

Why Trump Lost

For many months now I've been saying that if Donald Trump were to lose the election, it wouldn't be Joe Biden who beat him. It would be Donald Trump who beat Donald Trump.

Of the 80 million votes Biden got, I doubt if there were 12 people in the whole country who affirmatively voted *for* him – as opposed to those who passionately voted *against* Donald Trump. Such was the disdain more than half the country has for our current and soon to be former president.

He got lucky four years ago. He won because enough voters were sick and tired of politics as usual. They wanted something new. They figured he's a businessman and not a politician and so they decided to give him a chance. They knew him from television – but they didn't really know him.

After four years they did get to know him. And that's why he lost. His toxic personality finally caught up with him.

As Dan Henninger put it in the Wall Street Journal: “ Any close-to-normal first-term president running on Mr. Trump's record—including the fast-track anti-Covid vaccine protocols—should have won the election with more than 300 electoral votes.”

Donald Trump is many things, but “close-to-normal” isn't one of them.

Women, especially college educated suburban women, had had enough. They saw him as vulgar, cruel, dishonest, and psychologically unfit for the high office he held. So did a lot of other Americans.

Yes it's true that the virus didn't help. Winning reelection with millions of Americans out of work and more than a thousand dying every day isn't a recipe for success.

In the beginning his daily briefings boosted his ratings. But the longer he was on camera the more his character flaws became apparent, and his ratings faded.

People didn't see him as a competent leader. How could they when he made so many mistakes, which is a nice way of saying he lied about so many things. The bragging about what a great job he was doing didn't resonate after a while. The fights with reporters didn't help.

It's true that much of the mainstream liberal media were aligned against the president. They thought he was illegitimate from the start. Their biases were blatant. But fake news didn't bring him down – despite the utter corruption of so much journalism about him.

Neither did an international criminal conspiracy to steal the election cause him to lose, an alleged plot to rig computers that supposedly gave more votes to Biden than he really received. No one outside the Trump team and its most passionate supporters bought that story.

It was the moderate voters who were the ones that would decide the election. But they also had had enough, including more than a few moderate Republicans. And those voters in Wisconsin and Michigan and Pennsylvania who chose Donald Trump over Hillary Clinton four years ago couldn't take four more years of Trump chaos either. They were exhausted.

And there's another reason Donald Trump lost. His biggest fans in conservative radio and cable TV were nothing more than his enablers. They excused everything he said and did. They didn't care if he made things up. They were mere exaggerations they said, no big deal. His bragging wasn't anything to take into account, either. Same with his nastiness, which they saw as toughness, and a welcome antidote to what they viewed as pre-Trump GOP weakness.

Had they really been friends instead of slobbering sycophants

they would have held him accountable for his actions; they would have told him to knock off the combative behavior because regular folks don't like that kind of thing. Instead they said his personality shouldn't matter, that the stakes were too high in this election for something so seemingly insignificant as personality to be taken into account.

But his personality did matter. Voters might have cut him some slack over his handling of the virus if they just plain liked him. His most passionate supporters liked everything about him. But there weren't enough of them to carry him over the finish line.

A short time before the election a conservative friend sent me an email, part of which I'll share with you: "As for President Trump, he's a guy who manages to snatch defeat out of the jaws of victory almost every time he speaks or tweets. If the man just stuck to a prompter, and otherwise kept quiet, the media would still hate him, but have a lot less ammunition to play with. More important, he'd have the public on his side – and a much larger percentage of the public, for sure. One thing is certain: He possesses neither the skill set as a communicator nor the desire to be a statesman when it is a statesman we need right now in the Oval Office. If he does lose in November, he will need to look no further than the mirror for the reason."

Except, of course, he won't look in the mirror. Donald Trump enjoys playing the victim. And in a way he is – a victim of his own dysfunctional self.