

Invoking 'Monsantan' and conspiracy theories pollutes GMO debate

The majority of modern Americans—and modern Christians—do not believe that Satan walks among us, preferring instead to identify the great deceiver as a symbol of evil.

But Satan has not disappeared. We need him too much. In the ongoing struggle with inexplicable suffering, there is no greater comfort than finding a target for simple, righteous blame. And so the list of Infernal Names, now secularized, grows ever longer: Big Government, Big Business, Big Pharma, Big Food. These are complex systems, of course—too complex to serve as satisfying scapegoats. But through the alchemy of capital letters we transform them into fairy-tale caricatures of corruption and deceit, villains that help to make sense of it all.

Monsanto may well be as bad as its detractors assert (tobacco companies certainly proved worse than anyone imagined). But the current climate makes it impossible to find out. Widespread belief in Monsanto's irredeemably evil nature discourages unbiased reporting.

This is tremendously problematic, not least because it means the public conversation about important issues will be dominated by zealots. Take GMOs. On one side there are the activists, wearing gas masks and [waving anti-Monsanto signs](#) emblazoned with skulls. On the other are those who come to believe that any opposition to GMOs springs from [deep-seated idiocy](#); the work of anti-science demons.

It would be nice if none of this rancor affected reporting, but that's wishful thinking. Journalists, editors, and publishers care about accuracy, but they also worry about their audience. When that audience insists on believing in Satan, stories will be far more likely to feature him—even if he doesn't exist.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [Is Monsanto Satan? The Pleasure and Problem of Conspiracy Theory](#)