

Part 1



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Historic events tend to have unexpected effects on our lives, bringing the thought of uncertainty forward and into the forefront of our lives. In late 2020, Supreme Court justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg unfortunately passed away at the age of 87. Almost immediately following her death, Republicans had already begun the search for a replacement for her Supreme Court vacancy. Amy Coney Barrett came into the national spotlight after her official nomination to the Supreme Court on September 26, 2020. All of the news surrounding her nomination was the fact that she was a conservative judge who held conservative religious beliefs. The Supreme Court, should they confirm her nomination, would have a conservative majority and could have the power to overturn some of the landmark civil rights decisions. As a gay man, I feared that her nomination could prove beneficial to the conservatives who see the LGBT community as second-class citizens who shouldn't have the right to marry the ones they love. I feared that *Obergefell v Hodges* would be disputed and overturned as I had seen the official GOP platform's support for the repeal of marriage equality. Growing up as a gay boy in a religious family, I heard the way that people referred to the LGBT. But when the Supreme Court ruled in favor of Marriage Equality in 2015, I felt that my future as a gay man was certain. With Justice Barrett on the Supreme Court now, I am uncertain of the effects that her nomination will have.

For now, I can feel at peace knowing that my rights to marriage equality are protected by the Constitution.



Part 2:

My mother is the oldest of 5 children in her family. She was born in 1960 in Nuevo Laredo, Mexico and immigrated to the United States when she was 15 years old. My grandfather made the decision to move his family to the US so that they could afford an education for my mom and her two sisters. In Mexico, families must pay for education beyond the sixth grade. My mom had dreamed of being a teacher since she was young, and he knew that he wouldn't be able to provide her with the means to pursue higher education.

My grandparents applied for legal residency in 1975, and fortunately, the judge assigned to their case allowed for the whole family to be brought along. In most cases, judges only allow one family member and then process the rest of the family separately.

My mom was placed into an ESL eighth grade class at the age of 15. Due to the language barrier, when my mom should have been a sophomore, she was placed two years behind to

make up for the language requirement. Her sisters were placed into their elementary grades accordingly. My grandfather did not negotiate by any means regarding my mom and her sister's educations. Even when my mom was overwhelmed with learning English, he would not let her quit school. The three of them finished high school and my mom went on to Laredo's community college with a full academic scholarship to pursue a business administration and accounting degree where she graduated in 1985.

Working at the International Bank of Commerce for more than three years, my mom finally came to realize her dream of becoming a teacher in 1989. She applied at the local Laredo ISD as a bilingual teacher for three years before going back to school for a Master's in Bilingual Education, which she completed in 1994. In 1997, my mom married my dad and moved to San Antonio and worked with SAISD for 10 years before moving to NISD for the last 13 years of her career. My mom is now officially retired with 31 years of teaching experience. My grandfather's vision for a better life for his children had been realized.