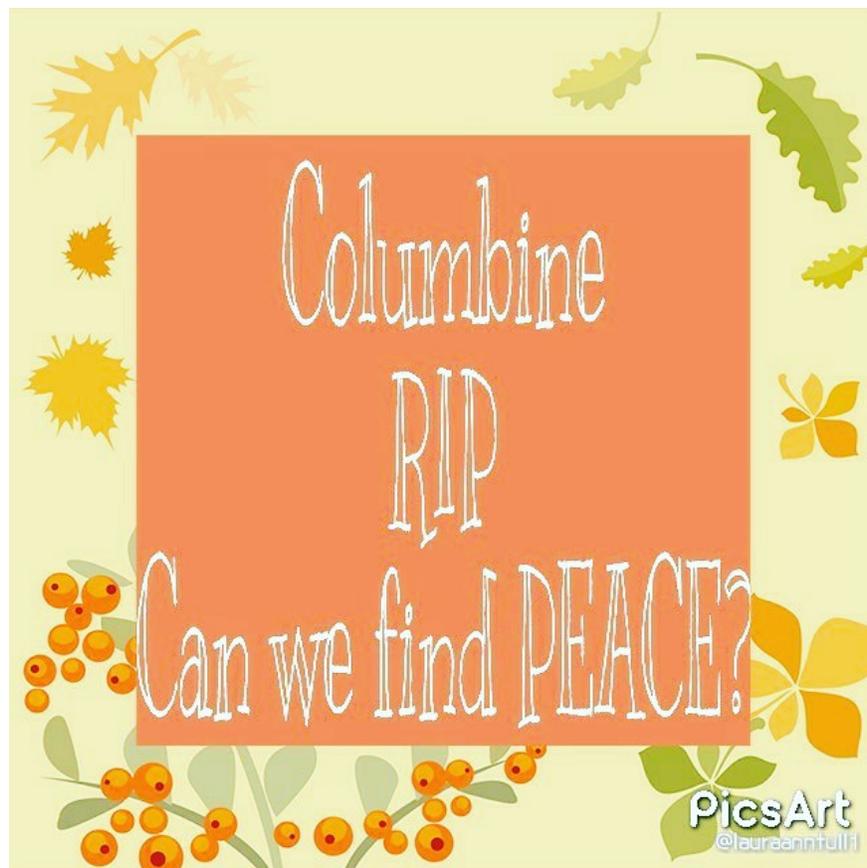


My life when Columbine 18 years ago



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18 years. It seems like longer. Nothing has changed. We still have not fixed why it happened.

Kids lost there lives. Mine went on but it feels wasted now. It feels wasted by a system that refuses to enlighten itself. I was in law school 18 years ago. Three years I regret. Three years that now seem

meaningless in a country that does nothing to protect kids. This country that has forgotten its published advertising motto of “The Land of the Free and the Home of the brave.” What is brave about children shooting children, or anyone killing kids.

Eighteen years ago I was getting ready to graduate. I had surgery on my knee and had a limp. I had a narcissistic guy, Juan Roberto Gonzalez, I had dated, ruining my last 6 months in school. I found out later he lied about our relationship. JR apparently had an ex girlfriend in Texas try to kill herself over him. His self inflated ego thought because I was upset he would use that to further blow up his likeability. It worked. The school elected him as the ABA representative. I had dumped him because he wanted my job and I figured out that is why he started dating me. I was the ABA representative. Yet the school I realized looking back did not trust me. They appointed a guy to be my Junior. A guy who was a player and a bit of a con. He let people think he was the Chris in Chris Steakhouse. I was the phi beta kappa kid. I made a news letter. I organized a report for my replacement. I wonder if JR bothered to read it. I even won an umbrella for increasing the membership.

Men are not a necessity to me. They either make my life easier and care or they are not worth crying over. I love men but my father is a narcissist. My father's lack of emotional support taught me I could not rely on a guy to be there for me. I had to be there for me. It was the fact JR stood in church and acted like he wanted a relationship then told his friends we went on one date that shook me up. I was in the process of converting to Catholicism. I started my first month of school after a car accident but before JR started dating me. It was his lack of respect for the church, his dishonesty, and that he had used me that upset me. I was always a sensitive person. I am surprised I managed to graduate law school. I needed to be around people who let me be the actor and poet.

I hated the drama. I went to a few therapy sessions about it. But the therapist really could not help me. She had no control over the gossip or this guy. I was not depressed or pining over him. I wanted to get work done not deal with his ego. I think he hated me for getting hired to work on religious freedom.

In 1998 NEA vs Finley was handed down by the Supreme Court and I finally had a topic to write for my thesis for my Masters. I had started a

Masters before Law School in Performing Arts Management but my committee topic fell through. I could not get a consensus and got into law school. I spent the next year working 2 jobs and studying for the bar and writing my thesis. Hours in law libraries & at the NEA. By 2000 my thesis was done and I passed the Cali Bar. I flew out to California 4 times to take it. Once to San Francisco. Once to Oakland. Once to San Jose. Once to Pasadena. I passed it the first time I typed it. I had to buy a special typewriter to take the test and spent 6 months practicing on it. Everyone I knew says I probably failed it the first 3 times because no one could read my handwriting. My MBRE scores were always high enough to get into the DC bar. However I did not want to stay in DC. I wanted an intentional excuse to leave. I never wanted to be a lawyer but I never wanted a life in Maryland either. I knew I belonged somewhere my earthy artsy side would be accepted.

I was persistent and motivated. I wanted California. It called. I felt like I never belonged where I was born. I did not want to be a traditional lawyer. I wanted to work in Entertainment. I wanted to be like the men my father pointed to who are actors and lawyers. The only problem is, they are all men.

I had the emotions of a poet and the perspective on life of a child. I was never meant to be in a court of law. Though some people I knew in college called me an old soul. I think the older I get the younger I feel. As if life becomes more strange and different and foreign and new with each passing year. I wanted to be a child. I wanted to hold onto that innocence. I wanted life to be peaceful and fulfilling. I wanted to create stories and poetry and art. I wanted to be on film sets to be the characters I created in my stories and poetry as a child. I am a dreamer. There is nothing wrong with who I am if you stop judging me by degrees and expectations set by Hollywood producers out of touch with the reality of humanity or parents completely out of touch with who I am. I needed to be seen as talented and creative. Law left a void inside me.

I think now how much Columbine was a moment that we thought with innocence would end. Just like I keep thinking I will wake up in a sane kind world again that respects I am educated and capable. A world where people will stop trying to kill my hopes and dreams and make me change. I keep wondering why anyone would waste there time trying to stop dreams. But then why stop a child from breathing before they have

the chance to figure out life. Why control the fate of someone else? Why cheat steal or lie? But then you realize people are dying because no one cares about doing what is right and we are creating a morality based on archaic notions and not a foundation of cohabitation and mutual love and respect. We have perverted love to be about possession. We strive to be a society based on A puritanical view on religion and God that leads to witch hunts and a seven hour work week. (The Puritans did not believe in Sunday as a day of rest)

Something has to give. Something has to change. We need compassion and love. We need to let people truly be free.

