

Virtuality, Sociopathy & Hyperabsence

The time is ripe for resistance

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The work/sleep, shop/discard, lose/win, simulated existence that is thrust upon us is fundamentally forced participation in an electro-sociopathic process.

With computer mediation steadily consuming discourse life is increasingly lived behind, and for, a screen. As contemporary civilization continues this conversion into omnipresent, digitized drudgery, antisocial propensities mushroom, a listless insatiability abounds, while feelings and insight are left behind.

Friedrich Nietzsche, in his 1878 *Human, All Too Human: A Book for Free Spirits*, describes constrained spirits as characters able to envisage only limited possibility and a tendency to oppose expansive, unconventional types.

From the boredom and dissatisfaction of the constrained spirit, a destructive ambition arises that is aimed at annihilating the well-being, sensibility, and interconnections of the less constricted. These sociopathic, egotistical creatures, who dominate modern civilization, set their sights on destructing and disfiguring any manifestation not in the image of the constrained spirit.

Further instances of this destruction include prison and military industrial complexes, police state apparatuses, and attacks upon the vulnerable.

In conjunction with the digitized economic Darwinism that presides over most of daily life, comes a relationally nihilistic process which liquidates receptivity and friendship. One manifestation of this is the commonplace phenomena of people with a social network, but without sincere companionship who spend the bulk of their constricted lives virtually existing, and existing virtually, with their machine screens.

In this insatiable, consume to exist and exist to consume system, where the majority of touch is reserved for the touch-screen, friendship is increasingly considered pointless.

To put it in corresponding (and horrifying) neoliberal terms, relationships have become de-incentivized since these are not economically rational phenomena. Spending too much time focusing on relations doesn't allow the individual consumer to achieve maximal cost/benefit efficiency.

In addition to the annihilation of relationships and expressivity, economic and political processes are in place that complicate, pervert, and bureaucratize the development and communication of ideas that otherwise could be articulated about the violent, alienating methods underlying the social order.

Examples of these obfuscations include celebrity worship, repetitive platitudes, fallacies about democracy, and identifying as a consumer. Vital aspects of interaction such as transparency and empathy are obscured or disallowed in dominant culture, while trivial, abstract edifices are erected, such as brands, sports teams, and fashion fads that imprison the mind, divert the instincts, and buttress the distortion and mystification processes.

In the current social media saturated existence, the link to instinct, intuition, and the untamed is converted into a tenuous bond to static, dissociated images, sound bites, and blurbs. This attachment to cold, instantaneous depictions severs and replaces our connection to historic and organic phases and tempos, and orients people towards capturing and away from experiencing.

An effect of this paralysis is a reduction of the capacity of a section of the populace to conceive of evolution, transformation, or revolution. Perhaps the most farcical aspect of social media inundation is that this apparatus tends to work exceedingly well for solipsistic self-aggrandizement.

Corresponding to the excessive presentation of marketable techno-countenances is an agonized or anesthetized bodily core. Dissociated, deadened states, or conversely, states of apprehension, agitation, and despair, correlate with egocentric immersion in formalized, parameterized information delivery/reception processes.

In *Revolt Against Poetry*, avant-gardist Antonin Artaud asserts that “heart is what isn’t my ego” and “to love his ego is to love death,” illustrating the difference between the vitality of embodied intuition and the lifelessness or anguish corresponding with being stuck in persona.

Those not numbed by self-absorbed virtuality are left with a choice to experience a painful subjectivity, or take anesthetizing drugs, and many are inclined to opt for numbness, hence the proliferation of psychotropic usage and the rampant opioid epidemic.

Aside from the conspicuous hollowness of existence in the digitized hyperabsence, it is more and more apparent that status quo economics and politics are beyond restructuring and that radical change is the only feasible corollary. The overtly divisive, xenophobic personalities of many of the Western predators-in-chief that are taking over are increasingly congruent with the psychopathic processes to which the body politic is subjected.

The perpetual problem of how people who want an unrefined, unreified, free-spirited existence preserve and defend space without themselves becoming rigidified, one-dimensional, or callous is as pressing as ever. We exist in an inflamed tinderbox, with a largely disaffected populace, and a decaying establishment steering the ship in increasingly entropic direction. For those able to release themselves from the diversions and simulations, the present is a time that is ripe for resistance, splintering, and a multitude of possibilities.

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