

# One Screen, Two Movies? Think Again

Another week, another scandal, but the latest — the August 8 FBI “raid” on former president Donald Trump’s Mar-a-Lago home in Palm Beach, Florida — looks set for a run of a month or more.

Democrats, as usual where Trump is concerned, see the search and seizure operation as an omen of imminent comeuppance for a disgraced politician. Indictments! Convictions! Orange coveralls! Lock him up!

Republicans, as usual where Trump is concerned, see it as politically driven prosecution. Witch hunt! Rogue FBI! What about Hillary Clinton? What about Hunter Biden?

“Confirmation bias,” Scott Adams **tweeted** back in 2017, “explains how two movies can play on one screen. I see ear plugs and you see rubber bullets.”

Both sides are seeing what they want to see. Each side is convinced that they’re with the “good guys” while the other side’s supporters are mentally deranged and violently criminal.

Why can’t both sides be at least partially right?

What if Republicans and Democrats are both playing politics AND the worst things they say about each other are true?

What if there’s at least a grain of truth in nearly every “scandal” claim AND the accused’s defenses are really just self-serving excuses and evasions?

What if there aren’t any good guys in either of the movies perpetually playing on our shared screen?

It’s comforting to think of politics in binary terms.

We like to believe that, while some politicians may be corrupt, they’re usually on the other side of a partisan aisle from us honest and righteous people. The corrupt or dishonest on our own side are “a few bad apples.”

I strongly suspect that even many of those same politicians believe they’re the good guys, and attempt to remain pure of heart and firm on principle.

But consider:

Politics is ultimately about power.

While most of us see power in terms of using it for good or evil, right or wrong, a certain demographic displays “A lack of empathy and sense of detachment from others for the sake of achieving one’s own goals .... The ability to charm and influence others .... [and] Inability to take responsibility for one’s actions, instead blaming others or rationalizing one’s behavior.”

Think of some prominent politicians and consider how well their personalities and behaviors apparently map to those three items from the **Psychopathic Personality Inventory**.

While, per Lord Acton, “power tends to corrupt,” it also attracts those who are predisposed to corruption in the form of power for its own sake. They approach it with more zeal and sharper focus, and therefore more successfully, than those who only reluctantly grasp the One Ring.

One screen, two movies? No. We’re all strapped to our chairs for repeated viewings of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*.