a building. I have no words.

I voted against Donald Trump because of Nykea Aldridge. She was Dwyane Wade's cousin. She was shot in the head and killed while pushing her baby's stroller down a Chicago street. Donald Trump sent out a tweet about her death for his political gain. "African-Americans will VOTE TRUMP!," it ended. No, Donald. Actually, every single poll shows they won't.

I voted against Donald Trump because our system is not "rigged." I live in South Florida, a community filled with political exiles from places like Cuba and Venezuela and Nicaragua, countries with corrupt, totalitarian, repressive governments. Our system is not perfect. But for 240 years, our democracy has respected the will of the people and allowed for peaceful succession. To question its legitimacy is irresponsible, reckless and un-American.

Views on Election 2016

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I voted against Donald Trump because I believe in freedom of expression and freedom of the press. I voted against Donald Trump because of Wolf Blitzer. Some of his relatives were

killed in the Holocaust. Wolf's parents survived and fled to America. Trump has fostered an atmosphere at his political rallies [where his followers angrily shout, "Jew-S-A!"](#) and hurl insults and anti-Semitic slurs at members of the media.

I voted against Donald Trump because I am a deeply flawed person of faith. If I went into a confession booth right now, I'd be in there for hours. I believe in the redemptive need to admit mistakes, express regret and ask for forgiveness. I have done it too many times to count. The thought of a powerful leader who lacks the basic humility to admit error and ask for forgiveness -- not even from the God he professes to believe in -- astounds me.

I voted against Donald Trump because I am a Republican. I accept that Trump duly won the Republican nomination. But I do not accept that he represents Republican values -- not the ones I grew-up respecting.

Ana Navarro mocks Trump's use of Spanish in debate 01:07

I have been a Republican since before I could vote. My family fled communism. Ronald Reagan fought communism. That sealed the deal for me. I have been an active partisan my entire adult life. This is the first time I vote against the Republican nominee for President. I did not want to vote for Hilary Clinton. Unlike Senator Bernie Sanders, I do care about her "damn emails." I am disturbed by the blurry lines and for-profit overlap between Clinton's philanthropic, business and political worlds.

Most of us suspected Hillary Clinton was going to run for President again in 2016. She and Bill Clinton knew it too. They knew they would be under scrutiny. If for no other reason, they could have and should have behaved differently.

No, she shouldn't have set up a private server, which could have compromised national security. No, she shouldn't have given paid speeches to Wall Street. No, her closest aide, Huma Abedin, should not have had an ethically questionable arrangement that [allowed her to simultaneously work for four different Clinton-related entities](#), including the Department of State. No, the Clinton Foundation should not have accepted donations from countries which abuse human rights and discriminate against gays and women.

In every single one of those instances, Hillary Clinton and her closest advisers, including Bill, exercised bad judgment.

Leaked Trump video sparks heated exchange 01:03

Like so many other Americans, I am left deciding which of these two candidates is the lesser of two evils, which one is capable of inflicting less damage on our country, our social fabric. The personal decision for me boiled down to choosing between a person who I consider to have very bad character and a person who has exercised bad judgment. Our founding fathers set up a government of checks and balances. We can and have survived presidents with bad judgment. But I fear the effects on America of a president with bad character.

I worry that Trump brings out the worst in America. Division. Hostility. Racism. Bigotry. Misogyny. Things we used to hide. Feelings we used to try to overcome. Under the guise of not cowing to political correctness, some people are no longer embarrassed or ashamed to show the warts on their souls.

Some tell me, in 2016 we should no longer expect the president of the United States to be a role model. I refuse to accept that.

Donald Trump has changed the way the world views the US

The president of the United States has to lift us all in moments of national grief. The president of the United States has to hug the children and spouses of fallen soldiers. That person represents us all. That person is recognized as the face and the voice for America in front of the rest of the world, and more importantly, by our children. A person supported by the Klu Klux Klan and its former Grand Wizard David Duke can never represent me. He can never be a role model for me.

We each have a right and a duty to make a personal choice based on those things that are most important to us, that we value most. My conscience compels me to do every little thing I can to make sure a bad person is not our next president. In America, we don't choose our leaders through violence or armed insurrections.

One vote is our right. One vote is our weapon. I am exercising mine against Donald Trump.