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Vermin Supreme: The Political Anomaly

Envision yourself in a large cramped room filled with hundreds of people. The air reeks of tenacity and slight discomfort. Previously, you were reluctant to take the day off of work to be there and had doubts about just how much of an impact you could possibly make. Normally, you would never subject yourself to the hours of waiting, fatigued body, and a scrawled signature to simply provide yourself with peace of mind— but now— you’ve done your part. A renewed and vibrant sense of firmness about yourself emerges. As you see the banners waving proudly, you imagine yourself someday being a part of the process. On the stage in front of you, the man everyone was waiting for has finally arrived daunting his specialty yellow striped cape along with a very vibrant money patterned scarf. Not only is he wearing colorful and wizard like clothing/robes, but he also dons a boot on the top of his head in which he cannot be confused with another individual— ever. This man you see is none other than Vermin Supreme, a presidential candidate of the United States of America. Vermin, with his own brand of anarcho-capitalistic satire, is able to represent and embody all aspects of politics and makes clear the crucial flaws with most politicians. He is able to do this by promoting extreme stances such as mandatory tooth brushing laws and also his infamous stance of free ponies for all Americans.

Ken Stevenson, the man you saw earlier, has been involved within the political sphere since 1987 through his candidacy for several different levels of office such as local, state, and even national elections. He had officially changed his name to Vermin Supreme in the 1990s and affirms his strange and unconventional nature by wearing a boot as a hat and also carrying a large toothbrush and often promotes strict and exaggerated laws such as the mandatory zombie apocalypse awareness and also promotes time travel research. Vermin represents the exact opposite of a successful politician. A man was not always confident in what he wanted to do and whose path in life did not flow the average route of prestigious law school to a successful law firm and then into marriage and then into politics. Vermin’s path is more similar with the average American as he had aspirations for art school in Baltimore but later dropped and had to pursue other goals. Vermin later on had started booking bands for underground clubs as his job.

Remember the vision earlier of the voting booths hundreds of people attending and supporters loudly celebrating outside. Now, imagine yourself at one of Vermin’s rallies, or more accurately—meet and greets. Currently, you find yourself walking towards to voting center greeted by excited volunteers and optimistic youth. To your surprise, you find Vermin Supreme, a figure you probably have not been exposed to and are most likely very confused at his purpose? Does he support your candidate by providing a joyful and comedic experience, or is he simply a distraction meant to siphon voters from your base. To your surprise, Vermin, although ragged in appearance and writhed oddity, assures you of his purpose in a mellow and relaxing tone. “Free ponies for all Americans” Vermin states while smiling warmly and distributing candy. “Did Ron Paul offer you candy? I don’t think so. Vermin Supreme!” Vermin again yells. Now, if you’ve already noticed the difference in approach, most candidates will generally setup their rallies days or even months in advance and will cancel if attendance is low. Vermin, in a display of confidence, will approach the voters first. Now, this is a sight that you’ve never witnessed— a politician offering/bribing voters with candy and approaching in a genuinely friendly way. Now, imagine yourself within a rally for Ron Paul. There are multitudes more people present at a Ron Paul rally. You are in a grand auditorium with high ceilings and velvet chairs. A firm wooden and engraved podium is dead center for all to see and hear. Although the environment has much more capacity for appealing to voters and projecting power, something isn’t quite the same. The atmosphere of the room, the connection between candidate and voter— it’s not there. After rounds of thunderous applause, you continue to applaud a candidate whom you are unable to see since he is so far away. Only with the assistance of a monitor can you see a glimpse of what this man stands for. After the rally, you later on attempt to meet Ron in person, but are unable to form a correspondence with him as he is on a very busy schedule and has left the state immediately after the rally ended. Although you saw everything you expected to see, was this really a fulfilling moment in which you discovered necessary truths about your candidate? This is another point that Vermin makes with his behavior about the interaction between politicians and the general public. From this experience, you will be able to question why other candidates do not offer such friendliness without fear of judgement or lost appeal. By understanding to form a closer connection between parties/constituents, our republic will be more efficient in both its operation as well garner more approval from the masses.

During the meet and greet with Vermin, you are presented with his views on government regulations and how society is deserving of more independence from control—from rules. Now, although this is unnecessarily extreme, you are unable to look away or distance yourself from these claims. It is only human nature to gravitate towards the extreme and you are currently witnessing this intense and somewhat delusional behavior. Now, although you would normally run from someone with these claims, Vermin in his friendly appearance can make these claims in full confidence and capture the attention of many. His arguments such as mandatory tooth brushing laws also tracking devices on toothbrushes as well as his support of time travel research are evidence of his extreme standpoints. Now, one can only wonder if this is entirely satire, or if Vermin has a vision or underlying belief in which he uses exaggeration to express. By believing in forced tooth brushing and prison sentences as penalties, is he acknowledging the nation’s poor dental health and overall lack of affordable health care? By arguing for zombie research and awareness is Vermin pointing out the increasing presence of wasteful spending such as the state legislatures passing discriminatory and unconstitutional laws in order to appease their base, leading to large lawsuits that the states ultimately will lose? Now, it may or may not be intentional, but it is interesting to think about and that is what makes Vermin appealing to readers/voters. His statements are wild enough to be interpreted in many different ways and does not alienate a single audience.

Outside of the voting booth, many individuals have the interest and drive to participate, but may lack the time, money, or expertise in order to understand the finer intricacies of politics. Regardless of political know-how, Americans generally understand the refined nature of a politician and understand that politicians prioritize maintaining confidence and confirming core ideals. Although integrity is a positive trait to have and usually cannot be seen in a negative light, it is clear that it can also become an issue as well. Many people may prioritize their focus on analyzing if a politician has stuck true to his/her principles and inadvertently put less emphasis on understanding if those principles were right in terms of both outcome and also morality. Take for example the common thought of “Oh, wow. Although I don’t support his/her positions, I have to respect the commitment.” This is an example of tracing a politicians voting history in order to find out if he/she is consistent with his/her views. This is the only explanation for the rise of political phenomenon Vermin Supreme as he has proven his dedication to his character for the last 30 years when he first changed his legal name of Ken Stevenson to Vermin Supreme and finally entered the political stomping grounds. Now, although firm commitment and strength is invaluable, Vermin has shown us how this idealistic bravado may actually be silly and harmful. When presented with the core idea of a republic, we should strive to elect politicians who are able to prioritize understanding their constituents and be able to change their views through reasonable discussion. Vermin, with his unchangeable views on the efficacy of time travel research and zombie awareness, has show us how having strict central beliefs is not necessarily inculpable from blame in terms of accomplishing goals and serving the general public.