

Who is to Blame?

The mental exercise for the day will be answering the following questions:

Nancy Pelosi's husband was struck at least twice by a deranged man who was able to wrestle a hammer from the husband of Nancy. Who is to blame?

1. Republicans.
2. Democrats.
3. Mental health problems.
4. The internet.
5. All of the above.
6. None of the above.

If you decided not to answer any of these questions, you are the winner. The truth is that all of these answers and none of them account for the attack on the majority leader's husband.

Both Democrats and Liberals have played the game of picturing their opponents as demons. Not ordinary devils, not the old fashion devils of folklore from the middle ages. Rather the demons painted by the political parties are either fascists or communists, depending upon who is doing the name calling. Either way, the opponents of the political bosses are so terrible and so dangerous that they deserve nothing short of prison, and maybe even death. Lunatics like the man who attacked Nancy Pelosi's husband are all too happy to oblige. It is not even clear whether he was encouraged by leftwing or rightwing propaganda, but what does it matter? He was motivated by the trash that our political parties regularly turn out in an effort to make their opponent so ridiculous, unacceptable, and dangerous that something has to be done by freedom loving citizens, even if that means taking a hammer to the head of an opponent's spouse.

Mental health issues are also to blame. Various studies show that between 25% to 40% have a diagnosable mental health problem. Some of us are just a little depressed, anxious or otherwise a bit off in our capacity to function effectively. Others are downright psychotic. Statistics are only as good as statisticians, and they are no bargain either. However, it does not take much for a concerned citizen to appreciate that we live in a country and a world where inappropriate behavior occurs so often, and on such a regular basis, that it has become the norm. Perhaps that is always the way that it was, but in the past there were armies and the police state to keep a lid on dangerous people.

The internet does not escape without blame either. Crazy people love company. There is plenty of company for bizarre and inappropriate citizens on the internet. A case has made its way to the United States Supreme Court, *Fernandez vs. Google*, where the immunity for internet purveyors will be tested. The plaintiff in *Fernandez* claims that terrorists are encouraged by the use of algorithms. Just what does this mean? An algorithm is nothing more than an appeal to an interest shown by one who utilizes the services of the world wide web. Say, for example, you are interested in buying a new couch for your living room. You look up a couch and then, for what seems like an eternity, you will be getting ads about couches, even though you bought your couch 10 years

earlier. That is known as an “algorithm,” driven by artificial intelligence. It looks like artificial intelligence has a long way to go.

Terrorism works the same way. People interested in murdering other people can look up all kinds of trash on the internet. Conspiracy theorists and theories abound. If someone is crazy enough to spend time trash talking their political enemies, there will be plenty of algorithmic responses. Artificial intelligence is happy to assist in the identification of enemies who must be eliminated in order to save the world.

It is time for internet companies, preying on small and fragile minds, to lose their immunity. Congress never meant to protect the web from people so dangerous that they would upend our Constitutional form of government, and plan homicide in the name of political stability.

If you answered the above question “none of the above,” you may have some special insight that no one else possesses. Without question, there are more problems this country faces that Republicans, Democrats, mental health issues, and the internet. If you answered, “all of the above,” you probably are still leaving out a few dangerous and negative components to a society who seems to be able to produce homicide as easily as widgets.

It would be great if evolution would develop human beings beyond that part of their brain that is most like that of a reptile. Reptiles do not think. Reptiles react. Reptiles, in particular, respond out of fear. Those who market ideas, hatred, and politicians, understand how the reptile thinks and therefore appeals to that most prehistoric part of our brain: “fear.” Just like the reptile, we run from fear, stand frozen, rather than make difficult decisions, and nurture our appetite to eat bugs and other suitably untasty things. Well, we don’t know about the bugs, but we do know that people react out of fear, often times much more aggressively than to the lore of love.

Who is to blame for all of this? Well, we are, of course. When we start thinking and stop reacting to that which is negative, fearful, and distorted, we have some chance of recouping our lost vision of paradise in North America.

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