

It is of little secret that fungi, and by extension mushrooms, find ways to pop up wherever they see fit. In spite of human attempts, little can be done to curb the existence and prosperous nature that fungi are so famous for. Because of this, they have found themselves to be the true global colonizers; us humans are mere infants to the testament of fungi. With their mycelial networks, ability to work collectively with both other species of fungi but with other flora and fauna, and the prevalence of their ecological role as decomposers proves that fungi are not merely here to provide us with mushrooms; fungi is destined for greater, and it knows this.

Although fungi is not known for its “intelligence” as far as human intelligence is concerned, fungi does have the intelligence of nature. In other words, fungi is the true network of the world - with its abilities to carry messages across entire landscapes, or to simply become the landscape itself. Furthermore, although some fungi are better decomposers than others, all fungi play a part in decomposing the rot of the world as well as becoming a part of the rot themselves. While mushrooms are the fruit of fungi, thus making them an extension of the mycelium, they are all parts of the circle of life sped up into a manner of days. Mushrooms rupture from the ground, release spores for the mycelium to continue its spread, then rot and get eaten - for many species of fungi, humans would be hard pressed to know a mushroom was even present once its gone.

It is not hard to think that mycelium already has the Earth colonized in its cycles of birth, death, and cultivation. And yet, there are still places fungi have seemingly not reached. Yet I am here to inform you otherwise, dear reader. The World Wide Web, the last bastion of yet to be fungified space...or is it? I must say that I can take it for good reason that fungi have begun to colonize the web. In an evening of drunken browsing, I stumbled onto a site that I knew was not for me; I don't think I'm alone in saying that we've all had those kinds of moments. Moments where one feels outside, confused, downright terrified. I stumbled onto a site for a group calling themselves *The Flesh of The Net*; there were pages of evidence showing how mycelial networks would fuse with microchips and other pieces of isolated tech within a lab setting. This group was trying to show how if it can happen in a sterile environment, an unnatural setting for fungi, then why wouldn't it happen anywhere. Though they claimed these experiments were only to show the public that it can happen, I got the sense that they might be behind this whole thing as well. While nobody can truly control the actions of fungi, their writing about the subject made it seem as if they are excited for this digital fungal takeover.

As for my stance on it...I'm not quite sure. Fungi has done us well in helping to keep the planet free of rot, who's to say they won't do the same thing with the internet. They might realize the filth the internet hosts and get rid of it...would that be censorship, or nature just taking its course? Either way, the only thing that can truly be done for now is to wait. Fungi seem benevolent in the soil, yet we don't know what their nature holds when exposed to and brought into the digital fold.