

Who is Dr. EV-il?



by Michael Rectenwald

General Motors' 2022 Super Bowl ad "[Dr. EV-il](#)" summons viewers to ponder the issue of climate change. The ad introduces the company's electric vehicles (EV), apparently committing the company to a "net-zero" future. In the same breath, GM subtly admits that it will use what is purported to be a looming catastrophe to its advantage.

The ad reprises the theme of the *Austin Powers* series; Mike Meyers, Seth Green, Rob Lowe, and Mindy Sterling play Dr. Evil, Dr. Evil's son Scott, Number 2, and Frau Farbissina, respectively. As his cohorts inform him, although he has taken over GM, Dr. Evil has been debunked by climate change as the world's number one threat. Not to be outdone, nor to have his plans for world domination thwarted, Dr. Evil coopts the Frau's words, vowing to regain Number 1 status while becoming part of the solution.

The irony of GM's Dr. Evil appropriation is not lost on [Gizmodo](#) columnist Molly Taft, for whom GM is a real-life super villain *openly pretending* to be a superhero: "GM's long history of climate denial makes this ad painfully literal—and is a warning about how polluting companies are now trying to greenwash their own reputations." For Taft, GM is Dr. Evil himself; marshalling this iconic character is too clever by half and cuts matters too close to the bone.

The ad strikes me as ironic too, but GM's playful Dr. Evil ad

is a joke on such readers as Taft. The company suggests that it is not the criminal force that Taft and others make it out to be. Dr. Evil is, after all, a fictional villain, and not the real CEO of GM.

But even more ironic is GM's (perhaps unintentional) representation of "[woke capitalism](#)." Just as GM appropriates Dr. Evil and Dr. Evil appropriates Frau Farbissina, the ad seems to reappropriate the mien and ethos of Herr Klaus Schwab, the chairman and founder of the World Economic Forum, who has been [popularly likened to the villain](#).



Schwab may be the world's leading corporate mouthpiece of climate change catastrophism. He, and the corporate "stakeholders" signed onto the WEF's agenda, also stand to gain outsized economic and political influence as the "Great Reset" is enacted through Schwab's brainchild, "[stakeholder capitalism](#)." Its environmental, social, and governance (ESG) Index already measures corporate compliance with the agenda. Stakeholder capitalism makes [partners](#) of corporations in the world's governance system, while advancing their monopolistic economic ambitions.

Does GM mean to suggest that Klaus Schwab is Dr. Evil? After all, Dr. Evil echoes Schwab and the WEF's Great Reset agenda: "I will help save the world first, then take over the world."

Given the prevalence of the comparison on the Internet, it's highly unlikely that the creative team was unaware of it. But whether the invocation of Klaus Schwab is intentional or not, the ad nevertheless issues a tongue-in-cheek criticism of a woke agenda that GM has been compelled to abide.