SO WHAT’S THIS ALL ABOUT?

It has given me great discomfort, in wanting a peaceful submission of social change, and hoping I am in the right, while *fully and completely* understanding why some believe a certain allowance of violence may be the harbinger of change that we need. But how can we know? Is violence really required to bring about human flourishing? That seems paradoxical.

Human solidarity can be felt in the digital ethos of communities worldwide. People can connect with others online simply because of some specific niche interest they share. Media used to be so limited in scope, forced to appeal to a large audience simply because it was practically and economically infeasible to reach enough people interested in something more specific. Globalization has also made it harder to see the greater power dynamics at play. Media of course plays into the same circular bolstering of “the norm” as the rest of us are. We are all participants in the continuation of capitalism and the like, even if we disapprove of it. Our individual dissent doesn’t matter so long as we are contempt with the acceptance that while things aren’t perfect, they’re preferable to life in any other country in the world.

*We’ve found ourselves at the heart of dissent, fueled by a critical lack of compassion, maintained—I believe—by the very system which governs our being*. Our youth and naïvety as a species is being tested, for cultural dynamics change and evolve so numbingly fast. Together, with the overdependence on abstractions like money and power, we face a barrier like no other. But history moves on; this barrier stays put, trapping and dooming us to history past. *Humanity has a choice: either remain complacent in this great perversion of life and death; or stand up, say no, and assert that there is beauty and meaning in a life of solidarity*. We cannot and must not deny this assertion in any individual being, for then what does that make us? Yet another failed revolution in the toils of history.

I draw from a number of texts to argue what the best way forward might look like and how to rebel against the pervasive submissions of social structures the likes of patriarchy, capitalism, racism, etc. The main source of inspiration for this passion project comes from Albert Camus’ work on human nature and murder, *The Rebel*. In it, he argues that revolutionary action is doomed to fail from the onset if it is not waged on a common dignity found in all of humanity. He wonders if there is a degree of permissibility in regards to violence and murder as a means to a necessary and moral end. We’ll soon question this conclusion, asking ourselves if this presents a confounding contradiction to the idea that each and every life matters and indeed, contains beauty... *The Rebel* is an amazing and thoughtful essay—written beautifully, of course—exploring and coming to terms with the nature of life and death and our relationship to it—highly recommended.

The other substantial text this project draws upon is a work by the great writer and thinker, Mark Fisher, titled *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?* We cannot in good faith construct an argument about human nature and living in the world without knowing enough about the greater social systems at play. These things act in the background, subverting and reinforcing how we think about our lives and the “appropriate” reactions to certain experiences. The emergence of industrial capitalism changed how we interact with the world, and this text helps us recognize those intrusions, especially since Camus had no experience within contemporary post-globalist capitalism. *Capitalist Realism* is a short but potent book and does a good job preparing you to see how capitalism operates, engaging you to question its true efficacy—highly recommended as well.

Together, along with more ancillary sources [such as Peter Singer’s *Animal Liberation* and Owen Flanagan’s *The Problem of the Soul*], I attempt to make sense of our lives as we experience them, dream of a future driven by passion, assess and discuss the reality of taking action, and ultimately argue that compassion is the essential catalyst through which human solidarity is achievable.