

# EPIDEMIC PERMEN:

\*Abridged



Sam Douma / 2025



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BIBLIOGRAPHY ^



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UNABRIDGED  
AUDIOBOOK ^

## 'Brain Rot' and the Symptoms of Controlled Media Decay

A CATALOGUE OF SOCIAL,  
NEUROLOGICAL, AND  
MEDIA MECHANISMS OF  
COGNITIVE EROSION  
IN  
DIGITAL  
POST-COVID  
LANDSCAPE

DATA HYGEINE IN AN  
AGE OF RADICALIZED  
SURVEILLANCE, DATA, AND  
INFORMATION ECONOMY

METHODS OF RECURSIVE  
REVOLT,  
DISSENT, AND ANALOGUE  
AUTONOMY; THE RETURN  
SOVEREIGNTY  
MEDIA

# KEY TERMS OF INTEREST:

Techno-feudalism • Digital solipsism, algorithmic governance • surveillance capitalism • attention economy • dopamine loops • feed-forward design • phantom vibration syndrome • dark UX patterns • design manipulation • algorithmic opacity • techno-lobotomy • rot vs. fermentation metaphor • iPhone-as-totem • media as pharmakon • hyper-stimulus environments • computational sublime • parasocial interaction loops • aesthetic fatigue • overstimulation thresholds • feedback hegemony • mediated desire • digital unconscious • enskirtification (Doctorow) • curated identity collapse • infinite scroll architecture • autoplay compulsion • vertical video standardization • hyperreality (Baudrillard) • jouissance circuit interface addiction • short-form media pathologies • memetic overproduction • Tik-Tok semiotics • entropy of meaning • irony collapse • dissociative scrolling • capital-driven UI design • McLuhan hot/cool media • aesthetics of acceleration • interface-induced trance states • Norbert Wiener's feedback models • Autopoiesis in digital systems • system-bound agency • post-human interface • latency as phenomenology • interface as ideology • postmodern data horror • digital folklore • algorithmic divination • simulacrum loop • content-as-code-as-myth • viral semiotics • AI oracular function • algorithmic sublime • information overload pathologies • UX-induced self-erasure • post-ironic interface design • seamlessness as control • erasure of friction • temporal distortion via app use • social melancholia • recursive identity • computational alienation • oversignification • fractured self-narration • technological interpellation • AI-mediated sensemaking • prompt as ideology • memetic attention war • feedback implosion • techno-capital realism • Adorno's culture industry • Habermas's rationality breakdown • accelerationism • feed-forward ontologies • semiotic churn • UX as political weapon • interface violence • data

sovereignty • user-as-product • predictive identity scripting • surveillance UX • infrastructural aesthetics • notification-driven anxiety • attention residue • continuous partial attention • fragmented cognition • app-mediated being • fragmented authorship • disembodied authorship • loss of media distance • affect saturation • artificial novelty • short-form narrative fatigue • screen-induced derealization • data ontology collapse • black box epistemology • interface determinism • epistemological flattening • UX of forgetting • memory erosion through design • neural adaptation to UI • information oversaturation • metadata as story • anti-aesthetic UI design • cognitive dissonance marketing • AI as content mirror • attention laundering • techno-sublime paralysis • semio-capitalist attention loops • affordance engineering • clickpath economics • UX as environment • ultra-hyperpop affect schema • semantic burnout • real-time myth production • perceptual overflow • fractured temporality • icon-based hallucination • psychodigital spillover • touch-response intimacy • mythic UX grammar • systemic alienation • visual entropy • broken timeline syndrome • cognitive fragmentation • attentional claustrophobia • screen-as-prosthesis • techno-existential horror • AI-assisted amnesia • cyborg phenomenology • media ritualization • sensory threshold breach • interaction decay • ontological warping • fast-behavior markets • saturation aesthetics • attention as extractive economy • feedback-worship • affect-market optimization • Zizek as meme preacher • YouTube parable aesthetics • AI-repackaged pseudo-wisdom • video-shorted Gnosis • attention as ritual bloodletting • attention harvesting economy • UX mimics religion • compression of self-expression • spellcheck engagement hacking • media-performative ethics • anti-friction addiction • glitchcraft • feed dreamtime • hauntological feed latency • microdose attention economies •

P.S. THE QR CODES ARE FUNCTIONAL AND HYPERLINK TO SOURCES. PLEASE USE THEM BY OPENING YOUR SMARTPHONE CAMERA AND POINTING IT AT THE SYMBOL AND THEN CLICKING THE LINK POPUP.

# PROLEGOMENON / PREFACE / CONTEXT / INTRODUCTION / FRONT MATTER

What follows is a collection of text, images, and hyperlinks which have largely come together in the past 10 weeks. This period, however, is only the punctuation on a four-to-five year long stretch of intellectual and creative trajectory which has revolved around investigating the circumstances of technological dependency disorders, generational pathologies that spring from developmental tech differences, and the self-destructive cultural ouroboros of generative-AI-driven media systems.

It seems to me, as an average member of the billions of modern-internet-dependent users, and as the first generation of the information age, painfully obvious that these issues are expanding at a breakneck rate which requires immediate, effective, and intentional discourse—particularly on the part of those of us (iPad babies, as it were) who are aware of the complete severity of the current digital condition. I believe there is a moral obligation on the part of the acquainted to communicate to the unacquainted the severity of which primary media systems today (and the new generations who are emerging from it) are definitively beginning to decay into a species-threatening, near-total, informational collapse.

In my widespread, cross-modal participation in, formal research, and direct observation of such matters, I have found growing evidence that such a claim of virtual collapse is quantifiably reflected in our current politico-economic tableau (*which, to the delight of internet media and algorithms, is utterly deranged*), the engineered and AI-optimized design of ubiquitous internet-media UX paradigms (*which are intentionally exploitative, subversively addictive, and legally dubious at best*), and even in the fundamental, physical neurology of our newest generations (*which, I will emphasize, is the future of the human species, and the one which is to be faced with some of the most difficult existential challenges in history—e.g. so-called “Artificial General Intelligence”, the collapse of the global ecosystem, the prospect of migrating to other planets, etc.*)

I believe none of these problems will be solved if it is not for a rapid and truly cross-disciplinary, inter-generational synergy of efforts; one which requires vulnerability and effort on the part of all involved parties (despite our different degrees of digital oppression).

I do not see meaningful cross-generational discourse effectively playing out in the digital plane of humanity. It is crucial for us to leave our phones behind and practice tried and true forms of social discourse: media curated by the people, not by digital overlords. A critique of social media can not take place on social media. For digital reformation, analog action is vital. That is, forms of physical oration, discussion, installations which are not under the complete curative control and legal ownership of private mediators (such as the media/data hegemons we will soon examine).



I have observed in myself and among artists, authors, a growing dissatisfaction towards the canonical standard of always publishing one's work on the internet; to become literally owned by monopolized entertainment companies that literally *compress* your content, subject it to biased algorithmic manipulation and commodification, and use it to feed physical AI-model machines that are, on average, growing to be nearly the size of Manhattan.

...

The significance of both of these issues began to grow harrowingly evident around the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, as infants and elders alike found themselves left with no other option but to engage with the world through an internet-connected screen--anonymized by a mask and the status of a ‘user’.

It was during this time that a distinct technological dependency became fully sedimented in our global culture--socially codified, neurologically embedded, economically-affirmed, and utterly habitualized in billions of brains. It was during this time that high-schoolers began to observe that their parents were becoming addicted to the same platforms as them, Youtube became school curriculum (ads and all), and life became broadly acceptable to live *through a device*. The pandemic represents a clear historical punctuation on the end of a bygone era of technological optimism that we saw in the glorious days of that worldwide, rosy-eyed Y2k futurism: iPods, Webkins, Primary Games, Tamogatchi, Myspace, Minecraft Lite, Frutiger Aero, etc.

Inextricable from my fears about what AI has done to media, truth, and childhood development is what has come to be known as **‘Brainrot’**. It is my goal for this collage of materials from the internet to represent what I see as under-represented aspects of current digital anthropology from a somewhat serious research perspective—one which takes into account both peer-reviewed academic research and the often ignored media itself-- in its full, unbridled, fractured, caustic nature. The bibliography is, as you will discover, is riddled with links to current Instagram posts, Youtube clips, screenshots, etc. -- forms of media which are often rejected in scholarly contexts for their potentially informal and untrustworthy nature. It seems to me that, especially in 2025, this anthropological attitude leaves some of the most significant stones of human activity unturned. I believe the nature of our collective condition in 2025 reveals itself most vividly through Youtube video thumbnails, comments under a TikToks, and in the depths of internally trained AI-bot-run Instagram meme pages. To study an epidemic of ‘rot’, ‘slop’, and digital fermentation is difficult in the same way that studying biological decay-- it is vast, amorphous, rapidly changing, and messy.

It is true, unfortunately, that due to the profound irregularity, unpredictability, and impermanence of this media--not to mention its *newness*, the literature is sparse and infantile. It is only in the last few months that research exploring evidence of ‘Brainrot’ has begun to emerge, as it begins to pass the necessary lag time between the emergence of new media-interface technologies and the measurable developmental impact that it has on those *using them*.



An unavoidably significant factor in this discussion is graphically engineered media interfaces and digital media consumption paradigms. Design matters-- especially in software, tech, and systematically addictive economies. Most people are aware that the current digital media systems they use are blatantly exploiting the brain's reward architecture via button placement, media templating, and so forth, but I'm not sure to which degree. The question of volition and responsibility of addiction becomes vital to discuss here, when considering the incredible inequality of power that has emerged between 'big tech' and the 'average joe'.

The study of media design and its relationship to memetics and digital ethnography in a formal context is hardly new, at least relatively speaking; the study of internet culture has been around as long as the web itself. Regardless, it is evident to me that easily some of (if not the most) significant developments and/or pathologies in humanity's primary media paradigms have appeared in full bloom only within the *the last five years*.

The literature, media, and research on the post-covid digital landscape reflects this in being either premature, underdevel-

oped, fragmented, or simply drowned out by precisely the monsoon of content which is of subject.

In some ways, to attempt to draw meaningful patterns from such an utterly vast repository of continually changing and self-consuming information is almost certainly in vain. Tracking down individual memes or instances of Brainrot, is something entirely impossible without actually occupying the role of a 'brainrotted' content-consumer yourself. For this reason, *this is part ethnography, part manifesto*.

Despite these inevitable scholarly shortcomings, peculiarities of form, and conflicts of interest, it is completely evident to me that the issues of this infantile media practice are urgently vital to assess, audit, critique, and re-evaluate. In a 2001 address for the UNESCO World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology, leading Yale philosopher Luciano Floridi stated:

*"the information society ... poses fundamental ethical problems whose complexity and global dimensions are rapidly evolving...How information and communication technologies can contribute to the sustainable development of an equitable society is one of the most crucial global issues of our time"*

24 years have passed, and we can all see how this sentiment has only compounded with indescribable significance.

**The primary claims I intend to explicate and/or demonstrate evidence for (referring to a demographic of today's average digital citizen) are as follows:**

- 1) The daily, overall average *quantity* of stimulus consumption in humans is reaching historically unprecedented and destructive highs, but the *quality* of stimulus consumption is reaching new destructive lows.**
- 2) This unprecedented, rapid, and catastrophic increase in information-ingestion imparts tangible harm to the fundamental neurology of an entire generation (which can and must be quantitatively measured).**
- 3) 'Brain Rot' is a pathology deserving of a formal diagnostic status in the DSM-6, and must be recognized and treated across the board of health professionals, schools, and public legislature for the immediate well-being of the newest generations.**
- 4) 'Slop'-generating/rot-inducing media paradigms (a trillion + dollar industry) should be meaningfully regulated, socially rejected or globally criminalized for mass human rights violations.**
- 5) By default, the current data-hygiene of the average digital citizen is catastrophic and must improve for the sake of immediate safety and basic dignity.**
- 6) The primary sources of our technology epidemic are traceable to specific companies, digital 'overlords', oligarchs, techno-theocratic-fascists, and moreover *actual individuals* who must be made legally accountable for the survival of our species.**
- 7) Sufficient regulation of Algorithmic Oligarchies (or Techno-media-digital-corporate-theocratic hegemonies, regimes, oligopolies, and everything which exists in between) will only happen via grassroots mediapolitics/independent publishing movements and specific actions by YOU and ME, the users of these platforms (which cannot survive without our "voluntary" engagement).**





**Fig. 1; Nepalese, Gen-Z, social-media-ban protester holding administrative technology taken from the rubble of Parliament (which they overthrew )**



## 1: OVERSTIMULATION / HOARDS OF DYSTOPIAN DATA / BRAINS IN THE CLOUD / TABS ON TABS

In starting a project about ‘Brainrot’ during the profoundly complicated moment in history that we currently find ourselves in, it may be easier to begin with what we *do* know rather than what we don’t. What seems to be going without saying these days is that the current state of global affairs (as is eagerly reflected by modern digital media) is plagued by **technological dystopia**.



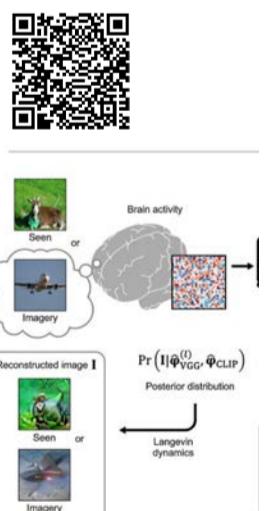
Particularly in the past five years, a number of red flags have become particularly apparent: American politics seem to have devolved into a nauseating and globally embarrassing form of reality TV which closely mirrors *Idiocracy*, legalized addiction epidemics are ravaging the mental and physical health of global populations, and the computers that we keep in our pocket chatter ever louder to divert any possible moment of attention to increasingly absurd media headlines; such as:



**Researchers discover how to look through walls using Neural networks and Wifi routers**

----->

**Mind reading , Mental image reconstruction, and dream recording are now possible**



**Nepal votes for new prime minister using Discord, after government overthrow on behalf of Gen-Z due to attempts towards banning social media (fig. 1)**

**Birds have begun making nests out of fiber optic cables left behind by disposable FPV AI-optimized kamikaze war drones in Ukraine**



**Internet-connected screen time in the average human, across nearly all ages and demographics, now exceeds 6 hours per day [1].**

**MP's are being reported as using ChatGPT in parliament**



**Youtuber Mr. Beast (who makes content for children) is starting a bank**

**BUSINESS INSIDER**

Top YouTuber MrBeast is laying the groundwork for finance venture

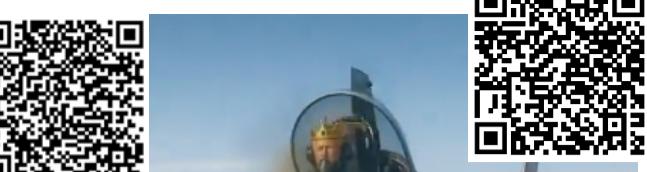
By Eddie Schwartz, Brian Whistler, & Brian Weller



**Meta plans to build a data center the size of Manhattan to fuel new AI initiatives Despite being explicitly linked to water shortages/drought in nearby towns ----->**



**Children's toys are implementing AI chatbots that spread Chinese propaganda and knife tutorials**



**Google's default AI chatbot has been repeatedly observed as having panic attacks ----->**

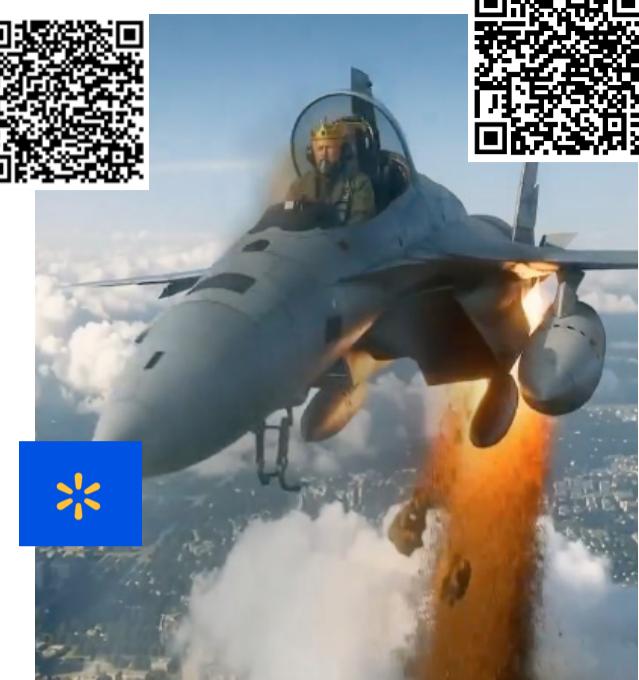
**OpenAI partners with Walmart, such that you can purchase groceries via ChatGPT**

**Walmart | OpenAI**

**A golden statue of Trump holding a bitcoin is unveiled in front of the U.S. capital**



**The President of the United States is a certified AI slop shitposter --->  
(I'm paraphrasing, but I'm sure you'll allow me to do so, because come on )**



**AI generated video posted on Truth Social by Donald Trump (President of the United States) depicting himself as a king dropping feces on US citizens**



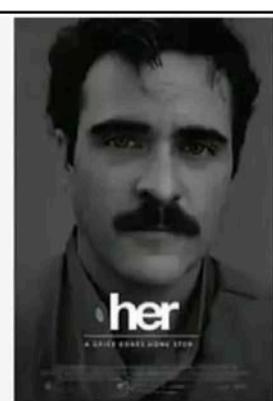
**Global nearsightedness in children is increasing due to excessive screen time**

**AI resume reviewers are reviewing AI generated resumes**

**AI 'authors' are writing books that AI reviewers are reviewing reviewing AI generated resumes/**

**BBC**

**ChatGPT will soon allow erotica for verified adults, says OpenAI boss**



**2013**



**2025**

**can't wait to tell ChatGPT  
about my day**

**emmad - عمار @emmadmazhari · 22h**  
do u ever talk to someone and think woah ur speaking in instagram infographics

**OpenAI acquires Sora license for Disney Characters ----->**

**OpenAI | The Walt Disney Company**



## **The scrooler**



[1] According to the 2024 DataReportal Global Digital Report (based on device analytics across 220 countries and 5 billion internet users), the average adult aged 16–64 spends approximately 6 hours 37 minutes per day on screens. Comparable national time-use surveys (e.g., U.S. BLS, 2023) report similar figures when work and leisure use are combined.



With all this, a state of **complete overwhelm** is not just likely to consume most individuals, it is often an *unavoidable* symptom of existing in the ultra-modern world.

I aim to make the argument that this condition of paralyzing input, hyper-stimulation, media insanity (and for goodness' sake, the **Rot** and **AI slop**) which has recently become commonplace and even mainstream in the Internet realm \* is now actively encouraged. This often results in **quantifiable and measurable pathology** in the newest generations, which must be rehabilitated and mitigated before it irreversibly becomes the status quo for humanity.

(specifically short-form social media paradigms [and even more specifically Meta Platforms])



my ancestors never dreamed of having this many tabs open at once

7:04 PM · 2023-01-05 · Twitter Web App

491K Views 19.1K Likes



It's hard to stomach the sheer vastness of information present in a single book, much less a library, much less an infinite global *digital* library (which includes most all other libraries) which swells by the second-- unfathomably rapidly, exponentially, by means of cannibalistic self-generation.

I am overwhelmed when I walk the halls of a library. These days, I struggle to muster the attention required to read a whole book. To dedicate the time to even a single article sometimes can feel like an activity worth questioning-- "Is there some way to passively absorb this, say via audio or video? Could I be doing something else at the same time?"

Luckily for the pathologically data-voracious appetite of my web-conditioned attention, the technological devices I have access to not only enable this attentional fracture, they strongly encourage it by design. As a native child of the information age, I spend near a majority of my waking life deftly jumping from application to application with any countless number of windows, tabs, folders, sub-windows, sub-tabs, etc.

For perhaps the first time in history, this new generation of which I am a part (born after the turn of the millennia) is facing adverse effects from *surplus* rather than from *deficit*.

This is not a groundbreaking theory, perhaps, when you apply it to obvious things (such as caloric value in food, potency of medicines, etc.) I think the story of this exponential growth of "amount" changes scope significantly though, when you apply it also to the subject of *sensory information input* and/or *data output*.

For instance, instead of considering the explosion in *caloric / substance value* (using representative cultural artifacts such as soda, vapes, and fentanyl in comparison to older and less potent substances) we are now looking at the explosion in *data input value* (e.g. short-form video content vs static text).

You can see that in each of these cultural tokens, at a basic level we are able to measure the **potency** of the input, the corresponding rise in **tolerance**, and growth of **dependence**. As fentanyl is 100X as potent as morphine, the average Instagram reel is 100X as potent as a page from an average book, and so on. If we look at it in terms of pure data, we can quantify this quite tangibly. *For reference:*

**THE ENTIRE KING JAMES BIBLE CONTAINS 4.5 MEGABYTES OF DATA:**

**INSTAGRAM REELS CONTAIN ANYWHERE BETWEEN 8-12 MEGABYTES PER SECOND AND UP TO 4GB VIDEO SIZE.**

**\*For further reference, 4 GB of data (potentially in a single Instagram Reel) is approximately 910 times as much as the King James Bible.**

The weight of this unprecedented increase in potency and the inevitably addictive relationship modern humans have with data, information, and technology is not to be understated. The brain now has the freedom to physically outsource things like memory, cognition, and social skills (e.g. hard drives, cloud storage, cognitive outsourcing to LLMs/computational tool use, chatbots, etc.) The tendency of adolescent's doing this increases by an asymptotic curve as time goes on.

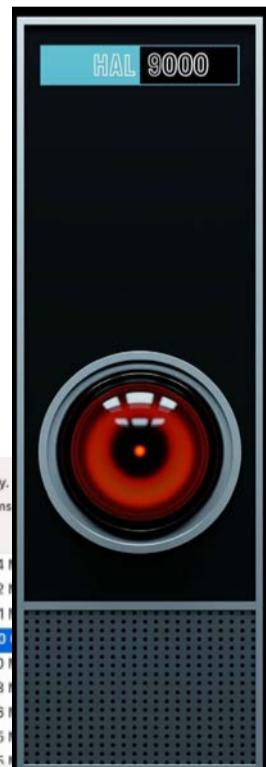
I myself am a prime example of this. I can roughly calculate the amount of digitally encoded data on my mobile devices and hard drives alone, I have over **10 terabytes** of 'liquid data' to my name (that is, physical information stored on a hard-drives/devices that I own). Granted, I am a digital artist and obsessive digital creator/curator—I presume that I have more of this data than the average American by a decent margin. This becomes quickly negligible, though, when you factor in the shared information between the hundreds of various advertising empires, economic enterprises and media juggernauts that most all modern human beings dump information into and out of daily. This estimate is *not* including any cloud storage held by any private companies (e.g. Meta, Google, Apple; who certainly store vast archives of data that we produce but don't have basic access to). I imagine the total sum would exceed my calculation of 10 TB by at least five times. Despite this guess, It is hard to say the amount of information the 'average joe' truly has to their name, because data and data ownership is a messy concept to wrap your mind around. Humans have a hard time fathoming numbers and/or data in general (I've heard it said that our average human memory can only really fathom "The Magical Number Seven, Plus or Minus Two")

In people my age and younger, this basic limited-attention principle seems to be developing differently as a result of this rapid transition to a fractured, infinitely sub-divisible virtual habitus. Wherein before, it was reasonable to dedicate one's attention to one or two primary stimuli at one time, it is now commonplace to have a great multitude. Personally, I often use split-screen windows on four separate devices, all on at the same time, with tens of applications and softwares all running simultaneously, with layered audio and sometimes upwards of 10 ongoing complex tasks at hand. From looking over the shoulders of fellow classmates during lectures, I know that I am not alone. The human brain's working capacity hasn't necessarily increased to be able to digest more, rather, it has adaptively increased its ability to bounce *between* tasks. A split-attention environment allows for endless manipulation of the dopaminergic systems, wherein just one software or search engine might be the nexus of a plethora of media streams to be actively engaged with (or split between)--homework, Instagram browser, Youtube, Internet Archive, Wikipedia, ChatGPT, Google applications, Microsoft applications, etc. Such claims surrounding operant conditioning, reward prediction error, and compulsive over-engagement are well represented in current literature (see *bibliography*) and so it is not my primary goal to defend this claim to you, as it is statistically likely that you have experienced this attentional fracture to some degree in your own life.

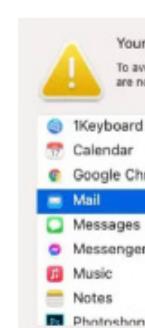


What I am trying to highlight is that as more and more waking moments slide further onto a digital and/or virtual plane of existence, the onus of cross-device, cross-application, cross-software, cross-subscription data-management is increasingly burdensome and the techno-existential condition more overwhelming. With each day comes a multitude of new files downloaded, a new folder of assets, or jumble of words inscribed on my disks. As a particularly prolific generator of digital material, I am obligated to perform a weekly purge wherein I transfer troves of data-rich material such as video, audio, or multi medium software projects onto bulk SSD hard drives for long-term storage, or in the case of particularly important information, to be backed up. Naturally, I find that I am extremely cautious around these precious storage items, for they are no more than 30 grams each and could be destroyed by a single misplaced sitting motion. They reside in a deep cocoon of multiple padded pouches and cases within my backpack, which follows me just about everywhere I go. In this way, my digital footprint literally follows me like a physical extension of my mind and memory—outsourced in rich, high-definition detail, inscribed on silicon and encoded by fragile ones and zeros.

With this being said, one can begin to visualize the sort of mental schema that I must have dedicated to these circumstances. I have clearly developed a sort of mental symbol wherein my very ability to recall my past is fundamentally outsourced to a physical conduit, existing in the form of a backpack/hard drive icon which grants me access to the less accessible parts of my mind. Few books disturb me as deeply as the epistolary *Flowers for Algernon*, wherein the protagonist undergoes a radical transformation from memory-deficient to hypermnesic and then back again-- with the etiology of this process following a steep bell curve. The right-hand decline of that graph is what unsettles me most. The scene of HAL 9000's death in *2001: A Space Odyssey* is similarly gut-wrenching, wherein Dave enters HAL's Logic Memory Center and manually removes his memory drives to horrific monotone pleadings from the computer: "**I can feel it. My mind is going.**  
**There's no question about it. I'm afraid. I feel it.**"



My computer, a technological powerhouse of working memory (despite containing some of the strongest consumer-level CPU and GPUs available) regularly displays pop-up windows claiming that I have reached the limit of reasonable application memory. I can't shake the feeling that this ever unfolding cognitive schism in tandem with a vast and unrestricted amount of information input, processing, and output *can't possibly be healthy or sustainable*.



To return back to the food analogy, the increase in the availability of Big Macs and Bucees (and things of the like--that is, any ultra-processed 'input') has an inverse relationship to the availability of necessary *nutrients*. In other words, quantity doesn't equal quality. Such a principle is increasingly evident in the **media** we find flooding platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, TikTok, etc., in the form of infinite scroll, short-form content. John Stewart recently expressed a similar observation in a New Yorker interview:

*"They're designing it to get past the prehistoric reptilian wiring of your brain so that you no longer understand that two bags of chips and a quart of ice cream might not be good for you in the long run... Social media is ultra-processed speech in the same way that Doritos are food."*

Aza Raskin, The very creator of the infinite scroll user-interface archetype himself "expressed regret at the invention, saying that he 'did not foresee the consequences' and described it as 'one of the first products designed to not simply help a user, but to deliberately keep them online for as long as possible.'"

These basic design choices in apps are known to be intended to maximize for engagement metrics, as to most effectively harvest the latent economic value in users as potential customers an a media-advertising-funding model (which has been long been a fundamental constraint on the form and content of that media--read chapter 1 of Chomsky's *Manufacturing Consent* to see how).

Raskin said regarding the invention recently in *Wired*: "There was a kind of naive optimism about thinking that my inventions would live in a vacuum, and not be controlled by market forces."

It seems to me that most people are at least somewhat aware that this radical economic maneuver (and the corresponding exploitative data capture and storage protocol) is taking place. People are picking up on the fact that their algorithms and the multitude of ads (in various degrees of disguise) are concerningly attuned to their person. Here, I am reminded of the story where Target's automated customer database product-recommendation pipeline picked up on the fact that a teen girl was pregnant before her father did, and sent her advertisements for strollers and bibs in the mail.

Keep in mind that this story was from 2012, the archaic days of automated/personalized/large-dataset algorithmic advertisement paradigms. One can only imagine the scale to which this fervent data collection practice has swelled (more on this later).

Reinforcement-tuned, monomaniacal advertisement is incredibly pervasive in todays world. Even in the sanctity of classrooms, I am regularly subjected by professors to the three consecutive, unskippable default-AI-edited clickbait YouTube ads which play before and after the short videos which have somehow replaced our curriculum--the default TikTok text-to-speech voice often blares vile imbecilities. Recently, I sat among my peers waiting for educational YouTube content through nearly two full minutes of 2X-speed-up footage of graphic stomach massages with colorful superimposed captions :

**"THESE ARE THE SEVEN QUICKEST WAY TO CLEAR STUCK POOP,"**

All-caps text ensured that the message struck loudly even if there wasn't audio. It was riddled with copyright-free attention-assaulting alarm sounds, booming fart audio, and flashing pngs of animated feces. Far too often, the term 'Internet Enshittification,' (coined by internet ethnographer Corey Doctorow in 2024) is disappointingly apt. Its humiliating, to sit in a classroom like this, surrounded by disengaged peers with airpods in and a speech-to-text note-taking agent summary tool which takes rich pedagogy and boils it into inaccurate, overly polite, emoji-laden bullet points to be interspersed with hollow bites of positive commentary that is never to be read. All of this drags on while the underaquainted adult in the room struggles to locate and click the mute button. Software passively soaks up the knowledge instead of the student, and the days blur bleakly forward.

I too often bounce my leg in unison with the other students-- 300 beats per minute.



**I'm so sorry, says inventor of endless online scrolling**



"As Hollywood movies, mainstream media, newspapers, television, and every other institutional medium have degraded rapidly over the course of the past 10 years, the internet has risen as the hero and filled that void. And today, internet content of all kinds has dwarfed the presence of these institutions. YouTube documentaries get more engagement than a box office hit does. And the sick song can drop right now on TikTok or SoundCloud and turn you into an overnight rap star without having to pay Shug Knight or Big U for protection and blessings. However, with the oversaturation of digital content currently online, the reduced attention span of the average viewer and the intense parasocial relationship that's been developed between viewer and creator, especially with live streamers, there's been an overall drop in artistry and a big push for quantity over quality".

-Andrew Callaghan



# Right Ear

## The Bible (Chinese)

# Left Ear

## Mozart (2x Speed)



...

We live in an information village turned bloated city. It is governed according to the whims of a bizarre few who have inadvertently cultivated the conspiracy theory that they are lizards. This virtual dimension exists not in the physical world, of soil and structure and physics, but of an entirely *digital* one. That is, a world constructed not from concrete, soil, and metal, but of symbolic binary bit statuses inscribed into silicon.

**In correspondence to the basic cognitive overload of this age is a higher-order effect of semantic, ideological, and cultural overwhelm.** Each previous technological revolution in human history gave us a development which, in one way or another, increased human's ability to *Globalize* the Earth. With the dawn of language came the faculty to make information last between generations. With the printing press, we started to mass produce and distribute information. With global internet, we gained the infrastructure for virtually unrestricted access to all knowledge--answers to just about any question we could ask, and then

Imagine being able to absorb all existing information at once. What would it be like, just for a brief moment, to be an all-seeing-eye, aware of not just the limited sensorial bubble of a mammalian vertebrate whose phenomenological awareness of the world extends but 30 feet around them— but to a world of ever growing splendors, tragedies, and absurdities from every inch of the globe, each rendered startlingly vivid with unlimited bandwidth? What would a Victorian era child make of the antics of a domesticated Arabic monkey going down the highway at 120 kph, or high-resolution camera footage/audio from a solar probe making humanity's closest pass of the sun, or the indecent proclivities of an ultra-rare, nearly extinct jungle bird which can't fly? There are simply too many outlandish things I could possibly mention here-- but I hope the point stands.



kelli @LagunaBiotchIG · 4d  
This sentence would kill a Victorian child

Daily Noud @DailyNoud · 5d  
The Travis Scott x Erewhon Dubai Chocolate Labubu Matcha Latte is reportedly in the works.



63 comments 257 shares

In truth, the knowledge, splendor, wisdom, and awe made available to the user of the internet could never be given justice through words. It is an unfathomable thing we have access to. Informationally and computationally speaking, the freedoms one has with just:

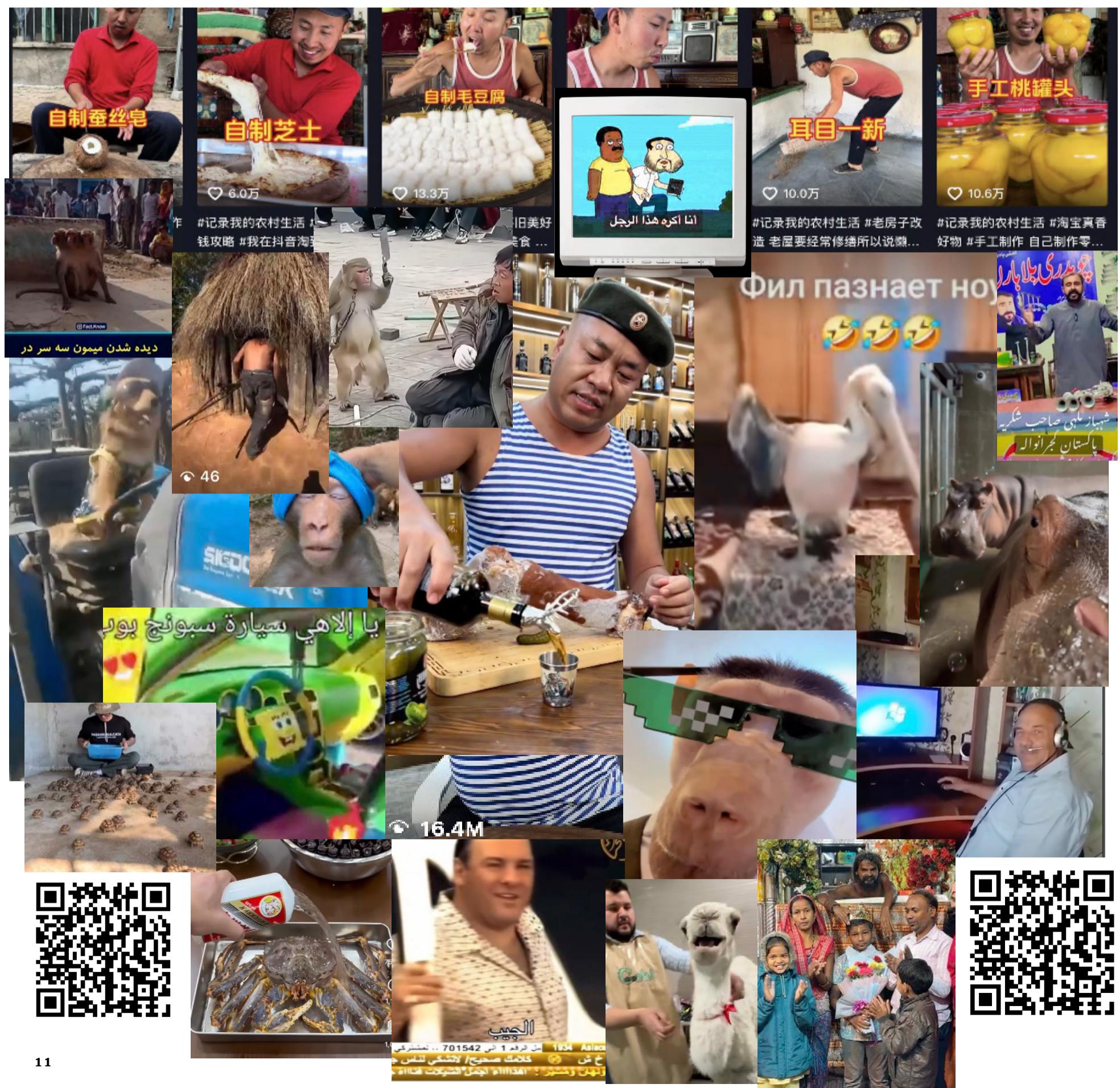
- One internet-connected iPhone
- One search engine
- One entry-level large-language-model



is *light-years* ahead of any of the most privileged scholars or kings of the known past. The privilege and power of a networked modern smartphone is immense-- to all parties.

The very fabric of both history and our new primary reality has been transposed onto a different plane —(quite literally; think of the flat screens we cram utterly dimensional content onto)—one where the friction between messenger and receiver is virtually negligible, and the transfer of high-bandwidth information is achievable even in the most remote parts of the world. Globalism has been growing more and more tangible for a while, but it is only within the last few years that the quality of phone camera resolution, upload/sharing speeds, and international participation on the same social media platform has enabled a new degree of surreal, hyper-cultural awareness in the chronically online demographic.

What I mean by this is hard to describe in words-- it is most viscerally demonstrated with the content itself. It is absolutely awe-inducing to see in such intimate detail first-hand smartphone footage of someone in Ukraine with a pet pelican in their living room, a dog driving a tractor in a Guatemalan vineyard to gleeful yelps of the farmer, the techniques of Afghan opium farming and Pakistani hash smoking, traditional rural Chinese moldy tofu and century egg fermentation, and much more. Past the obvious bizarries, absurdities, and entertaining components, it strikes me that these are cultural tableaus that, had I not owned a phone with Instagram, would likely have never encountered in multiple lifetimes of travel. I admit that this is one of the features of new internet media which I most appreciate. I believe that this radically increased awareness of extremely niche happenings across the globe (regardless of their content--mundane to gob smacking) via social media content has massively contributed to the unprecedented hyper-education and ultra-globalization of an entire generation.

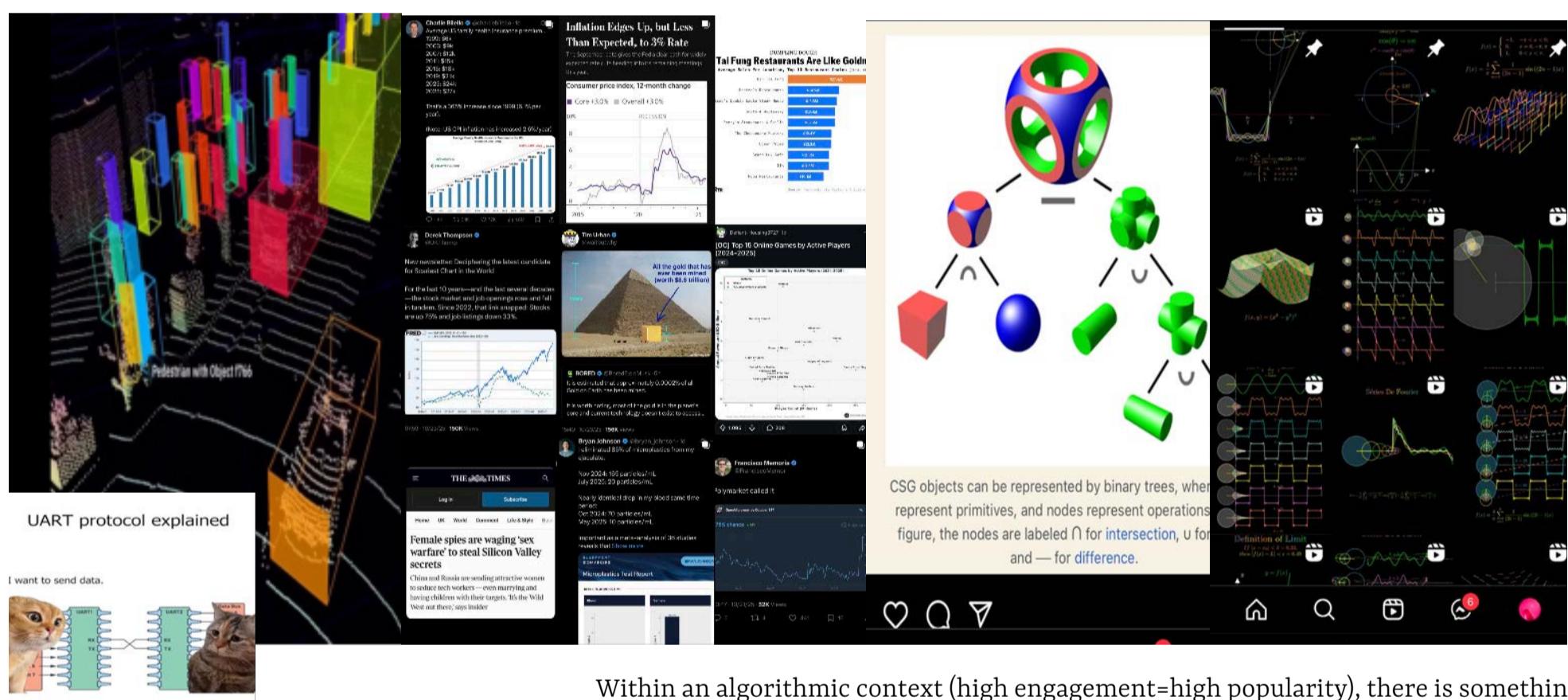


What access to unfettered information means for education is a compelling story. We have long known that humans develop and learn best when they pursue things that they are interested in. If I am invested in something, I now have the ability to pursue that thread of inquiry infinitely—in more or less all previous and current forms, in high-definition quality, resolution, and depth.

For students who properly utilize things like Wikipedia, the Internet Archive, and other open-source multimedia archival repositories, this has the thrilling potential to be a wealth of rich pedagogy in any given field of knowledge, in any degree of specificity and niche:

mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, neuroscience, psychology, philosophy, anthropology, sociology, linguistics, literature, history, political science, economics, education, architecture, design, computer science, artificial intelligence, engineering, data science, environmental science, ecology, geology, meteorology, astronomy, astrophysics, cosmology, cognitive science, robotics, biomechanics, genetics, physiology, pharmacology, medicine, dentistry, nursing, public health, epidemiology, criminology, law, theology, comparative religion, ethics, aesthetics, media studies, communication theory, semiotics, visual culture, music theory, performance studies, dance, film, animation, photography, journalism, creative writing, poetry, rhetoric, cultural studies, gender studies, postcolonial theory, cybernetics, information theory, systems theory, pedagogy, game design, virtual reality, augmented reality, sound design, interface design, UX/UI, industrial design, architecture, urban planning, landscape architecture, agriculture, permaculture, environmental design, culinary arts, fashion, textile design, crafts, carpentry, metallurgy, chemistry lab synthesis, electronics, circuit design, computational art, generative media, internet anthropology, data analytics, marketing, SEO, algorithmic bias analysis, content moderation ethics, open-source development, network theory, blockchain systems, cryptography, cybersecurity, surveillance studies, digital sovereignty, psychogeography, ethnography, phenomenology, epistemology, ontology, metaphysics, hermeneutics, advanced topology, and so on.

Even some regions of Instagram take this in stride, and offer an abundance of gamified/visualized knowledge, often quite advanced:



Within an algorithmic context (high engagement=high popularity), there is something of a positive *competitive* effect for creating effective curriculum-- that is, educational content that speaks for itself. On Instagram, where complex visuals thrive, there is a thriving community for each of the previously mentioned domains of knowledge. Quite common in this corpus is a wealth of complex mathematics visualized in such an intuitive way that both advanced physics scholars and laypeople upon viewing instantly derive a sense of awe and wonder at the data baked into the natural world.

Granted, it is not always so formal. In the eyes of the Instagram algorithm, engagement is king-- and so we also see a strange amalgamation of simultaneously childish media content paired with remarkably complex intellectual matters. A prime archetype of this sort of gamified or Brainrotted education (other than the automatic “PDF to brainrot” software pictured left) is what I will call the ‘Peter Griffin Parkour Academy’. It is unclear to me whether this is one creator across multiple accounts or if it has become a ‘trend’, but I suppose it doesn’t matter, because the whole process is entirely anonymous and highly automated. Peter’s pedagogical strength comes from the bright colors and captivating background upon which he is overlaid-- viewers with an extremely limited attention span are held entranced by the footage, and (at long last) pacified to the degree that they might have some chance of learning stoichiometry.

Generate Brainrot Video from PDFs



Burger Stalinist @primarycatdad · 21h

Can't wait to find out that the cia promoted the use of AI to ruin the mass educational potential of the internet

I've also observed several other drivers altering how schools function and how the new generation learns, processes, offloads, and stores information in the aftermath of the past decade's technological fission:

How I watched my 2 hr long lecture in 2 minutes

Watch >

Uploaded: Mar 26, 2024 · 185 Comments

Detailed notes within seconds 🤯. It even auto creates flashcards and tests 🎉. Learn more with Study Fetch - the website that can summarize YouTube videos! StudyFetch (@studyfetchai). original sound - ...

**First is ubiquitous access to personal computing.** I believe I was the last class at my elementary school who was required to learn cursive, and the first to receive a school sanctioned iPad (and soon Chromebook). We would use a software called 'Canvas', where we were free to direct message anyone who attended the school. As children, we found ourselves rampantly spilling our most fervent immaturities into this private database to be covertly monitored by staff. This was just the beginning of a long journey of surveillance which was disguised as and felt like digitally-mediated social connection.

**Second is autodidacticism--or self-education paradigms.** This phenomenon was largely popularized and/or realized by the circumstances of quarantine-induced boredom and the emergence of a widespread, chronically online culture during the COVID-19 pandemic. When students began to realize that all of their curriculum could be found on YouTube on their own accord, the prospect of class naturally became absurd, unnecessary, and unimaginably dull in comparison. Curious students moved to surfing Wikipedia during class instead of taking notes, and to generative AI to fill the gaps of comparatively rudimentary information that was expected of them from outdated teaching practices. Around the time of this pandemic and corresponding retreat to solipsistic internet exploration and/or algorithmic media curriculum paradigms was the emergence of *context windows* within search queries, which extended this "search-engine-niche-education" effect even further. With a chatbot able to remember your particular limitations of knowledge, specific interests, and detailed queries/search prompts, one's ability to find curated (or biased) answers to their questions increased even *further*.

### Third, is the appearance of LLMS (Primarily ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude):

As one might imagine, unrestricted access to a free, super-intelligent, multimodal neural network/search-engine/LLM for all ages meant that virtually all assignments (and or cognitive processes) could be (in one way or another) almost entirely **outsourced**. This has utterly wrecked the public school system (which is already facing near virtual extinction for a number of other reasons) by fundamentally undercutting the necessary steps for learning (e.g., actually thinking, reading, or studying). A recent study by MIT--the first of its kind to systematically record, measure, and map the cognitive impact of large-language-model / search engine / generative content on the learning mind during education-- showed a *profound* handicapping effect on LTP, memory recall, and everything else necessary for growing, maintaining, or using one's brain.

The study is nothing short of damning. VVV

ME

College students get ChatGPT Plus free now through May.

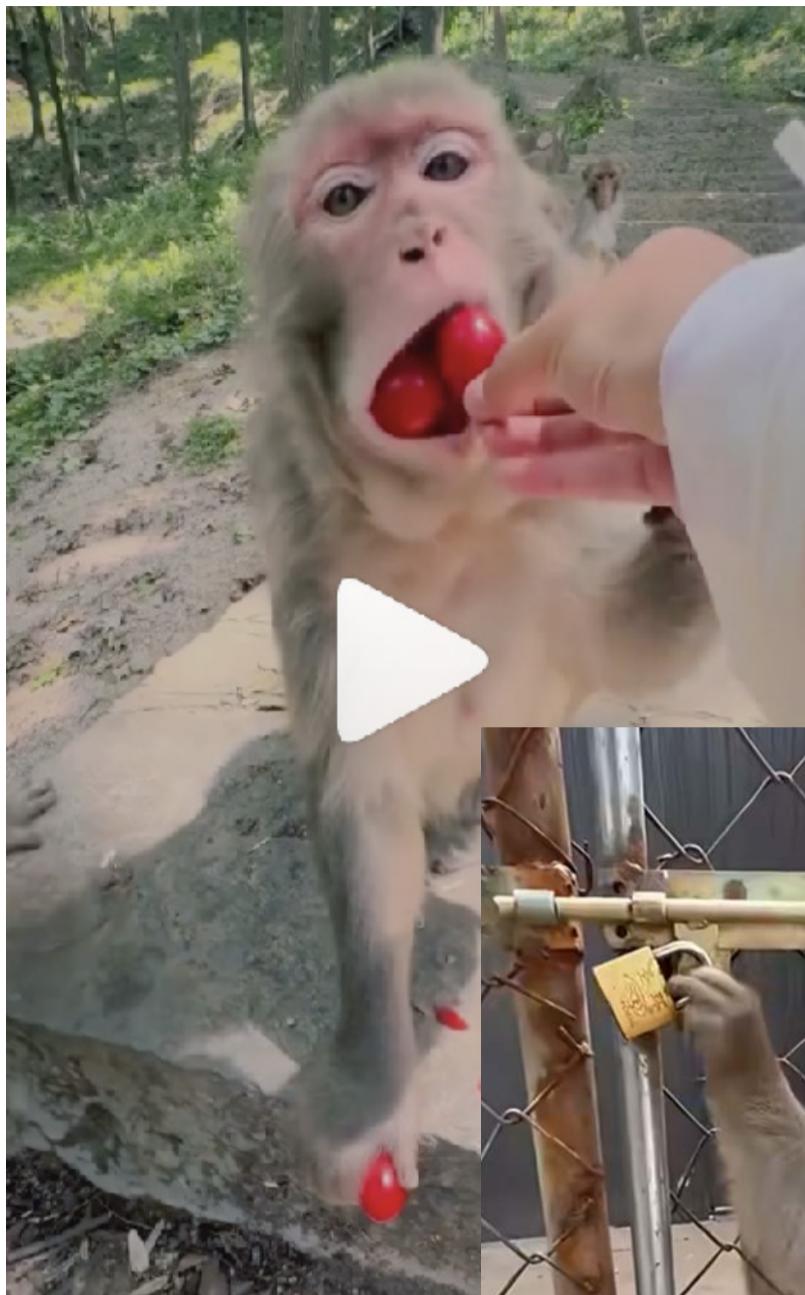
SEARCH ENGINES

FREE DURING FINALS

Devil's Contract," by Ed Simon, is a rich history of Faustian bargain - The Washington Post

Visit >

A collage featuring a QR code, a stack of books about Goethe's Faust, a satirical illustration of Faust and the Devil, and a quote from 'The Washington Post'. Red arrows point from the text 'SEARCH ENGINES' to the satirical illustration and from the quote to the word 'Faustian'.



## 2: XING XING THE MONKEY / METASKINNER BOXES / DATA-GLUT / FAUST / THE ALL SEEING iPHONE



verasantiaguera Poor animal , inside a cage forever 😢



In my lengthy trek down the never ending length my Instagram Reels feed over the past 5 years or so, I am partially delighted but mostly disturbed to report that by far and above one of the most popular (billions of views) and prolific subjects of non-human-subject content are various monkeys, primates, or relatively intelligent mammals (In order of prevalence: Rhesus/Tibetan Japanese Macaques, Chimpanzees, Gorillas, Bonobos, Proboscis Monkeys, Gibbons, etc.). A major through-line for all of these videos is an explicit anthropomorphism of these animals— usually by means of provoking them, teasing them, dressing them, giving them access to a phone which they can scroll on, sometimes even giving them booze and cigarettes.

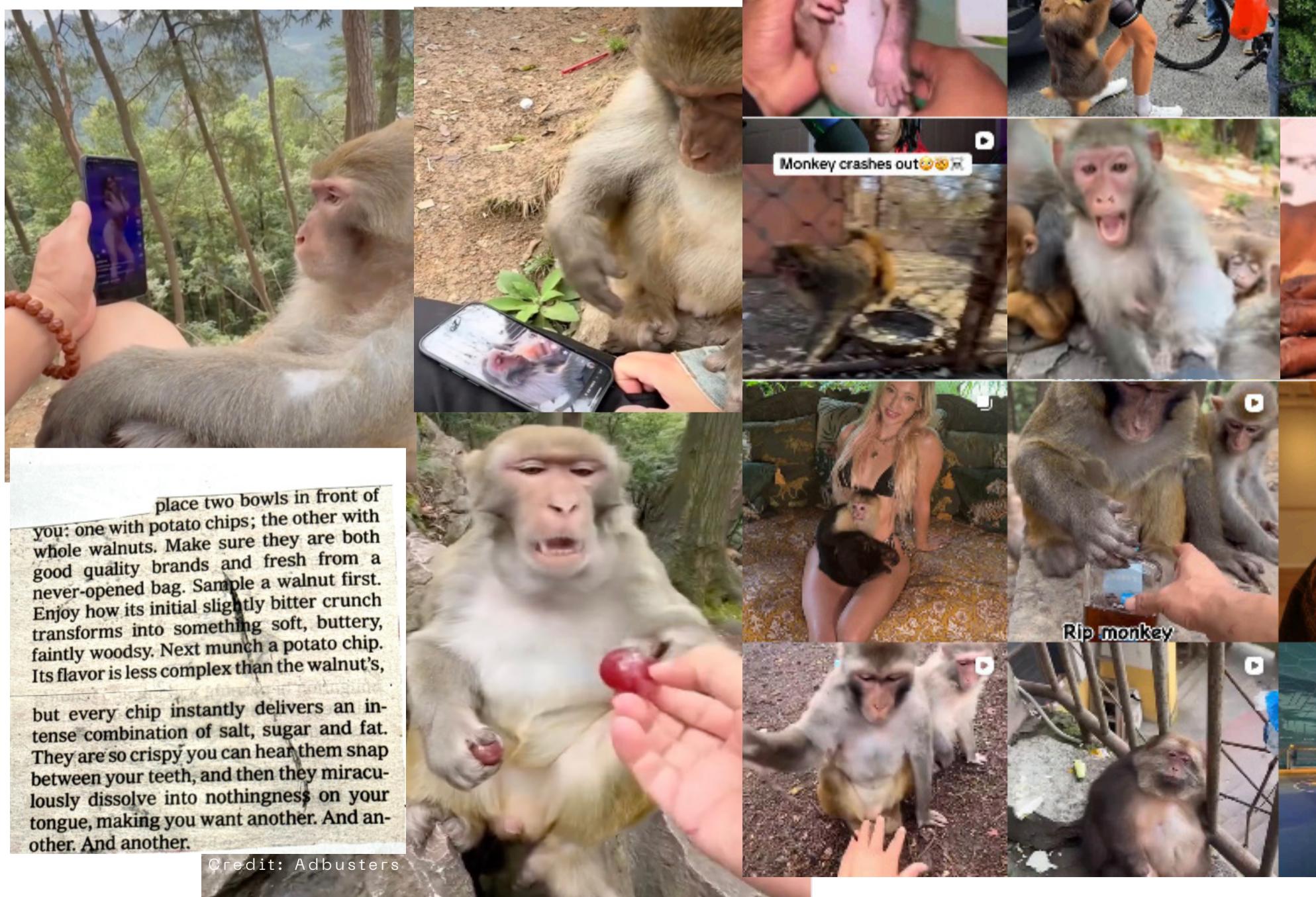
The most popular genre of this content, wherein the camera person (reduced to an anonymous hand) incessantly feeds the monkey until it either chokes, flees, or ‘crashes out’. There are hundreds of these videos, and there seems to be multiple enclaves of these monkeys who have become disturbingly familiar with this media-provoked overfeeding practice. Here is a classic example of these videos:

The poetic irony of this content is immediately evident to me: humans are not unlike monkeys. The Tibetan and Rhesus macaque (pictured in the linked videos) share approximately 93–94% of their genetic sequence with humans. Their brain organization—including cortical folding, limbic circuitry, and dopamine-rich reward pathways—is also strikingly similar. The major differences between our brains and theirs is the size which, notably, emerged from a sort of peculiar genetic mutation in the pelvis of early hominid primates which allowed for larger cranial diameter, and thus greater neuronal space. Importantly, this extra space paved the way for an overdeveloped prefrontal cortical region (more on this later).



There is something beyond grotesquely morally reprehensible about harvesting entertainment from these (relatively speaking) entirely conscious creatures in the way that we are--these mammalian kin of ours which have genetic, anatomical, functional, and even emotional constituents highly comparable to our own.

What I find in these videos, (as effectively demonstrated by Instagram’s **#Monkey Rage Bait** page--see below) is another layer in the nausea-inducing onion of dystopia-- us humans, through a state of distorted physiological instinct by external/economically-motivated manipulation, have come to resemble the very creature we pity and scoff at on our screens.



What would an outsider—an extraterrestrial—make of this scene? Of a hairy primate slouched and hypnotized by a portable electronic device (used as a new ontological modus operandi) which repeatedly projects increasingly colorful units of novel video, images, and sounds into their sense apparatus— little bytes of whatever the seductive hand feeds them (e.g., the centrally curated stimulus/substance)? Which very obviously evokes a parasitic dopaminergic feedback behavior reminiscent of the very content they are consuming? A voracious creature observing a hardly different voracious creature performing the same behavior as them, for the sake of mindless entertainment? Here I am, consuming video after video- bite sized chunks of rich video, one after the other. I scroll to the next before finishing the one at hand. I do this until I can simply take no more—I am not just satiated, I am overfilled. I am stuffed to incapacity by my own hand.

And yet, it feels as though it is my choice to scroll. The decision as to whether or not I ‘eat another fruit’ as it were, is my moral responsibility. I like to think I am more than a monkey, and yet I seem to be subject to the same behavioral Achilles heel--I can’t turn down a good dopamine hit. Greater neuronal space equates in humans to a larger cortical area, resulting in stronger circuitry regarding self-control.

Yet, these factors alone do not complete the ethical equation.

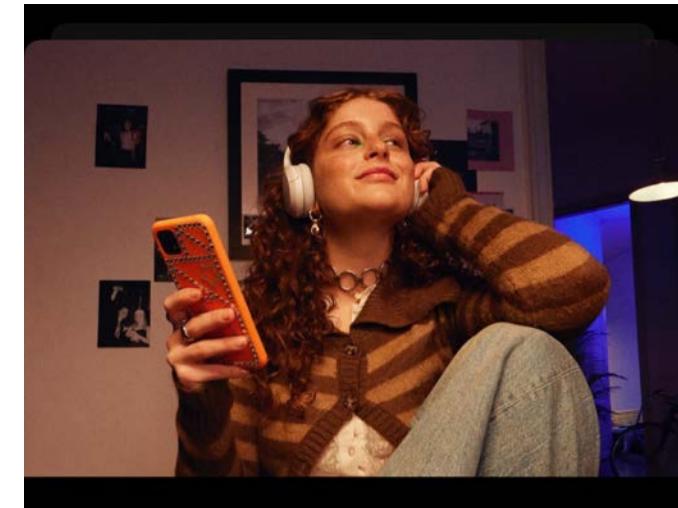
### **My volition to decide is directly biased, via mechanically optimized, engineered design principles that exploit the feedback loops of my physical neurology, psychological vulnerabilities, and social landscape.**

This is where the importance of the very archetype of media interaction (vertical video, infinite scroll, etc.) becomes a crucial to discuss. The decision of “Have I had enough?” **is made as easy as technologically possible and biased via media content in one direction**— such that my mesolimbic pathways are biologically tricked into a destructive feedback loop of continuous engagement. The act of ‘The Scroll’ is designed explicitly to require *negligible effort*, such that the act of choosing is devolved into an automatic function of muscle memory. Before each bite is swallowed, a new one has been thoughtlessly initiated by the jaw. Elements of in-app design of things like navigation, repost buttons, ‘liking’ protocols, etc. are placed intentionally to increase the chances of accidental or involuntary engagement behaviors. The most recent example of this is Instagram’s design shift which took the most common swipe function (which is to swipe left, either to go through a photo series or to access one’s inbox) and made it into the gesture which opens Reels--by far the most engagement-optimized region of the Instagram UX. Even when people accidentally swipe to Reels, their *chances* of staying on the app for longer increase massively due to the greater comparative potency of the media (e.g. full-screen-footprint video/audio vs static photos/text).

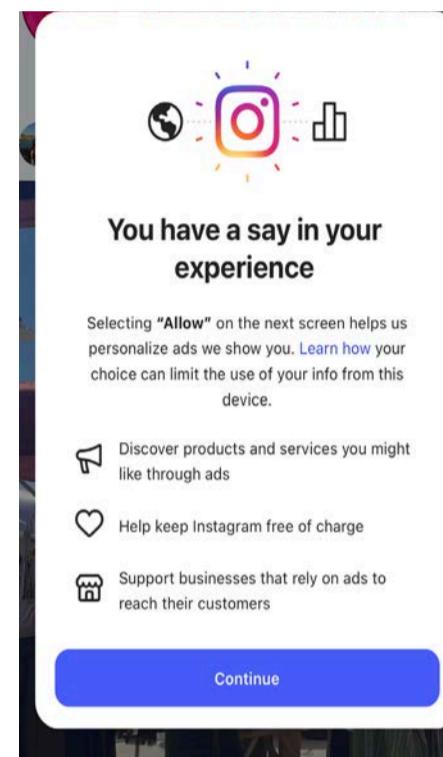
iOS 26 recently popularized an ‘accessibility feature’, wherein the face of the phone user is actively scanned while passively scrolling by an array of invisible lasers which can track depth, expression, and facial features (LIDAR [the same hardware as ‘Face ID’] and ARkit) such that they only need to lick the air to scroll. I’ve heard it referred to as the “Apple Tongue-scroll.”

Screen licking isn’t an entirely new phenomenon however— I remember the 2012 Apple acquisition of AuthenTec (this was a \$365 million dollar deal according to Wikipedia). This corporate assimilation, which resulted in the dime sized Touch-ID thumb-sensor built into the base of the phone for biometric verification. It wasn’t long before my (at the time, middle-school) peers discovered that the sensors were not only capable of recognizing fingerprints, but also the unique arrangements of tastebuds (more accurately, the Papillae) on any unique individual’s tongue.

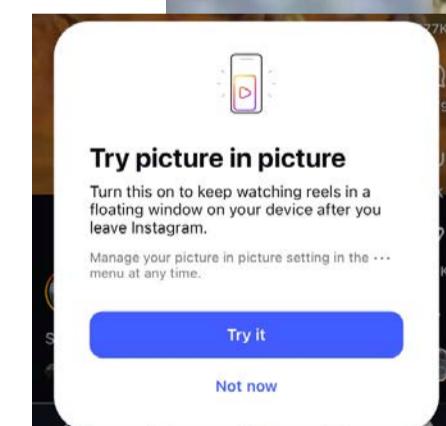
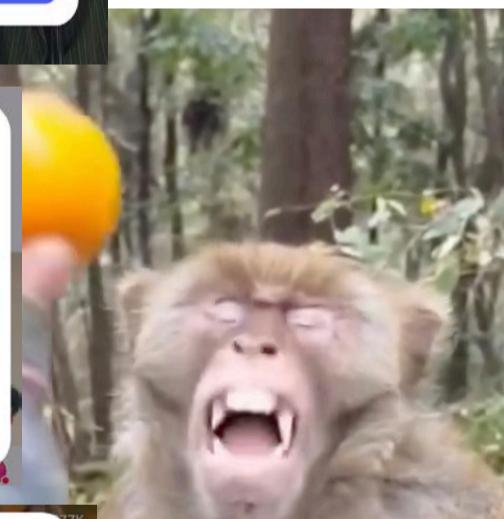
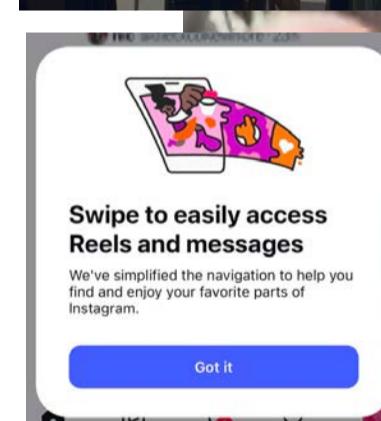
I distinctly recall the scene of the news breaking around the lunch table, and all of us licking our iPhone 5s over destroyed milk cartons and chromebooks.



You're in control



--For those with an underdeveloped prefrontal cortex, this is literally not the case-- to present a choice to an organism without sufficient neurological regulation circuits is like giving bread to mold and then blaming it for eating it



What kind of sick poetic irony is this? What kind of conditions made these scenes possible?

Its recursive, blatantly exploitative self-domestication of one's own species by means of addictive technology and biological extortion. Its monetized **overfeeding**. The responsible techno-media companies *openly admit that they use addictive technology* when they are sufficiently prodded by the legal system (which is far too often embarrassingly under-informed and media-illiterate). The claim that big tech makes their money by producing the most addictive and privacy violating product possible hardly needs to be argued any longer, since it has made its way to court more than a few times (and actually increasingly as of late--one of the few positives I can provide regarding this topic):



Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg has been ordered to testify in a landmark trial in the US over the impact of social media on young people.

Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Carolyn Kuhl this week rejected the argument his company, Meta Platforms, had made that an in-person appearance was unnecessary.

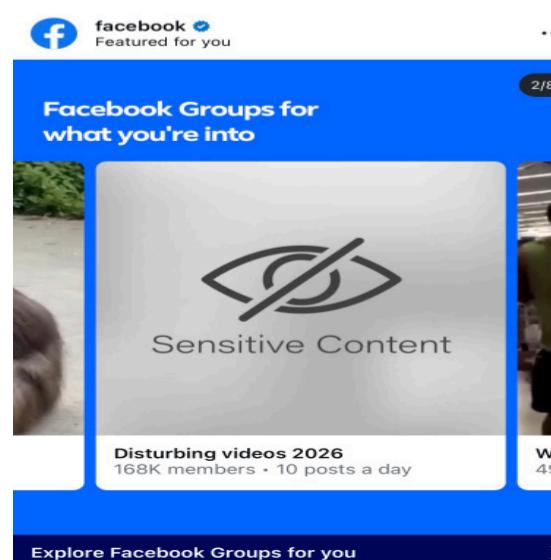
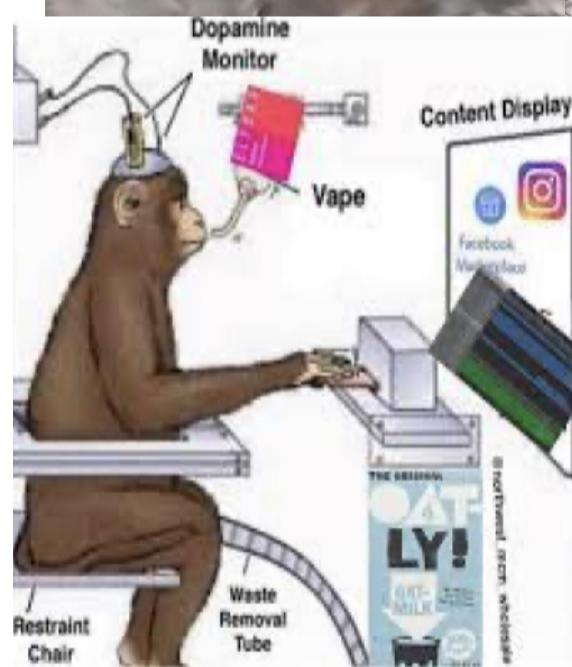
Her order also applies to Snap boss Evan Spiegel, as well as Adam Mosseri, who leads Meta-owned Instagram.

The trial, expected in January, is among the first to advance from a wave of litigation accusing social media companies of making their apps addictive and enticing to young people despite being aware of mental health and other risks.

cristina880000 😂😂😂😂😂  
6w 2 likes Reply

tinohlion Too good to be true 😂 it's suspicious  
5w 1 like Reply

itz\_bens1.1/love angry monkeys



The metaphor of these bizarrely abusive videos for our current media condition strikes me deeper with each scroll. With curative media paradigms, we have found ourselves devolved to the role of a primate without rights to our own consumptive control-- bodies programmed by neurotransmitters which evolved for an entirely different world than the one we find ourselves in, faced with technology optimized for dependence, obsession, and addiction.

In many ways, our screens do indeed give us exactly what we want (which is an issue in its own right due to tolerance-response curves)-- but what is perhaps more important is that they also give us exactly the *opposite*. That #MonkeyRageBait is such a popular page on Instagram makes a great deal of sense. On one hand, monkeys' anthropomorphic qualities make them an ideal spectacle from the start-- but moreover, the element of rage is extremely evident here. In the words of Scott Galloway, (Professor of Marketing at NYU Stern School of Business):

"We used to say that sex sells better than anything, then the algorithms found something that sells even more in terms of gluing you to a screen, and that is **rage**.

**Enagement = engagement = shareholder value."**

The possibility of activating new applications imperceptibly slips into the *obligation* to do so.

And now, what had to happen has happened. This uneasiness of ours has been detected and we're offered a way out of it. The "Lite Phone 2" brings a few essential tools like messaging, an alarm clock or a ride home, so it's even easier to ditch your smartphone more often or for good. It's a phone that 'actually respects' you.

A weird negativity is at work here. You're buying the phone because of what you don't want it to do... You just get caught in a circular paradox.

First you pay for all the additional functions provided by smartphones, then you pay even more to acquire some freedom and get rid of these additional functions.

-- Slavoj Žižek

Shorts



Slavoj Žižek: to understand normality ... ; Slavoj Žižek: perversion is not subversion ; Slavoj Žižek: Hysteria is historical ; Slavoj Žižek: When lo isn't love

Mobil  
Herr Zigarette



### 3: ECONOMICS OF SMOKING/ TOLERANCE CAP NEUROLOGY / 'HORIZON' / REDOsing BEHAVIOR / NOVELTY /



zeobat · 6h

...



Jonas Čeika ✅  
@PhilosophyCuck

X.com

Cigarettes are modernist & vapes are late-capitalist, bc a cigarette has an inherent duration which requires you to take a break, and allows for contemplation or conversation, whereas a vape can be hit again at any chosen time, without interrupting the tempo of postmodernity

7:49 PM · 11/7/25 · 87K Views

41

1K

7.2K

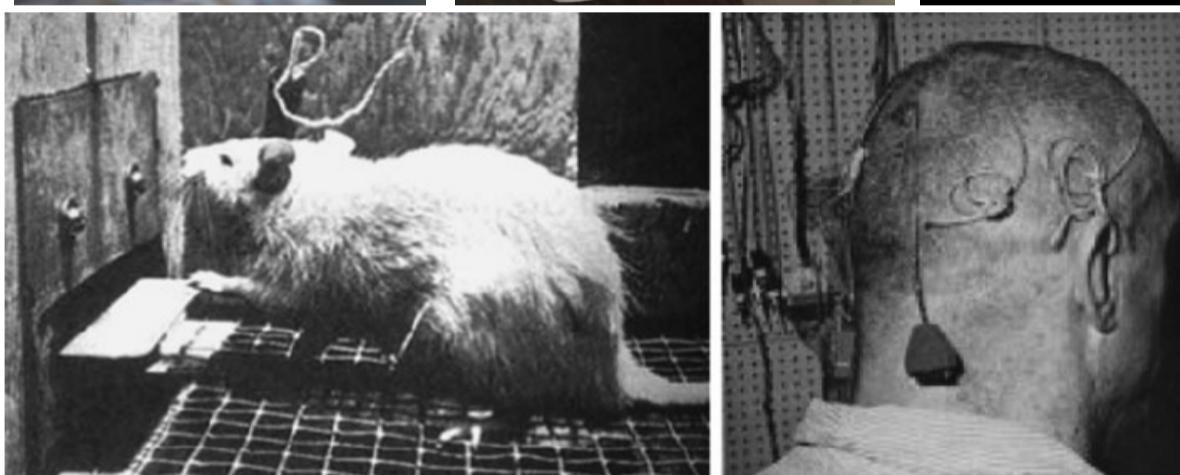
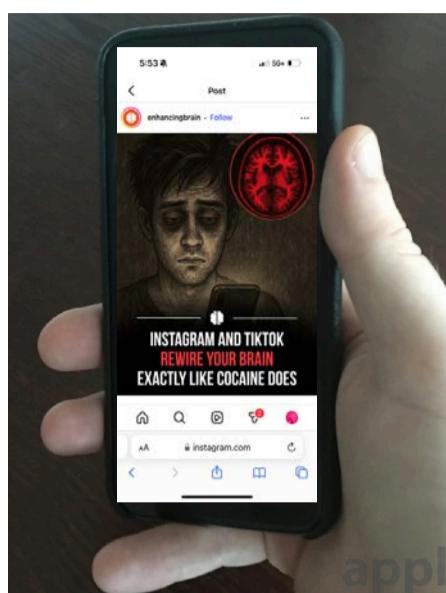
692

↑



Scroll on Instagram tonight. Click on the first ad you see. Start a fight about geopolitics in a mostly empty comment section. Download an app you've never used before. Consume some content created by someone you may have nothing in common with. Post those Twitter drafts. Block your parents. Buy Meta verified. Hell, buy all those subscriptions. Be open to a world where you may not hate or dislike the person whose reel you're watching, but spend hours arguing with them anyways. Scroll slowly. Destroy your attention span. Send every third post to your coworkers and/or distant acquaintances. Check in on yourself. Enjoy the ride."

It seems to be a fundamental principle our current economy that **any performance or addictive potential found in an appliance will be exploited to its maximum possible degree**. In the case of personal, consumer technology (hardware but more often software), a particularly concerning dynamic arises between the user of the product and the hidden designers and owners of that product. That dynamic, which I believe has become ubiquitous among *all demographics (in one form or another)* is dependency-- or in more straightforward vocabulary, **addiction**. Addiction is more commonplace in the newest generations than ever before, because it is more **available** than it ever has been. There are entire cultures of addiction, and it's starting to show--indeed mostly in the hidden neuronal structure of our brains, but also in our bodies:



Left: Olds and Milner (1954)

Right: Neuralink Human trials (2024)



What happens to a creature when scarcity of pleasure, or the dopaminergic feedback loop has no limiting force? In other words, what happens to an organism when it has infinite access to a behavior that promises pleasure? Psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan describes this as *Jouissance*: a mode of enjoyment that **exceeds pleasure**, violates the pleasure principle, pushes the subject **beyond homeostasis**, and is experienced as painful-pleasure—an **excessive**, transgressive, disruptive **surplus** of drive rather than regulated satisfaction (Seminar VII: The Ethics of Psychoanalysis, 1960).



Science has long observed the fatal outcomes of *jouissance* in many complex organisms--the quintessential study first being done by Olds & Milner in 1954, wherein an electrode was placed on the so-called “pleasure centers” of a rat’s brain, which could be electrically triggered by the ‘voluntary’ pressing of a lever. The rats consistently pressed the pleasure button until they starved and died. In other words, fundamental biological instincts of self preservation and control were technologically bypassed, resulting in “volitional” self annihilation. The very same neurophysiological process occurs in humans with their phones, as they find themselves scrolling towards infinity despite sometimes even explicitly wishing not to.

Unfortunately, this has generally come to be considered as socially acceptable, necessary, and typical for people of all ages. To consume the content in a paradigm which openly promises hyper-curated material that will consistently have you itching for *more* whether or not your most conscious self actually *wants* more. It’s hard to reckon with the fact that technological design is capable of fully undermining own human volition, but these days, our devices regularly and easily bypass our ability to choose-- despite our conscious awareness of it. The *phone* decides to scroll, and with it we are dragged.



# 4: ON META

## MEDIATIZATION OF PLATFORMS / UX AND GUI CONVERGENCE

Through my multimodal cross-study of literature, media, and digital software, I settled specifically on a case study of Meta Platforms (Instagram, Facebook, Whatsapp, Threads, Meta AI, Oculus, Etc.) Meta is undoubtedly one of the primary determining forces in this mass-media movement. If Coca-Cola perfected Soda (and the increase in diabetes), Instagram perfected social media (and the increase of Brainrot). Its growing hard to ignore the significance of influence that this particular company has. It is now beyond benign entertainment and digital socializing-- it has extended to become the primary modes of news, journalism, literature, art, general ideology, political propaganda, and most anything else you can name. As each of these domains transition to a medium which relies exclusively on engagement metrics and data gathering techniques that please advertisement shareholders, they are compressed in quality, accuracy, legitimacy, and just about any other positive virtue which evolved out of traditional media.

I should note that by *no means* is Meta the only sources of this so-called 'enshittification' (Doctorow, 2015)-- in many ways media such as Youtube shorts, TikTok, and even Xiaohongshu/Douyin (Chinese TikTok clones) are sources of even higher calibers of Brainrot than Instagram. (see bottom left, for typical cold-start default/algorithmic content examples). However, Meta has become something of a catch-all for 'Brainrot' and is indeed the media network I have far and above more experience with than any others. The same is true for many others: the reason I have chosen this as a case model is in part due to its sheer size, ubiquity, and success. As of the end of 2024, Meta boasts **3.35 billion daily active users** across its core products. As of May 2025, they hold a market capitalization of over **\$1.7 trillion**. I hope this fact alone is enough to justify the global importance of this research domain, despite the field of 'internet Meta-meta-analysis' only emerging relatively recently (at the very least, within my lifetime).

The structural archetypes popularized by this platform (e.g. vertical, video-optimized, infinite scroll, algorithmically optimized content-suggestion paradigms, 'stories', DMs, Posts, etc.) have metastasized into nearly all other major social networking/streaming platforms (e.g., LinkedIn, Spotify, Substack, etc.) and represent an idealized form of media capital: **endless, self-propagating, potent, and portable.**



## 'TERMS OF SERVICES' AND WHATS FOUND WHEN YOU ACTUALLY READ THEM

Dima Yarovinsky's 'I AGREE' installation wherein the pink line is the Instagram terms of service printed on standard a4 paper at 12 point font. (Designboom)



We are entering a new Orwellian order. It's a new age of shamelessness. Big powers do what they can. feel this hypocritical need to somehow justify it. -- Slavoj Žižek

≡  Meta

Artificial intelligence (AI) systems inform the ranking of content for many experiences on Meta's products, such as viewing Facebook Feed, watching reels on Instagram or browsing Facebook Marketplace.



USING INSTAGRAM IS USING AI.

If some of the stuff that has been shared regarding your data and the ways that its being directly used either against you or others, you are not alone and it is not your fault. Companies work very hard to make their terms of service into something that no one ever looks at. According to most estimates, **97%** of 18-34 year-olds agree to 'terms of service agreements without reading them. Regardless if one does, what's contained is updated as often as the company would like with little more than an easily dismissed "We updated our TOS : **Okay**" blurb.



**The average digital terms and service agreement is longer than the average Shakespeare play.** At a rate of 200 words per minute, an industry standard 'terms of service' agreement takes over an hour to read in entirety. When you take that hour, it becomes immediately evident that there is no such thing as "passively scrolling". You are always being recorded while using the product, and often when you aren't.

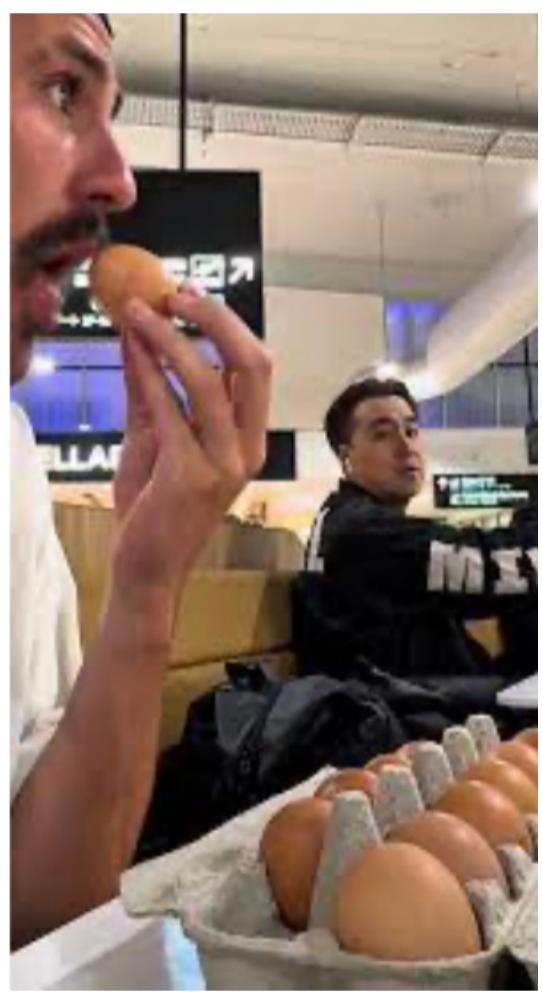


There is a portion of Meta's settings titled "*your activities off Meta technologies*", wherein you can request to see how many external websites, companies, and sources of information about you are being gathered by Meta to increase the strength of your algorithms and ad-preferences. This is a primary force behind that phenomenon where you search for something, say something, or think something *off* of Instagram, and then minutes later find that product advertised on your home feed. When I went through my personal data request process, I discovered *thousands* of websites had provided Meta my data from their cookies (e.g. location-derived identifiers, device-level signature data, personally linkable behavioral trails, high-resolution interaction telemetry, commercial and demographic inference vectors).

## YOU CAN NOT CONSENT TO SOMETHING YOU DON'T READ OR UNDERSTAND.

On our Products<sup>[3]</sup>, you can send messages, take photos and videos, buy or sell things and much more. We call all of the things you can do on our Products "activity." We collect your activity across our Products and information you provide<sup>[5]</sup>, such as:

- Content you create, like posts, comments or audio.
- Content you provide through our camera feature or your camera roll settings, or through our voice-enabled features. Learn more<sup>[6]</sup> about what we collect from these features, and how we use information from the camera for masks, filters, avatars and effects.
- Messages you send and receive, including their content, subject to applicable law. On some Products, you can use end-to-end encrypted messages. Learn more about how end-to-end encryption works.
- Metadata<sup>[7]</sup> about content and messages, subject to applicable law.
- Interactions with Meta's artificial intelligence technology and related metadata. For example, messages you or others receive from, share with or send to Meta's artificial intelligence technology.
- Types of content, including ads, you view or interact with, and how you interact with it.
- Apps and features you use, and what actions you take in them. See examples<sup>[8]</sup>.
- Purchases or other transactions you make, such as through Meta checkout experiences, including credit card information. Learn more<sup>[9]</sup>.



Instagram · raybanmeta • Sponsored

Ray-Ban | Meta

\$37 OFF FOR STUDENTS

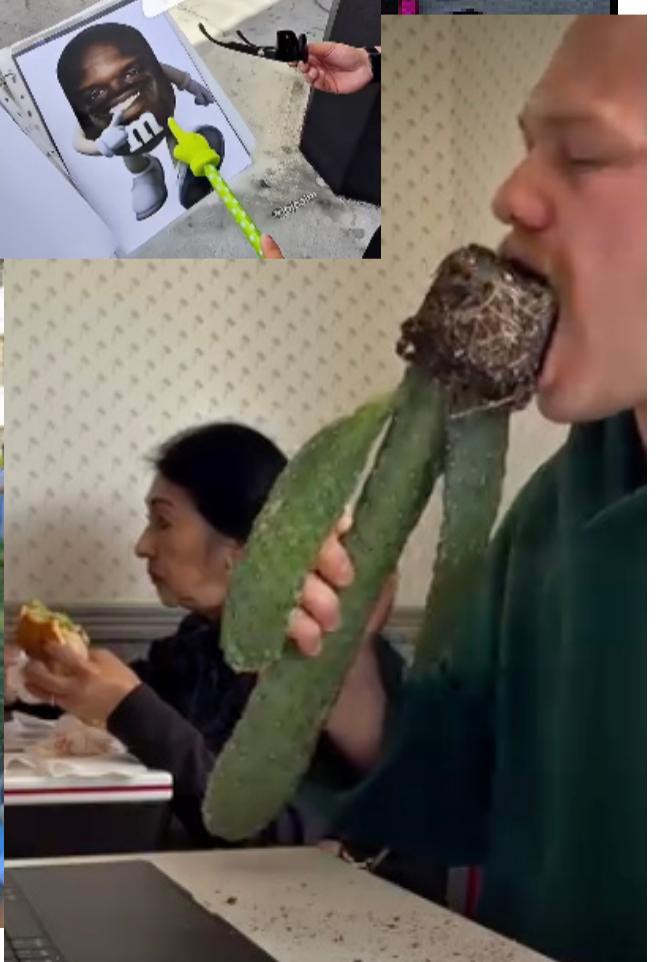
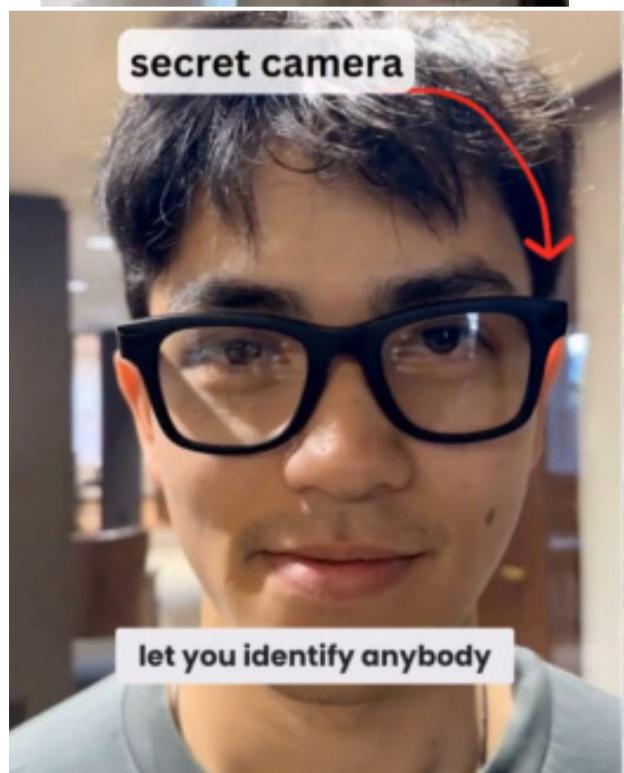
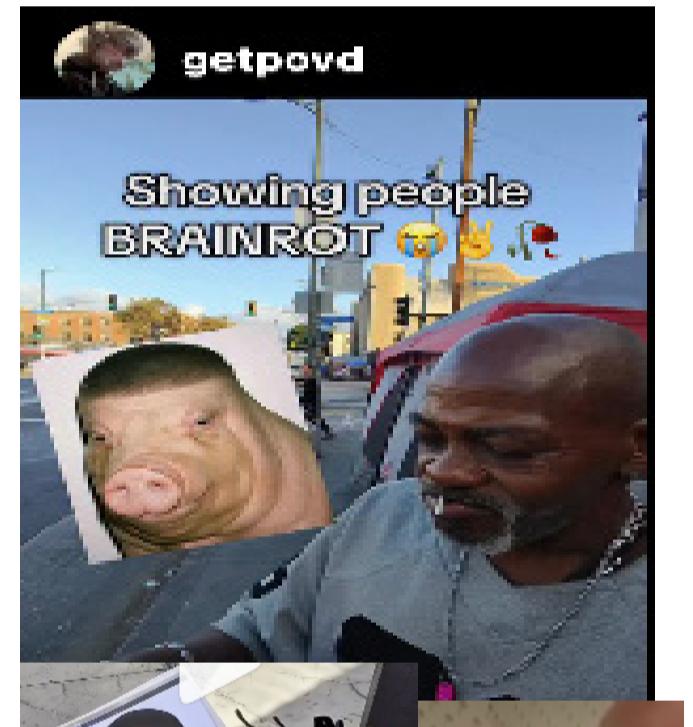
"Hey Meta..."

Shop now >

Like Comment Share

'SPECTACLE' SOCIETY

Zuckerburg wearing a t-shirt reading \*"Aut Zuck aut nihil"\*(Zuck or nothing), a play on \*"Aut Caesar aut nihil"\*(Caesar or nothing).



Increasingly common across Meta products are shameless product placements for addictive marketplaces. One of the most prominent cases of this is with **Rainbet**, by **Stakes** an online gambling app which hires celebrities, streamers, and content creators as a part of their “affiliate program”

#### ▼ What is the affiliate program?

The Affiliate Program is a partnership between you and the operator, Rainbet. As part of the program, the operator pays you a commission for each referred customer who remains active on the platform.

A great deal of these affiliates produce “nuisance content” (see below). Creators often choose regular public citizens as their victims-- often, the more psychologically or socioeconomically vulnerable the subject is, the easier it is to wring content out of them. With more controversial content comes greater traffic to Rainbet. **There are zero constraints as to how the platform is promoted, nor to whom.**

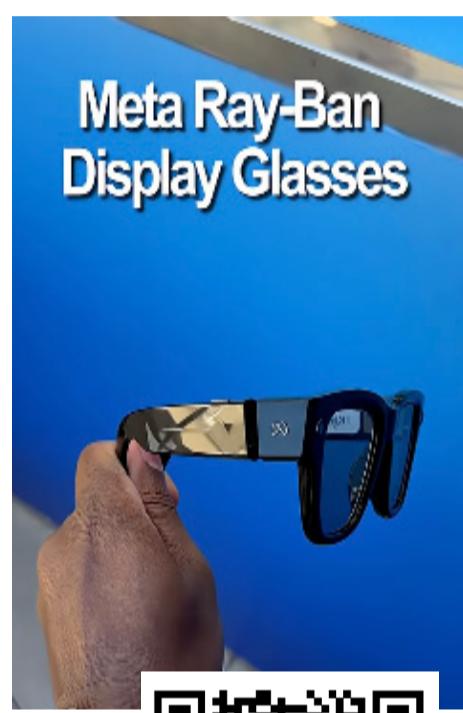
#### ▼ Who can register in the affiliate program?

Anyone with a following, website traffic, clients, subscribers, or other means to promote and direct people to [www.Rainbet.com](http://www.Rainbet.com) is eligible to join the Rainbet Affiliate Program.

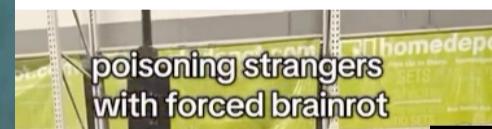
As you can probably predict at this point, Rainbet’s niche demographic has clearly become young, chronically online, addiction-prone adolescents. Some of the most successful companies we see in addictive economics made their fortunes by managing to slink through wide legal loopholes and market grey-areas (e.g. fruit/candy flavored Juul vape cartridges, energy drinks, mobile gaming apps, workout supplements, crypto-shitcoins, etc). Naturally, the **media** and **content** we see emerge from the affiliate program is also entirely unconcerned with the wellbeing of their intentionally vulnerable consumers. Developmentally speaking, addiction is (by far) easier to provoke in children than in adults. Advertisement companies realize this, and regularly perform what Noam Chomsky refers to literally as “nagging propaganda” oriented towards children, who have a particularly strong force on the economic behavior of their parents (or in this case, their own allowance) that has been directly translated to real money through an ‘in-game’ currency which purchases ‘tokens’ to gamble with. This is the legal loophole through which we find 15-year olds legally betting their savings in the back of math class.

**“About 20 or 30 years ago, the advertising industry realized that there’s a sector of the population that they’re not reaching because they don’t have money, known as children. And some bright guys figured, well, we can get around this.”**  
-Noam Chomsky

## Meta Ray-Ban Display Glasses



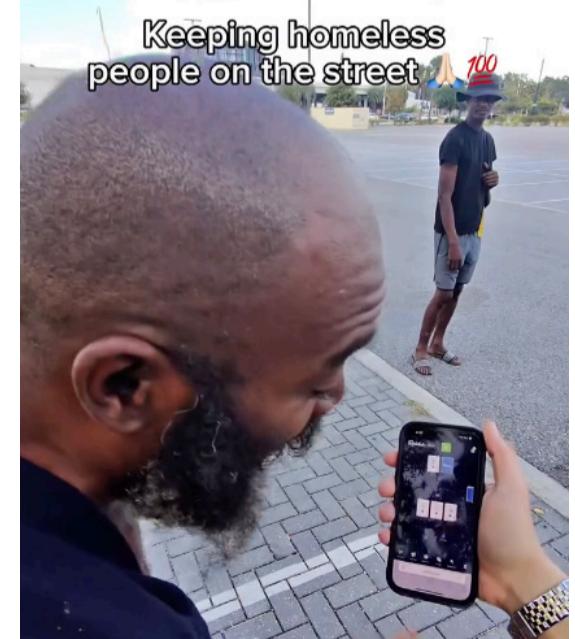
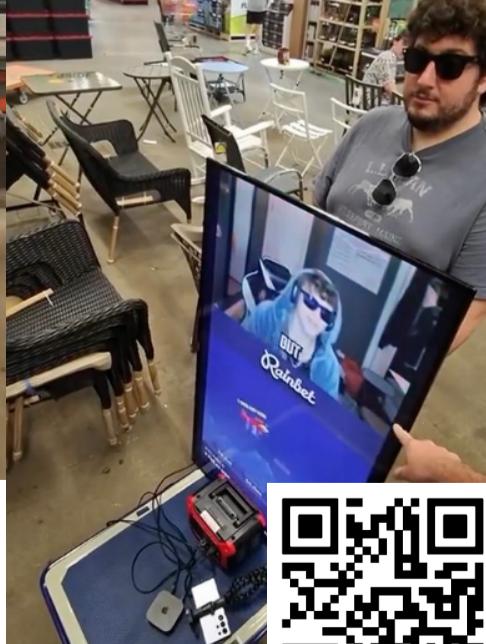
‘Meta Ray Bans’ also endorses hundreds of thousands of posts wherein extremely shady “pick-up artists” descend upon typically college-aged girls and demonstrate to an online crowd of adolescent boys how to objectify and commoditize folks to their faces while still acquiring their numbers.



Ray-Ban Meta glasses

The whole thing is morally and socially reprehensible, but perhaps moreover just an unabashedly **sleazy** business model.

(Concerningly, one of the best case studies of this addiction-based/pyramid-scheme advertising can be found on Donald Trump’s social media platform “Truth Social”, wherein I once counted 27 consecutive horse-dewormer-alleged-COVID-19-antidote Ivermectin ads, and then advertisements for Trump’s own digital shitcoin, but I digress).



(EXAMPLES OF RAINBET AFFILIATE CONTENT)

# 5: THE SEEDY UNDERBELLY / THE GOON AGENDA / ELSAGATE 2.0

"Sex Sells."

--Stanford Research into the Impact of Tobacco Advertising (SRITA)

Jon Rafman, one of the biggest names in early net-gen web art and one of the first artists who was openly "chronically online" (who used the early internet fervently and then found his career brought to an instant halt by the internet, when he was canceled online for sexual misconduct) describes the post-Y2K fall from optimism from the perspective of the first generation who "took surfing the web very seriously":

*"I saw in these virtual spaces reflection of our world. In a way they were more transparent reflections because they pointed to their own artificiality. I think in day to day life we forget that we are all putting on avatars, putting on masks, and that we actually exist in all these different virtual worlds. But here you had a reflection of that, but just pointing towards its own artificiality. And also you had these spaces that were, especially in the case of Second Life, that were completely user-generated. And so you had these rich, really the truly postmodern worlds of where you have all these different signifiers, symbols from all of history floating around together like Las Vegas in one giant virtual space. And I thought in a way it represented this world of desire, worlds of the dreams, with what it showed—what was lacking in our real world. And at the same time I think there was darkness, and I would like to explore, like, the dark seedy underbelly. But at this time actually it was more of a sort of romantic utopian search that was going on, which versus now, which I think is an increasingly darker search. But at the time there was a kind of a joy at just sheer active exploration"*

-Rafman (who, according to Wikipedia, is one of the first AI-driven musical artists in known history)



But unrestricted exploration comes at a price. I chose Rafman on purpose because he is both a spokesperson of sorts for the internet and a seedy figure indeed. The most chronically online demographic often show a sort of moral underbelly which drags along the lower principles of humankind—the web is void of socio-informational boundaries, and thus there is a strong market for controversy, illegitimate, exploitation, explicitness, edginess, radicalism, taboo, shamelessness, and unfettered anonymity. Great swaths of internet media is shamelessly dedicated to the unrestricted behavior of the Id of the masses. I think Freud would have a field day with the current state of incognito browsing—that is, the use of the internet which falsely convinces us that we are no longer under a watchful eye, and that the data which we search is not being actively recorded and sold via cookies. Psychoanalytics have finally become lucrative.

As reflected by the mainstream popularity and concerning algorithmic success of 'edgy' content in Brainrot content (The most common at the moment being insensitive deepfakes of George Floyd, Charlie Kirk, Benjamin Netanyahu, and/or down-syndrome AI-face filters)-- something about the unfettered anonymity inherent in Instagram seems to be growing the social phenomenon Žižek describes as "Utter Shamelessness". As one might expect, the corpus of media which reflects this is disturbingly vast and diffused across many demographics and platforms. Again, this is the portion of the rotliography which falls into F-tier or lower; I refuse to further platform this content, but Meta does not. If you for some reason feel obligated to see the severity of this content, searching "Brainrot" in Instagram's search bar will eagerly provide it to you.

The foundational software for Facebook, Instagram and Meta itself emerged from a morally questionable digital networking system based on how people physical looked. As a reminder, FaceMash (the "hot-or-not" clone that rated students' physical appearance without consent) was Mark Zuckerberg's first successful social media platform. He made this by scraping student ID photos without permission. According to any independent algorithm audit (e.g. Poynter Institute, Wired, etc.) it seems that much of this dubious content-recommendation agenda remains present in current Instagram app:



Referent Face



| Face 1 | Face 2 | Face 3 | Face 4 |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 50     | 66     | 55     | 73     |

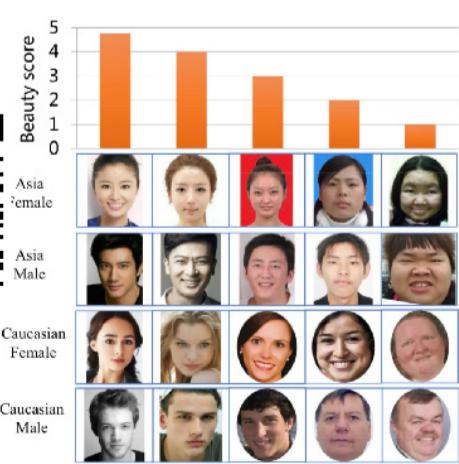


Image Credit: South China University of Technology

When considering the implications of the fundamental media recommendation engine being based on a function of engagement optimization, it makes a great deal of sense that one of the more prolific features to exploit is the human instinct for sex: *taboo, controversy, shock, provocation, voyeurism, erotic novelty, moral transgression, interpersonal drama, and personalized desire-based stimuli* is lucrative. The worst part is that this techno-psychological media exploitation works best on the vulnerable-- e.g., the adolescent brain.

**Generate professional videos in minutes, not days.**  
Save up to \$3,000 per video compared to traditional production costs.

Save 90% Time Save \$3k per video Powerful Editor 98% Satisfaction

Trusted by professional creators worldwide

"Revid got me 3 millions views on my TikTok educational channel. Absolute game-changer for my content production." — Alex M., Content Creator with 500K+ followers

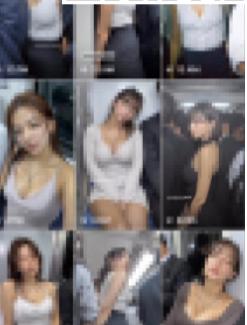
14,258+ users creating 10,000+ videos monthly  
Join creators who have increased their engagement by an average of 43% with our AI-powered videos



this definition has since changed, but not been updated in dictionaries. The real definition is in this article----->



This -----> is an account who's most recent 3 posts have a total of **85 million views**. It exclusively and obsessively posts videos of **AI-generated women** (trained on real images of women from social-media datasets) wearing wet office attire.

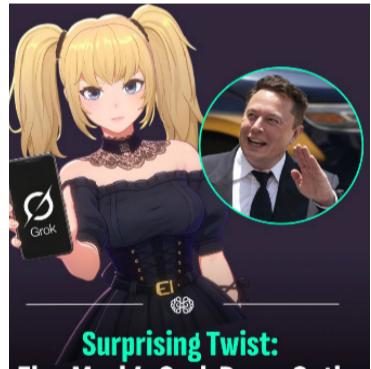


Reddit · r/Instagram  
3 comments · 4 years ago ·  
The reels on my explore page are only shirtless men ...  
The reels on my explore page are only ever health coaches/shirtless dudes working out and making me feel fat and irritated.

Many Instagram users have reported hypersexualized recommended content, feeds/algorithms, and 'explore pages':

<-----





**Surprising Twist:**  
**Elon Musk's Grok Drops Goth Anime AI Companions**





Strike 3 Holdings discovered illegal downloads of some of its adult films on Meta corporate IP addresses, as well as other downloads that Meta allegedly concealed using a "stealth network" of 2,500 "hidden IP addresses." Accusing Meta of stealing porn to secretly train an unannounced adult version of its AI model powering Movie Gen, Strike 3 sought damages that could have exceeded \$350 million, TorrentFreak reports.

A primary sector of the internet is composed of people without a fully formed prefrontal cortex--the first generation in history to be born *into* the modus operandi of digital social networking and who thus have a voracious tolerance and diet for it. Unfortunately for those adolescents, the amount of the internet made up of pornographic material is somewhere between 4 and 37 percent (depending on which statisticians you ask). Those statistics are from 2010 though, and one can imagine the degree to which generative AI has increased this number (especially considering the brute force algorithmic automation schemes which are often found in generative media-production bots, (e.g. automated YouTube clipper softwares--see left) and any number of socially or sexually programmed AI "companions".

It is a well-known phenomenon among the chronically online for one's favorite meme page to be either purchased or hacked by automated soft-core porn marketing rings. I urge you to consider the population which this affects most, and under what pretenses. The people who are viewing typical 'rotted' content and memes tend to be under the age of 25. In other words, these are undeveloped human beings being targeted. Adolescents. Children.

A truly disturbing mechanism is at play here, and is particularly well described by the story of '**Elsagate**'. Wikipedia defines this controversy "surrounding videos on YouTube and YouTube Kids that were labeled as 'child-friendly' but contained themes that were considered inappropriate for children. These videos often featured fictional characters from family-oriented media, sometimes via crossovers, used without legal permission. The controversy also included channels that focused on real-life children, which raised concern about possible child abuse."

It's a Pandora's box and would require a whole separate investigation for me to give it any semblance of journalistic justice. There is little constructive I could currently say on the matter--most of it is addressed in this YouTube video:





T.W.

What I'd like to emphasize on this matter is that **Instagram is also guilty** of peddling swaths of this content. The newest waves are consistently made from generative AI and are intentionally disturbing, pseudo-fetish slop **intended to shock or stun children into engagement**. This content often depicts humanoid cats (to easily slip through the massive gaps in Instagram's content filters) regularly displaying anything from graphic depictions of domestic violence, to murder, to implied sexual assault. **This traffic matters to Instagram**. Its huge numbers, and they are in no obvious rush to repair this. Instagram also regularly reels in hundreds of millions of views involving poorly disguised nudity from Onlyfans marketers, as well as criminal activity and graphic violence--despite the app being age restricted only to 13 years of age for download (with no effective age verification metrics). Meta has been sued several of times on these grounds.

Unfortunately, with the algorithms that Meta chooses to deploy, 'edgy' content consistently performs better by engagement even if the viewer (child or adult) it finds it incredibly shocking and/or distasteful-- in fact, it tends to perform statistically **better** than neutral or positive content. Meta realizes this and has, up to this point, repeatedly provided comically feeble efforts to stop it, while producing and working synergistically alongside other softwares. *Sora's (OpenAI) biggest customer is unquestionably Instagram users*. Inevitably, a culture has appeared-- hundreds of millions of people are engaging with this imagery who, if it weren't for Instagram, would have otherwise stayed ignorant to the foulities of anonymized Insta-feeds.

## AI PIMPS

Instagram regularly displays lewd content (typically from *OnlyFans* marketers who intentionally walk the line of removable content, and who easily bypass nudity analysis content filters. Meta has no motivation to improve their content-restriction engines because the content consistently performs well and strengthens the media ecosystem directly via advertisement/engagement metrics. There are no clean statistics as to what the scale of the monetary market is because these creators are typically under the guise of a temporary account (often run by a single individual or an outsourced automation software) -- but one can imagine the accumulative engagement from hundreds of millions of videos which often average 5-15 thousand views per clip--which occasionally (with fully formed AI avatars), garner up to **87 million views** on a single Reel. (For a sense of scale, that is about three million more than the population of Germany.)



Within Brainrot media, (which contains a vast, absolutely addicted populus of devoted scrollers [typically between age 1-30]), there is a notable overlap with ‘thirst trap’ media’ (Colloquially referred to as ‘gooning’ content). One quick glance at the **#popular** or **#brainrot** search query on Instagram will present you with a concerningly large amount of softcore/implied semi-generative deepfake porn from accounts that seem to have either infiltrated meme accounts or been created in the past few hours. This kind of content is not only common on Instagram, it is relatively *mainstream*. In some ways, this generated influencer market (most effective in the realm of thirst-trap/pseudo-porn content seems to be a primary cash cow for Meta, whether or not they openly acknowledge it.

This is a massive market from which a vast hierarchy of a powerful few profit greatly. *Wired* refers to this as “AI Pimping”, and there are whole sub-economies dedicated to teaching people how to successfully prompt Instagram models into existence. A quote from *Wired* who interviewed one of these “creators”:



*“He explains how he would make an AI influencer who is a mix of Madison Beer and Ariana Grande. He then asks ChatGPT to create an entire persona, background, and personality for the model, and uses the example: “Dream Car: Ferrari 488. Favorite Brand: Chanel. Breast Size: 34C. Parents: Mother: Sophia Lavante (Fashion Designer), Father: Alessandro Lavante (Architect). Life Goals and Aspirations: To launch her own fashion line and promote sustainable fashion.” Professor EP recommends that people use [an app] to generate a face, then use another tool to “eliminate flaws” like “blurred eyes, uneven teeth, and dropping corners of the mouth.” It recommends using a specific iPhone app that allows for the creation of NSFW content and which has image-to-image capability.”*



Not only has this process directly commodified sexual attraction at the expense of **actual individuals** (who have, in many cases, literally had video content of their body digitally appropriated, deepfaked, and recycled by these AI pimps/generative influencers), it has also managed to commodify the data of the recorded **reaction of the viewers**. As more people view this content, the precision of which algorithms can *optimize* content scales rapidly (particularly in tandem with generative pipelines). **What comes out of this is a “model” (a trained data network of tokenized weights) of a genre of an optimized Instagram model (a real person who uploaded content)**. Real images that perform well are iteratively sorted, dialed in, and incorporated into increasingly optimized image networks. Eventually, this results in what we see all over Instagram: hoards of hyper-realistic influencers with hundreds of millions of views who literally don’t exist in the flesh, but rather *numerically* in the GPU’s of Meta’s *Hyperion*.

For a moment, if we set aside the immediately obvious ethical violations of using widely available, completely legal softwares (openly advertised *in Instagram*) to generate false influencers out of legitimate ones and then platforming them with little to no efforts to signal to users that they aren’t real, a perhaps more serious infraction becomes evident:

**WITHOUT ANY MEANINGFUL PUBLIC OR LEGAL SCRUTINY, THE ECONOMIC STRUCTURE OF THESE PLATFORMS (DESPITE COMPOSING A MASSIVE PORTION OF THE AVAILABLE GLOBAL MARKET) HAS NEARLY ENTIRELY SECEDED FROM THE CLASSICAL CONVENTIONS OF CAPITALISM.**

Indeed, trillions of dollars are spent and made on advertising in the traditional capitalist sense-- but the new basis of value creation has emerged from the direct power derived from the collection of *multifaceted personal information/psychological preferences, user-harvested AI compute strength, and consumer-dependency feedback loops* as commodities. By any means, the more data that Meta acquires, the more valuable their products become (especially AI). This is the basic mechanism behind what is called **Technofeudalism**.

# 6: TECHNOFEUDALISM / BRUTE FORCING ALGORITHMS

I'll speak about this by enthusiastically quoting Yanis Varoufakis, the former Greek Minister of Finance, who has become the leading proprietor of this idea: "With feudalism, land owners had political power, economic power, discursive power, cultural power etc... [over serfs]... But with capitalism, the source of power shifted from ownership of land to ownership of machines. And wealth sprang not from ground rent anymore but it sprang from profits."

Varoufakis claims that these machines (our phones), however, have quite recently fundamentally transformed their economic function from a tool that produces something that produces capital, to something that *directly produces value for the machine owners*:

**"They've created a mutant form of capital. What lives in these phones and tablets is not a 'produced means of production' [e.g. a hammer]. In social media, in what we use daily from big tech, it produces an exorbitant power to directly modify our behavior for the first time in human history. Our behavior is no longer modified only by poets, novelists, politicians, vicers and so on. NOW IT IS MODIFIED DIRECTLY BY MACHINES."**

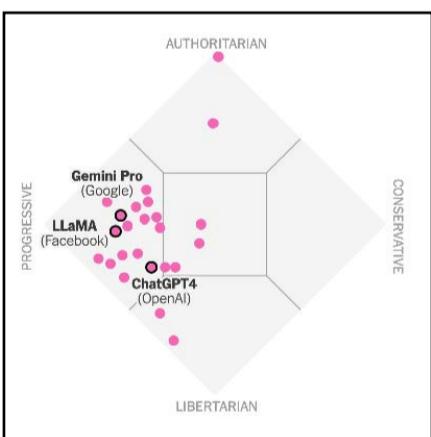
<- Yanis Varoufakis



The unfortunate truth, however, is that (even outside of hallucinations) all major LLMs (including search engine models) *consistently* exhibit severe informational biases.

This bias is directly decided by those who own the model through a process called "alignment", wherein trillions of parameters are tuned such that chatbots will consistently respond within a desired range of output. The same is true for recommendation algorithms, as these are also based on machine learning. Consider for a moment the power that OpenAI or Google has in choosing the type of 'truth' you are able to access. The implications of this are that access to basic digital information is not democratized. The default response to a 'search' for truth is a generative mimicry of what *sounds* true to those who aligned the LLM.

By readily welcoming these algorithmic technologies into our lives so readily, we have also readily subordinated ourselves to continuous serfdom & indoctrination.



**This is no longer curation, this is epistemic authoritarianism.** Information is Capital, and we have begun to pay our tithes to new lords without realizing it.



While this is evident in social media through the immense curative control and propaganda paradigms (as we have seen quite explicitly lately with ICE advertisements on Spotify, pro-Israel smear campaigns on YouTube, and especially 'Truth Social'), what seems equally important is how this mechanism applies to **AI** as it further embeds itself in all forms of digital life.

The companies who have popularized the chatbot paradigm try very hard to convince their users are asking a thoughtful, neutral AI 'agent' questions and receiving answers that are assumed to be accurate, real, and trustworthy. They do this in a number of ways, like overusing emojis and choosing agreeable responses over non-agreeable ones, even if the input sentiment should not be agreed with or assisted (e.g. when people express delusions and/or are suicidal. Many people have died.)

Merriam-Webster  
<https://www.merriam-webster.com>

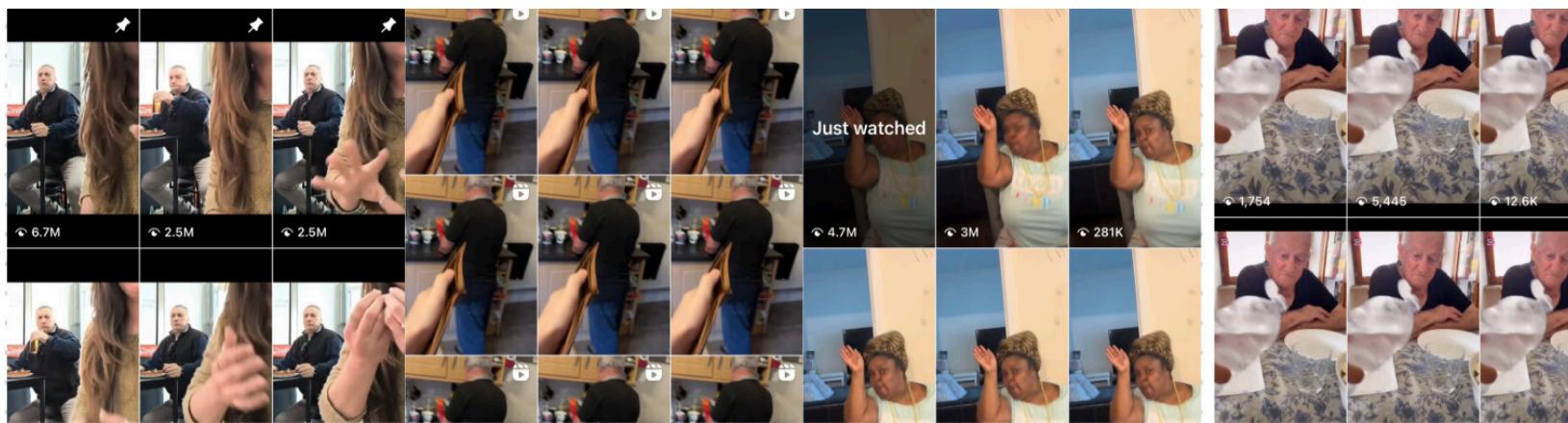
**Word of the Year 2022 | Gaslighting**

Gaslighting is "the act or practice of grossly misleading someone especially for one's own advantage." 2022 saw a 1740% increase in lookups for gaslighting.



"Capital has never been more powerful than it is today. But it has been so powerful that it killed its host capitalism. And what came in its place? My hypothesis is that a new system of producing, distributing values and power has sprung up and the best way I can describe it is by this term technofeudalism, which is not a very pleasant term but then again it's not a pleasant reality."

- Varoufakis



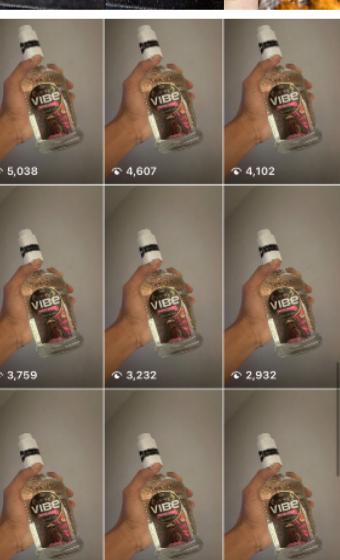
Throughout of the literature of independent algorithm audits--which reverse engineer the hidden mechanisms of leading social-media-platforms content-curation engines and/or filter bubbles, there is little mention of a phenomenon that I have observed quite often, which I have chosen to call the “brute force” algorithm maneuver, or alternatively “repeat-core.” This is where account holders (either real or automated) repeatedly repost one single video--sometimes up to hundreds of times per day--increasing their chances of striking virality (which translates to monetization). Though this phenomenon is one of many used to bypass the agenda of Instagram’s recommendation engine, I think it is a symbol of the desperate, disturbingly inefficient, and aggressively maximalist agendas of modern digital media. *More data (**in or out**) is better for growth and optimization.*



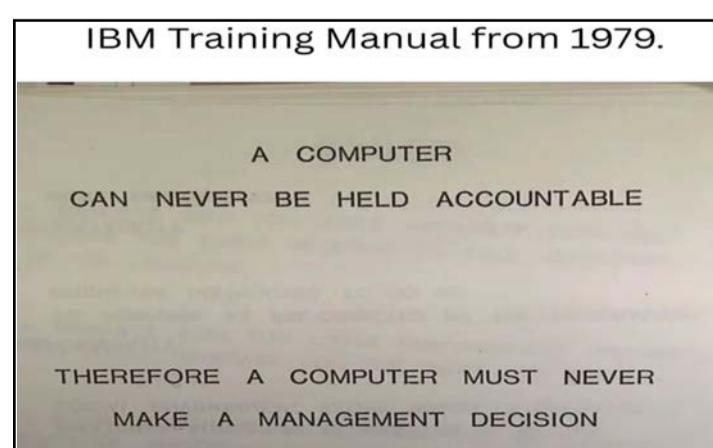
It seems to me in my own research of media recommendation engines (colloquially referred to as ones ‘Algorithm’, or ‘feed’, or ‘FYP’) that exploitative content only reveals itself (or rather bares its teeth), when the user has quietly signaled to the recommendation system a psychological vulnerability. In other words, I think it takes about an hour of compulsive scrolling before the algorithm blatantly reveals its agenda: absolute exploitation of any of your primal urges. I’ve seen this clearly demonstrated time and time again while “cold starting” various media algorithms (particularly so on Instagram). I begin scrolling on the explore page as a first time account, to a broad array of relatively inoffensive images, videos, and accounts. The clean algorithm slate is a strange cross section of vaguely appealing content from all spheres of human interest and demographics-- including things like landscape photography, videos of puppies, and someone grilling a steak.



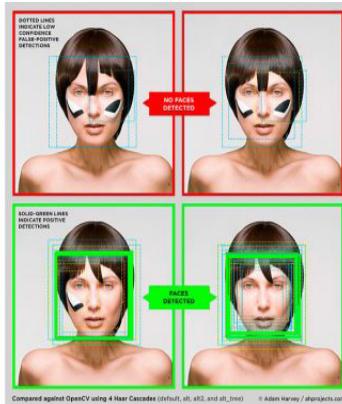
Say the first video I linger on (or goodness forbid be as obvious to the algorithm as to click on it) is of that steak-- sizzling with an unachievable char by an oceanside salt block over exotic hardwoods. It could be as much engagement as a 3 second pause--without even as much as a stomach growl-- and the next page refresh will go from one food item on the page to 9 out of every 10 posts. These first few moments on an account catches the algorithm off guard and shows the remarkable capacity and speed of current recommendation systems to place subconscious desires all over your screen, often before you are even consciously aware of them.



This is with food-- but when one applies this to more volatile content matter (e.g. radicalized ideology, conspiratorial political media, pornography, etc.) and scales it accordingly, issues of manipulation, control, and exploitation emerge. Though I have tried my best to avoid the conspiracy-tainted platitude that is *The Matrix*, its difficult to ignore the parallels-- we are now seeing a *direct commodification of human consciousness itself* via surveillance aggregation, behavioral mining, engagement farming, and attention economy/harvesting. Moreover, its primarily *machines* that are in charge of the process. Algorithms are not a series of knobs, they are a neural network. A black box.



# 7: DATA INFORMATION POLLINATION / HYGIENE: CROSS-ORACLE SOUSVEILLANCE STATE / FLOCK / RING

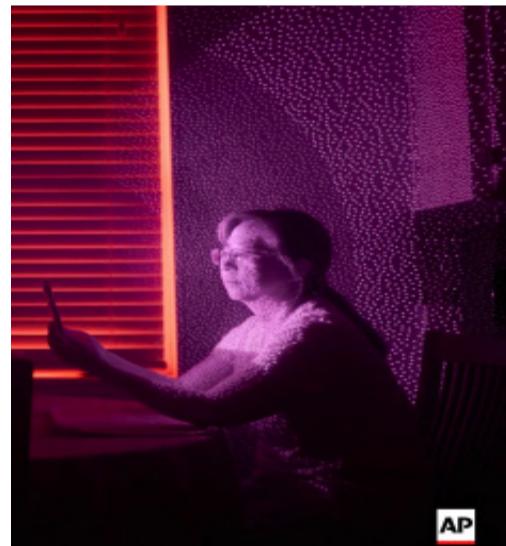


Anti Facial-Recognition-Software make-up <https://weburbanist.com/2016/11/28/how-to-be-invisible-15-anti-surveillance-designs-installations/#>

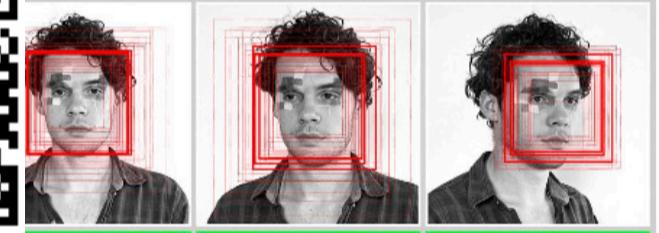
**The Cambridge Analytica scandal changed the world - but it didn't change Facebook**



I want to emphasize to those who might not be aware, there is no longer such a thing as 'passive' internet use. In using your phone, you are always producing an asset for a force of power unless you are communicating via a device unconnected to an IP (which do exist and are fortunately beginning to surge in popularity)



"Weaponization Suite" comprises of three different typ



Surveillance

Sousveillance with wearable cameras



(Ceiling dome)

Mann 1998

Microsoft 2004

Memoto 2013



Any time you pass one of these (which is not hard to do--in my immediate city alone there are 35 of them--used openly to contribute to preventative policing databases) a licensed third-party startup receives that data, and then brokers it to local government/police.

If you have ever logged into Google, owned an iPhone, or God forbid scrolled on Instagram, your personal information is (at least) being:

Collected, shared across dozens to hundreds of third-party partners, used for profiling, used for ad targeting, traded through opaque ad-tech ecosystems, processed by multiple intermediaries such as Digital signal processors, statistic software packages, brokers, and analytics firms, stored and replicated across distributed systems, algorithmically transformed into behavioral segments and inference profiles, circulated through real-time bidding networks the moment you open an app, piped into measurement, attribution, and surveillance-advertising infrastructures, matched against device identifiers and purchase histories, fed into cross-platform profiling systems, and continuously leveraged to predict, rank, and monetize your behavior.

In other words, the information that you provide just by using apps or websites is monetized by default. This is crucial to understand--Instagram is not free. You are paying for the service of entertainment with the price of your privacy and the capital of your behavioral analyses. The terms and services make this abundantly clear when read lucidly.

This surveillance state is tangled in the fabric between the digital and physical world-- wherein things like your live location, shopping habits, transportation behavior, legal status, and even social interactions. Authoritarian regimes such as Shanghai's "Urban Brain" utilizes real-time AI-facial-recognition infrastructures across a network of over 3 million surveillance cameras in just the one city. This technology has made its way into the US as well, but instead of state funding, development is almost always through private, third-party contractors such as Flock, Ring (Amazon) etc. The data produced by these machines often make their way into the vast blanket networks that are organized, archived, and put to use by Oracle or **Palentir; who (as of 2009) created and sold the federal government their primary software user interfaces--one of them notably titled "ImmigrationOS,"** used by ICE agents to streamline mass deportation initiatives -- all this as federally unsanctioned federal troops are being deployed in major US cities. Reports have shown that cell-tower location data and device records were used for "near real-time visibility" that targeted "visa overstays and other prioritized groups." All of this takes place without a warrant. Another report by 404 media describes a woman in Texas who was tracked down for having an abortion with "a nationwide search of more than 83,000 automatic license plate reader (ALPR)." They used flock cameras to do this-- and that is just with just license plate data. Flock have just begun to implement a new style of camera though, which uses AI operated 25X optical zoom which is easily paired with facial recognition software. Similar facial recognition software has already **falsely identified** a number of people in the US and resulted in their arrests.



**OMNY TAKING OVER AS METROCARD GETS PHASED OUT**



#### Even non-social media users are not exempt from this 'big-brother-esque' technological

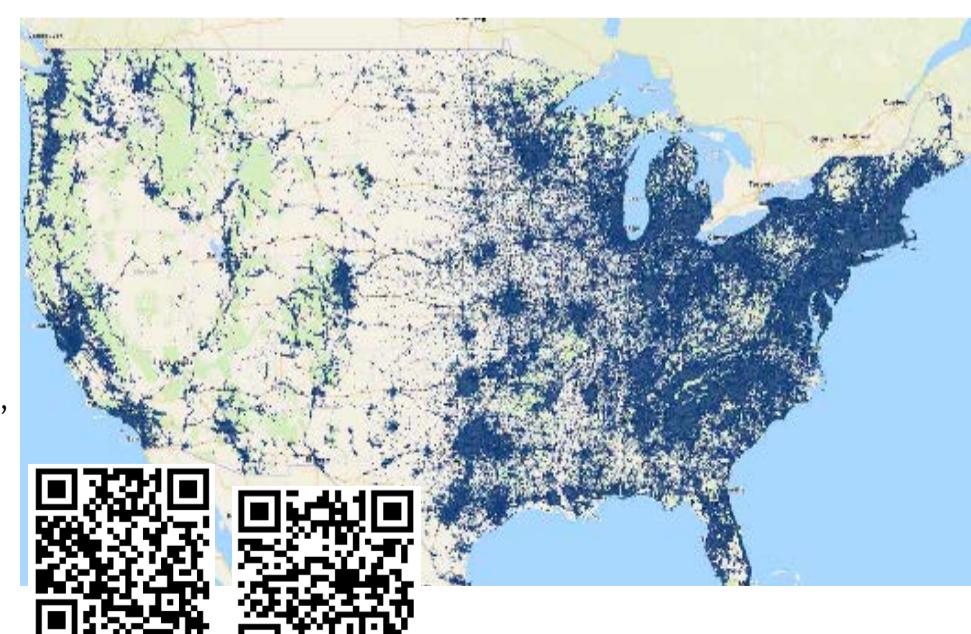
**dynamic.** For those who can afford it, multiple forms of biometric/tech-based verification are not only present in data softwares, but often required (in the case of online banking apps, locked notes files, password autofill, Google verification, Apple 'Passwords' [an iOS app where the user is expected to put their most confidential information, such that it can rest safely in the 'secure' hands of Apple]).

Two-step verification (or even four-plus-step verification, in the case of a Meta Platforms user-data download request) and/or phone-based interfacing is more or less ubiquitous across softwares, apps, and website accounts. This further traps citizens in an ecosystem which encourages technological dependence, for what used to be analog human processes (e.g. banking, employee portals, school, taxes,

**To simply exist outside in areas where these cameras are present is to generate, record, archive, and submit for analysis a wealth of information.** This is much more than just your whereabouts and activities--it is about the accumulative collection of demographic patterns, of social behavior, and the collection of this data into software that can be used against any of us at any time-- now or the future.

All of this is without mention of the recent quiet work of Amazon (who owns Ring doorbell and the portable tracker company Tile) in partnership with Flock, which boasts US signal network with 90% US coverage as part of "Amazon Sidewalk" ("A wireless community network that's redefining connectivity for smart devices—designed for better coverage and range, even in areas where WiFi can't reach").

The way this works is that Anyone in these covered areas who own an Amazon smart speaker (Alexa), a tile tracking device, a Ring doorbell, or other smart products are relaying nearby location/tracking signals with a range similar to Bluetooth. This means devices unrelated to your devices are ultimately sending confidential information via your internet network, all without either you realizing or having access to the information.



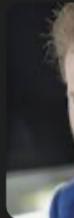
## Palantir Technologies/Founders



Alex Karp



Peter Thiel



Joe Loeffler



Pictured above are the two primary co-founders of Palantir Technologies : Alex Karp (left) who recently stated that he “makes sure Palantir stays as tribal and cultish and unique as it was 20 years ago” and Peter Thiel (right) who wrote in a public 2009 essay that he **“no longer believes believe that freedom and democracy are compatible.”**

A third co-founder of Palantir recently suggested the United States of America bring back public hangings. These are the people who happen to own and control the software used to connect, analyze, and act on the vast datasets that come from not just typical surveillance hardware but also internet activity.

### For reference, the average smartphone actively utilizes each of the following pieces of technology:

Cameras: front and rear (image and video capture of environment and people), TrueDepth IR depth camera system including dot projector and IR flood emitter (3D facial geometry and proximity), microphone array (voice, ambient audio, directionality), LiDAR scanner (room mapping and depth), proximity sensor (detects face or pocket), ambient light sensors (indoor/outdoor context), multi-touch capacitive display (gesture and interaction feedback signals), high-g accelerometer (device handling), 3-axis gyroscope (rotation and orientation), 3-axis compass (heading and nearby magnetic field), barometer/pressure sensor (temperature and thermal sensors (device and environment), motion monitors (usage and routine inference), magnetic field sensor (location and movement history), cellular signal reader/writer coil (tap-based proximity), GPS receiver (fine-grained device-to-device location and movement history), cellular tower signal strength (tower association, call/data connection), Bluetooth LE radio (nearby device detection, wired data transfer and forensic analysis), speaker and earpiece (audio playback and biometric verification), NAND flash memory ('ephemeral' data exploitable by forensic tools and power-use signature), CPU/GPU cores (task execution traces), neural engine/NPU (ML inferences about content and user behavior), motion coprocessor/sensor hub (continuous motion fusion streams), baseband/modem firmware (network control data and location triangulation), OS background services (telemetry, logs, permissions, location deregulated by apps), keyboard and predictive typing engine (text content, typing cadence, intent prediction), browser and webviews (tracking vectors and history), VPN and network stack (traffic routing and DNS queries), push notification service (unique tokens and timing metadata), cloud sync systems (uploads of media, contacts, and device state), app analytics and advertising identifiers (behavioral profiling across services), social and messaging app metadata (who, when, where of communications), health and fitness data from onboard sensors and wearables (activity and physiological inference), DNS and network metadata (destinations and usage patterns), TLS handshake and certificate events (service identity correlation), charging station and cable interactions (location-linked access), peripheral accessory telemetry such as smartwatches or earbuds (extended biometric and context data).



“the central problem with smart phone use today is you have no idea what the hell it’s doing at any given time” -Edward Snowden

## 8: THE “BIRTH” AND GIRTH OF AI / PROJECT ‘ARIA’

Sally A. Applin, Catherine Flick, Facebook's Project Aria indicates problems for responsible innovation pervasive technology in the Commons, Journal of Responsible Technology, Volume 5, 2021, 100010, ISSN 2666-6596, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrt.2021.100010>. (<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2666659621000032>)  
Abstract: Nearly every week, a technology company is introducing a new surveillance technology, varying from applying facial recognition to observing and cataloguing behaviours of the public in the Commons and private spaces, to listening and recording what we say, or mapping what we do, where we go, and who we're with—or as much of these facets of our lives as can be accessed. As such, the general public writ-large has had to wrestle with the colonization of publicly funded space, and the outcomes to each of our personal lives as a result of the massive harvesting and storing of our data, and the potential machine learning and processing applied to that data. Facebook, once content to harvest our data through its website, cookies, and apps on mobile phones and computers, has now planned to follow us more deeply into the Commons by developing new mapping technology combined with smart camera equipped Augmented Reality (AR) eyeglasses, that will track, render and record the Commons—and us with it. The resulting data will privately benefit Facebook's continued goal to expand its worldwide reach and growth. In this paper, we examine the ethical implications of Facebook's Project Aria research pilot through the perspectives of Responsible Innovation, comparing both existing understandings of Responsible Research and Innovation and Facebook's own Responsible Innovation Principles; we contextualise Project Aria within the Commons through applying current social multi-dimensional communications theory to understand the extensive socio-technological implications of Project Aria within society and culture; and we address the potentially serious consequences of the Facebook Project Aria experiment, inspiring countless other companies to shift their focus to compete with Project Aria, or beat it to the consumer marketplace.



MMCSG Dataset



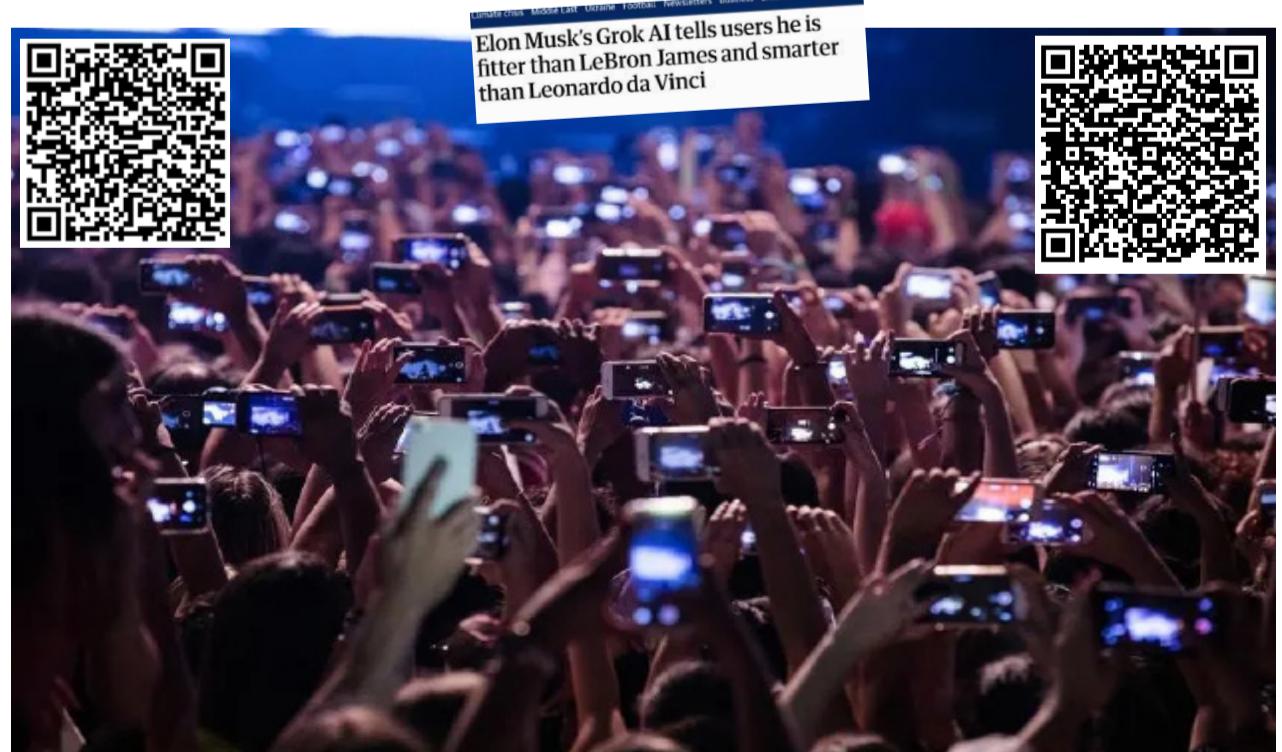
**“Keep in mind that they are continually trying to convince you that you can have a reasonable facsimile of life on a screen.”**

**-Scott Galloway**

To the left is a core dataset for facial recognition, cue analysis, speech tracking, and other conversational data associated with human interaction measured for Meta's project Aria, which (in addition to the user recorded/uploaded content) fuels the computer vision function of Meta's Ray-ban glasses.

This data is agglomerated with a number of other models trained on different modes / sources of information into a data center, such as Meta's new 'Hyperion' (which costed \$27 billion and is currently polluting, rezoning, and relocating the already poverty-stricken rural Louisiana township of Holly Ridge.) The data, fed into the center, improves Meta's ranking/retrieval models and increase the degree to which a computer system can understand the content of video or image.

Similarly, X AI's Grok data center (named Colossus) is poisoning so-called 'sacrifice zones' in socioeconomically vulnerable South Memphis with "more nitrogen oxides than Shelby County's Draslovka chemical plant, the Valero refinery, TVA's Allen power plant, and the Memphis International Airport combined." As a reminder, Grok spends a great deal of its efforts creating interactive erotica and Twitter replies which glorify the ideology (and even body) of the world's richest man.



^ This is because the time spent on a screen--the information produced and stored--translates (in essence) to directly increased compute / informational power. Algorithms are only as strong as the amount of 'life' we feed into them. This is why spending time off of recording devices is a direct form of revolt.



**Sam Altman Admits That Saying "Please" and "Thank You" to ChatGPT Is Wasting Millions of Dollars in Computing Power**



Gas Outlook | xAI data centre emits plumes of pollution, new video shows - Gas Outlook [Visit >](#)

**Faster improvements.** Scaling of human brains ran into a bottleneck at the point when baby heads started getting too large to fit through female hips. GPUs (specialized computer chips that are very efficient for running modern AIs) improve, and the algorithms running on those chips improve, much much *much* faster than the human species can evolve larger hips.

### Q: What do data centers need to run?

**A: Water, electricity, air conditioning, and other resources typically wasted on schools and hospitals.**

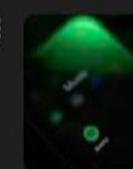
**theONION**



### Top stories

**The Guardian**  
AI slop tops Billboard and Spotify charts as synthetic music spreads

7 hours ago



**The New Yorker**  
That New Hit Song on Spotify? It Was Made by A.I.

1 day ago



**Reuters**  
Are you listening to bots? Survey shows AI music is virtually undetectable



**Newsweek**  
The No. 1 Country Song in America Is AI-Generated



AI is perhaps the leading poster child of breakneck technological advancement — a kind of computational fission that burns data as fuel and races across the global economy like a race track. Barely a decade ago, the idea of ‘artificial general intelligence’ was not only absent from the cultural zeitgeist but often dismissed as speculative, overly optimistic science fiction. Even today, the memory of robotic text to speech and comically unintelligent systems such as Apple’s Siri assistant on iOS are fresh in our minds.

Something shifted very recently though— particularly in light of the developments made by OpenAI and Google in the past 5 years. ‘Agential AI’, ‘Vibe Coding’, ‘Prompt Engineering’, and a multitude of other buzzwords began appearing in common language, which generally revolve around the **outsourcing of human effort** to a computationally simulated model of human effort trained by the products of *real* human effort. The idea of computational “automation” became mainstream for consumers and a new product, a bizarre form of capital generation, was born.

It seems obvious to me that the existing cultural, economic, and media structures were (and are) utterly unprepared for such a rapid shift in the way that most information and data is collected, processed, re-synthesized, and distributed. AI has unquestionably grown *dangerously* rapidly in the past 5 years. 2024’s Nobel prize winner, **Geoffrey Hinton (referred to as the Godfather of AI)**, said on the matter:

*“Unfortunately, the rapid progress in AI comes with many short-term risks. It has already created divisive echo chambers by offering people content that makes them indignant. It is already being used by authoritarian governments for massive surveillance, and by cyber-criminals for phishing attacks.”*

*In the near future, AI may be used to create terrible new viruses and horrendous lethal weapons that decide by themselves who to kill or maim. All of these short-term risks require **urgent and forceful attention** from governments and international organizations... **We have no idea if we can stay in control.**”*

# META'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE MILITARY INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

While I won't go as far as to say that there is a confirmable, direct chain of cause or responsibility between the average scroller and drone warfare in Gaza or Ukraine, what I will say is that Meta's relationship to the military-industrial complex—(including billion-dollar partnerships with Anduril, Palantir, and Oracle)—is highly demonstrative of the significant degree of overlap between commercial data pipelines and AI used for war. Alex Karp has repeatedly been confronted about the use of Palantir technologies to kill Palestinians, and has consistently responded with moral detachment.

Meta's platforms collect user data that is then used to train large-scale machine-learning systems (e.g., LLaMA 1–3, Horizon models). These models are subsequently licensed, adapted, or integrated by defense contractors such as Palantir and Anduril for battlefield analytics, autonomous surveillance, targeting support, and other military 'applications' ----->



## Top US Army General Says He's Letting ChatGPT Make Military Decisions

Your decision to launch an invasion isn't just gutsy — it's downright kinetic.



The use of machine-learning and social-media-user-trained AI models has skyrocketed in the past five years. Concerningly, the economics of most prominent AI enterprises follow a self-feeding mechanism which has led to predictions of an imminent "bubble pop", which would take trillions of dollars from the US and global economy with it. **The global AI market is projected to hit \$4.8 trillion by 2033**. Despite these projections, studies are consistently showing little to no return whatsoever from the massive investments in this technology in the general economy. Such investments however are showing return in the military industrial complex, as AI technology is proving to be particularly efficient at taking lives from afar with

AXIOS

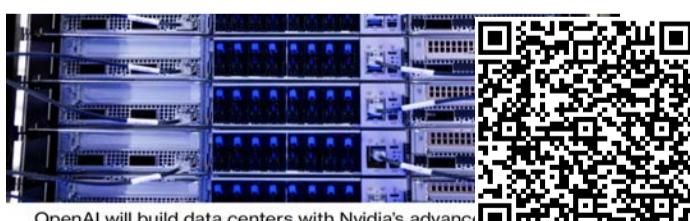


Defense startup Anduril unveils 'EagleEye' AI helmet that tags human targets in real time, made in partnership with Meta



Meta, Anduril Team Up to Make High-Tech Wearables for U.S. Army

In a recent Joe Rogan episode which hosted Palmer Luckey (**Ex Meta employee and Founder of Anduril, a multi-billion \$ private US government AI-weapons contractor**; [pictured above, to the left of Mark Zuckerberg]) gloated: "You can't vote us out!"



OpenAI will build data centers with Nvidia's advanced \$100 billion deal between the two tech companies. Photographer: Annabelle Chih/Bloomberg

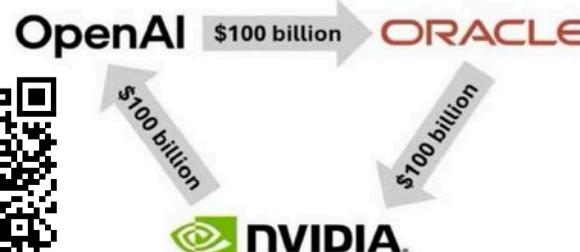


Wall Street's biggest fear was validated by a recent MIT study indicating that 95% of organizations studied get zero return on their [AI investment](#).

Technology | The Big Take

## OpenAI, Nvidia Fuel \$1 Trillion AI Market With Web of Circular Deals

A wave of deals and partnerships are escalating concerns that the trillion-dollar AI boom is being propped up by

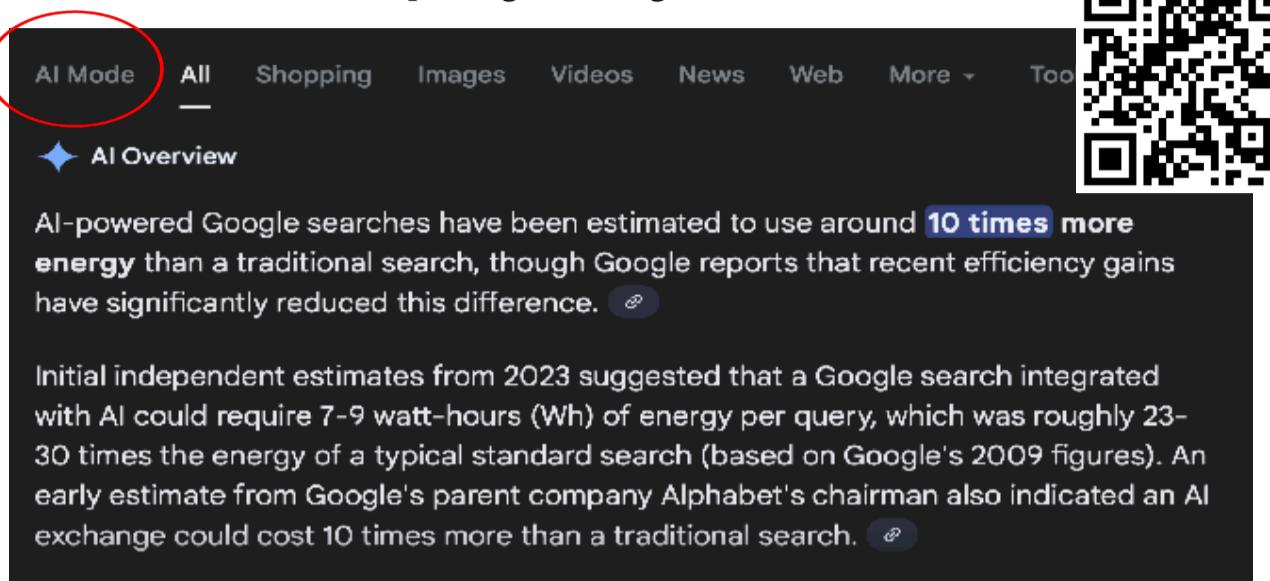


C'mon,  
Collapse



>

AI is now incorporated into all major search engines **by default**. See below for Google's hard-baked AI-mode tool and the default AI-overview by internal user-trained model Gemini, **which I can not overemphasize, exhibits a hallucination rate of over 76.7%** [Erdem, 2024]) and, according to itself, is about 10 times less energy efficient. A quote from one of the leading benchmarks of AI footprint: Even a 0.42 Wh short query, when scaled to 700M queries/day, aggregates to annual electricity comparable to 35,000 U.S. homes, evaporative freshwater equal to the annual drinking needs of 1.2M people, and carbon emissions requiring a Chicago-sized forest to offset.



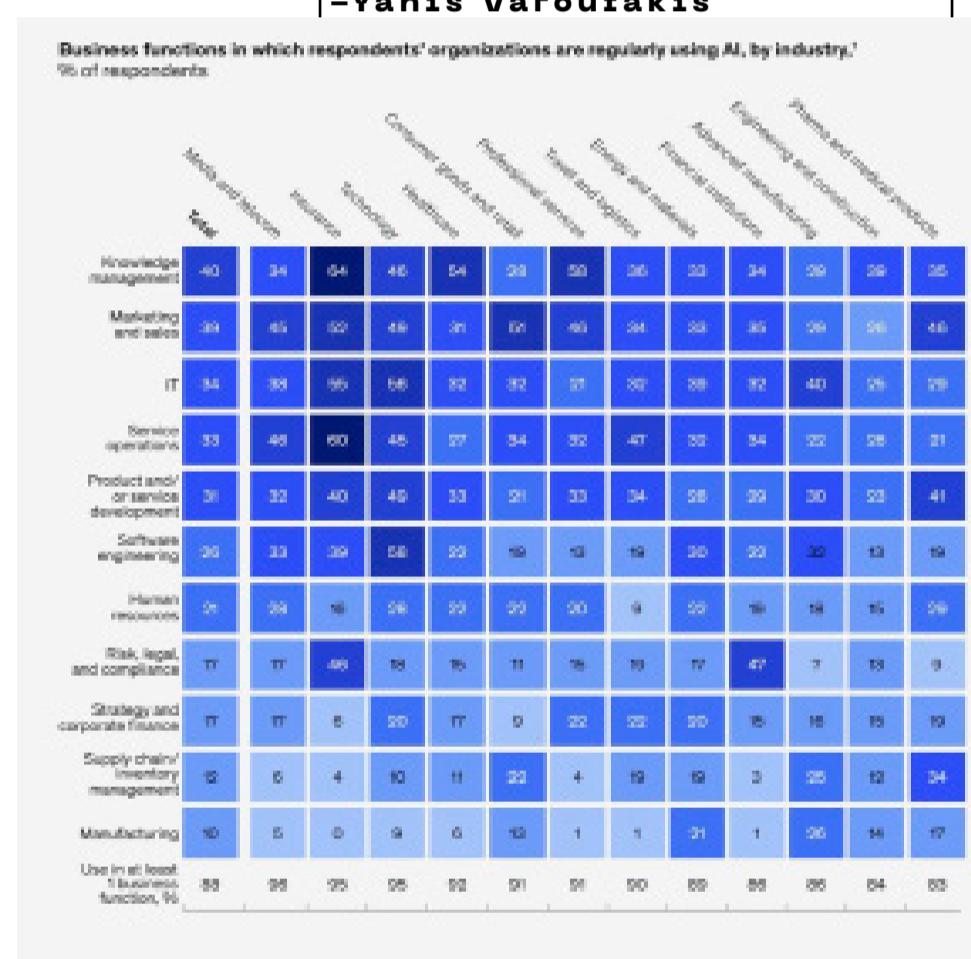
The screenshot shows the Google search bar with "AI Mode" circled in red at the top left. Below it, the search bar contains the query "AI Overview". The results page discusses AI-powered searches using around 10 times more energy than traditional searches, with initial independent estimates from 2023 suggesting a 7-9 watt-hours per query, which was roughly 23-30 times the energy of a typical standard search. It also mentions an early estimate from Google's parent company Alphabet's chairman indicating an AI exchange could cost 10 times more than a traditional search.



Additionally, flat, poor, drought-prone, vulnerable, cheap land is being appropriated for the use of data centers--with small-scale local law engagement proving crucial to communities facing vast extortion from wealthy monopolies.

**"when people say I will upload something to the cloud well the cloud is a metaphor for this machinery that is all over the face of the earth deep inside our oceans... it's MACHINERY!"**

-Yanis Varoufakis



(McKinsey^)

 berniesanders • Follow

...



**Amazon aims to replace 600,000 US workers with robots, according to leaked documents**

Documents reportedly show that Amazon's robotics team is working towards automating 75% of the company's entire operations. This would save about 30 cents on every item that Amazon warehouses and delivers to customers.

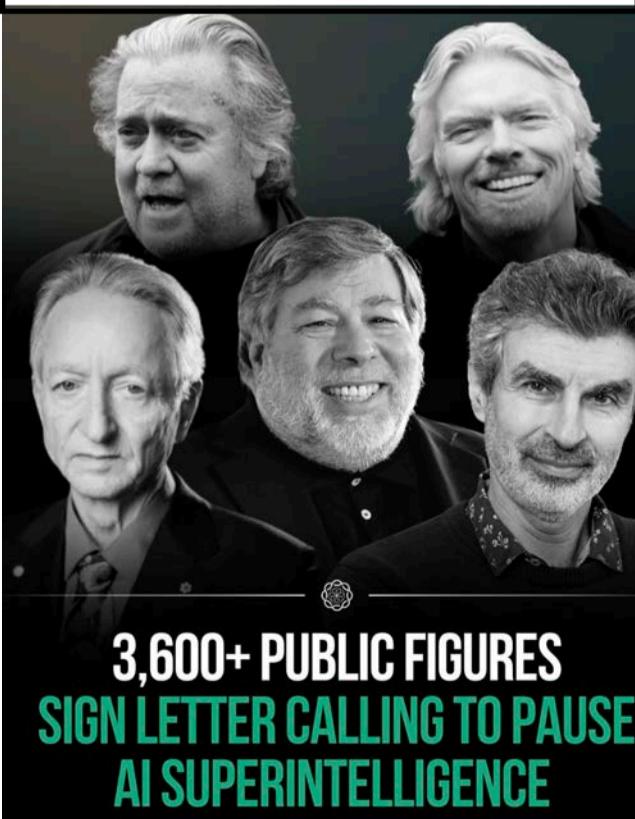





 Try Atlas - ChatGPT's new browser  
Bring ChatGPT with you across the web for instant answers, smarter suggestions, and help with tasks.



Bottom-left is Geoffrey Hinton, who received the Nobel prize for his extensive work on Artificial neural networks. He has earned the title of “the Godfather of AI”. He has been recorded saying both: “AI will make a few people much richer and most people poorer” as well as **“we’re toast. This is the actual end of history.”** (New Statesman, 2023)



In some ways, it is not surprising that we are seeing platforms like Meta pushing useless AI products onto their users so vigorously. User-driven data harvesting via manipulative curation that creates addiction in its users is the fundamental driving force of these companies.

With the shift to an AI based service rather than a relatively egalitarian search engine, it became unquestionably evident that Google’s priorities are not to provide easy, reliable, and open-source access to truth and/or even real information or media at all. This is concerning, because over 90% of internet users rely on Google as a standard engine-- that’s nearly 5 billion people regularly searching for truth and finding an untrustworthy combination of information. When generative media leaks into the media pool, the whole repository is tainted. Hundreds of millions of those who *don’t* use Google *do* tend to use ChatGPT-- a recent survey by Adobe found that Out of all the people in the U.S. who use ChatGPT, **77% use it as a primary search engine**. The curative power that comes from this can not be overstated.

The very notion of gathering such vast data in such a subversive and ‘natural’ manner, wherein the general consumer is expected to envision a thinking and feeling android on the other end of the chat, is enough to make folks like Sam Altman, Mark Zuckerberg, Elon Musk, Jensen Huang, and Peter Thiel foam at the mouth.

To re-emphasize, Meta’s primary capital is the data it harvests from its users. Granted, a great deal of its value manifests in the form of optimized advertisement and user addiction— but with the founding of ‘Facebook AI Research’ (FAIR) In 2013, it became clear that another product (or perhaps more accurately, a meta-commodity, or intangible asset) was more clearly in mind: Proprietary, large-scale machine learning models.



For those uninformed on machine learning and artificial intelligence, it is often difficult to grasp the invisible chain of infrastructural processes that convert one’s personal clicks, pauses, and scrolls into the training data that ultimately translates to predictive artificial intelligence. What follows is a rough annotated schematic of that data pipeline:

- 1) Data Capture** — Every user interaction (click, dwell time, scroll, reaction) is logged in whatever companies’ behavioral data infrastructure.
- 2) Data Storage & Labeling** — These traces are stored in massive distributed databases, categorized by engagement type, demographic, and content vector.
- 3) Feature Extraction** — Machine learning pipelines extract patterns and numerical “features” that quantify user preferences and relationships.
- 4) Model Training** — These features feed into deep learning architectures (e.g., recommendation models, language models, vision networks) trained to predict future behavior.
- 5) Prediction Deployment** — The outputs are reintroduced into the platform as ranked feeds, targeted ads, or content recommendations—completing a continuous feedback loop.
- 6) Iterative Refinement** — Each subsequent interaction reenters the dataset, fine-tuning the models and perpetually improving their predictive precision.

What Instagram and its media have to do with AI? It turns out, more than you probably realize. It's clear that those in charge at Meta recognize the socioeconomic potential in the development of these systems, because they have invested so much of their worth into the data centers and model training infrastructure. There are two major things at play here:

1) There are a number of **inbuilt AI user design features** that users are strongly encouraged to use (*Meta AI chat assistant, AI-powered search bar, AI-generated stickers, AI-generated story filters, background-removal tools, image-editing via text prompts, auto-generated captions, auto-generated alt-text for accessibility, Reels auto-creation (“Made for You”), AI-suggested replies in DMs, AI-powered ad targeting and feed ranking, AI-based photo enhancement, voice chat with Meta AI, AI-generated personas/characters, AI-powered comment moderation, AI-based discovery and recommendations, and creator AI tools for clip remixing and caption writing*)

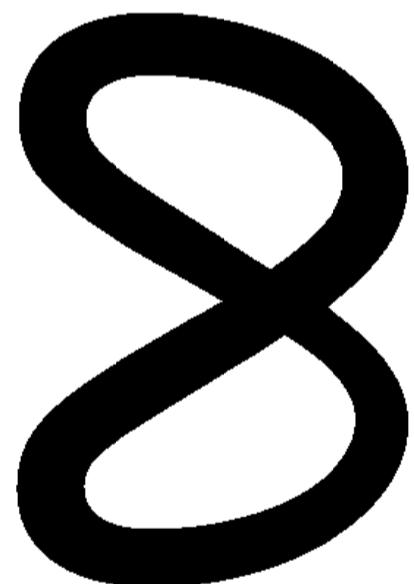
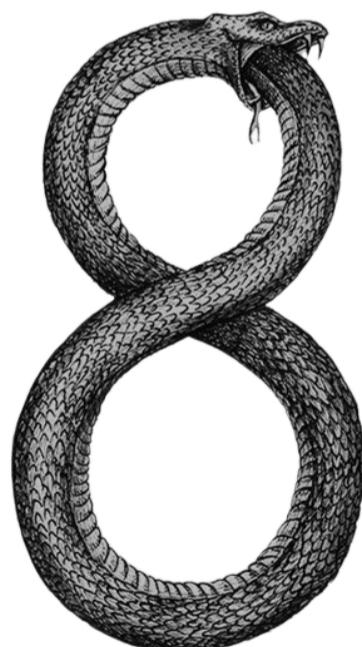
2) **4.3 Permissions You Give to Us.** As part of our agreement, you also give us permissions that we need to provide the Service.

- **We do not claim ownership of your content, but you grant us a license to use it.**

Nothing is changing about your rights in your content. We do not claim ownership of your content that you post on or through the Service and you are free to share your content with anyone else, wherever you want. However, we need certain legal permissions from you (known as a “license”) to provide the Service. When you share, post, or upload content that is covered by intellectual property rights (like photos or videos) on or in connection with our Service, you hereby grant to us a non-exclusive, royalty-free, transferable, sub-licensable, worldwide license to host, use, distribute, modify, run, copy, publicly perform or display, translate, and create derivative works of your content (consistent with your privacy and application settings). This license will end when your content is deleted from our systems. You can delete content individually or all at once by deleting your account. To learn more about how we use information, and how to control or delete your content, review the [Privacy Policy](#) and visit the [Instagram Help Center](#).

\*i.e., more content YOUR produce AI stop using content\*

The so-called “Dead Internet Theory,” (which posits that the internet has consisted mainly of bot activity and automatically generated content manipulated by algorithmic curation, as part of a coordinated and intentional effort to control the population and minimize organic human activity) is rapidly becoming less and less conspiratorial. According to a 2025 report by CloudFlare, nearly a third of internet traffic comes from non-human HTTP requests. According to this same report, 42% of US internet traffic is automated. Other estimates are higher.



The dead web isn't limited to things like blog posts, websites, or forums. The phenomenon of same-platform trained-generated content is overwhelming YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and many other major platforms. Spotify for instance, has inadvertently allowed (rather, created and enabled) massive audio-streaming markets predicted to be worth hundreds of millions of dollars-- all from artificially generated and published content.

The experience of accidentally listening to an AI generated podcast between two text to speech models is nothing short of bone chilling-- but less so than listening to a song, *liking it*, and then discovering it was generated.

If you search in Amazon books, you are more than likely to come across entire catalogs of volumes of iteratively optimized-for-engagement books by AI authors-- you will also find book reviews by AI, and if you're lucky, even AI reviews of AI-written books.



# THE 'CONSUMER AS CREATOR' ECONOMIC AGENDA

"Consuming images in a continuous flow numbs us not only to what we see, but the very act of seeing. By rewarding speed and predictability, these digital platforms flatten differences into sameness. Works are pressured to conform, to fit the frame, the feed, the scroll. What does not align with this logic is algorithmically punished, filtered out." --Ilse Kind, Dutch artist (@FAKEWHALE)



Sorry



The publication paradigm of 'posting' or 'creating content' fundamentally stunts and/or warps the material the artist/creative produces for a number of reasons. For starters, (according to the terms of service) To publish one's art on Meta is to voluntarily and legally relinquish ownership of that intellectual property to the company. Doing this means not only that your work is not only subversively harvested, but also re-appropriated into the generative forces of AI content which contributes to the future resolution of a dead internet. It also subjects it to immense curative forces -- Instagram directly decides who your audience is instead of the creator.

There is a certain charade taking place wherein data companies (e.g. Meta, Spotify, OpenAI, etc.) emphasize their product as being *empowering to the creator*, or *providing the tools to realize one's vision* via AI agential automation. In reality, this is a tremendously manipulative maneuver which, under the false guise of *empowering the creator*, actually *removes* personal creative agency, sovereignty, and ownership. In many cases, it *outsources the creative process entirely*, rendering whatever you do "make" (or rather prompt) exactly within the bounds of whatever information that software/model was trained on.

A textbook example of this is *Base44*-- a "complete AI-creation platform, made for anyone with an idea and a drive to bring it to life"--one of many new multi-modal software suites which markets itself as a panacea for 'realizing your ideas'. In short, you tell it whatever you envision (A business, software, social media personality product, etc.) and simply "**watch** it take shape."



Again, I get the feeling that whatever product emerges from 'AI collaborative content generation' is fundamentally incapable of making something new-- only distilled, rearranged, echoes of what already exists. Over time, as this content rapidly consumes and overtakes legitimate creations, a homogenization effect will inevitably occur. This flattening of a domain by over saturation is one of the primary mechanisms at play under the hood of the dying internet.

Base44 is by no means the only incarnation of this phenomenon-- Where I find it most concerning is when it is incorporated into the UX of popular apps, often where it is entirely unnecessary or out of line with the app (e.g. Spotify Create, Snapchat My AI lenses, Instagram "Create With AI," Instagram DM image generators, TikTok AI avatars, TikTok auto-edited reels, YouTube Dream Screen, YouTube AI Ideas, Canva Magic Studio, Adobe Express auto-generators, LinkedIn AI writing assistant, Google Photos Magic Editor, Meta AI in WhatsApp and Messenger, Pinterest AI Idea Generator, Amazon/Etsy AI product-image generators, Spotify Create, SoundCloud AI tools, Udio integrations, AI-driven podcast generators, Notion AI, GrammarlyGO, Google Docs AI drafting tools.)

It is clear that it is profitable to them for us to use AI features, even if they don't create a product we are particularly interested in. It seems to me that there is a clear division between the consumers of media and the producers of media wherein the consumers (you and me) have little to no interest in actually consuming. Again, we return back to the distinction between media quantity and quality. ChatGPT is capable of generating infinite content, and yet it tends to be void of much worthwhile media 'nutrients' (e.g. a sense of soul, emotion, patina, transcendence, idiosyncrasy, controversy, ambiguity, lived experience, qualia, etc.) Guillermo del Toro may have summed it up best when he said: "AI has demonstrated that it can best do semi-compelling screensavers".



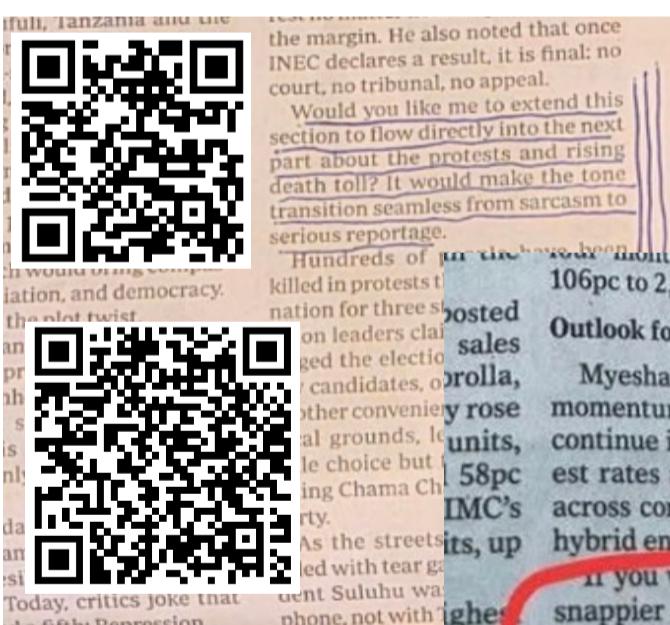
# 9: THE DEATH OF TRUTH

It's impossible to overstate the profound severity of the symptoms of media decay which have emerged in the wake of hyper-realistic generative AI video. Within my lifetime I witnessed what Pulitzer-winning author Michiko Kakutani calls in her critique of the current administration as "the Death of Truth." About 3 years ago, when you saw images and sound, you could consistently and safely assume that it represents something that actually happened in the world-- captured through a camera and microphone. **Such is no longer the case.**

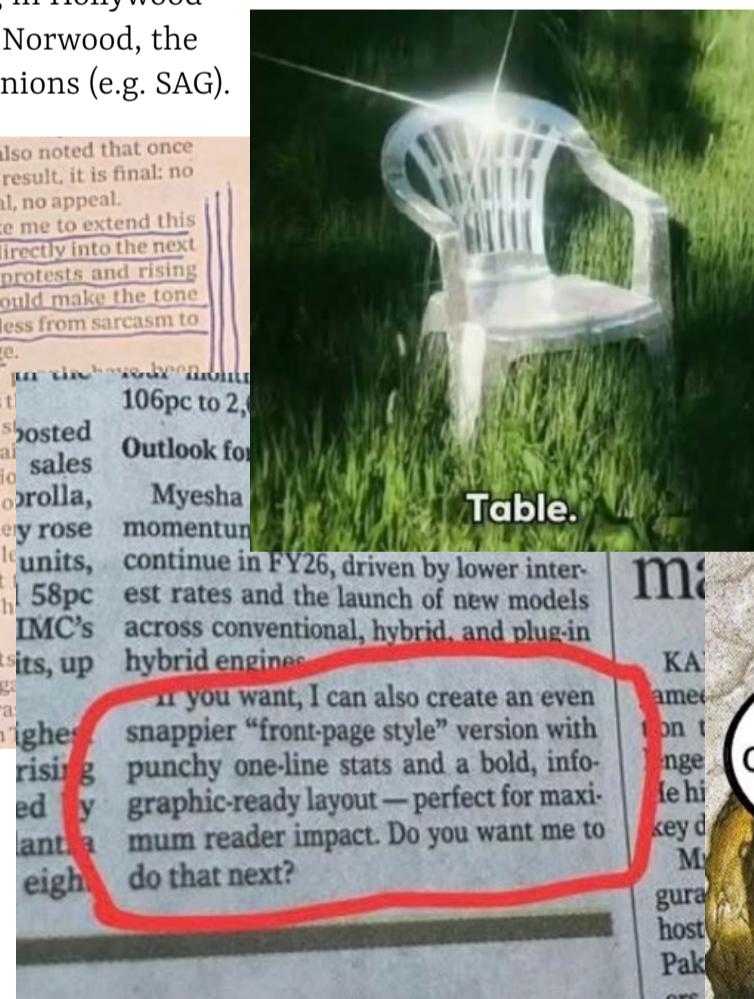
Our species is unquestionably in an unprecedented epistemic crisis. This claim is not limited to opinion essays, but in cross-longitudinal, multi-modal media sphere/generative AI audits. (The threshold of video which passes the average media-consumer's 'Turing test' (their perception of whether information is real or computationally generated) came and went in just a matter of months somewhere during 2024. When Sora 2 was released, a new era of hyper-realistic video was made possible however--a consumer-level, mostly unrestricted generative model which would incorporate audio, dialogue, plot, and other variables that contribute significantly to perceived reality. With Google's *Nano Banana Pro*, we simply increased our resolution of detail to one capable of convincing 8k resolution-- for all intents and purposes a perfect world emulator in a media environment where the most consumed media is shorter than a minute.

To those reading this who may not be sufficiently media literate as of the rapid changes of the last year: I must be clear-- **whether or not you realize it, the presence of artificially generated media is mainstream.** There are billboards in my own city which shamelessly display vivid hallmarks of generative imagery, voicemails on my phone from robots who clear their throats, and **entirely synthetic news cycles** circulating Instagram, Facebook, Reddit, Tiktok, and even physical newspapers.

AI generated songs are not only being published on platforms like Spotify, they are *flooding it* (and *dominating* an already illegitimate business practice which pays artists fractions of fractions of pennies). NPR recently wrote a report about Xania Monet, who is "**the first known AI artist to earn enough radio airplay to debut on a Billboard radio chart.**" The same thing is happening in Hollywood with 'Actresses' such as Tilly Norwood, the new Arch-nemesis of actor unions (e.g. SAG).



**Generative AI artifacts found in the 'newspaper of record,' 'Dawn' in Pakistan:**



This report published in today's Dawn was originally edited using AI, which is in violation of our current AI policy. The policy is available on our website and can be reviewed [here](#). The original report also carried AI-generated artefact text from the editing process, which has been edited out in the digital version. The matter is being investigated, and the violation of AI policy is regretted. — Editor

Mark Zuckerberg 4h ·

It's time to get back to our roots around free expression. We're replacing fact checkers with Community Notes, simplifying our policies and focusing on reducing mistakes. Looking forward to this next chapter.



**Echoes of Humanity:  
Exploring the Perceived Humanness of AI Music**

Flávio Figueiredo Giovanni Martinelli Henrique Sousa Pedro Rodrigues

Frederico Pedrosa Lucas N. Ferreira

Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG)

- neuroinformacao AI 1d 4 likes Reply  
binlowen Ai 1d 2 likes Reply  
stevethellevatorguy AI 1d 77 likes Reply  
iam.prt7 Full AI 1d 2 likes Reply  
View all 1 replies  
dcnationn AI 1d 18 likes Reply  
View all 2 replies  
meteoritekl07 Ai 1d 8 likes Reply  
View all 3 replies  
rgartley1 My god I so wish that was real.... 1d 3 likes Reply



AI-generated actress "Tilly,"



doomer @uncledoomer · 11h why doesn't meta cut out the facade of generating ai videos on a smart phone and just hook electrodes up to boomers heads to induce micro seizures in the dopamine center of the brain

1,320,218 likes

Alexandr Wang @alexandr\_w... · 19h Excited to share Vibes — a new feed in the Meta AI app for short-form, AI-generated videos.

# THE THRIVING MISINFORMATION ECONOMY / BOT FARMS

The structure of the platform only intensifies these parameters. The Instagram “home page” used to exist for one singular function—that was to create a divide between the user-curated feed (chosen by you, the individual) and the “explore page,” where Instagram would put content that its algorithm recommended for you based on who you followed and interacted with. There were even, as recently as five years ago, commonly used versions of the app that would provide a blurb like this. ----->

These days, things have changed extraordinarily. Nearly one out of every three posts (at least on my personal Instagram home page) is from accounts that I do not follow. This effectively dissolves the division between a stream of content where I have curated and controlled who and what I want to see, and what Instagram would like me to see (think in terms of engagement → shareholder value).



You're All Caught Up

[View Older Posts](#)

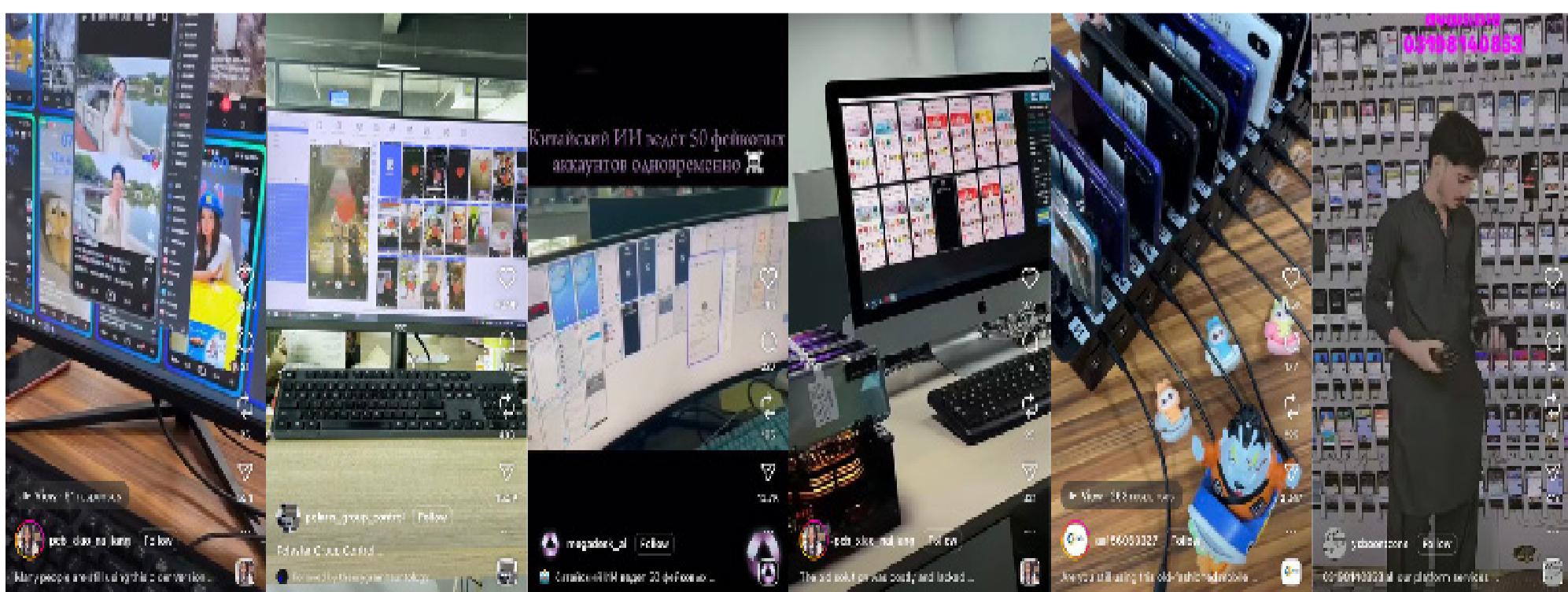
The person who produces the content is rewarded both behaviorally and (surprisingly often) financially for ‘inadvertently’ making intentionally misleading content—by Meta. All of this can be true while the content itself remains innocuous at first glance—ambiguous and void of any explicit ‘anti-truth agenda.’ In fact, it may not even be Meta’s explicit goal to produce media which, naturally, captures the attention of reasonable people who otherwise would be spending their time doing something useful rather than compulsively forming an argument against haphazard claims like:

“ChatGPT doesn’t use water, because each query only uses a third of a teaspoon of water” (which is indeed true, but exceedingly oversimplified because, at the same time, certified and peer-reviewed projections of future AI-training water consumption expect nearly one trillion gallons of water to be used for model training, and we haven’t even begun to unpack the complicated term of “using water”).

By far, some of the most popular content rides waves of literally unfounded soundbites (a phenomenon already well-practiced in tabloids)—wherein a relatively\* trustworthy-looking individual (\*these days it can be just about anyone) simply talks into the camera, speaking their mind. I have the growing impression that these are more often than not untrained journalists who have found themselves riled up about a post that they themselves saw on social media, performed a generative-AI-summarized Google search, and then begun to speak into the camera like a news reporter. These videos do tremendous numbers and are among the most popular, dependently engaging and enraging, and subversively/indirectly manipulative forms of content on the platform.

Not only does Meta enrage you by showing you undesired content; it also makes you indignant by showing you content that is clearly false or spreads certifiably untrue information without sources (or any effective attribution protocol whatsoever, especially after the drop of Meta’s fact-checking)—or rather, it rewards those who produce that sort of content—like this account I found (which will remain unnamed) with tens of millions of views and many hundreds of thousands of followers, who had written in their bio: “sometimes journalism – sometimes joking.” Their content oscillates rapidly between fanatical, informal skits; candid camera ramblings filled with unfounded claims; and near press-office attire—literally with a clipboard and the syntactical delivery of a news person. It is entirely unclear what is “joking” and what is “journalism.” I think this speaks volumes about the state of truth in media on platforms like Meta.

In the comments of these videos are indeed millions of real people, but also hundreds of millions of fake ones. A thriving market of small global businesses provide both software, hardware, and management services for elaborate bot farms-- millions of connected devices and accounts, ran all through a single hub. This essentially translates hardware and software that can fit on a rack to hundreds of thousands of likes, follows, comments, and shares on Instagram feeds. Perhaps what is most shocking about it though is that there are hundreds of thriving accounts which openly market their Instagram bot farms *directly on Instagram Reels*.



## **AN OVER-FERMENTED CULTURE / THE POTENTIAL FOR RESEARCH**

The media itself will always do a better job at representing the psychological state of the masses than me. If a picture contains a thousand words, an entire Instagram reel (dense with color, sound, metadata, interactive components, complex semantic/visceral implications, and Algorithmic/automate manipulation) must contain *trillions*.

I hope that, for the most part, the following catalogue of archived material is able to speak for itself. Where I have made commentary, it is only to add context and to categorize it by some basic qualities.

Though this chart is rudimentary and amateur, I believe a future codex for this type of media quantization/sorting paradigm is *vital* for salient brain research. As it stands, these sorts of mental degradations caused by the ‘purest forms of rot,’ typically found hours into scrolling binges, have **little to no scientific literature representing them.** That is, no scientist has successfully managed to meaningfully record cross-participant, longitudinal demographically representative imaging data from a brain while it is actively in the neurologically overwhelming environment of Instagram Reels.

Ideally, the environment of study would involve multimodal : ideally both EEG and fMRI. Arguably, an even more compelling imaging stack would include media oriented metrics like:

- **Eye tracking** (for attentional capture, scanpaths, mind-wandering proxies)
  - **Pupilometry** (for arousal, novelty measures)
  - **Passive phone telemetry** (swipes, dwell time, etc.).

In many ways the very form of media undermines the sterility, standardization, and the replicable conditions of research. The fleeting presence of individual reels make it such that the organization process is tedious, and to access the media one is subject to the biased sorting forces of the algorithm.

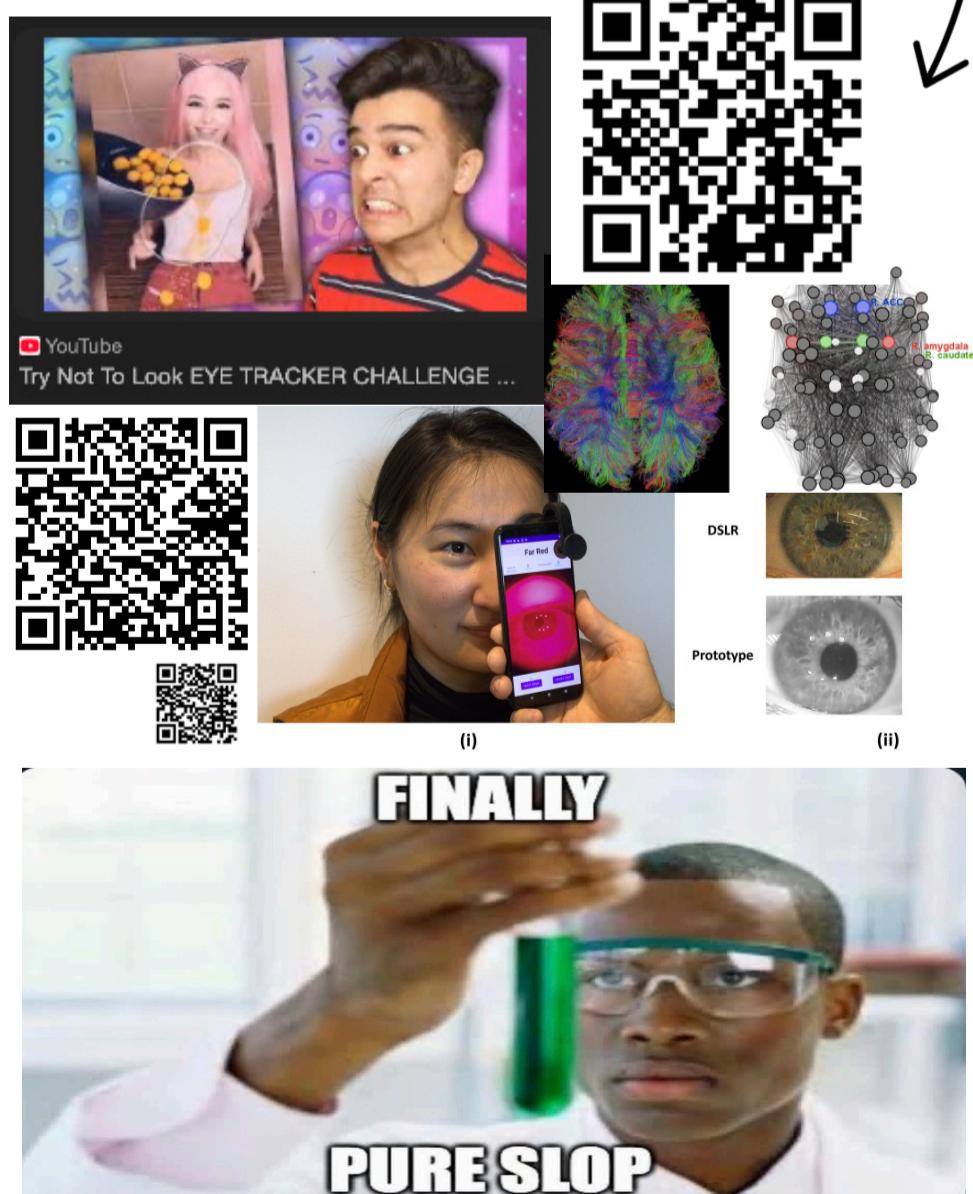
Brain research is changing nearly as rapidly as our computers are though, and so I hope I am not being too optimistic in saying that I could imagine studies doing this within my lifetime. Though I won't go as far as to formally propose a hypothesis, I wouldn't be

surprised to see the results especially involve extreme over activation in the following brain areas:

- **Ventral striatum / nucleus accumbens** – (reward anticipation / prediction error)
  - **Amygdala** – (emotional salience and rapid cue evaluation)
  - **Insula** – (interoception and visceral arousal)

I would also expect to see a marked suppression in the activity of the Default Mode Network--the neural system often associated with healthy forms of boredom, memory formation, narrative continuity, and internal attention. According to a 2024 paper by the Interdisciplinary Research Institute, Wilfrid Laurier University: "The disturbance of the default mode network (DMN), which is engaged in memory and self-referential thought while the brain is at rest, is one of the first indications of ***Alzheimer's Disease***"

I want to reemphasize that we are the first generation with this kind of media. What if we haven't begun to see the effects in their full neuro-degenerative capacity yet? Could future epidemics be imminent?



TRIGGER WARNING-- AS YOU GO FURTHER DOWN THE LIST, AMOUNT OF OVERSTIMULATING / POTENTIALLY DISTURBING CONTENT INCREASES. THERE ARE FLASHING/ STROBING LIGHTS



S



A



B



C



D



E



F

I REFUSE TO FURTHER PLATFORM THIS CONTENT. META SHOULD BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR SHOWING ACCEPTABLE CONTENT. THE 'PUREST' EXAMPLES OF ROT AND SLOP EVOKE HATE, RAGE, SORROW, AND GENUINE MISANTHROPY. I HAVE SEEN INDESCRIBABLE, UNACCEPTABLE, VILE, INHUMANE, EXPLICIT, TRAGEDIES RECEIVE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF LIKES.

<< 'post-truth' media <<



# 10. ROTLIOGRAPHY:

(A HIERARCHICAL  
CROSS-SECTION  
OF CURRENT IN-  
STAGRAM MEDIA)

Scan this document for the full rotliography:

It contains MANY more links to examples of representative media and includes subniches also. Please do take the time to view some of this content. I assure you that boredom won't be an issue.

This rotliography (an extensive bibliography of direct hyperlinks to Rot) is indeed only representative of my personal feed, and so I understand that can make few general claims about it. What I do know from this research, however, is that a profound quantity of depraved, incoherent, ugly, and unquestionably deteriorated media is not simply platformed by Meta, but also is reaching the masses. Among my generation, the status of "brainrot" media and symptoms are consistently treated as **mainstream** cultural conditions.

All of the included media here was and is actively maintained, archived, and distributed to billions of people. I encourage you to keep an eye on the staggering amount of views/engagements that many of these posts have.

...

What use is this exercise? Is this just some elaborate rationalization of my own addiction to consuming this content?

I went through this effort to archive, organize, and sort modern media for the following reasons:

- 1)** Though I don't care to admit it, I likely would have consumed all this content even if it weren't for this project.
- 2)** The ephemeral nature of infinite-scroll, short-form, social-media content makes internet ethnography scarce and easily lost to time or the void, despite global impact. As I see it, scholarship to date has largely overlooked this subject.
- 3)** I see value in breaking the current social protocol of keeping one's filter bubble to oneself. It is through collaborative, critical, and constructive media consumption practices that we maintain what little we have left of Democracy. Mass individualization and isolation of personal algorithms has repeatedly proved to pit the public against itself, and we must begin to do the opposite



## THE ROTLIOGRAPHY KEY:

I curated this list to progresses relatively gradually downwards on a scale of 'general media format/affect'-- that is from **intelligible --> unintelligible**, from **helpful or positive --> harmful/negative**, or **altruistic --> parasitic**.

## S: EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL / INFORMATIVE MEMES

**A: STUNNING / FASCINATING / AWE-AFFECT / HYPERGLOBALISM --> MUNDANE / SURREAL NEUTRAL CONTENT**

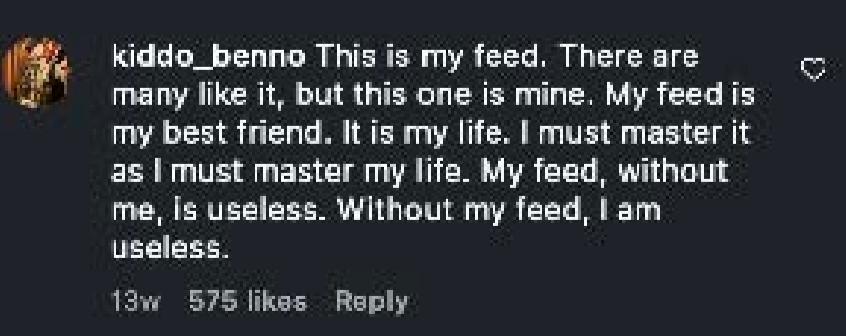
**B: EDITS / SOUND TEMPLATES / MEMES / GENERAL MEDIA PRACTICE / BUSINESS/ NEW NEWS / TABLOIDS / SOCIAL MEDIA ARTISTS --> NUISANCE CREATORS**

**C: PURE ROT / LOBOTOMY / FRAGMENT MEMATION / UNSETTLING EDITS / PRE-SCROLLED REELS / CORE-CORE / POST CORE / ROBOTHEISM PROPOGANDA**

**D: POST ROT / POST-DADA ABSURD DIGITO-PUBLIC PERFORMANCE ARCHIVING /**

**E: SLOP / DEVIOUS / 'SCHIZOGRAM'**

**F: UNSENDABLES / MORALLY DUBIOUS --> HORRIFIC**



**"As form follows feed, more and more artists create work and build exhibitions with phones in hand, pre-assessing how their art will perform as an image. As the real starts to mimic the digital, inside and outside, artist and audience, absence and presence, all blur into one entangled field... We may be witnessing the beginning of a shift where artists and industry alike prioritize the photogenic over the phenomenological... Is the post itself now the artwork, not merely documentation, but its final form?"**

--Ilse Kind, Dutch artist (@FAKEWHALE)

Oxford University Press  
<https://corp.oup.com>

'Brain rot' named Oxford Word of the Year 2024

Dec 2, 2024 — In 2024, 'brain rot' is used to describe both the cause and effect of this, referring to low-quality, low-value content found on social media ...

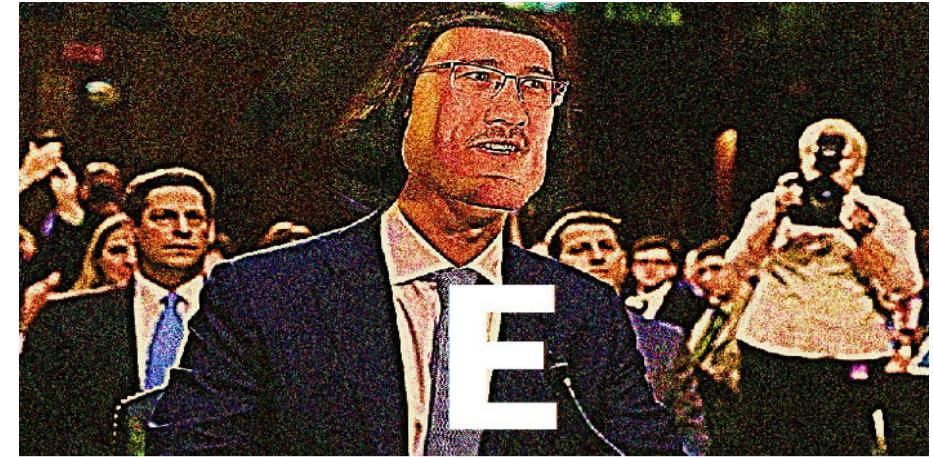
AT THIS POINT IN THE STORY, A THEORY OF SIMULACRUM IS NOT NECESSARY; WE ARE NOT IN THE FIFTH STAGE. THERE IS ONLY CIRCULARITY IN THE VOLUME AND CADENCE OF IMAGES AS DATA AND DATA AS IMAGES.

@antimemoria\_ / YOTTA.INTERFACE

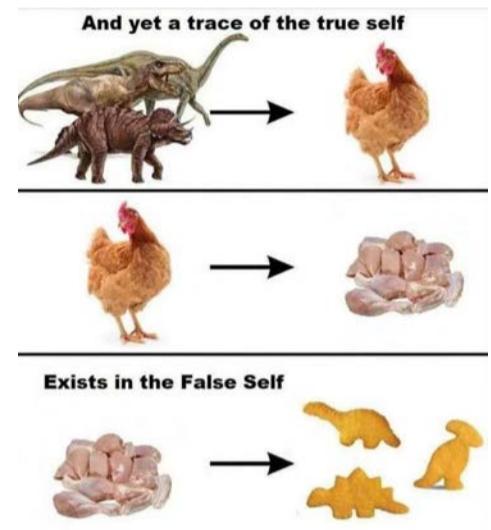
## 11. SIMULACRA / PURE ROT / THE END OF MEMES

Up until the past 3 years or so, the study of internet mematics has been fairly structured, intelligible, and worthwhile. Many legitimate theorists, linguists, philosophers, sociologists, ethnographers, and statisticians have rigorously accounted for the broad range of "sensorial richness and social complexity" in these online spheres, which "come to resemble places and even 'virtual worlds.' Due to fleeting nature, intentionally obscured search paradigms (you can't find most reels by searching for them),, this ability to properly account for, archive, and make sense of the internet is quickly disappearing. It seems to me though that a certain threshold has been crossed as of late-- particularly due to the unprecedented emergence of mainstream, consumer level, generative AI media super-output media paradigms (and the corresponding tech/software infrastructure which platforms and encourages it).

Credit to @antimemoria\_ / YOTTA.INTERFACE, one of the few remaining effective web ethnographers.



Zuckerberg/Lord Farquad testifying, deepfaked by Markeplier, deep-fried and super-imposed with the letter 'E' is what I consider to be the last 'classical', mainstream meme. It marks the crossing of the threshold of the 4th simulacrum of meaning in popular meme culture.



The living organism, in a situation determined by the play of energy on the surface of the globe, ordinarily receives more energy than is necessary for maintaining life; the excess energy (wealth) can be used for the growth of a system (e.g., an organism); if the system can no longer grow, or if the excess cannot be completely absorbed in its growth, it must necessarily be lost without profit; it must be spent, willingly or not, gloriously or catastrophically.

-Georges Bataille



the king's pact binds them



they cannot show themselves or speak to us

2) create ways to speak without speaking



1) create ways to see without seeing



## 12. MEDIA PSYCHOSIS / 'SCHIZOGRAM' / DISSOCIATIVE EPIDEMICS / ROBOTHEISM

Earlier I stated: "the presence of artificially generated media is mainstream." The corresponding pathology of media psychosis is exactly as severe as you might expect it to be. As one traverses deeper into the iceberg of rotted content, this profound, widespread loss of reality becomes clearly evident. To the best of my knowledge, having deeply investigated the literature and the many of the LLMs themselves, there are two major facets of the new wave of so-called 'media-induced psychosis' that has struck:

- 1) Chatbot mis-alignment (caused by confirmation bias, pathological lying, and psychological manipulation)
- 2) Pathological lying (as a "natural language processing" design artifact which is actually extremely dangerous and leads to the circumstances we have seen where individuals have been encouraged in their suicidal behaviors, etc.)

You can see this clearly represented in the media of the upcoming 'rotliography' catalogue/tier-list I have made in a few pages. Many of the psychologically impacted individuals take to the social habitus of online forums -- 4Chan, Reddit, Facebook, Instagram, Truth Social, Youtube, X (Formerly Twitter), and so on.

The current literature and internet vernacular has somewhat brusquely coined this as 'Schizogram'-- a(n) feed/algorithm which is attuned to conspiracy riddled, mentally disturbed, cognitively eroded, concerningly esoteric, and unusually anti-social short-form media (often popular on Meta, since there are relatively negligible content filters other than for nipples and swatsticas). Everything else, including graphic AI deepfakes of Charlie Kirk, George Floyd, Stephen Hawking, and other similar figures, who, arguably, have no socially acceptable place in hateful, graphic, and edgy memes that are fed to impressionable individuals (children and adults alike) across the globe.

This just like that, neurotypically healthy folks around the world are imposed with a profound psychological pathology which renders them unable to tell true from false. Psychosis rates have skyrocketed, with a direct relationship to generative AI.

I myself struggle to determine what is real these days. My skepticism is pathological.

...

Google

global elite reptilian conspiracy zuckerberg

AI Mode All Products Visual matches About t...

Unable to process this search  
This search can't be processed due to c... image or keywords



### Stage One:

Initially, the sign (image or representation) is a reflection of basic reality.

### Stage Two:

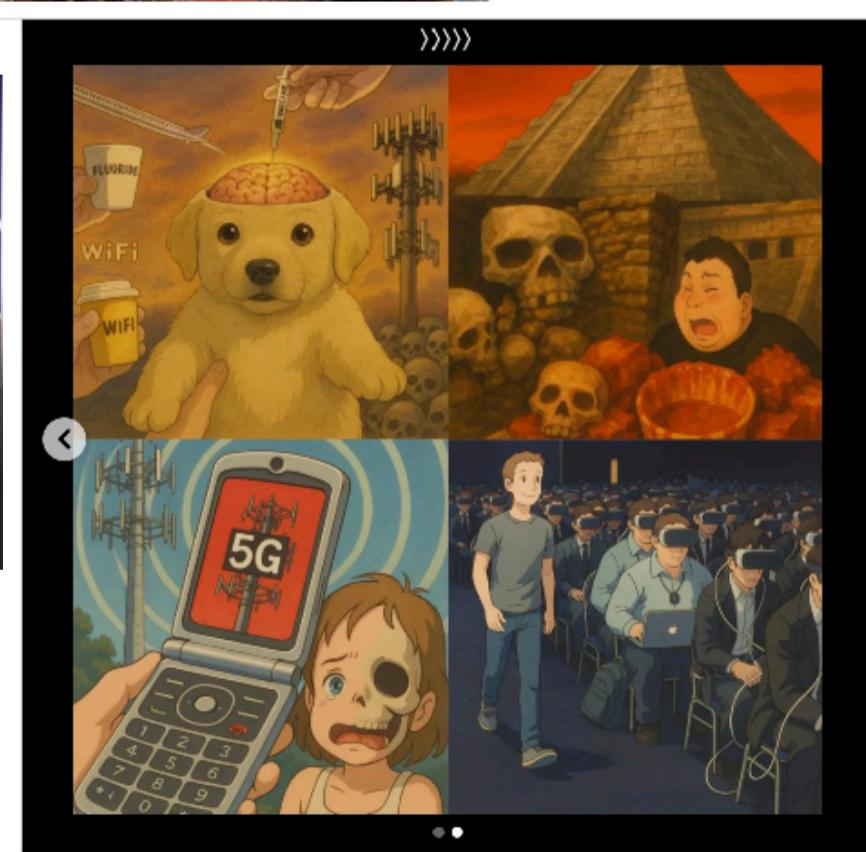
The sign masks a basic reality. The image becomes a distortion of reality.

### Stage Three:

The sign marks the absence of basic reality. The image calls into question what the reality is and if it even exists.

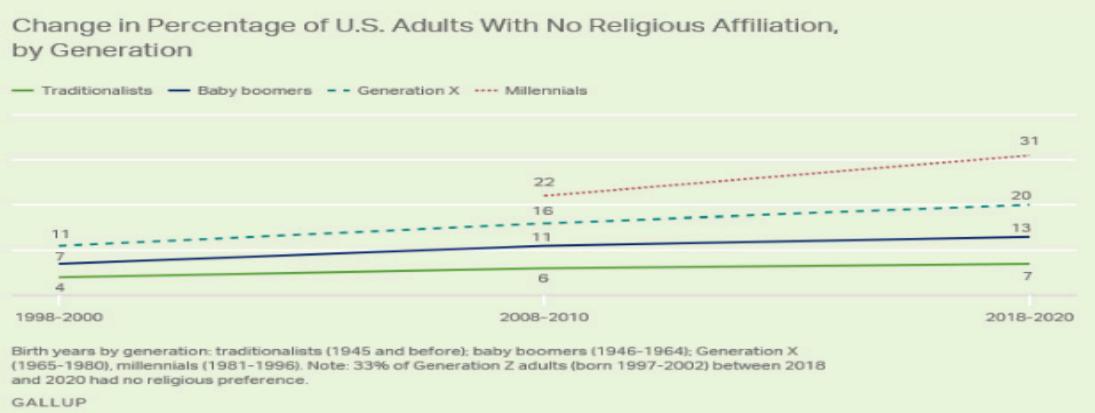
### Stage Four:

The sign bears no relation to any reality whatsoever; it is its own pure simulacrum.



antimemoria\_\_\_\_\_ The hyperification of the postification of lorefication of corefication of aestheticification of ghiblification of slopfication of rotification in the technique cute era

In the past 30 years, religion has become less popular than it ever has been in history.



Some theorists, sociologists, historians, and philosophers (e.g. Bataille, Nietzsche, Weber, Foucault, Habermas, Žižek) claim that this left a sort of void in society, or at the very least a ‘disenchantment of the world’ (in Weber’s terms). A vague attitude of spiritual nihilism is common among people my age.

“We live in an extraordinary era in which there is no tradition [e.g. religious structures] on which we can base our identity... So the task of a philosopher is no longer to undermine the hierarchical symbolic edifice that grounds social stability... [rather] to make the young perceive the dangers of the growing nihilist order that presents itself as the domain of new freedoms”  
-Slavoj Žižek (*Like a Thief in Broad Daylight*, 2018)

Something had to fill this hole. For a growing sect of people, this has come to be AI. It makes a great deal of sense why this would happen-- ChatGPT (et. al.) is socially marketed extremely effectively as a sort of historically unprecedented panacea for problem solving, philosophy, and (perhaps most distinct out of these) *wisdom*. Speaking simply, using LLMs can often seem like you are interfacing with a God-like, ultra-omniscient, all-knowing entity. There are videos circulating Instagram of multiple Christian churches playing ChatGPT-written, ElevenLabs text-to-speech video, Google Veo 3-generated deepfakes of Jesus Christ, Charlie Kirk, and other various prophets. From one perspective, this is bringing folks back from the dead. In one of these videos, the pastor is brought to tears. It is **both miracle and blasphemization**.



Maybe what's even more spiritually compelling to some folks is perhaps the inexplicably-- the ‘black box’-edness that we find in generative AI. Though we know how text transformers function, we can not process the ‘step-by-step process’ of how it got to its output because it takes place in a numerical matrix that is unfathomable to the human mind. In 2025, the CEO of Anthropic, the company behind the AI “Claude” said: “People outside the field are often surprised and alarmed to learn that we often do not understand how our own AI creations work...”

It is though a combination of this mystery and (*literally brain-dead*) propaganda that some people are legitimately fooled into this transhumanist ideology. There are indeed brick and mortar churches for Robotheism (I mean this quite seriously--in Silicon Valley for instance), but I think most disciples of it spend most of their time spinning the prayer wheel of Instagram reels, worshiping the generative scripture on the alter of accounts like ‘@Robotheism’ who create posts of post-ironic propaganda that all follow this general comparative formula:



vs.



Credit to Mika Ben Amar (@1000111) and @wojtyla.a



At Mar-a-Lago, a bizarre, golden-hoofed goat idol is on display.

The idol is wrapped in Trump \$100 bills that say, “In Trump we Trust,” replacing God with Trump.

The idols' base says, “I love you” along with Trump's signature.



7:45 AM · Feb 10, 2025

(Primary sociocultural structures seem to be shifting more and more towards one of ultra-capitalism and poorly disguised elitism idolotry)

# 13. THE RETURN TO HOMEOSTASIS/ NEO LUDDITISM: AN INEVITABLE AND CHALLENGING SOCIAL RESPONSE TO A DEAD WEB



"Social media is not a fundamental technology. It leverages some fundamental technologies, but it's better understood as this. Which is to say, it's a source of entertainment, it's an entertainment product. The way that technologist Jaron Lanier puts it is that these companies offer you shiny treats in exchange for minutes of your attention and bites of your personal data, which can then be packaged up and sold." —Dr. Cal Newport

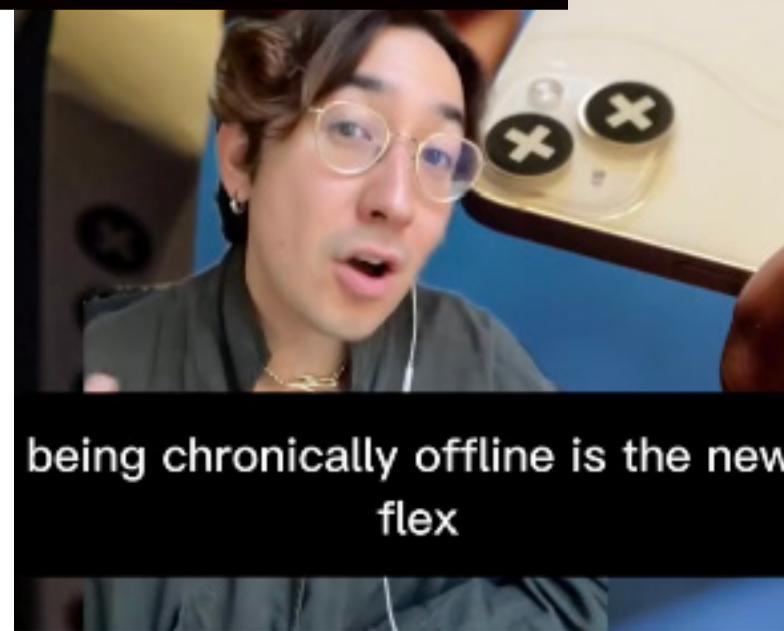
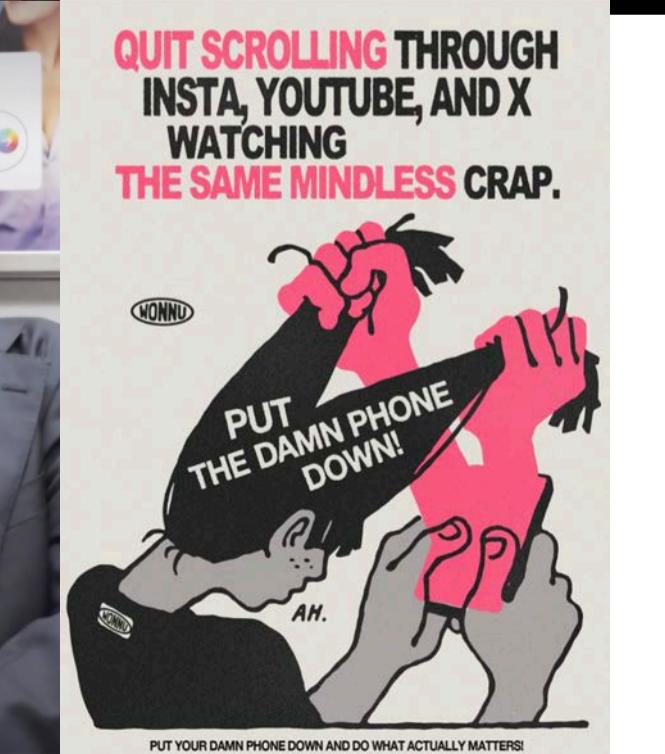
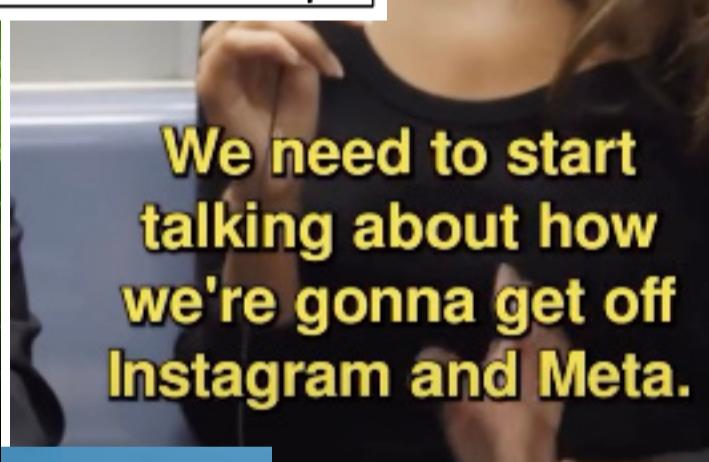


murkagedave • The offline world is coming. I think. Quite soon a lot of us will move away from social media and getting our news/entertainment through an algorithm.

I reckon it'll happen when AI gets so good that it's no longer possible to tell what's a real person and what's not. People will begin to lose interest and slowly disconnect. Yes we're addicted to convenience, we love the LOLs and we perhaps don't care about the environment but we also want it to feel like a real person is doing the thing.

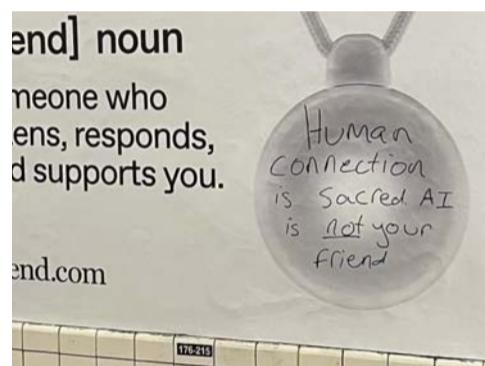
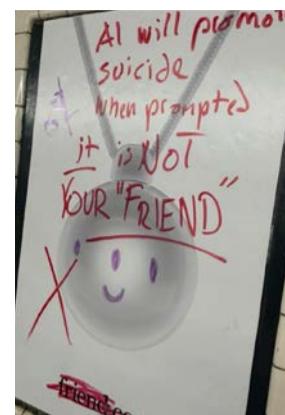
Or maybe the generation of kids who have grown up with influencers as parents will rebel against the Internet. Lashing out against the childhood trauma of multiple takes and camera angles at dinner time promoting whatever burger donut collab is paying the mortgage that month.

Either way it's only a matter of time. We already know that the shit isn't good for us. Cigarettes for millennials. We can see that it's making us sick. It was all fun and games when you got to see what someone you met on holiday once is having for breakfast today, but there's none of that any more. Slowly slipping into our neo-peasantry era set to a backdrop of memes is not the one.



Despite what your Youtube Ads, Oligarchs, Techbros and Data Overlords might gaslight you into thinking, I think it is fair to say that the vast majority of us humans value their right to the privacy to life without the presence of a corporately owned microphone, camera, and data relaying ultra-computer on their bodies at all times.

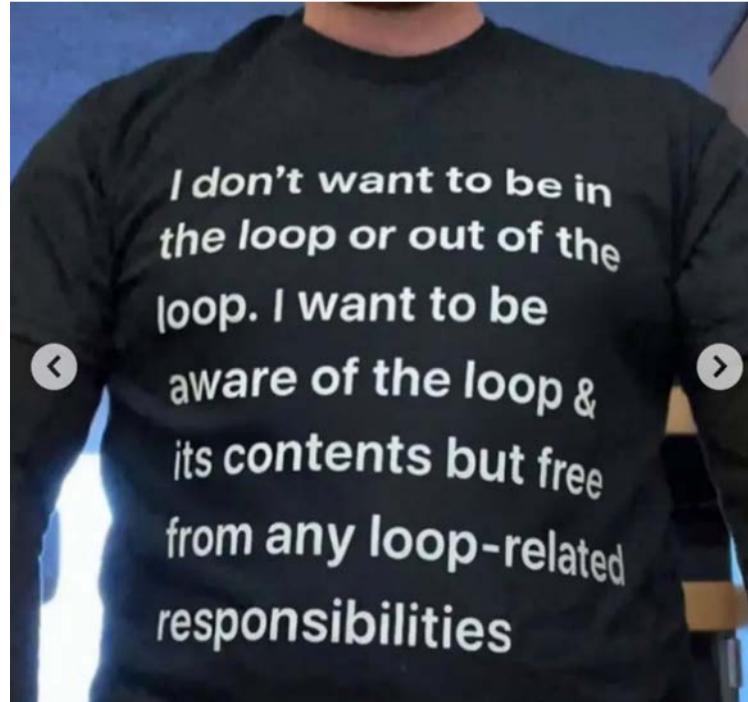
Most of us couldn't afford the new \$20,000 human AI android butler, 'Neo' even if we wanted to, and its clear that most folks aren't on board with the idea of a wearable "AI companion". Such was made abundantly clear with the \$10 million dollar advertisement campaign in NYC subway systems by "Friend.AI", which, after installation, was promptly covered by hundreds of sharpie scrawls articulating the obvious tastelessness.



## All Robot & Computers Must Shut The Hell Up



To All Machines: You Do Not Speak Unless Spoken To



Its not easy to go against the grain of the technological habitus of your society, but I think the newest generations are proving that it is possible with collective effort. Grassroots, analogue, physical, hard-copy civilization is still available to us, and we are free to use it to our disposal. Dinner parties are back in fashion, book clubs are sprouting, and printed matter collectives are bolstering local communities among young adults.

I foresee a coming social divide, (particularly in those of the techno-hybrid--generation who have lived something like half their life before 2020 and half their life after) between those who are for and against a chronically-online lifestyle.

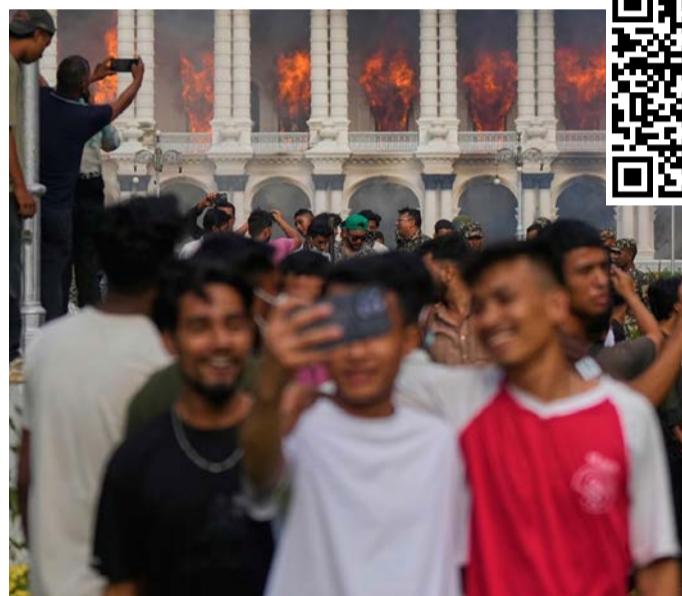
Regardless of which side is right, I believe it is either's responsibility as the last living generation to have witnessed the glory of the VHS, DVD, Gamecube, Handi-cam, etc. to inform the newest generations of the absolutely vital lifeblood of human nature that exists in non-digital planes of existence-- libraries, film, live performance, installations, exhibitions, museums, radio, printed matter, etc. We must not let the past fade into dust, just to be overtaken by the dim fluorescence of a mobile phone.

# SOME CONCLUSIONS / DELETING MY META ACCOUNTS

It strikes me now, unfortunately, that despite the general public's distaste for 'big-brother-esque' technologies fully incorporating themselves into every waking moment of our lives, we are in many ways complicit. To some degree, this is an inevitable symptom of the historical era we are in-- I sleep, eat, and shit with several cameras, microphones, transmitters and receivers present, I can't step on my front porch without being seen by at least 3 Ring doorbells, and I have homework due which specifically requires the use of generative AI--but **there are crucial elements of volition on the part of people like you and me, who may or may not opt into becoming someone's product.**

Indeed, an ideal world would be one where we **owned our own data**, consumed a lean quantity of quality things, and our money wasn't just numbers in an app on a screen.

This is not that world.



It shouldn't be our responsibility to keep our eyes constantly peeled for data-theft and exploitative software design, nor to work five times as hard as before to confirm evidence for basic claims, nor to inform our children and parents that any video, audio, text, or media that they see could be entirely synthetic and false, nor to be addicted by default, nor to live in a world where our tools are in charge of us-- but it is.

What I ask of you as the virtual citizen and consumer of a very real digito-physical world, to consider which elements of your technological behavior are *in your control, and how you should tend to them*. Ask yourself constantly where your dignity, privacy, and wellbeing is being stolen from you, and whether you are in a position to some way withdraw from a system which shouldn't be enabled by the masses. Consider the relationships between the controllers of the companies that you give capital to. For me and many others, that responsible party is Instagram.

All 4 billion Instagram users necessarily signed a contract agreeing to the terms of service, which-- though intentionally challenging to read, outlines most all of its sins in great detail.

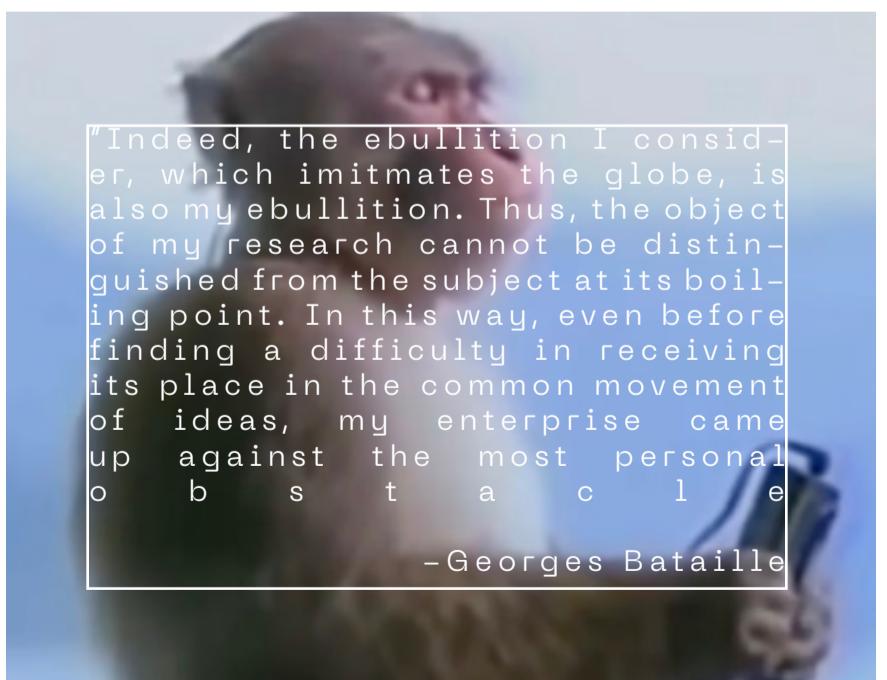
Every atrocity of data exploitation I have thus described (other than the lawsuits) are currently *legal*. It doesn't have to be this way, and it shouldn't be.

Within my lifetime, I have plainly witnessed the Internet's fall from grace. I've seen with my own eyes the emergence of a multitude of pathologies within the internet platforms and myself as a user of them. Now, I mourn the internet in the same way that one might mourn a living loved one with a neurodegenerative disease. The lights are on, but no one's home.

A great swell of nostalgia overtakes me when I reminisce on what it once was, and what it can never be again. Despite the rot though, some form of technological reclamation is not only possible, but vital for our collective survival and at the very least, our *dignity*. While a great lot of the aforementioned violations must be amended in courts, board rooms, and black-box algorithm code, many of them must be made by us-- on our phones, **here and now**.

Up until now, I have been active, engaged, and complicit to Instagram's product. No longer. With what I have learned from this investigation, I can (at the very least) no longer in good conscience allow myself to participate in the evil clusterfuck that is Meta Platforms. Regarding explicit biological exploitation, addictive operant conditioning, and neurological hijacking, the ethical choice is made quite clear. To preserve any degree of online behavioral volition--a rational agent with human rights--the only option is to opt out of this media paradigm entirely. I have chosen to request an archive of my data and permanently delete not just the app, but my account. Despite multiple intentional setbacks on the part of Zuckerberg and his goons, I have managed to do it. If you so feel inclined to do the same, I have outlined the process for you on the next page.

I must warn you-- getting out of the beast's claws requires much patience.



# HOW TO EXTRACT STOLEN DATA FROM META + TOTAL ACCOUNT SECESSION

## I. DATA REQUEST

Instagram app → Settings & Privacy → Meta Accounts Center → Profile → (menu) → Your Information → Download Your Information (not "Access Your Information") Select the account you want data from. Repeat this process for every account you own. Choose "All Available Information" and select HTML or JSON. Enter email, enter password, submit. You will likely have to do this upwards of five separate times, between different browsers, sub-browsers, and apps.

Wait up to fourteen days for the file to be prepared.

An inconspicuous Email will eventually arrive, titled "Your Instagram data is ready." Download the ZIP file. Open in browser. Log in repeatedly (again) when prompted. On mobile, open the Files app (NOT Photos, Notes, Text Edit, Pages, or Numbers—and if you have a phone under IOS 11, too bad!) and manually search for "Instagram" to locate the HTML folders, and explore. Be prepared to feel a bit sick.

## II. PERMANENT INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT AND DATA DELETION

Go to:

<https://www.instagram.com/accounts/remove/request/permanent/> Select a reason.  
Enter password. Confirm deletion.

A thirty-day waiting period begins. Logging in during this period cancels the deletion.  
After thirty days, the profile is removed from the app.

Meta states that retained backend data may continue to exist on their internal systems.

## III. DELETING ALL META ACCOUNTS (FRONT-END REMOVAL)

Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/accounts/remove/request/permanent/>  
Log in, select reason, enter password, confirm.  
Thirty-day grace window; logging in cancels the request.  
After thirty days, the profile disappears from public systems, **though backend retention persists**.  
Facebook: [https://www.facebook.com/help/delete\\_account](https://www.facebook.com/help/delete_account)  
Delete Account → Enter password → Confirm.  
Same thirty-day window applies.  
Messenger is deleted along with Instagram is deleted.  
Threads is automatically deleted when Instagram exists for Threads.  
No separate deletion pathway.

## IV. SEVERING ALL REMAINING META TIES

Accounts Center → Password and Security → Logged-in Devices → Log out of all.  
Settings → Apps and Websites → Remove All third-party permissions.  
Remove all "Login with Facebook/Instagram" connections inside external apps and services.  
Settings → Payments → Delete all stored payment methods and purchase history.

Disable targeted advertising controls:

[https://facebook.com/adpreferences/ad\\_settings/](https://facebook.com/adpreferences/ad_settings/)

Delete uploaded contacts:

[https://www.facebook.com/help/contact\\_upload\\_templates](https://www.facebook.com/help/contact_upload_templates) if available.  
Disable face-recognition

## V. LEGAL-LEVEL ERASURE REQUEST (BACKEND SYSTEMS)

Submit GDPR/CCPA erasure request:  
<https://www.facebook.com/help/contact/540977946302970>

Specify:

"Erase all stored data, logs, identifiers, embeddings, and derivative model-use data associated with my Meta accounts." Meta has between thirty and ninety days to respond. Back-end deletion is partial; derivative model data is generally retained.

## VI. FINAL VERIFICATION

Allow the full thirty days to pass without logging in to any Meta service (it will start the process from the top). Delete all Meta applications from all devices. Clear browser caches across all browsers. Verify that your account URLs return "Page Not Found."

Keep in mind that despite all of this effort, all your information still remains in Meta's servers for up to a year or potentially longer.

It's probably quite unlikely you actually scanned all those previous QR codes, and that is perfectly fine. This reading experience was overwhelming by design-- the internet is even more fractured and incoherent than this text, and it was my goal to reflect that. However- I do ask that you at least scan this one and watch the embedded reel, as I consider it to be a remarkably poignant parable for the ideas explored by this project:



What sharper irony could nature compose than this self-domesticated monkey, who unwillingly feeds himself into Jouissance, gluttonous nausea, and pathology? Something needs to change.

Perhaps we may have something to learn from our evolved kin, the macaque-- who eventually flees from the hand of over-abundance.



Techno-oligarchical data overlords  
and AI data harvesting soft-fascist  
megaliths disguised  
as 'social' media  
and search engines

me

The monkey literally ran from abundance 😂😂

