

Collective consciousness is, on ethical matters, an enormous lie. Thus spake Thunderflap. I use the powderhorn as a strategically vague symbol for esoteric awareness. I speak through the hole in my hat. (I allude with this hole in the hat to the excellent film *Passages from Finnegans Wake*.)

People believe in fake (“sentimental”) politicians because they believe the lies they tell themselves about themselves. Or they pretend to believe in them so you don’t suspect them of thoughtcrime.

Hobbes tells us to look inside. To get *behind* what people say in public, to see behind their mask, be honest with yourself about yourself – get behind your own mask. Listen to the depths of your interior. Nietzsche was great at this. The hard part of this “shaman’s journey” is the loss of the usual gleaming self-righteousness. The “shaman” is, as some hybrid of Kojève and Jung might put it, *historically* dead – neutralized by the shattering of a finite self-conceptualization.

The wrong move here is to play the honest victim trapped among the mendacious. The word *mendacious* is linked etymologically to blemish and defect. A lie is a wart or a pimple or a wound on the demeanor. How can lying be so common if lies are so despised? As we all know on a gut level, honesty is a measure of intimacy. Inside the group, we don’t lie. Which means we have to keep secrets and protect reputations. From who? Outsiders who don’t love us, who may hate us. What exactly are politicians? They work in sales, and they are their own product.

As a friend of mine likes to say, *Moloch demands a tower*. I’m talking about the generalized prisoner’s dilemma and the significance of the lack of a *benevolent* Leviathan. I think the only way something like justice could prevail on this planet is a situation that involves us being kept as pets by a superior species from a distant star. I wouldn’t put it past our keepers, though, to be at war with one another. Consider the end of *Lord of the Flies*.

Do I believe that “you” (a random-average person) give much of a fuck about strangers ? No. We are brutally selfish in this context of abstract strangers, and we hide it with our big mouths and our little typing fingers. On the other hand, most of us actually love our families and close friends. These are exclusive “esoteric” groups. What we really or mostly are is fucking “freemasons.” The larger solidarities (class, race, sex) are mostly phony. Thus spake Thunderflap. I “care” about others like me to the degree that they are my canaries. That’s a little too cynical. We can identify with characters on TV shows, and we can be moved by real footage of a moral outrage. We are visceral beings. One video about one victim moves us more than a mere count of one thousand faceless victims.

Like Hamlet, I count myself as “indifferent honest” – of average decency, apart from my inflexible point of honor anyway. “Historically dead” already, I don’t write this little essay to change the world. It’s a mark on the mountain as I walk this lonely trail (I meant to write “trail” but the typo will stay) of that inflexible point of honor. I’m talking about honesty in the narrow sense of not lying to myself or to my people. Who are my people ? Others like myself. *We gloomy glorious honest ones...* It’s only proper that we mock ourselves for this hard core of earnestness, yet even the mockery expresses the earnestness it mocks. Irony is continual parabasis (breaking the fourth wall). My latest face becomes a mask, simply because I’ve seen it in the mirror.