

The Anti-Gospel According to “the Mooch”: Trumppo-mimesis and the Dogma of Moral Reversal

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President Donald J. Trump (DJT) is in many ways a “beautiful” example of an *objet a* – like the shark in Spielberg’s *Jaws* or the avifauna in Hitchcock’s *The Birds* ... if we recall two of Slavoj Žižek’s more ominous examples from *The Pervert’s Guide to Cinema* and *The Pervert’s Guide to Ideology*.¹ A recent meme (actually retweeted by @realDonaldTrump) depicting DJT’s head on “Rocky Balboa’s” sweaty, sculpted body² illustrates well this openness to wide-ranging pop cultural interpretations of the president. The image first circulated, vis-à-vis Vladimir Putin 2020 calendar pics³, with gleeful mockery but then became for many “Trumpsters” a non-joking symbol of the president’s enduring strength and determination, e.g. “eye of the tiger” political style. This uncanny power of interpretive reversal, even to the point of ridiculousness, is one of the keys to DJT’s political and, more importantly, religio-cultural success.

What appears as a flaw, vice, or even a weakness in the president is somehow transformed into a “perfection,” “virtue,” and “strength” – even for so-called Christians conservatives. The now infamous “do us a favor” call with Ukraine President Zelensky⁴, for example, which clearly is setting up a this-for-that transaction, has morphed for a high percentage of polled Americans into a “beautiful call” in which DJT is heard protecting American taxpayer dollars from “corruption” rather than

bribing a foreign leader to provide political “dirt” on a potential electoral opponent. As it applies to DJT, seemingly any conventional political setback, generic flub, or serious personal failure (moral or business) easily can be positively reversed and re-fashioned into a brilliant, biblical-like overcoming of some compromising situation or condition; or, as conservative Christian and president of the Family Research Council Anthony “Tony” Perkins would call the consistent dismissals of, or turning a blind eye to, the more serious moral failings of the president, “mulligans.”⁵

It is DJT’s so-called fail-proof “Midas touch” that informs Anthony (“the Mooch”) Scaramucci’s 2018 oleaginous depiction of DJT in *Trump: The Blue Collar President*. To be fair to Anthony Scaramucci, a great deal has changed for him in the Trump universe since he first appeared on the political scene. His tenure as White House communications director lasted only eleven days, but even after his public firing and media-wide ridicule (being discarded like an “empty Big Mac box”) he remained “loyal” (“FBL – fired but loyal”)⁶ to the president. It only has been very recently that Scaramucci has created distance between the president and himself and I will leave it to the reader to provide an explanation for his change in perspective, especially his (unrequited) endorsement of former Vice President Biden for president.

Scaramucci’s *Trump: The Blue Collar President* has two distinctive arcs – one autobiographical and the other biographical. The testimony or witnessing contained in the autobiographical material melds into the biographical portion, existentially placing Scaramucci in the aura of DJT’s life and rise to political prominence. Scaramucci refers to a third narrative arc – the story of America, but that “story” remains a vague and naïve ideological backdrop to the rise and putative unending success of DJT: “In one way, this book,” he writes, “is the story of my life and my unique friendship with the president, but in the larger view, it’s also the story of an America that changed dramatically during those years.”⁸ For Scaramucci, DJT is the fulfillment, if not embodiment, of America’s post-war promise and global aspirations. The “American Dream,” from Scaramucci’s “MAGA” perspective, was poured into DJT, making him the messianic “champion” who would hear the cries of those left behind by corrupt politicians and big “tech oligarchs”:

Our leaders became feckless and unable to stand up for the United States of America. The aspirational working class – hardworking men and women who, like Fred Trump and Alexander Scaramucci, had struggled to achieve success – suffered a sharp decline while career politicians in Washington lined their

pockets and held Congress in gridlock. With the coming of the internet, vast, powerful companies run by tech oligarchs controlled the content we read and the things we bought. Though these companies professed to be progressive, their actions were actually intrusive, racist, and limiting.

The lives of American citizens declined too, and when those people looked for help, no one was listening. At least not until the most improbable of all candidates came riding out of New York to champion their cause.⁹

This excerpt summarizes the point of the book – (1) America was great once; (2) America lost its greatness; (3) America was made great again or perhaps even redeemed by DJT. Intermittently Scaramucci provides autobiographical details and a folksy narrative filling in of his own rise from a regular kid in Port Washington, NY to Harvard success story to hedge fund multi-millionaire. Many or most of the details of Scaramucci's life are not extraordinary. What I mean by this is that Scaramucci's family, like many families, is an immigrant family. They worked hard and paved the way for their children's success – like many families. Scaramucci, from his own account, was a good student and made his way into the nation's best educational institutions, Tufts University and Harvard University. After completing his J.D. from Harvard Law School, he eventually made it "out" of the working class as a financier. There are many people who could tell the same or a very similar story. The difference, however, is that Scaramucci decided to tell his story as an example of the historical, if not divine, "force" that also brought DJT to the White House.

What is this historico-metaphysical "force" that propels "the most improbable of all candidates" to champion the cause of the lost American dream? In Chapter 3: From Schlemiel to Mensch, Scaramucci traces the intersecting arcs of his autobiography and DJT's biography. Early in the chapter, we learn that Scaramucci is a fan of F. Scott Fitzgerald and the epigraph from the *The Great Gatsby* seems to establish a theme for what follows in the chapter: "life is much more successfully looked at from a single window [, after all]." If Scaramucci is taking his narrative lead from Fitzgerald, then the epigraph points to a "force of personality" or a force that comes from being able to focus exclusively on a single goal or task. The link here to DJT comes by way of the myth of his "self-made" success and highly focused business acumen. In this distorted portrait, DJT is depicted as a "genius" or, as the president says, "stable genius" and as someone with super-human qualities, including, as DJT's son-in-law Jared Kushner says, highly attuned "instincts." This

view of DJT is widely shared even among his one-time political rivals. The embarrassingly forgetful former Secretary of Energy and Ukraine scandal figure Rick Perry has gone as far as to call DJT the “chosen one,” which is a belief shared by many regular, everyday Trump supporters as well.¹⁰

If DJT is viewed today as the paragon of success, then it seems understandable that someone would attempt to follow in his path or, at least read *The Art of the Deal*, which next to the Bible is the president’s favorite book. In retrospect, the goal for a young Anthony Scaramucci, according to the “Mooch,” was to succeed in some way, but what defined success was elusive and the tasks he had to complete toward that goal were equally elusive. What Scaramucci describes in his book is an uncanny and unrecognized life track he shared with the president. The same force that propelled Scaramucci to his success happened to be the very same force that has delivered DJT to the White House. Moreover, most importantly, it is the same force that would make “America great again” by abandoning fundamental American values – this is Scaramucci’s (anti) good news testimony.

As we learn, young Anthony had a paper route and was elected class president, which allowed him to attend high school events featuring local politicians. In general, success was “making it out of the working class.”¹¹ For Scaramucci, being a good and effectively networked student was the “ticket” to better economic circumstances and he made his way to Tufts:

Billy Tomasso, a friend of my father’s, had gone to Tufts University, done pretty well in life, and remembered the school during fund-raising. Billy set up a meeting with the provost of Tufts [Sol Gittleman]. It was a pretty big favor. First of all, Tufts is rated in Barron’s as a “most selective” school. Also, my grades weren’t nearly as good as those of my brother, who got into Tufts three years before me strictly on academic merit. David graduated fourth in his class in high school. So I had to have some strings pulled, and then rely on my own sparkling personality. I took the Eastern Air Lines Shuttle up to Boston.¹²

Through connections and a “sparklingly personality,” a young Anthony Scaramucci was able to take the first steps toward success, which he portrays as apparently precarious and serendipitous. The interesting part of this account, however, has nothing to do with the events of his life. What is interesting is the way that Scaramucci uses his early success story as bookends to the rise of the “young

Donald Trump” and the “dream of Manhattan.” The first section of Chapter 3 strangely ends with Scaramucci’s reminiscences of high school and his description of his appetite for reading. The bulk of the section, however, is focused on the young Donald J. Trump and begins with DJT’s move from Queens to Manhattan in the early 1970s. The third and final section of the chapter awkwardly re-links the Scaramucci “off to Tufts” narrative and his transformation, as he describes it, from “schlemiel to mensch.”

The bookending of the Scaramucci narrative with the young Donald J. Trump story could be the result of poor editing – he went off on an extended tangent. However, I will argue that this narrative structure is intentional (unconsciously perhaps) and informs the entirety of the book. For this to work properly, one has to recognize that Scaramucci is using the DJT biographical arc as the meta-narrative not only for his own coming of age story but for the story of post-war America, too. The use of anecdotes creates a narrative *telos* in which seemingly serendipitous events find profound meaning as they lead to DJT’s rise to political power. Scaramucci recounts a brief meeting in 1982 between President Ronald Reagan, “one of America’s greatest presidents,” and himself as a young man, which has a “meeting by the well” or foreshadowing or, even, a prophetic tone to it (similar to a young Bill Clinton meeting President Kennedy):

Reagan shook my hand and asked how I was doing. “I’m fine, fine,” I said, with a smile on my face so big I could’ve swallowed my ears.

Margiotta then asked him how he was holding up with all that was going on outside.

“Well,” he began in that wonderful baritone of his, “if you’re in this game, you’ve got to let it roll off you like water off a duck.”¹³

Although I’d heard the expression before, coming from Reagan the words sounded like they should be etched in granite somewhere. One thing was for sure: I would never forget them.

Years later, in the Oval Office, I told the story to another president.

What was an exciting opportunity for a senior class president (meeting a US president) becomes “historico-metaphysical” insofar as the story relayed by Scaramucci finds its ultimate meaning/destination several decades later when the “advice” reaches its seemingly final addressee – transmitted from Reagan to

Scaramucci to DJT. What would a similar story look like without the metaphysical plateau? Cloned to reality? Here is a possibility: I, Victor Taylor, as a high school student (not class president) actually met then Governor Ronald W. Reagan in the spring of 1980 in Auburn, NY (Holiday Inn banquet hall) and we shook hands and asked others and me how we were. We answered something like “good” or “great,” as I recall. Governor Reagan’s speech was read from a script and occasionally he looked up to stress certain points, e.g. people on “welfare” holding the country back, high taxes hurting business investment, and a weak military (compared to the Soviets). For me, the event was the event, but if I were to tell it within Scaramucci’s narrative framework it would only have meaning only if I were to tell or transmit the story back to world history or to, let’s say, DJT. In other words, for Scaramucci, the events of his life mostly find meaning as they tie-back-to or intersect with the DJT arc to the presidency, which fundamentally creates the capacity for what I will call Trumpo-mimesis – modeling oneself and identity on the subjectivity of DJT. In other words, the same historical or divine “force” that has propelled DJT to his White House is the same “force” that has directed and shaped Scaramucci’s life. . . or so it would seem.

Trumpo-mimesis, like Christomimesis, which readers with a background in Christian theology will readily know, involves establishing an aspirational subjectivity, in this case DJT, and leading one’s life according to a set of rules or a precise ideological regime. “What Would Jesus Do?,” introduced by Rev. Charles Sheldon in the late nineteenth century, as an example of Christomimesis, initiates or interpellates the subject into a subject-position that is defined and determined by a prescribed world-view and expected actions – “love thy neighbor” or “do unto others as you would have them do unto you” or “turn the other cheek.” Trumpo-mimesis, therefore, is a life dedicated to imitating DJT, ideological, stylistically, ethically, and behaviorally. Trumpo-mimesis also could include being cloaked or awash in “Trump reality” – here I would point to Kanye West’s description of putting on a MAGA hat for the first time and his experience of feeling like “Superman.” Being empowered in this context is having a subjectivity that can be publicly released or expressed or proclaimed to the wider world. Trumpo-mimesis makes the expression or articulation of misogynist, racist, homophobic, anti-immigrant, and whatever horrible sentiments permissible if not obligatory under certain rhetorical or mimetic-positive conditions.

For many Americans, and not just progressives, liberals, radicals, and perhaps some moderate conservatives, DJT remains a theological and cultural paradox. By

this, I mean quite simply that for decades, most visible during the Reagan era, Christian conservatives have trumpeted the “morality” of their perceived majority. From their pervasive and relentless anti-choice to anti-LGBTQIA to pro-prayer in public school policies and agenda, Christian conservatives have made great efforts to be consistent with the basic tenets of “biblical morality” (whatever that actually means in any given situation). However, with DJT and noted by Tony Perkins’ statement regarding the president’s alleged past extra-marital sexual encounters and assaults (“mulligans”), Christian conservatives not only look the other way, but embrace the president’s moral and ethical shortcomings (to state it mildly). This is not, as I will argue, one’s typical form of or run-of-the-mill religious hypocrisy, which many know all too well in American religio-political life. Angela Denker in *Red State Christians* states it in the following stark terms:

But Trump, for the majority of Red State Christians, is much more than a puppet. He represents a combination of a redeemed sinner with a checkered past and a successful businessman who can get things done. When the Christian gospel has been conflated with a strong country, it’s easy to see how Trump has come to be seen as a timely savior. Evangelicals love a redeemed sinner, especially when he’s white, male, and rich.¹⁴

As we saw in Scaramucci’s account and reinforced by Denker passage, DJT’s supposed success as a businessman and status as a television celebrity, which places him in the realm of the secular, becomes the very criteria for his exalted place in conservative Christian politics. In other words, DJT, as a candidate and as president, doesn’t need to be “one of community” (although Denker views DJT as a redeemed sinner) to champion their cause. In fact, that he is not one of Christian community, makes him all the more effective since he is not bound, supposedly, to the moral strictures and ethical vulnerabilities as “one of their own” would be. This is exemplified in the recent controversy surrounding Jerry Falwell, Jr., Becki (Tilley) Falwell, and Giancarlo Granda (a.k.a. the “pool boy”). The alleged agreement in which Mr. Falwell would look on as his spouse and Mr. Granda had sexual relations is, for the most part, an affront to Christian and so-called “family” values, espoused by the Liberty University code of conduct, the late Jerry Falwell, Sr, personally, and others such as Tony Perkins who regularly appears on cable news channels to inform the public of just how immoral others are. In this instance, Jerry Falwell, Jr.

has been admonished and forced out of his role as university president. Why and why not DJT for his alleged transgressions? Simply, Jerry Falwell, Jr. is an evangelical Christian and subject to the moral code . . . so the hypocrisy has a quantifiable limit. With DJT, who is not “one of their own,” the standard is different and the hypocrisy has no limit—it is easy to imagine DJT in Falwell, Jr.’s situation and nearly no one caring in the red state Christian community. DJT is not a member of the community but is instead an agent working on behalf of the community—a metaphorical “hired gun.” In a manner of speaking, DJT is just a tool for the conservative Christian community to use toward their political and theological end, assuming there is a difference between the two. This dialectical relationship, the ability for DJT to “git-er-done,” without the moral and ethical constraints or hesitations that presumably would impede or paralyze a “true” Christian believer is the necessary foundation for Trumpo-mimesis. A similar formulation is at the basis of the Westboro Baptist Church (WBC) phenomenon. While the cheering and celebration of the death of an American soldier or the outright vile attacks on LGBTAI people, Muslims, Jews, Catholics, etc. would be construed as against the foundation of Christian moral teachings, these acts for the Westboro congregation become “signs” of God’s will; that is to say, the most egregious violations of Christian ethics are dialectically reversed to advance a “Christian” theo-politics. My point, here, is not to show some organized alignment between DJT and the WBC – the WBC has protested DJT. I do contend, however, that dialectical reversal, even within the core of Christian values, is possible to “sanctify” an otherwise condemnable means to an end – no redemption or altar call required.

So, when conservative Christians or, specifically, red state Christians imitate DJT (Trumpo-mimesis), what are they imitating and internalizing and projecting back out into the world as the good news? The answer, in part, can be found in the previous tool analogy. In Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, God will use whatever “He” deems necessary to achieve a desired end. For conservative Christians, these would include various Egyptian Pharaohs (Ramesess), King Cyrus the Great, Herod, Judas, Pontius Pilate, and anyone who could be enlisted to make a particular, often loathsome, point. The “toolification” of an unsavory figure to serve God’s ends, therefore, is totally consistent with “Judeo-Christian” narratives. This also provides limited cover for otherwise ethical people to act unethically—theo-political carnival day.

From this perspective, DJT is a very minor figure in this assemblage – certainly no biblical level villain. Nevertheless, this anti-hero president is expected to and does act outside the scope of what would be considered proper Christian behavior—the same behavioral expectations Falwell, Jr. has been held to (so far). Even as president DJT doesn't tell the truth on a consistent basis and he frequently supports policies that to many are cruel, harsh, and immoral, e.g. separating families at the US/Mexico border. The list of his bad personal and public behavior goes on and on. As long as his intentions continue to point in the direction of conservative policies (ending *Roe v. Wade*, primarily), however, not only will red state Christians and other conservatives look the other way, they will without any sense of shame embrace his style and behavior. . . . emulating it and seeing it also as fulfilling God's need for an effective "tool."

When attempting to do theology in the era of Trump, one needs to account for an ironic reversal, more specifically an ironic reversal of what traditionally have been considered ethical norms. If we, as Scaramucci did or perhaps still does, take DJT as a world historical figure whose life and actions point to some greater reality and purpose (DJT's many business failures and bankruptcies were the necessary bad times preceding his greatness, e.g., *The Apprentice*), then his tactics and strategies or, more basically, his actions for aspirational red state Christians connect directly to God's plan for America. . . . and the world. Of course, not all of the president's supporters are red state Christians. Many are blue state or purple state voters who like the president's economic policies—as long as the stock market is strong, they can "live" with him. DJT, for instance and to the surprise of many pundits, captured a large percentage of white, college educated women from the Philadelphia suburbs in 2016, underscoring his favorability on economic and some ideological issues. Steven Hassan in *The Cult of Trump* describes DJT's supporters using a pyramid structure:

If we think of Trump's followers as comprising a pyramid structure, with circles radiating from its base, most would occupy the outermost circles. Forming the bottom of the pyramid – literally, the base – would be Trump's most loyal followers, including members of the Christian right, alt-right, listeners of Fox News and right-wing media, dyed-in-the-wool Republicans, and others. Above the base, in ascending tiers, would be business, political, and religious leaders

who support and promote Trump, often to satisfy their own agendas. Closest to Trump – and atop the pyramid – would be his family and staff.¹⁵

Red state Christians or the Christian right occupy the middle level of the pyramid. This position above and below others does not in any way diminish their combined significance – the pyramid is intersectional. Business, pro-gun, anti-choice, Christian right/Jewish right, subject positions form a complex assemblage that are unified by DJT's personal style and behavior along with his political vision. Contrary to the point made by Denker, DJT need not be “redeemed” or “saved” in this context. In fact, I would argue that not being “redeemed” or “saved” makes him more effective as a unifying figure insofar as he can operate without the presumed moral restrictions of a Christian subject. Lance Wallnau in *God's Chaos Candidate* likens DJT to King Cyrus:

Like Cyrus, Trump is seen as a figure of deliverance, an unwitting conduit, an unlikely vessel. And deliver he has—not just to the Christian right but also to the Jewish right. Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, thanking Trump for moving the American embassy to Jerusalem, compared him to “King Cyrus the Great.”¹⁶

King Cyrus the Great offers an opportunity to return to Scaramucci's “anti-gospel” of Trump-world. For the sake of argument, let's assume that there are certain actions, behaviors, and speech-acts that would be too abhorrent or, at the very least, too morally unsavory for a supposedly religious person to exhibit or do, e.g. lying, acting unethically, acting cruelly to the most vulnerable, name calling, making fun of people, making excuses for authoritarian leaders, calling for the death penalty for people struggling with drug addiction, making racist statement, making sexist statements, . . . take your pick.

If it is all the same, imagine two additional variables. The first is that some, not all, of these immoralities are agreed with at some base level and, second, that these immoralities are weighed against an ultimate objective. Looking at it in this context it is easy to explain the wide support DJT has among red state Christians and other people who consider themselves to be religious (ethical). Scaramucci summarizes this at the end of his book:

When he's not on the defensive, or fighting back, he might be the most flexible president to ever hold the office. I've seen him align with Bernie Sanders and Ted Cruz, all in the same week. Because of his flexibility, he's able to approach problems in an unorthodox way that can often cut through decades of protocol, red tape, and orthodoxy that other presidents have to navigate through before they even get to the problem; his negotiations with North Korea are a prime example. Lost in the sea of hysterical news ink about Russia and conspiracies is a set of decisions and policies that are driving our economy, making us safer, creating jobs, and returning us to the respected place in the world that we once occupied.

I believe we have a real opportunity in a Trump presidency to change things dramatically for the good. We might never have a president again who can move intractable barriers the way he does.¹⁷

Scaramucci's "good news" is that, for "us," America is "greater" – safer, economically on the right track, and returning to a "respected" place in the world. However, there is an "anti-gospel" haunting his account. It is an "anti-gospel" predicated on devotion to an anti-hero . . . someone who violates the very tenets of a religious or ethical life in order to accomplish a series of political tasks, e.g., overturning *Roe v. Wade*, restricting immigration, relieving the wealthy and corporations of their civic duty (paying taxes). It is more than that, however. While for many the gospels are associated with the virtues that lift all people, Scaramucci's "anti-gospel" offers a contrary message. The "good" he sees DJT creating is a "good" for a select few – a select few as in the 1% economically and the 35% who hear in DJT's mega-rallies their own voice and visceral dislike for that which is associated with "liberals" and other so-called "enemies of the people." Beyond that, however, is the "anti-gospel" of normalization – the way in which Scaramucci excuses the zero-sum game of American politics and the hostile and dishonest speech coming not only from the president but from the Trump administration, e.g., coronavirus misinformation. The rhetoric of business-like efficiency, a myth in and of itself, paired with messianic fantasies are a dangerous mix. The foundation of a democratic republic cannot function or, quite possibly continue, in a win at all cost environment. Scaramucci's "anti-gospel" and the call to imbibe DJT's cynical concoction of faux

patriotism, supply side make believe, and dark religiosity leave us in a desperate place . . . and one that may be culturally and politically permanent.

At the end of *Trump: The Blue Collar President*, Scaramucci leaves the reader with a final pop-culture film reference – *Rocky*. After foretelling the success of a Trump *second* term, he writes, “Somewhere the theme from Rocky has started to play.”¹⁸ “Gonna Fly Now,” composed by Bill Conti with lyrics by Carol Connors and Ayn Robbins in 1977, plays during a montage of Rocky’s training sessions and culminates with his run up the steps to the Philadelphia Museum of Art. For Scaramucci, this epitomizes the Trump-movement (even though Rocky lost to Apollo Creed in the first film). When the motivational and triumphant music is muted, the totally inane lyrics (thirty words with only seven not repeated) comes into view:

Trying hard now
It's so hard now
Trying hard now

Getting strong now
Won't be long now
Getting strong now

Gonna fly now
Flying high now
Gonna fly, fly, fly

“Make America Great Again” does somewhat translate into “Gonna fly, fly, fly” in the space of popular political culture. Rocky did what he had to do, which seems to be Scaramucci’s point after the F. Scott Fitzgerald reference earlier in the book. Rocky punched a side of beef hanging from a meat hook. He drank a container of raw eggs. He was “unorthodox” in his training overall. While Scaramucci and DJT advocates (Sarah Huckabee Sanders, for example) would like the world to think that the president is a “counter-puncher” and unconventional political fighter, he isn’t. The “anti-gospel” witnesses try to make it all the same . . . that winning at all cost is being a champion. Clearly, after nearly four years, we have learned the hard lesson that it isn’t. The unabashed lying, gas-lighting, and endless scapegoating all point the reversal of the initial reversal – DJT is not a success because he is a failure . . . he is a failure because of his success as an inept, dishonest, and divisive leader.

References

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Notes

- ¹ See Slavoj Žižek's, *The Pervert's Guide to Cinema* (2009) and *The Pervert's Guide to Ideology* (2012) directed by Sophie Fiennes and produced by Mischief Films.
- ² See <https://thehill.com/blogs/blog-briefing-room/472253-trump-tweets-photo-of-his-face-superimposed-over-rocky-balboa>
- ³ See <https://putin-calendar.ru/2020-calendars/wall-calendar-1/>
- ⁴ <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/25/us/politics/ukraine-transcript-trump.html>
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- ⁵ See <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2018/01/23/tony-perkins-evangelicals-donald-trump-stormy-daniels-216498>
- ⁶ Scaramucci, Anthony. *Trump: The Blue Collar President*. Hachette Book Group. 2019, p.283.
- ⁷ See <https://www.cnn.com/videos/media/2020/03/04/anthony-scaramucci-joe-biden-2020-election-markets-now-quest-vpx.cnn>
- ⁸ Ibid, p.73.
- ⁹ Ibid, p.95.
- ¹⁰ See the following: <http://theconversation.com/rick-perrys-belief-that-trump-was-chosen-by-god-is-shared-by-many-in-a-fast-growing-christian-movement-127781>
- ¹¹ Scaramucci, p.34.
- ¹² Ibid, p.42.
- ¹³ Ibid, p.34 and p.250.
- ¹⁴ Denker, Angela. *Red State Christians*. Fortress Press. Kindle Edition, loc. pp.486-7.
- ¹⁵ Hassan, Steven. *The Cult of Trump: A Leading Cult Expert Explains How the President Uses Mind Control* (pp. 172-173). Free Press. Kindle Edition.
- ¹⁶ Ibid, p.151.
- ¹⁷ Scaramucci, p.284.
- ¹⁸ Ibid, p.284.