

Stop the Exploitation of Greta Thunberg

Swedish teenager Greta Thunberg, 16, became a global celebrity for her message of climate-change alarmism. “I want you to panic. I want you to feel the fear I feel every day. And then I want you to act,” she [told](#) the World Economic Forum in Davos this year.

Greta is currently on a tour of North and South America. She crossed the Atlantic Ocean on a zero-emissions boat and received a hero’s welcome when she landed in New York.

The global media covers Greta with gushing accolades. She has appeared on the covers of *Time*, *British Vogue*, and – oddly enough – men’s magazine *GQ*. She has been nominated for this year’s Nobel Peace Prize. Celebrities line up to meet her. She has already published two books.

Speaking as a mother, I have a different perspective. I’m following Greta’s journey and I am appalled to see a minor being exploited to advance a political agenda. I would never permit one of my own children to be used in this way.

History teaches us that early fame often leads to disastrous outcomes. Corey Feldman, Michael Jackson, Lindsey Lohan, Britney Spears. The list of child celebrities whose lives fell apart once they reached adulthood is endless.

Greta already faced significant challenges before she rose to global fame. She talks openly about the fact that she’s been [diagnosed](#) with Asperger Syndrome and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. She also has Selective Mutism, a [condition](#) defined by Britain’s National Health Service as “a severe anxiety disorder where a person is unable to speak in certain social situations, such as with classmates at school or to relatives they don’t see very often.”

Right now, Greta is the ideal spokesperson for climate-change alarmism. Her youthful fresh face and her braids are a novelty. She makes authoritarian pronouncements [like](#): “Everyone and everything has to change so why waste precious time arguing about what and who needs to change first?”

Since Greta is only 16, no one can ask her tough questions – like how to square her goals with representative democracy. Anyone who criticizes her is vulnerable to the charge of bullying a child.

Greta is being used to promote a political agenda by people who don't care about her long-term welfare. What will happen to her when the novelty wears off? She won't be a cute little teenager for much longer. How can she go back to living a quiet life when she's gotten used to being greeted by cheering crowds wherever she goes?

And where are Greta's parents in all of this? They seem to be her enablers. Her father accompanied her on her boat journey across the Atlantic. He is an actor and her mother is an opera singer. Perhaps they are vicariously living out their own dreams of global fame via their daughter.

I wish Greta all the best. I hope she goes on to lead a happy, stable life as an adult. But quite honestly, the odds of that happening are low.

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