

Touch of Evil

Written by Bob Alexander
Thursday, 21 November 2013 20:32

In the Spring of 1996, at 7 o'clock one morning, I arrived at a breakfast meeting of the movers and shakers in the addiction field. I immediately made my way to the coffee bar. I'm not functional at 7 o'clock in the morning and part of this meeting was my presentation about how to use The Internet to promote addiction awareness as well as their treatment centers. I quickly downed my first cup of thin, hotel coffee and looked around the room. There were about twenty men in the group, all white, all somewhere in their sixties, all seemingly affluent, all freshly showered and shaved, all wearing good suits, and all had been to a barber shop recently. Well ... I too was a white guy and had taken a shower at stupid o'clock in the morning ... but that's all we had in common.

I poured a refill and wandered over where everyone was laughing and telling jokes. I was all set to pretend to smile over tame jokes lifted from the Reader's Digest. Y'know ... the not-funny "safe" humor Bob Hope peddled for the last 30 years of his career. But I was wrong. They weren't telling those kind of jokes. They were telling "Hillary" jokes. I'm not against bad taste or dark humor but it has to be *funny*. These weren't. They were just mean, vicious, and obscene. They could have just eliminated the joke-telling altogether and simply told one another "I Hate Women" or "I Hate Hillary Clinton."

These jokes elicited the kind of Haw Haw Haws you can imagine hearing from good ol' boys Haw Haw Haw-ing as they were gettin' liquored up n' gettin' ready to have themselves a good ol' fashioned lynching. Someone tapped a knife on a water goblet calling everyone to order. The jokes stopped ... the laughter died down ... and of course the meeting began with a prayer. Jesus Christ ... so this is what it's like to be trapped in a roomful of Republicans.

I sat down, ate my rubbery eggs, and pretended to listen while one guy after another droned on about something. When it was my turn I opened up my laptop, plugged the speedy 56K modem into a jack, and screeched and squawked my way onto The Internet. I clicked around showing them the World Wide Web while giving them my spiel about how they all needed an Internet Presence in order to do business the way business was going to be done from now on. I didn't care whether they believed me or not. I just wanted to slap down some business cards, unplug the laptop, and go home. I could tell most were wary of This New Thing, some were downright hostile, but they all were interested in making more money.

I eventually made websites for some of these guys. I lashed together the bare minimum, charged as much as I could, and lived with the dissonance. People *were* getting help. Treatment is better than no treatment, and it was just too goddamned bad some of those

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treatment dollars ended up in the pockets of those creeps. But I couldn't forget the smarmy glint in the eyes of the joke tellers or their brutish laughter. It was unnerving watching these supposed pillars of sobriety take off their masks revealing their inner pig. But most of all I couldn't understand why all this malevolent, misogynist energy was focused on Hillary Clinton.

Now I have to backtrack before 1996 to explain my naiveté. It's remarkably easy to become ... um ... *apolitical* while stumbling along in the fog of addiction after a decade or so. You kinda lose touch. And for most of the twelve years of the Reagan/Bush era it seemed like the perfect time to pull the covers over my head and take a nice long nap. I was aware of the big stuff that hit the headlines like Iran-Contra and the S&L thievery. But a daily horizon to horizon hangover blots out a lot of the details y'know what I'm sayin'? I got out of the treatment center, or as I call it, "The Home," just in time for Poppy Bush to invade Iraq.

Clinton brought an end to 12 years of Republicans driving the bus and the Republicans I knew lost their goddamned minds. Surprised the hell out of *me*. For some reason the electoral process they loved when it served up Reagan and Bush became untrustworthy when the people voted for Clinton. Their momentary confusion hardened into a full-blown hatred of the Clintons.

Billionaire Richard Mellon Scaife spent millions funding the Arkansas Project aimed at discrediting the Clintons. The conspiracies spun out of thin air by the project included the Clintons and the CIA smuggling drugs out of of Mena, Arkansas and arranging the murder of White House aide Vince Foster. That nonsense, as well as The Clinton Body Count, a list of 50 or 60 deaths of people loosely associated with the Clintons, was repeatedly debunked. But the Republicans I knew believed every word.

When told allegations against Clinton weren't true Ann Coulter said to release them anyway because they'd hurt Clinton. The lies were fed to a compliant media who eagerly threw more gasoline onto the bonfire. And the Republicans I knew danced and howled about The Rule of Law under the light of a gibbous moon.

Clinton was finally nailed for lying about having extramarital sex. The Republicans I knew screeched "Victory!" The Rule of Law had prevailed. They couldn't get him for drug running or murder but By Gawd they could impeach him for lying about oral sex. At the time I was working with a psychologist who described Clinton as a text-book sociopath. A few years later he described George W. Bush as "a pretty decent chap" and Dick Cheney as "an honorable fellow." Once again it was unnerving to see this man's blind partisanship completely nullify his PhD and

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obviously his powers of observation.

That is what happened when he plugged his brain into the noise machine. It amplified his pre-existing prejudices into a fever-dream of hatred, fear, and paranoia. He listened when it told him Women and Homosexuals and Colored People and Poor People and Liberals and Atheists and Muslims are all hacking away with sharp knives bringing this great country down ... and nobody in Main Stream Media told him it wasn't true.

Without a complicit media the Noise Machine comes to a screeching halt. The screeching ... stops. So if you want to know just how much of the media is owned or controlled by psychopaths ... check out the noise level. What's leading and bleeding on the Nightly News? As far as I can tell the volume needle is pinned and the Republicans I knew are probably all shambling around the fire ... again. I don't know for sure because I've moved away from all the Republicans I knew. I just couldn't stand to look into their cold, black, mirthless eyes anymore. It's too depressing to imagine what it would be like to *believe* what they believe.