

**\*\*\*We read/extemporized the following at the First Public Comment at beginning of meeting.  
 \*\*\*\*\*See below for our comments at Public Comment at end of the meeting.**

**Subject: Leelanau County BOC 5/11/21 Clerk Loathing Decision/Action.**  
*We/People, appreciate Chairman Wessell's admission of what a bad thing the prior commission's action and unfortunately/tragically is being continued by THIS commission at BOC's 6/13/23 Exec. Committee meeting.*  
 Some prior Commissioners and most Commission **abused** power to hurt people/TAXPAYERS and **damage** the Clerk. Appears some commissioners did it because of a **lack of love/charity** and seemingly narcissistic reasons. (Usually manifested as dirty politics.)

At the May 11, 2021 **Four** Commissioners in an **infamous surprise LATE agenda ADDITION** approved a Clerk-Loathing motion/decision. That decision removed the **Financial & Human Resources duties/responsibilities immediately from the Clerk.** All in the **absence** of **any** study/report indicating need/necessity/justification/benefit (even to this date). At the May 18, 2021 BOC meeting most of the board agreed to approve it—again with **no report!** Since then we've requested Commissions many times to stop this **costly** and **harmful unneeded process.** At the 6/13/23 BOC Exec. Committee we provided statements Chairman Wessel made as per the minutes of the **October 10, 2021** BOC meeting:

***"Wessell asked why would we approve these positions knowing that we don't have those answers and knowing that we don't need the positions";***

***and Clerk's response, "You have no plan and you have not involved the players; it may be intentional and it could be, you have not included the players that are doing the work. She continued that this is a dangerous road you are traveling. Crocker is very concerned for the County. She continued, can the shift be made, absolutely, and she believes that Commissioners are choosing the wrong way to handle this and the end result will be on the Commissioners.***

**\*\*\*\*\*=====Our Comments at 2<sup>nd</sup> Public Comment at end of meeting=====\*\*\*\*\***

Before meeting each of you were given a **copy of Wall Street Journal article re Verizon.** We believe the private sector would have provided Leelanau County broadband service **much quicker** if Commissioners had **not** approved taxpayer money and a free tower on county land to **Verizon.** Corporations seem to know how to fleece government officials. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >>>>>**

**[Verizon Shakes Up Executive Team After Tough Year** By [Will Feuer](#) and [Mark Maurer](#)  
**Wireless carrier names new chief of consumer group and says finance chief is exiting**

**WALL STREET JOURNAL** Updated March 3, 2023 at 2:17 pm ET] **\*\*NOTE: Bold, italic** emphases –by spm 2023-03-04\_wsjverizon

We came across a recent article that appears to **exemplify** the Commission’s May, 11, 2021 **Clerk-Loathing** decision with the following excerpts:

**Legal Mafias and Moral Asymmetries**

[Max Borders](#) – [May 12, 2023](#) a

<https://www.aier.org/article/legal-mafias-and-moral-asymmetries/> **American Institute of Economic Research** 2023-05-12\_aiermafiemoral

It’s about **The Morality’s Big Three** and **The Politics Big Three...**

**The Moral Core** Maybe you’ve noticed that few people talk about morality anymore. I once avoided such discussions, never wanting to come across as churchy. And some conflate their sectarian or personal moralisms with what we might call the moral core — that is, the handful of essential virtues that, **when practiced**, facilitate social harmony and material abundance. **Notice the emphasis on practice.** Though most values in the moral core are nigh universal — that is, present in almost every culture...

**Morality’s Big Three**

**Morality, especially in America, has become anemic. So we need to talk about it again. Consider the Big Three of the moral core:**

1. **Don’t harm.**
2. **Don’t steal.**
3. **Don’t lie.**

Much of tort and criminal law is built on the Big Three, but, as we’ll see, that law is only for the plebs. Still, if you hurt someone, pleb, you’ll probably go to jail. If you steal? Same. Certain kinds of lies, such as those involved in **fraud**, can land you behind bars, too. **For the elites, though, especially the political elites, politics creates a profound moral asymmetry. That asymmetry eats through society like a caustic acid.**

**Politics’ Big Three**

Let’s put the matter a little more starkly. **Politics has its own Big Three:**

1. **Harm.**
2. **Steal.**
3. **Lie.**

**Politics is anti-morality.** Just like the mafia uses these tactics in their enterprise, **political actors do too.** Yet most people won’t acknowledge this reality. Between failures of imagination, such as the inability to see how things could be otherwise, most people settle for ways to justify **unjust authority.**

**Legal is not Moral** So, **politics is a system of legitimized violence, theft, and untruth.** But don’t let the term **legitimized** fool you, as that just means legal (though not for you). **Legal doesn’t mean right.** It doesn’t mean just. **It doesn’t mean moral.** **The powerful get away with misdeeds because, for too long, we have conflated the domains.** And this conflation goes all the way down.

**Appears Politics’ Big Three** applies to BOC 5/11/21 **Clerk-Loathing** decision. A decision that demonstrates **abuse of authority** by Commissions and other elected County officials.

## Legal Mafias and Moral Asymmetries Max Borders - [May 12, 2023](#) a

“[T]he state originated as a protection racket.” – James C. Scott, *Against the Grain*

<https://www.aier.org/article/legal-mafias-and-moral-asymmetries/> American Institute of Economic Research 2023-05-12\_aiermafiamoral

A powerful mafia takes over a small country. They tell everyone in the country they must pay a percentage of surpluses to the mafia’s goons. If they pay up, the goons will protect them from other gangs. If they don’t, goons will return with guns. Part of this arrangement means the people will have to obey mafia rules, even though some of those rules strike them as arbitrary.

One day, the mafia grants everyone in this country the right to vote for the mafia’s leaders and even let people run in elections to become a boss. Newly elected bosses get to make the rules and enjoy the power to issue threats on the mafia’s behalf.

After a time, the people start referring to this mafia as the government.

***This little allegory prompts a set of questions: are mafias and governments just protection rackets? Does the introduction of voting and elections justify the mafia’s authority? And what part of that justification involves morality?***

### **The Moral Core**

Maybe you’ve noticed that few people talk about morality anymore. I once avoided such discussions, never wanting to come across as churchy. And some conflate their sectarian or personal moralisms with what we might call the moral core — that is, the handful of essential virtues that, **when practiced**, facilitate social harmony and material abundance. Notice the emphasis on practice.

Though most values in the moral core are nigh universal — that is, present in almost every culture — I sometimes prefer aspects of Eastern over Western conceptions.

**Eastern approaches to morality involve conscious, daily practice — including emotional control — whereas Western approaches increasingly involve occasionally plucking abstractions from the air.**

### **Morality’s Big Three**

***Morality, especially in America, has become anemic. So we need to talk about it again. Consider the Big Three of the moral core:***

**4. Don’t harm.**

**5. Don’t steal.**

**6. Don’t lie.**

The **Big Three** are almost universal. For example, in the Vedantic traditions, there are ahimsā, asteya, and satya.

- Ahimsā emphasizes non-violence in thoughts, words, and actions. To practice ahimsa, replace negative thoughts with positive ones and approach your daily interactions with kindness, avoiding aggression.
- Asteya, or non-stealing, promotes satisfaction and happiness – particularly with what one has. The idea is to obtain things honestly, and in your daily practices, focus on your experience of the moment rather than on coveting others’ assets or achievements.

- Satya, or truthfulness, is essential for spiritual growth and fulfillment. Be honest with yourself and others, operate with integrity and adapt your practice to your current physical and mental state to avoid accepting or propagating untruths.

As I've suggested, these aren't conceptually different from the West's Big Three. But subtle differences exist in how these fundamental norms are taught and practiced.

Much of tort and criminal law is built on the Big Three, but, as we'll see, that law is only for the plebs. Still, if you hurt someone, pleb, you'll probably go to jail. If you steal? Same. Certain kinds of lies, such as those involved in fraud, can land you behind bars, too. And this is as it should be.

For the elites, though, especially the political elites, politics creates a profound moral asymmetry. That asymmetry eats through society like a caustic acid.

### **Politics' Big Three**

Let's put the matter a little more starkly. **Politics has its own Big Three:**

**4. Harm.**

**5. Steal.**

**6. Lie.**

### **Politics is anti-morality.**

Just like the mafia uses these tactics in their enterprise, political actors do too. Yet most people won't acknowledge this reality. Between failures of imagination, such as the inability to see how things could be otherwise, most people settle for ways to justify unjust authority.

Apologia around politics almost always involve justifications that tiptoe around the difficult truth that the pillars of political practice are himsa, steaya, and anṛtam, that is, violence, theft, and untruth. You'd better believe that, in politics, these vices are active, daily practices. Few people ever put matters into such stark terms, because authorities must always shroud themselves in casuistry. Wishes father lies.

**It used to be that churches helped justify state power. Today, the state is its own church.**

Making such a stark assessment of politics and its attendant mafias will strike many as harsh. Most have been raised on a steady diet of state-issued civics, empty patriotism, and apathy. But as civilization teeters at the precipice, **stark assessments are in order.** You just need more nuance, interlocutors will say. Nuance is one of those Obi-Wan words its wielders think can wave away the contradictions. But when you press them, the details always terminate in himsa, steaya, and anṛtam.

**Sophistry shrouds all the anti-moral machinations, but that sophistry has been so successful that most people believe it.**

But don't take my word for it. Here are some recent examples:

- "This is a pandemic of the unvaccinated."
- "The rich don't pay their fair share."
- "We will put you in jail."
- "[This] bears the hallmarks of Russian disinformation."
- "[P]roviding false information is punishable by up to five years imprisonment."
- Inflation will be "transitory."
- Penalties for tax evasion are 3-5 years in prison.
- "[The Administration has] committed to not impacting joint filers earning less than \$400,000 with higher audit rates."

**These are but a sprinkle, composing part of a vast system of power that subsists on *anti-morality*.**

### **Legal is not Moral**

So, **politics is a system of *legitimized* violence, theft, and untruth**. But don't let the term *legitimized* fool you, as that just means legal (though not for you). **Legal doesn't mean *right***. It doesn't mean just. **It doesn't mean moral. The powerful get away with misdeeds because, for too long, we have conflated the domains**. And this conflation goes all the way down.

**One wonders if *morality* and *politics* are *commensurable* at all**. After all, as the abolitionist Lysander Spooner once wrote:

If any man's money can be taken by a **so-called government, without his personal consent, *all his other rights are taken with it***; for with his money the government can, and will, hire soldiers to stand over him, compel him to submit to its arbitrary will, and kill him if he resists.

***Threats are the only justification for political authority that has ever made sense.***

If anyone has any moral justification, let him come forward and give it. You must prove that your morality is more fundamental than morality's Big Three. Until then, those with a conscience must figure out how to find the remaining pockets of morality and freedom and work to **underthrow** power.

[Max Borders](#) Max Borders is the author of [The Decentralist](#): Mission, Morality, and Meaning in the Age of Crypto, [After Collapse](#): The End of America and the Rebirth of Her Ideals, and [The Social Singularity](#): A Decentralist Manifesto. Max is also co-founder of the event experience [Future Frontiers](#) and founder of [Social Evolution](#), an organization dedicated to liberating humanity and solving social problems through innovation. Follow him on Twitter [@socialevol](#) Get notified of new articles from Max Borders and AIER.

**NOTE:** Emphases of **bold**, *italic*, underline, **background color** --by spm

## Verizon Shakes Up Executive Team After Tough Year

By [Will Feuer](#) and [Mark Maurer](#)

### Wireless carrier names new chief of consumer group and says finance chief is exiting

**WALL STREET JOURNAL** Updated March 3, 2023 at 2:17 pm ET \*\*\*NOTE: Bold, *italic* emphases –by spm 2023-03-04\_wsiverizon

[Verizon Communications Inc.](#) [VZ -0.80%](#) said its finance chief is leaving and named a new head of its consumer business, a management shuffle that sets up a contest to succeed Chief Executive Officer Hans Vestberg. The **shake-up comes as Verizon's consumer group, its largest division, *has struggled to hang on to its core subscriber base*** in competition from rivals [AT&T Inc.](#) and [T-Mobile US Inc.](#)

Mr. Vestberg, 57, **last year *succeeded Verizon's consumer chief*** and took the segment over himself. Now, Sowmyanarayan Sampath, the current head of Verizon's business-focused unit and a longtime executive at the company, will take the reins of the consumer business. Hans Vestberg became CEO of Verizon in 2018. **"I think we were sleeping a little bit at the wheel," Mr. Vestberg said. He said the consumer business reacted "way too late" last year as the economy soured in March,** and that the business ***has since become more nimble***. He said the company can now more quickly deploy money for promotions, marketing and other activities. He also cited the company's [Welcome Unlimited plan](#), which Verizon launched last year in a bid to keep consumers from switching providers.

Verizon managed ***to reverse subscriber losses*** in the consumer unit during the final three months of 2022, and Mr. Vestberg has said he expects the unit to build on its momentum. "It's not like everything is fixed because I've been there six months," Mr. Vestberg said.

Mr. Vestberg, ***an outsider*** who took the helm of Verizon in 2018, described the slate of executives involved in the shuffling as "next-generation leadership," though he said he would run the company as long as he has the support of the stakeholders. ***During his tenure, Verizon shares have fallen about 26%, compared with a roughly 41% increase in the S&P 500 index over the same period.*** Verizon remains the largest U.S. cellphone carrier in terms of subscribers, ***but it has ceded ground over the past couple of years.***

Mr. Vestberg, who is also board chairman, said he searched both inside and outside the company as part of the management changes and will continue to look for a new finance chief. Matt Ellis, 51, will step down as CFO on May 1 after more than six years in the role. Controller Tony Skiadas will take over the job, but Verizon will seek a permanent successor.

Verizon needs to balance strengthening subscriber growth with generating more free cash flow, said Timothy Horan, an analyst at investment bank Oppenheimer & Co. ***It will also need to further reduce the company's debt pile and lower operating expenses,*** Mr. Horan said. Verizon's long-term debt totaled \$140.68 billion in 2022, down 1.9% from a year earlier, a filing showed. Verizon could benefit from recruiting a CFO from outside the company who can bring a new perspective to cost cuts, Mr. Horan said. "They need someone to come in to look at things with fresh eyes to basically ***slash expenses by \$5 billion,*** which is just hard to do when you've been inside," he said.

Mr. Sampath, 47, the new head of the consumer group, has served as CEO of the business group since last summer. Before that, he held various roles in the unit and previously had leadership positions in Verizon's ***former media unit,*** most of which was bought by [Apollo Global Management Inc.](#) in 2021.

His new role positions him as a potential CEO successor along with another company veteran, Craig Silliman, 55, who runs the global services group and has held various leadership roles. Verizon also said its network chief, Kyle Malady, would take over the business group.

Write to Will Feuer at [Will.Feuer@wsj.com](mailto:Will.Feuer@wsj.com) and Mark Maurer at [mark.maurer@wsj.com](mailto:mark.maurer@wsj.com)

Appeared in the March 4 - 5, 2023, (Saturday/Sunday) print edition as 'Verizon Shuffles Executives as Rivals See Gains'. Page B3.