

Title: Psychology part 3 the Lalilulelo by u/rensole

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Alright lets do this thing!

As some of you might not know, I originally started posting on reddit on the sociological aspects and psychological aspects of things we are seeing.

I'm by no means a psychologist or licensed in any way shape or form to form an "educated opinion".

I'm literally just someone who gets hyper focussed on a subject and learns as much as they can in a short amount of time, one of these subjects for me has recently become **"social engineering"**, or **"how shills could function"**

Basics:

Social engineering is the use of centralized planning in an attempt to manage social change and regulate the future development and behavior of a society or group. This is something that I've been intensely interested in since I played a video game series called "Metal Gear solid", yes I realize the irony of starting with an interest due to a video game, going to reddit because of a video game retailer.

Metal gear solid is a heavy mix of fiction and reality, but it takes a very deep look at what is "destined to happen" due to nepotism or due to training (nature vs nurture debate), how our genes define us, or because they don't define us, an overarching "big bad organization" or if it's just us, the people, that define life and how it functions.

******(I'm extremely oversimplifying everything here as each and every video game in and of itself could have a multi year thesis written about them easily).******

Now Metal Gear Solid 2 was a video game originally released for the playstation 2 on 13 November of 2001. some see this game as prophetic or just a couple of people who knew how to read people and society as a whole that they were able to see where people might go in the next few years. do realize that at the time of creating this game social media was not a thing, at least not as we know it now.

Social media started in 1979 with the PLATO system (which was more along the lines of sending emails than an actual social media thing), after this we saw Bulletin boards come along in the 80s and 90s websites came along which the normal public could access and in 1997 we would see our very first (publicly available) messenger, AOL messenger.(web 1.0)

Facebook (the closed version for students only) and myspace were launched in 2003, and our beloved Reddit only saw the light of day in 2005.

So please take note that this game released a full 2 years before we actually had social media yet its a direct commentary on it (take in mind developing a videogame back then also took a full 3 years or so of work if not longer)

But before we head straight into the modern era of social media we need to take a step back to where it all began, Computers were originally thought of to help us with mathematical problems and military assistance, by the 1960s the computers were instrumental to our society as they were used in both getting us to the moon and to aid the USA in its war against Vietnam, but as far back as 1945 you had thinkers like Norbert Wiener, Vanivar Bush, and John von Neumann were already looking at what people could do with computers (Norbert Wiener famously wrote the book "cybernetics or CONTROL and COMMUNICATION in THE ANIMAL and THE MACHINE").

Computers are just numbers, zeroes and ones or Binary code as we know it now

it's either on or off.

And with these on and off they could code commands, simple ones but ones that were the start of AI and modern computing nonetheless.

Because AI is computer thinking, and thinking in humans (or at least believed so in the immediate post war era) was thought to have been just electricity jumping from one point to another, again binary, but human minds and computers were not only very comparable to one and other with the innovations coming along, specialists hoped that it could pave the way to understanding and even controlling how our own minds function.

This went from helping people learn, people with autism or “mental derangements” as they called it back then (what now is called “neuro A-typical”) , by looking at converting streams (or pulses) of electric signals into things like learning, consciousness and thoughts.

This was no less of an idea of serious intellectual pursuit in the then Soviet Union at the time, where people were believed to be the sum of their parts as a collective, instead of an individual, this can also be seen in their rapid expansion of Myoelectric prosthetics their rivals in the west were also continuing a project that originated in the Nazi experiment by Plotner, which over the years would be known under a variety of different names, ranging from “the nazi drug experiment”, “project Bluebird”, “project artichoke” or as we better know of it today, as project MKUltra.

(there is a book on this subject called ‘Blitzed: Drugs in Nazi Germany’ by Norma Obler which is quite worth the read)

These were experiments into the question of mind control, and if it could be achieved in any way shape or form this “mind control” isn’t as wishy washy as most people might think, it can be simple things from manipulating someone to do something, or even interrogation techniques can be used to get a desirable outcome with the other party.

So without straying into “conspiracy theory” territory, anyone would be able to see that there is always some form of this which will have a clear use case in real life.

However even though a lot of money went into these kind of tests, they never really got anywhere except for some basic stuff, like interrogation techniques, how to alter one's mind via drugs or psychotropics to be more willing to talk, simple manipulation techniques, which in and of themselves are even something you can question if they work, because everyone is different and responds differently to these things. (this is why there is no “end all, be all” method for either), But even though these tests could never really be labeled as “successful” they can still be seen as the first starting points of “Neural Networks” and “ai”.

As they needed a method to quantify these results.

I won't go in depth with what a Neural Network is, but simply put its a technique for modeling the neural changes in the brain that underlie cognition and perception in which a large number of simple hypothetical neural units are connected to one another. an artificial intelligence system used for learning and classifying data and applied in research on pattern recognition, speech recognition, machine translation of languages, and financial prediction, among other areas. Neural networks are usually abstract structures modeled on a computer and consist of a number of interconnected processing elements ****(nodes)****, each with a finite number of inputs and outputs. The elements in a network can have a “weight” determining how they process now with all these nodes and networks with infinite inputs and outputs can be seen as a predecessor for the internet as we know it today, a big brain-like entity.

A brain that can adapt to every sort of input and output, and scarily enough even learn and adapt to our needs. This we can see in the “algorithms” on the internet like Google, for example think of the Google tests of “are you a human”, “select the X in pictures’ this is not to check if you’re human, it's however just a part of machine learning.

Now that we have a basic understanding on where these patterns come from, let's look a bit further. The internet has some crude functions like a neural network, and we as a society use the internet more and more in our everyday lives and a neural network model human thought patterns it isn't a very big leap to assume that we, as a society, as humans, can be "modeled" and aggregated to think in a certain way ?

So let's extrapolate from that, if we as people can be "modeled" in such a way so they know what to sell you, would it also be a fair assumption to think that we as a people could perhaps be able to be altered or even influenced by being exposed to certain sets of data?

Look at how much we spend our free time on the internet, how many times has it happened to you as a person that you talked about something with a friend (vocally) and suddenly you start seeing ads about that same thing suddenly pop up? is this because someone is "listening in" or have they quantified you as a person to know around what times you would like certain things.

****In a world where everyone is lying - there's a premium on the truth.****

But where does that lead us?

It used to be that these experiments were small groups and they tried one thing and kept going, but with the new digital age of social media, they no longer have to rely on just Neuroscience, neuropsychology or psychology.

Now they can use Statistical, quantitative analysis and mathematics to see direct input and outputs, and see which one is quantitatively the best method to use for which group of people. As with the digital evolution they can try a multitude of different ways in different sections and subsections to get direct output on what it would do with a particular subset of data.

This can be set in multiple ways for example

Men, age 20-30, location USA

But you can then go even further

You can select by sexual orientation, specific ages, specific locations, hobbies, interests, music etc.

The more spliced out the model is the more specific the results will become.

Because for example you can see that men in Germany could react very differently than the exact same person (with the same subset of data) in the USA, the same goes for someone from New York or someone from Kansas or California.

And what changes in the outcome is quantifiable and can be made into pure math and statistics, and then the algorithm can change from person to person by only changing the calibration weights.

Now not every AI can do this sort of stuff, the term AI is extremely wide and extremely varied, so for ease of this piece we'll split them up as the way they function is again extremely different.

you have "simple" AI, this is an AI that specializes in only one single function and thrives to do it well, think of like the Tesla cars "self driving" thing, a car's cruise control or a fridge that would send out a message if it's out of ice.

The AI is programmed to do one thing, and one thing only, It's also not meant to "learn" outside of straight up program updates.

And you have "strong" AI

*****An AI that would match if not outperform a human's ability to make sense of the world and develop an understanding of its environment - Vincent Boulain*****

But if you have “simple” ai’s you can turn this also into more “strong” ai is just a greater mastery and wider data sets to train with better hardware.

We do have a huge thing we need to emphasize here, AI is not a “big bad” thing like in the movies, we won’t see “terminator” or “self thinking” robots any time soon. because AI can’t learn or understand the world in the way that we currently do, and it’s a big question if they ever can or will be able to do this (seriously this is an extremely divisive question in the AI community as I could tell, half of them say Terminators are only a week away, while the others say they won’t ever be able to self learn, so... no Clue), so the terms “AI”, “neural network” and “deep learning” are quite misleading, as they still rely on the data we (the people/programmers) put into it.

For the most part the goal is to get a general AI that works like an overarching “watchman” but even then they won’t be able to do all the things we as humans can do, A computer can save an image but it can’t for example “feel” in the way we do about a picture.

see this as looking at a picture of your late father, mother or grandparents or whatever, a computer may recognise it’s a picture of that person and even know who they were and when they died, but the pure raw emotion of seeing something like that is still something a computer will likely never truly understand. as a computer would just see a correlation between pixels.

But think back to the Neural networks, this is basically how they function:

<https://preview.redd.it/m4fdsnqetxn81.png?width=522&format=png&auto=webp&s=79616017df7c9ef3c19650737eef367dfb0292c6>

We don’t know what happens at hidden layer 1 and 2, but we do know what our input was and comes out at the end.

Now think of it as not just one single level, but multiple levels spanning across multiple networks. This means they can crunch statistics to see what comes out and which gives a response and which does not, or to collect data to extreme levels.

This can be brought back to key words, like we have seen on reddit when we refer to “shills”, they can quantify what kind of responses get a reaction, what kind of wording they should use to slip by as a “normal user”. If one for example only spams “XXX to the MOON■■■■” and nothing more time and time again, it’s easy to spot, so it gets banned from most of the subs as a spambot, so they need to make something better, something they can pass and something that can cause the “output” they want. so it needs to respond to other users.

So they use something called “reactive ai” or if you’ve spent an afternoon coding in your life the “if-then” rule, since the rise of this kind of stuff we have seen facebook and Cambridge analytica as a great example of how wrong and abused these systems can be.

As both FB and Cambridge analytica were involved in the 2016 us presidential election scandal were involved with that a lot more has come to light, among which that the AI that Cambridge analytica used was “trained” with a huge dataset, namely fb users in order to manipulate if not steer the public mind (no I’m not saying the election was stolen or some shit like that I’m saying that’s literally what they tried to do nothing more)

to quote a review on Jill Lepora’s book in the new york review of books “if then, how simulmatics corperation invented the future” (she was someone who pioneered this kind of thing).

“Machine learning techniques intuit cultural affinities and political preferences, the algorithm sorts users by location, education level, languages, financial history, property ownership, occupation, age, gender, sexual preference and relationship status. “

They track almost everything you do, buy read or even watch, and by using this "surveillance" system, companies in political data, advertising and facebook and Cambridge analytica have the power to bombard the public through blogs websites articles videos adds until we see the world the way that they want us to see it.

Ok so while we might be aware of our conscious thoughts there are also more levels and methods that we might not be directly aware of, one of them is "pattern recognition", this is how humans intuitively grasp patterns in shapes, faces, speech, people or even culture.

this can be from simple things like, recognizing objects that belong together but also faces, or patterns in general

<https://preview.redd.it/9huolxphtxn81.png?width=511&format=png&auto=webp&s=8fac853513e4588cce61a60b9208cbdaf6d1f31>

This means that in some way our mind functions as a "machine", going back to the recognition of patterns in binary only this time, far more complex.

Rosenblat's Neural networks were the attempts to answer this, they provided a mechanism for symbol processing that broke a symbol procedurally by using three simple metrics

- \- Inputs
- \- outputs
- \- weights

We knew the input (Symbol A) and an output (Symbol B) so they could calibrate these weights. They could in theory train this "neural network" to get desirable outputs accurately, and thereby they had a rudimentary version of how Neurons would work in a brain.

For example someone who can read and write cursive can easily distinguish what has been written down but someone who had never learned it can't, this is the biological equivalent of "calibrating the weights"

And this is in a sense the beginning of what we now call "machine learning".

As we can look at pattern recognition is about intuitive understanding of what we see we can think of society in a kind of networked mind, or a super brain.

***"if an idea catches on it can be said to propagate itself spreading from brain to brain" - R. Dawkins.**

In other words the struggle for survival between memes is largely waged by spreading the size of your network, just like genes themselves in the gene pool. And this is exactly what we can see happen with modern media, propagating their memes to "think for us" at the expense of individuals coming to their own conclusions and interpreting things for themselves.

However there are always outlying "neutrons" or individuals, so how can they fix that? well by something called "back propagation".

Back propagation is about starting with a wrong "output" and tracing it through the process and along the weights back to the inputs to slowly and gradually correct it in reverse so that next time it will be calibrated correctly. Now it's extremely easy to follow these data sets and extrapolate some conspiracy theory from it to link it to some sort of dystopian idea of today, nor do I think anything is really part of a "master plan" like the illuminati or something like that.

Now I started out with metal gear solid 2 as my example of going down this road, because a lot of these points are actually the subject matter of MGS2, but it also shows a big difference as the game came out in 2001 and the internet was much in its infancy stages, the internet is now more interconnected than ever. No longer do we have people who are stuck in their own "pool" and are therefore isolated with their ideology or thoughts, it's now we're all being confronted by "the other" the people we don't agree with, or

see the world differently than we do.

And I personally believe this might be the big drive behind a lot of the social problems we are seeing to this day, and these tensions are not at all addressed by the game, however the problems that it had still drive much of the ideas we have today, namely Truth, certainly remain, as what is truth to one person (Like the apes) and the rest of the world, still clash.

And without going too much into philosophy “truth is only what one perceives it to be”

For these points, I believe that Metal Gear Solid 2 remains a fundamental piece of social commentary even 20 years later in the digital age.

But on that note we also have to look at our own memes. How many of you reading this were already in agreement with me before opening this, or disagreeing just because it's me who posted it? How many of you are people from middle age 20/40 and invested in either GME or AMC or anything else? How many of you got this piece presented due to an algorithm? There is no escape from the data influx as it is constant and everything we do in this system has been built to study, quantify and ultimately try to control (controlling however is not the content but rather the context) like saying the apes people are conspiracy theorists, or how #kengriffinlied was met with “oh these are the same people who don't believe in the moon landing” immediately dehumanizing someone as a “conspiracy theorist” and means they must be uneducated or otherwise, creating the “context” in which it will and shall be perceived by the general public.

So how does all of this relate to us?

Most of you might have zoned out half way through, and I can't blame you for doing so, in the game MGS2 there was a big bad group of people behind the scenes, “the patriots”, and they tried to control the entire world by propagating THEIR truth, THEIR vision, and everyone that did not fit that would be ostracized or worse.

I believe however that it's more centric, it's about bigger corporations, not a “new world order” kind of thing but more along the lines of:

A company wants a certain point of view to become a narrative, they hire the correct company to do this for them and they will aggregate the social media space to get people riled up, this is where the Neural network idea comes back into play

<https://preview.redd.it/kvo44tvktxn81.png?width=472&format=png&auto=webp&s=fb07725f7931bba5881339b98c5e090f4e47be80>

Let's call this a “social” spread, you only have 2 skills to spread a message, however you will have some people who don't understand the material at hand, and will take the information at face value.

These people will then “infect” others with their “knowledge”.

Skills are able to do this due to the aforementioned Neural networks, or machine learning, or as it might be better known colloquially, “The Algorithm”.

A lot of people have often asked, “how does the X algorithm work?” You can often see this back on youtube, twitter and even on reddit and facebook. There has never been a clear cut answer come out of them, you can see very popular channels switch their algo as you can always see popular youtubers (on mass) upload videos with the title “we're no longer getting the views we are getting”, or people on twitter/reddit being “shadowbanned”. This isn't a magic wand that makes things work or something that changes on a whim, it is “calibrating the weights”.

To go a bit further on this theory on “why” would they do this? (they being the platforms not the skills) do they have a certain agenda they agree with and want to spread?

No it's nothing as evil as that, they want you to spend more time on their platform, because that way they make the most money, a good example of this is on youtube.

Let's for example take a "clean" new youtube account and take a look at what you see, Now let's take it a step further click on any random subject, lets take "flat earth for example, now you might not believe in this subject when you start looking at and think "oh this is rubbish", but here is where the algorithm kicks in.

The algorithm sees "oh you've watched XX minutes of this subject", I'm going to recommend more of these, they don't do this because they want to "push" the ideology but they just want you to stay longer on their platform, but because you are being bombarded with information at some point you will start to believe the stuff you've been digesting, this is called conditioning.

Now we can see this kind of "algorithm behavior" on every platform, think of youtube showing recommended videos, or Reddit with awards, or Robinhood with Gamification like elements like confetti and such, this is all just stuff to keep you on their platform longer, and each platform has something to keep you there.

Now this is what we will call primary platform elements. however let's look at the skills because that's what we're more interested in here, because well let's be honest the platform is just the platform, they don't interact with us or give out any vocal stuff to which we respond.

Skills however function on a very simple level, mainly on simple psychological basics that Sigmund Freud once placed for us, Hunger Thirst and Sex, this is why you often see a combination of the three in marketing, sex sells for a reason as it's the basis of the human condition.

However later came B.F. Skinner, the one who is famously known for the "skinner box" experiments, but it also started a psychological stream called "behaviourism", which is the philosophy of human behaviour (yes I know it's getting wishy washy again), but it comes down to some basic ideas, namely the human condition is driven by far more than Hunger thirst and sex, but also primary urges we have as humans mainly Fears, aggression, paranoias etc.

But this is what skills prey on, fear anger paranoia, we have seen this happen multiple times when I was a moderator at r/superstonk, you have people sending "trigger words" which they know they work, or give a sense or urgency to something, or slowly but surely becoming a "trusted" member of the community and suddenly shift and once caught delete their accounts, or something else, I'm sure you know by now what I'm referencing to.

The best example I can personally think of is how people come out of the woodwork and suddenly everyone is coming out to tell YOU what you should do with YOUR investments and money.

Let's look at real life for a second. Have you ever had someone come up to you and tell you that you shouldn't invest in something? sure they'd laugh and say "I think you're wrong" something along these lines, but they would never come back 20 times a day to tell you, "hey I'm worried you should get out".

This is because they don't have the incentive to change your mind, like if I lose all my money on my investments, my friends would feel bad, we'd have a laugh and "oh well such is life" kind of moment.

However, how many times have we not seen people come out to ridicule others for their investments in "meme" stocks? go into their subreddits and talk about how your investment is wrong, or you should get out or some other crap? fairly often right?

Well this comes back to the 'bombarding with information' this can lead to what we have often referred to as "FUD" which stands for Fear Uncertainty and Doubt, because this is the end goal, when someone is certain of their investment or anything really they won't move right? but what if that person gets uncertain, an uncertain person is easier to manipulate or get them to lash out in anger, because as a famous wrinklebrain once said "fear leads to anger, anger leads to hate, hate leads to suffering", because once you've gotten an emotional reaction they have "tilted" you.

And because a lot of people have been emotional from the get go about their investments, as it has now over time it has become a part of who they are, this is something especially applicable with the apes.

But this is also applicable when looking at the original DD writers we saw at the start of the \$GME movement, Many people who were once loved suddenly got ousted for minute reasons but these were kicked out, ridiculed for sometimes minute reasons.

This is because "shills" have to get the smart ones out, the people who help out, and everyone who is useful to a "movement" out. so they change their weights, they change their "weights" to get another emotional response. Meaning you get 10 shills, they convey "person X is bad", and people over time will start to believe it, and once they do they will propagate the idea for you. and this is also why you see "drama" come out on the weekends and they have new calibrations for their weights.

****Input 1>layer 2>layer 3> output, doesn't work? change input one and tweak it until you get the desired outcome.****

And this has happened to almost every "better known" person in the GME saga for one reason or another.

So what is the solution to all of this?

Dude I have no clue, this shit is so complicated and very complex in understanding and there is no clear cut answer on how to combat this type of "modeling" on people, shills however are very easy.

do NOT instigate, if someone is screaming into the void and saying shit you don't like, downvote, move on. don't respond.

Because if someone is being an asshole to you and others, and you don't respond, at some point people will realize that THEY are the assholes and will just ignore and move on.

My sources: Bro trust me bro

but for real there are so many youtube videos on the machine learning stuff and on the metal gear solid theorems and how they relate to social media and real life, full of theses on how social media tries to work this in, and on shills there are a lot less unfortunately

This is a very complicated subject on which a lot of specialists have trouble defining solutions to problems or even how to define what the problems are.

So unfortunately I have to leave this just like every partner I've ever been with, with an unsatisfying ending, but I hope this may be a jumping off point for some of you to look more into this, and perhaps people who know more about this type of "marketing" can take a look into this.

I'm just an idiot who has a lot of hyperfocus and nothing more, none of this is advice, none of this is more than speculation and I'm sure people with more/better knowledge will most likely correct some of the assumptions I have made or offer a better theory on how this works or functions.

Also this was written over the past months, and constantly kept adding to it, I've used lots of sources and can't recall which ones I have used. so if I forgot to credit anything or anyone I am sorry!