

The Monsters Have Won

by Bill Herbst

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Let me start with a caveat. Despite the title of this Commentary, I'm firmly convinced that billions of human beings are currently drawing breath on this planet who are well-meaning, generous, and loving creatures. They have hearts and minds, some live in families and some live alone, they work and play, and when they eventually shuffle off this mortal coil, they will be mourned and missed by those who love them. The problem is that they're not in charge.

No, the "good" people are losers. I'm one of the losers, as you probably are. Damn near everyone we know is a loser. This is not to say that being a loser is necessarily a bad thing. Many losers have meaningful lives that are well worth living. Some of us even choose to be losers, because in modern America, that's about the only way to retain some semblance of integrity, sanity, and grace. I'd go so far as to say that when we use the term "humanity," we're referring almost exclusively to the losers.

"The winners" who run things are a different breed, almost a different species. Sure, they look human, but they're not. Now, I don't mean to imply that the people in charge are shape-shifting lizards or alien invaders. They're not. In terms of biology and credentials, they're members of *homo sapiens*, just like us. But they're not humane. Either they never believed in and embraced authentic human values or they gave up on those values somewhere along their journey to becoming winners. And *those* people — the ones at the top tier of the pecking order — can be grouped into two categories: *bureaucrats* and *monsters*.

The bureaucrats take their marching orders from the monsters. All politicians are bureaucrats. Ted Cruz is a bureaucrat. Josh Hawley is a bureaucrat. Nancy Pelosi is a bureaucrat. And yes, AOC is a bureaucrat. Colin Powell — the now-deceased military general and former Secretary of State — was both a bureaucrat and a war criminal, along with George W. Bush, Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, and Barack Obama. The governor of whatever state you reside in is a bureaucrat. All high-level officials who run our major institutions are bureaucrats. Dr. Fauci is a bureaucrat. Bureaucrats tend to be smooth, well-mannered, obedient liars who willingly support the monsters. They are rewarded and revered in America.

Further down the food chain are armies of minions, tens of millions of them, who are not involved making major decisions, but who cheerlead for the policies decreed by the monsters and legislatively put in place by the bureaucrats. This includes most mainstream media "personalities" — such as Rachel Maddow, Sean

Hannity, and Tucker Carlson — as well as the overwhelming majority of so-called “journalists.” These highly-paid minions provide cover for the monsters. Their job is to disseminate and reinforce the fictional narratives that keep all us losers in line, passive, and compliant. It’s one hell of a system, and very effective.

The 64-dollar question, of course, is: *Who are the Monsters?* The answer to that question is elusive. I could cite various individuals whom I believe to be potential candidates for membership in that nefarious club of gangsters, but I’m not at all sure that heading down that road is productive or wise. Do I regard Bill Gates as a monster? Elon Musk? Jeff Bezos? The Koch Brothers? If so, that would seem to imply a blanket indictment of the entire class of Billionaires that has arisen in America and around the world. And yes, I cannot deny a strong personal leaning in that direction. The mere fact that there are now almost 3,000 billionaires globally (the precise number revealed by a Google search was 2,755) is clearly monstrous. This makes the days of Kings, Royalty, and Landed Gentry seem tame by comparison. But simply accusing the ultra-wealthy of being monsters strikes me as far too simple, inadequate, and probably inaccurate.

It may seem counter-intuitive, but even a category as bold, crude, and crass as “monsters” is likely to be subject to nuance, subtlety, and shades of gray. Even Hitler (arguably the most famous monster in recent memory) was multi-faceted. He was a vegetarian who loved his German Shepherd dog Blondie (even though he did eventually kill her). The human monsters in the world, especially now, are typically not mustache-twirling Snidely Whiplashes, although they sometimes come close when their practiced masks of social appropriateness slip to reveal the arrogance and psychopathy underneath.

OK, so if the monsters aren’t stereotypical cardboard cut-outs of evil, what do they believe in and stand for? I’d hazard a guess that what they believe in is *themselves*. The world is their oyster. They lean (probably strongly) toward the narcissistic in their attitudes about who they are. Did they start out that way or become that way? I’m inclined to think that they were always like that, right from the get-go. A certain percentage of humans are — psychology suggests about 5%. Some of that percentage are prevented from becoming monsters by life’s making mincemeat of their grandiose dreams of stardom. Many others, however, are not deterred by even severe setbacks. They are hell-bent on achieving success at any cost, and they will become monsters eventually.

OK. On to the next identifier. By and large, most monsters are rich people. Now, to be clear, not all rich people are monsters, but almost all the monsters are rich. Certainly terrible people who aren’t wealthy exist — tons of them — but they’re just terrible people. Their influence is limited. Monsters, however, harm us all.

Do people become monsters *after* achieving great wealth, or were they potential monsters all along, and acquiring wealth was just a way station on the road to monsterdom? I’m sure there are examples of both types, along with a third category of monsters who were born into wealth and didn’t need to achieve it.

And, lest I inadvertently leave the false impression that I regard potential monsterhood as something rare and perverse, let me state unequivocally my belief that monstrosity is, to one degree or another, built into all of us from birth. Any of us could become monsters. It lurks within us as part of our psychic shadow. Wealth and power are the two prerequisite conditions that can and often do trigger some of us to become full-blown monsters.

OK, enough beating around the bush. To reiterate the title of this Commentary, *the monsters have won*. The Panama Papers and more recent Pandora Papers make their victory obvious as hell. Sure, we (the aforementioned "losers") did our best to put up a fight against them and from time to time won battles that temporarily beat them back. But monsters never give up. They're wicked smart, and, every time they lose a skirmish, they study what happened and then come back with a vengeance (usually very quickly) to regain whatever advantage they temporarily surrendered. At this point, the war is over. We lost.

Monsters are brilliant at neutralizing whatever forces of truth, love, fairness, justice, and equality we use against them. That's been true for a long time, but the past century saw a massive increase in the sophistication and effectiveness of tools designed to manipulate people in the mass, i.e., to control the public. Those tools — which include (but are not limited to) advertising and public relations, as well as the creation and dissemination of false narratives — are not easy for the public to use in fighting the monsters. They are, however, perfectly suited for the monsters to use against us.

Monsters are also very skilled at seeming invisible by using sleight-of-hand to distract us from what they're doing (even though they do it right out in the open, boldly and shamelessly). They're so good at distracting the public that they hardly need to deny anything. They just say, "*Look over there,*" and we do.

Another thing monsters do extremely well is to effectively pit the public against itself. Divide and conquer. To some extent, they pull this off by perpetual class war, but more commonly it's done by grievance-based scapegoating. They get some of us to blame others of us (rather than blaming the monsters, who are the true culprits). In this way, they keep us from mounting any formidable counter-force to their owning everything and calling the shots.

The monsters have learned to do this so well, that now, really, the war is over. They've won. Yes, the fight continues, but our chances for even minor victories are diminishing so fast that it's dizzying. After every tiny skirmish we win, the monsters are usually able to undo our victory without even breaking a sweat. They have the tools, the know-how, and the agency (bureaucrats and minions). They pull the rug out from under us every damned time. Some examples:

- *Black Lives Matter arose as a grassroots revolutionary movement to address America's original sin and end the police violence that goes with it, but the movement was easily kneecapped and neutered by false counter-narratives. Racial injustice was almost instantly turned on its head in 1984 Double-Speak.*

- *Trump was just barely voted out of the White House, but the Republican Party doubled down without a shred of shame, remorse, or apology to become even more monstrous. And why not? They've seen plainly over the past two decades how well that works for them.*
- *Democrats are only a step or two behind. Joe Biden may be a slightly less outrageous liar than Trump, but throughout his entire career as a politician, Biden was always in total lock step with the monsters. Credit-card Joe, author of the omnibus crime bill, silencer of Anita Hill. The Democrats are wolves in sheep's clothing, corporate-loving hacks who don't deliver on anything they promise.*
- *Once elected to Congress, AOC and the Squad were immediately co-opted by crude careerism and seduced by their new-found celebrity. Oh sure, they still spout "progressive talking points," but wield no power. They go along with Nancy Pelosi, further weakening an already moribund Left by happily becoming bureaucrats.*
- *Every positive development is flipped upside down and twisted into an obscenity. The "Woke" phenomenon — whose original meaning was to "awaken" from the normal public state in America of hypnotic coma-trance and passive consent for Death Culture — was quickly transformed into a scathing epithet for knee-jerk social intolerance, deepening polarized public division by fomenting more hatred.*
- *The Sars COV-2 virus has been a massive clusterfuck right from the beginning. The public has been misinformed about every facet of the pandemic. For example, the economic lockdown of 2020 was imposed not because of the pandemic (that was a convenient excuse), but instead because global finance was imminently about to collapse. The lockdown froze demand for credit and let the financial system reset, enabling a massive transfer of wealth upwards into the pockets of the billionaires.*

None of this is a conspiracy *per se*; all of it amounts to working agreements among thieves and murderers, the majority of whom believe completely that they're fine people and spend much of their time posing and posturing (to themselves, others, and society) as being upstanding, kind, and good.

Since the monsters have already won, our only hope is that they'll fuck up and shoot themselves in the foot (or, preferably, in the head). Might they do this? Not intentionally, but yes, they will, because the world they're creating cannot last. Nature has had enough and is wreaking havoc to protect herself. Collapse is underway and will not be reversed. The "hope" I speak of here is that maybe — just maybe — after the catastrophes that are coming, enough of the monsters will go down while sufficient numbers of us might survive to pick up the pieces and start over. Yes, I know — with that and five bucks you can get a cappuccino.

So no, I'm not confident about any of this. But then, I probably won't be around to participate in the aftermath, however it shakes out. In part, I'm relieved by the probability of my being gone, because I'm sufficiently sick and tired (literally) that I wouldn't be of much use anyway, even if we have a shot. Better that I pack my bags and get out of the way, since we'll need all the strength, heart, smarts, and savvy we can muster, and I don't have much left of those qualities. But that's OK. I've had my time, my hour to fret and strut upon the stage. I'd like the young ones — who just might turn out to be real humans and not monsters — to get their chance.