When I was fifteen, I came out to my family as bisexual during a Thanksgiving conversation about how Obama was a terrible president.

"He didn't actually *do* anything," my uncle remarked. "He only got voted in because people wanted a black president!"

"He legalized gay marriage," I suggested.

"So?" he replied. "That doesn't effect anyone here."

"I'm bisexual," I said.

"No you're not. You're dating a boy... Can you believe how big of a fraud Hilary turned out to be? At least Trump's gonna set this country straight!"

I contemplated saying that my boyfriend, Jack, recently came out to me as Allie, but my uncle was still yelling, so I settled with "Pass the rolls, please."

After the 2016 election, I couldn't understand how my family overwhelmingly supported someone who seemed so against me. I didn't know how to distinguish "Uncle Todd" from "Trump Supporter." I felt threatened by the same man who taught me how to ride a bike and took me to my first movie.

Being bisexual became convenient. I was straight for my Republican family, and LGBT for my liberal school. It was easier for everyone if I defined myself according to the environment I was in. At home, I listened to my uncle complain "There are only two genders, and it's absurd for anyone to say otherwise." At school, I held my tongue as a friend explained how "religion is for stupid people who just want an excuse to oppress others."

I became a political chameleon, blending into my surroundings so completely that I sometimes worried that I could no longer distinguish my own beliefs. Trying to be everything for everyone, I let my own identity slip into the background.

The day after the 2016 Presidential election, I helped lead a community forum where members of our student body and faculty could openly express their feelings and thoughts. One student stood up and said, "If you are a Republican or you support Trump, you are against me as a black, LGBT, woman."

I was shocked. How could she so strongly and confidently generalize so many people? It reminded me of when my uncle said, "You can't be a Democrat and a Catholic. It just doesn't work." Did I not "work"?

Everyone around me seemed to assume that if you belonged to a party, you *must* agree with that party in its entirety. You were either Republican or Democrat, traditional or liberal, gay or straight. The country, the electorate, the news, the president, and especially those closest to me all seemed to want a clean split: you're with us or against us.

But I'm not.

Bisexuality is not an intellectual choice. It's not really even a decision: it emerges from an innate attraction to a variety of people – a fluidity of desire and an understanding that it's possible to have multiple identities at once.

Our individual politics, in contrast, are something we choose. But, for many people, that choice seems to have hardened into something almost biological in its intensity. The political culture of 2016 does not tolerate fluidity.

The danger of tying identity to politics is that it debases the individual: We become either 'Republican' or 'Democrat,' rather than inhabiting a full range of identities. Political labels generalize us. They cannot encompass individual thought processes and experiences, and I came to realize that they do not encompass me.

Political parties demand pretences. They demand that we lose ourselves in a fixed ideology. There are no folk songs sung for political chameleons, but I can't help but think that in a time when US politics have devolved into figureheads screaming at one another on television, there is a certain nobility to the people who listen.