

Why Greta Thunberg Should Be Time's 'Person of the Year'

Time Magazine has announced that this year's Person of the Year award will go to the 16-year-old Greta Thunberg. The Swedish school-girl-turned-eco-activist has become the poster-girl of the climate change-turned-emergency worldwide. The choice was not surprising, given the media adulation for the girl who has traveled the globe with a minimal carbon footprint.

Time has long abandoned the pretense of giving the award to truly great people, full of personality and talents, and who influence events. Alas, the time of grandeur, discipline and vision is over. *Time* is no longer the serious magazine of importance that it once was. People no longer want to make an effort to know, admire, and appreciate grand figures. We easily tire of greatness.

Greta a Perfect Fit

In this sense, the award to Greta Thunberg fits perfectly. In our shallow and mediocre times, today's figures must not be too deep or complex. They must not be connected to any historical or religious narrative outside of their own evolving story. Their speech must be Twitter-friendly. The new models need not be exceptional as long as they defy standard definitions. *Time* typically picks those who can link themselves to all the liberal causes in vogue.

By naming Greta Thunberg, *Time* is presenting a perfect postmodern archetype. Her award might be better called the Archetype of the Year award. Like all archetypes, she serves as the model for which all other activists of the same type are representations. She is meant to represent "the power of youth" in rebellion against an adult-dominated world. Her

story expresses well postmodernity's rejection of Western Christian civilization.

Time's choice makes more sense when we consider that agendas progress more with archetypes than party platforms. If a movement can find an archetypal person who can embody its platform principles, it will advance much more quickly. If the media can propagate a perfect archetype, they can make a cause universal.

Thus, Greta Thunberg is the personification of all the eco-movement could want and more. As a child, she can lay claim to represent the future. She does not play the role of leader but assumes the much more important mantle of symbol. In so doing, she need not present concrete proposals but only make impossible demands.

What She Is Not

She presents a new human type to act on a world stage that will be stripped of leaders and thinkers. She stands out much more for what she is not than what she is.

Thus, Ms. Thunberg is not a deep thinker or an articulator. She is nothing more than a symbol. Hers is a fatalistic world of gloom and doom of either-or alternatives. She accepts no other explanations beyond the coming human extinction scenario, and, like a broken record, she repeats it over and over again.

She is not given to tact, subtlety, or diplomacy. Instead, she demands vague and urgent action without specifics. Her message is cold, brutal, and unpoetic. She will talk about the hopes of youth and the instability of ecosystems without transitions. Her discourse uses direct, simplistic terms that address her anger, rage, frustration, and desperation.

She has no fondness for anything since she is the ultimate expression of anti-consumerism. She dresses in plain

expressionless clothes without adornments or jewelry. Everything surrounding her life is likewise plain and unassuming. It is a joyless world that does not admit an appreciation of man-made beauty or progress. A coldness permeates her world, filling it with sadness.

Mystery and Mysticism

There is also an element of mystery and mysticism in her presentation. Unfortunately, she suffers from Asperger's Syndrome, which impairs her emotional expression, making it cold, mysterious, and disconnected. Thus, everything about her tragically defies the standard definition of what might be expected of this child seemingly without a childhood.

Like all who embrace the ecological cause, Ms. Thunberg claims to have a spiritual connection with the earth from which we might draw energies. She takes up the cause of the indigenous peoples who she holds up as models of eco-friendly populations.

As *Time* notes, she is a 16-year-old that appears to be twelve in her short five-foot-tall body. *Time's* cover picture reinforces a mystical overtone by presenting an almost elfin figure staring out into the vast expanses of waves crashing into a rocky beach.

The media have been quick to capitalize on ascribing to her mystical persona special powers, not unlike that of a prophetess or oracle. However, the school truant from Sweden has only become a sensation due to the enabling power of adults who have opened every door from the Vatican to the United Nations. It is no coincidence that every liberal cause, from feminism to indigenous rights to gun control, can identify with Ms. Thunberg.

Advancing the Liberal Cause

If the object of *Time's* Person of the Year award is to

recognize the person that most advances the liberal agenda, then Greta Thunberg certainly can claim the title. By serving as an archetype for the ecology cause, she is a model to take the sagging eco-movement's fortunes forward.

However, what we need are authentic role models that practice virtue and move society to true progress. This vision is not found in a neo-pagan pantheistic worldview that rejects all that is civilized and Western. Instead, truly representative figures in society aspire to an order based on sanctity and governed by a personal God and His Providential action on Earth.

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