

A	Objectives	Expand your vocabulary by experiencing “big words” in meaningful sentences.
B	Description	<u>Anyone</u> can grow their vocabulary. It takes practice, determination, word use, and experiencing words. Some of you may find this work ridiculous, tedious, and even uninteresting, while others love it. Recognize humans grok in different ways but spend their life expressing themselves. Words enrich experiences and build respect amongst your peers.
C	Remind yourself	“I would like to absorb these words into my gray matter to help me express my experience of people, places, and things in our universe.”
D	Why?	Some individuals thank me years later for this approach; perhaps you may too. A brain is a strange place; one never knows when or where an item will “pop” into it. Pack the gray matter to fuel fierce thought, fire communication, and wit.
E	How perform	Set aside a 30-45 minute time slot when your mind is clear, like a Sunday morning. Turn off your phone and concentrate to complete this work timely and meaningfully.
F	Part I Complete a reflection	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Each week, you will complete a reading reflection in this doc in document processing software such as MS Word or notepad. Activities include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read and reflect on a passage. Mark >=three syllable words. (yellow or circle) List unfamiliar words and get a google definition. (green or square) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Query = <word> definition [only use this format please] Ask yourself if you are ready to absorb and will not be disturbed. Why? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Passages are rich in content, meaning, and depth. The more you reflect, the deeper I am able to comment on your learning. Write 2-3 sentences about the passage. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For instance, reflect on a word, the use of the term, word phrasing, something striking, quirky, haunting, beautiful, and how the passage made you feel. <p>This work is not an essay and it doesn’t have to be perfect. Get your thoughts out. update entire reflection to google sheets assign.submit</p>
G	Part II Crowd source on google sheets	<p>In google sheet write.reflect(words) update the words you don’t know. I will take the words across the class and add them to the wordsmithery doc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Words on wordsmithery will help when writing any of the four essays due. Smushy is a word jam that will print and provide to everyone at the end of the semester. <p>This activity is 10-15% of your grade, i.e., upwards of a letter grade difference.</p>
H	Concerns?	Your learning is the primary focus so please reach out directly to me.
I	FYI passage materials	<p>My graduate training includes data science and sociological theory, including robotics, human as machine, info.TECH, data.TRASH, nonsense, and transhumanism. Passages from sociological theory may describe haunting, terror, computation insanity, cyber flesh or skin, and the use of feminist descriptive words such as penetration or tech absorption. None intends to shock, alarm, make uncomfortable, discriminate, and so on. It’s advanced computer science material.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selected passages expose you to various words and contexts, perhaps unfamiliar, like fractals, the phantasmagoric, and fleshy wearable tech (iWatch). Nothing is unbecoming. <p>If ever sharing any of this work, please <u>qualify it</u> as “academic learning/theory media.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If something is too unordinary or concerning, ask me for clarification. Note: passages also from the Torah, classics (Moby-Dick), philosophers, and critics. <p>May all of you experience wonder at some point in your lives.</p> <p>~v/r brian.hogan 1/7/23 v2</p>

Introduction: Viral Contagion and Death of the Social

Winter of Hope/Spring of Melancholy

The disruption of everyday life has created an enormous opening that is quickly being seized upon by monopolistic digital platforms. Consumers have been driven into the waiting arms of Amazon, who happily takes human contact out of the equation for all manner of exchanges. Google and Apple pounce on the opportunity to develop contact-tracing technology, their products edging closer to becoming mandatory, rather than merely ubiquitous. And, in the absence of opportunities for physical human connection, platforms happily intervene, while maintaining practices that compromise user privacy and capitalize on user attention. If platforms were already on the path towards total integration into everyday life, then this very well might be the moment in which they consolidate their power over the imagination.

– Craig Fahner, *“emptyre-soft-skinned space”*

During the pandemic, I sheltered in place on Vancouver Island, literally an island of attentive solitude in the global stream of viral contagion, thinking of technologies of the new real and the suddenly proximate, instantly changed meaning of “I Stepped into the Future and It Wasn’t There.” Here, the pandemic was controlled by means of a resilient public health system and political leadership deferring to medical expertise, relying on a widely shared sense of civic responsibility and general care for the community in responding to the COVID-19 virus. Now more than ever in this time of viral delirium, Vancouver Island seemed like a rare, magical intersection of the four meridians of air, earth, fire, and water, an undeclared republic tilting towards social justice just off the western continental mass of North America – social solidarity in the face of viral contagion.

Ironically, the winter months preceding the pandemic were just the opposite of isolation and social distancing. As part of a collective political

struggle during the winter, many of us in British Columbia (BC) and elsewhere were involved in an active alliance with youth and elders involved in Indigenous resurgence and environmental activists to protest the armed occupation of Indigenous territories by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in support of aggressive pipeline expansion. Like an epochal rip in the fabric of normal time and space, the provincial Parliament Buildings in Victoria, BC, were surrounded by a large Indigenous youth encampment, vibrant with the lighting of sacred fires, drumming, inspiring speeches, and a field of red dresses symbolizing murdered and missing Indigenous women, all carried out with a spirit of love, not violence, and with very courageous, very determined resolve on the part of the Indigenous youth and elders. I may have been teaching a seminar on the politics of race and power by day, with that haunting trilogy of *Black Skin/White Masks*, *Red Skin/White Masks*, and *Brown Skin/White Masks*,² but by night many students were at the encampment in active solidarity with Indigenous youth, while others responded to frequent appeals during the night-time hours to come to the Legislature to help protect the Indigenous youth from possible police violence. What I witnessed over the winter was a glimpse into the possibility of a more just future traced out in all its social creativity, political courage, and profound ecological understanding by Indigenous thought and practice, and by strong alliances between Indigenous youth and many other young people conscious of the historical injustices of settler colonialism.

Then, the pandemic struck, with all its globalized panic fear and political cynicism. The darkness of the pandemic spring was just the opposite of the lightness of winter politics. Watching President Trump’s daily televised orgies of unconstrained narcissism and spasms of self-pity interspersed with mean-spirited scapegoating and cynical lies, all applauded by an enormous popular following howling the deep rage of their discontent, I was reminded of Deleuze and Guattari’s description of the continuing power of seductive appeals to the suicidal death drive of fascism.³ Here the political virus of right-wing populism, fuelled by panic fear and intense anxiety over the loss of jobs in the very real-life context for many people in the contemporary economy of work or starve, seeks to attach itself to the host cell of the television audience, releasing its genetic instructions and then waiting as the host cell reproduces the virus, whether expressed in the form of angry white male hysteria, scapegoating of Asians, border violence against asylum seekers, or studied popular silence concerning the cynical hijacking of relief funds by large corporations in the United States and by carbon-heavy energy companies in Canada.

The immediate consequences of viral contagion are dire: the eclipse of the social and the death of politics. And there’s something else as

technologies of the new real, viral contagion and death of the social. arthur/marilouise kroker

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first.last

a) lookup unfamiliar words [google query = <word> definition]

b) write a reflection:

NEW reflection question: to help stimulate reflection. Not required to answer but you certainly may.
narrative: sociological theory pondering the new real, pandemic, viral contagion

1. How are digital platforms monopolizing your time and personal behavior?
2. Are you concerned about living a life under surveillance?
3. “the continuing power of seductive appeals to the suicidal death drive of fascism” is a significant theory in our world today, thought and assessed in the 1970s. Given you like don’t know what it is, what would cause you to get curious about such things personally?

update whole reflection to: [assign.submit](#)

update unknown words to: [write.reflect\(words\)](#)