



Role of Celebrities: Taking the Temperature of National Fear

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The Geopolitics of Emotion, will strike many critics as a sheer provocation, if not an oxymoron. After all, isn't geopolitics about rationality, about objective data such as frontiers, economic resources, military might, and the cold political calculus of interest? By contrast, emotions are essentially subjective, if not purely irrational. To mix emotions and geopolitics can only be a futile, perhaps dangerous exercise, leading ultimately to the abyss of unreason.... First, One cannot fully understand the world in which we live without trying to integrate and understand its emotions. And second, emotions are like cholesterol, both good and bad. The problem is to find the right balance between them.... Between the Russian Revolution in 1917 and the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, ideologies [of the old guard] replaced national passions. One might even call the twentieth century the era of ideology. It was the passing of that era that led historian Francis Fukuyama to conclude—prematurely... that history itself had come to an end. It was an understandable mistake. After all, for several generations, history had been driven by ideological conflict[s]; now that one side of the major conflict of that era had collapsed [e.g., Soviet Union], wasn't it natural to assume that the to-and-from struggle that constitutes history might itself come to an end? It was not to be, of course. Today, as we shall see quests for identity by peoples uncertain of who they are, their place in the world, and their prospects for a meaningful future have replaced ideology as the motor of history, with the consequence that emotions matter more than ever in a world where media are playing the role of a sounding board and a magnifying glass.... In an age of globalization, emotions have become indispensable to grasp the complexity of the world we live in.... – Moisi (2008, pp. x, 4, 9)

The major three global political emotions: “culture of fear, culture of hope, culture of humiliation”—and, for Moisi, America, the UK, Europe, and Australia are ridden with and dominated by a “**culture of fear**” (p. 90).¹

¹ Moisi, D. (2008). *The geopolitics of emotion: How cultures of fear, humiliation, and hope are reshaping the world*. NY: Doubleday.

good and evil, Americans sometimes identify with celebrities as a larger means of coping with their own everyday anxieties. Oline Eaton's article "‘We Must be Ready Every Day, All the Time’: Mid-Twentieth-Century Nuclear Anxiety, Fear of Death, and American Life" brings to mind the tremendous anxieties of the Cold War, including the events surrounding the Cuban Missile Crisis and the larger fear of nuclear annihilation. In this context, Eaton draws on the life writing of the image of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis as a way of navigating through midtwentieth-century fears. The result is a discussion about ways of coping not only with tragic death, but also with the ways looming fears and life's uncertainties may be managed with courage and grace. As Eaton writes, "celebrity life narratives [may provide] a valuable resource for analyzing American emotional phenomena and behavioral history, providing a ghost map of the contemporary culture's anxieties." (1)

LARGER
LOOMING

"EMOTIONAL" CELEBRITIES:



Jackie Kennedy



Marianne Williamson



Who is Marianne Williamson?

What is the temperature of fear right now?

What is happening?

These are questions I am asking along with many others around the world, but especially in the USA during the 2020 Presidential Campaign. I'm currently writing a book on *The Marianne Williamson Phenomenon* (working title)—as, it is fascinating how there is something in these ominous women leaders, figures, celebrities (e.g., JK, MW above), that ‘hits’ us all when we let it ‘hit’ us—move us. There’s something “spiritual” going on with Williamson’s campaign and teachings that revolve around **Love vs. Fear**—in political and spiritual life with poignant broader implications and applications. I don’t want to miss this ‘history in the making’ as it happens. I want to co-participate and co-construct that (r)evolutionary history—maybe, you do too. That’s all I want to say at this time.

NOTE:

1. Sederholm (2017, p. 6). Sederholm, C. H. (2017). Introduction: Fear and anxiety in American culture. *The Journal of American Culture*, 40(1), 3-6.

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