

Deconstructing Frameworks and Reconstructing Meaning within Hyperreality

How can graphic communication design help navigate the state of hyperreality so that one can lead an authentic and meaningful life?

Introduction

We live in hyperreality. A state where truth has disconnected from reality. Graphic communication design has a responsibility as society's primary image producers to help users navigate this Postmodern culture. The methodology utilised here was to deconstruct frameworks, to become critical of constructed reality, and then to reconstruct meaning, to rebuild personal meanings from meaninglessness.

What is Hyperreality?

Hyperreality, put forward by Jean Baudrillard, is the state where representation replaces reality and becomes real in its own right. Building upon Ferdinand de Saussure's concept that a sign can be split into the signified (content) and the signifier (expression), Baudrillard asserts that our reality is increasingly constructed of signifiers without reference to the signified. A state where truth is determined and constructed within a system of signs. Like a dictionary which defines words with other words, an endless regression of definitions, without any direct contact to reality.

What is Simulacra?

Within hyperreality, reality is indistinguishable from simulacra (representations of the real). Baudrillard reminds us that a simulacrum does not 'hide the truth', rather the proliferation of simulacra means that there are no truths. We have become accustomed to a new reality constructed by various simulacra; images, symbols, models, maps, etc.

If simulacra are representations that signify something real, then these words (that compose this text), these geometric letterforms (that compose

those words) and these pixels (that compose those letterforms) are suitable examples. However, Hyperreality is not merely the congregation of hollowed out simulacra. It is the layering of simulacra, a copy of a copy of a copy and so on. It is when under those layers the original referent gets lost and forgotten. Eventually the real core does not concern our reality. A bootstrap process occurs and what remains is the hyperreal coating, thick enough to hold its own. A dynamic loop of meanings and definitions able to create more truth from within itself.

What are the consequences?

There are several consequences that result from hyperreality. The ones I will elaborate on in this essay are; the perpetuation of late capitalism through cultural hegemony; the loss of zest, aura and increase numbness; and the chief concern that we are unable to live authentically and meaningfully. It will become apparent in later sections that these are all causally interlaced and thus is difficult to perceive and overcome. I argue that when one is unaware of hyperreality they remain within a vicious cycle, destined to repeat the feedback loop of consuming and producing simulacra.

Main Argument

Though one may not fully transcend hyperreality, being aware of it can begin to liberate one's self from unconscious participation in a reality constructed by others — a world built by a system of signs which are embedded with ideological attitudes. One then begins to realise the human potentialities of self-determination, creativity in meaning and authenticity.

This argument is founded on the attitude summed up in Douglas Kellner's affirmation that "Perceiving the possibility of self-determination and constructing one's own needs and values could enable individuals to break with the existing world of thought and behaviour. Philosophy was thus to supply the norms for social criticism and the ideal of liberation which would guide social change and individual self-transformation"

What does it have to do with graphic communication design?

As a field of practice that is involved with sign production and image production, graphic communication design inevitably perpetuates hyperreality. As a student of this discipline I am concerned with how my practice will contribute to the repression of others. This concern taken to its extreme dictates that I should not produce any work at all. However, I developed my position in alignment with Marshall McLuhan's assertion that knowledge of the medium allows one to stand aside from its structure and discern its principles and lines of force. Therefore, due to knowledge of and participation in image production, graphic communication designers are well suited to challenge hyperreal culture.

This leads me to my main question, that is:

How can graphic communication design help navigate the state of hyperreality so that one can lead an authentic and meaningful life.

This essay intends to explore the different facets of this question through the analysis of cultural theorists, design practitioners, artists and my own design practice.

Users and Target Audience

The question put forward here may apply to those who live within hyperreality. Specifically, I am interested in targeting those who are not immediately aware of the state of hyperreality but nevertheless are within the confines of its influence. This concerns a growing general demographic which is involved with media technology and participates in social media. In my work I generally target an audience with a similar age as myself, young adults from 18 to 30. However, the far reaching effects of late capitalist ideology within hyperreality will apply to those much older as well as those much younger.

As the culture of hyperreality grows and the influence of postmodernity are felt throughout online societal participation, many will be able to understand and relate with my work without having intentionally looked into the theorists mentioned here. These theoretical commentaries on society are increasingly self evident in the daily social life. An intuitive literacy in the characteristic of postmodern media, such as meta irony,

satire and absurd, is learnt through the viewership of internet memes. These memes are often self referential and contained within a system of signs such that its meaning is insignificant to a cultural outsider.

Deconstructing Frameworks and Reconstructing Meaning - How one might navigate hyperreality to live authentically

In order to perceive and navigate hyperreality, one might follow the path of Deconstructing Frameworks and Reconstructing Meaning.

Deconstructing frameworks pertains to critical thinking and the deconstruction of cultural, social and ideological frameworks. Questioning fundamental truths about reality can liberate one's self from dogmatic beliefs but can also leave one lost within a meaningless vortex of fragmented non-truths.

Therefore, what naturally follows is the effort in reconstructing meaning. In doing so, one regains the ability to focus on what the individual deems truly important. The other half of navigating hyperreality is to reconcile the empty substance on which the surface rests, to create one's own meaning in life and to live authentically.

The continual practice of deconstructing and reconstructing ensures that one maintains control over the construction of their own reality and assert one's human agency through this process.

Deconstructing Frameworks

The deconstruction of frameworks is the practical and critical application of that social constructivist view; that our realities are formed by social, cultural and ideological constructs. This practice draws from a rich background of ideological and institutional critique.

Frederic Jameson's critique of our current historical situation recognises that Postmodernity and late capitalism are inextricably linked. The characteristic of this new cultural era that he calls 'depthlessness' ties together the state of hyperreality and the perpetuation of late capitalism. This depthlessness is comprised of the physical flatness of screen

technology, the postmodern attitude that rejects a transcendent truth beyond surface appearance and the superficiality of our hyperreal culture.

In this depthlessness we lose the depth of our character and the ability to perceive ideology, culminating in an inauthentic and meaningless life.

Walter Benjamin noted the loss of aura in the mechanical reproduction of artworks. Here the market begins to detach the image of an artwork from its original time and space so that it may be sold. In that process Benjamin saw the deterioration of culture and the loss of something meaningful. Thus began the commodification of human meaning and the spread of the capitalist free market encroaching on all spheres of life.

In a similar fashion, John Berger observed how advertisements began to detach the image of happiness from the viewer, so that it may be sold back to them. 'The publicity image steals the love of herself as she is and sells it back to her' In this stage the consumer is no longer sold goods and services based on their material, exchange or symbolic value but for a sign value that has been completely inflated. Here begins hyperreality where as the signifier detaches from the signified the meaning of happiness can be sold embedded within products and services.

Within this organisation of society that relies on surface appearances and a system of constructed meanings, Guy Debord recognises the advent of Spectacle society. One where the value of an individual is not determined by their character, or even what they have but rather merely what they appear to have. At this stage, not only is aura detached from artworks and happiness from the self but our very identity becomes detached as well. We are no longer mere consumers of simulacra but become producers of simulacra. In a societal structure that relies on spectacles, we must sell our self image to be understood, to exist. As a result we are caught within that whirlwind of hyperreality, ourselves becoming flattened and commodified, and it becomes evermore difficult to perceive, let alone transcend late capitalist ideology.

Jameson specifically recognises this distinct flavour of cultural hegemony in the current epoch. That the depthless quality of our hyperreal culture has allowed the commodification of all spheres of life. The capitalist notion of

market exchange has seeped in from the economic arena to the cultural, social and personal domain. As a result the late capitalist ideology threatens to dominate all other forms of thought.

The above evidences the progression of late capitalism, in its conjunction with hyperreality, into an all encompassing rationality; effectively preventing one from thinking outside its ideological frameworks. Fortunately, the same Postmodern milieu in which hyperreality arises, that detachment of signifiers which allows for the multiplicity of meaning, also invokes the ability to dismantle the mainstream reality that late capitalist rationality imposes.

This endeavour requires one to be aware of postmodernity and the state of hyperreality. As Douglas Kellner elaborates “Critical thought seeks alternative modes of thought and behaviour from which is created a standpoint of critique. What Marcuse calls ‘negative thinking’. This practice presupposes the ability to make a distinction between existence and essence, fact and potentiality and appearance and reality.”

It is here that graphic communication designers can increase media literacy and the ability to delineate between signs, images and reality.

Defamiliarisation

Peter Buwert put forward the technique of ‘defamiliarisation’ as a potential tool to break viewers out of habitual forms of thought. By presenting to the audience something that was previously accepted as familiar in a unfamiliar fashion. This technique produces an discombobulating effect. Within this moment the viewer is able to step outside the normalised frame of mind and elevate their criticality.

Happiness

This was the principle reasoning behind deconstructing happiness in my work ‘Smile at All Costs’. Buwert elaborates that the more familiar the object in question was previously, the greater the effect of defamiliarisation. Indeed, the general and widespread culture of pursuing happiness is a

strongly held and perfectly familiar concept. Therefore, by defamiliarising the cultural pursuit of happiness I rouse the critical faculties of my user.

Repressive Desublimation

The decision to deconstruct the framework of happiness was supported by Marcuse's concept of Repressive Desublimation. He puts forth the idea that the desire to transcend and critique ideology is quelled by commodified pleasure. Repression within late capitalism operates not by control and denial but through allowance and expression. One is free to pursue desires and pleasures in commodified form. One is encouraged to believe that the current state of affairs is ideal and voluntarily complies with the dominant ideology. As he elaborates, "under the conditions of a rising standard of living, non-conformity with the system itself appears to be socially useless, and the more so when it entails tangible economic and political disadvantages and threatens the smooth operation of the whole" (Marcuse)

My intention was not only to deconstruct happiness on the virtue of increasing criticality but also in doing so expose the ways in which late capitalism hijacks the pursuit of happiness. This was a productive exercise in exploring the state of hyperreality and the hegemonic forces it entails.

Munch like scream of the smiley face

Beyond the typical critique of capitalism that involves itself with the rejection of material wealth lies a concealed symptom of late capitalism. Within hyperreality even counter cultural ideas of liberation, rebellion and transcendence are flattened and commodified. For instance, alternative modes of thinking are packaged through stereotypical Eastern and mystical imagery and ecological living are packaged in wood, paper and green.

In his cultural analysis of the 70s, Erik Davis noted the 'unravelling' of 'old models of authority, identity and perception' was at once liberating and disorientating. Within this era, self liberation and self realisation became a cultural project. Yet the possibility of that an authentic and 'real' self did not exist, supported by the the same postmodern constructivist thinking that sparked the endeavour, produced what he called 'seventies narcissism, the Munch-like scream of the smiley face'.

There are many parallels that exist between contemporary society and the 70s America described by Davis. Only now the void created by postmodern destruction of meaning is filled by hyperreality and a new form of decentralised late capitalism which exploits the fragmented realities as new markets to cater to.

In a world with less and less fundamental meaning to grasp onto the last stronghold for purpose might be happiness. Thus we are more inclined to pursue it feverishly, to beam positivity outward, sharing our happy memories on social media. After all, to be is to be perceived in spectacle society and to be happy is to be perceived to be happy.

In hyperreality a discrepancy is manifested between the simulacra of happiness and the visceral feeling of real happiness. Its commodification means that it too will be utilised as a tool perpetuate late capitalism and prevent the individual from achieving authentic happiness. Though it may appear counter intuitive to undermine the pursuit of happiness, as it is what gives people genuine purpose, it is only by first seeing that the happiness packaged by late capitalism are empty simulacra and that we are able to pursue true forms of personal happiness.

Duchenne Smile

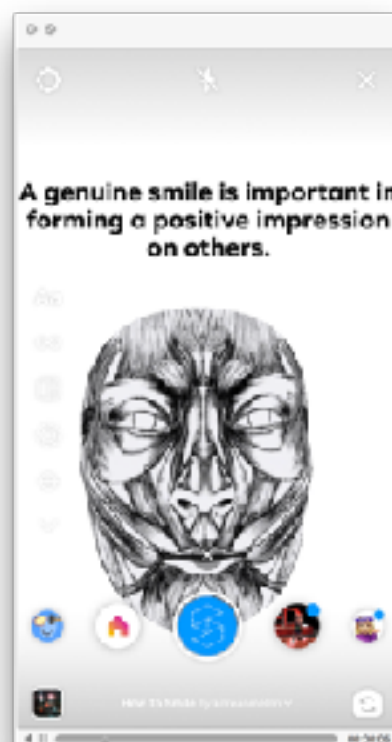
The below illustration explores the superficial attitude of performing happiness within social media.



With a societal focus on how we are perceived, there is paradoxically a large amount of interest in looking genuine. Many web articles which focus on self help suggest smiling a 'Duchenne smile', one that involves the use of orbicularis oculi muscles to crinkle the corners of the eyes. A Healthline web article reads 'Numerous studies have shown that smiling with your eyes as well as your mouth can help you be perceived as trust worthy and sincere'. This contradictory act of intentionally smiling authentically feels symptomatic of image culture, where one would learn how to appear genuine rather than truly be genuine.

In the spirit of defamiliarisation, this anatomical illustration which 'aids' the viewer visualising the respective muscles evokes a rather creepy and disturbing feeling. The accompanying instructions is reflective of that scientific attitude that tends to be appropriated for corporate productivity and sterilises the previously unscrutinised and perfectly genuine smile.

The illustration was then developed into a Instagram filter using Facebook's proprietary Spark AR software. By making the work accessible through social media the illustration now has a subversive function, to intervene within the process of self commodification.



Instagram, being a platform that primarily functions to share image and videos of one's self or own life, easily lends itself to be the materialisation of hyperreality. Within its circulatory system of simulacra one can easily slip into its channels of identity performance. As one begins to feel that their ideal self, curated, digitised and flattened in images, is more real than their actual self, the incongruence between self and self image will require one to endlessly participate on social media to validate their self worth. My work hopes to short circuit that chain of reactions and provide a moment of reflection in which the user can confront ideas of superficiality, authenticity and performance.

Smile At All Costs

The final outcome created for the act of deconstructing frameworks was a web article that juxtaposes a critical reflection on happiness and exaggerated simulacra of happiness.



The article was an essay written by me, an opportunity to take a more nuanced approach in presenting an argument for the defamiliarisation of happiness. The essay begins with the premise, a la Marcuse's repressive desublimation, that our forms of happiness are predetermined in order to dissipate our critical energies and to induce the consumerist mindset. Then it discusses a range of idea that may stem from the questioning of happiness as the ultimate pursuit of life. By the end of the discussion I hope to have persuaded the reader to begin questioning the closest and most familiar concepts, such as the pursuit of happiness, in order to elevate critical thought, escape ideology and live authentically.

The web article incorporates the visual language of happiness that have been predetermined by the preceding generations of corporate marketers. The colour yellow, hijacked by endless brand associations and codified as a happy colour, is used as the background colour. The typeface 'Shrikhand' was chosen for its resemblance to 70s styled American retro aesthetics that are utilised today to sell 'good vibes'. This is indicative of the loss of historicity and rendering of significant cultural items to pastiche that Jameson notes as characteristic of late capitalism.

Occasionally within the website, GIFs, taken from the search term happy on GIPHY, will interrupt the reading experience. This mimics the experience of traversing the webspace, often our reflective and introspective moments are cut short by a distraction that hijacks our brain's pleasure system in order to keep us moving through webpages, to collect data and show us more ads.

The familiar and bright visual language used invites the reader into the article only to subvert that familiarity through the content of the text. The contradiction creates an uneasy distance between what was once familiar and now unfamiliar, within that gap is a space for critical reflection. By demonstrating that even the most closely held values can be taken from us through commodification, one is encouraged to think critically about the reality that has been constructed, a hyperreality.

The Loss of Meaning

However, there is one fatal flaw in a purely sceptical and cynical point of view, that is the total loss of meaning. For instance, reducing the 'Duchenne smile' to a superficial act might disregard the potential for it to help someone gain confidence in their smile, build meaningful connections and improve their mood. In the aforementioned works, the deconstruction of happiness and the smile was a simply a practice in criticality. The potential for meaning remains as long as one is critical enough escape ideology and through that exert self determination.

Reconstructing meaning

This leads me to reconstructing meaning, a difficult and important part of navigating the state of hyperreality. The practice of ideological and institutional critique encourages the deconstruction of frameworks in the hope of liberation. Jameson critiques postmodern culture for its apparent collusion with late capitalist ideology; the hyperreal preventing us from moving beyond surface appearances, trapping us within the frameworks of constructed realities. Thus it is important to remain vigilant in an era where reality and fabrication are intermingled.

However, there is a possibility for too much criticality that completely detracts meaning and creativity. Davis notes, 'the problem with using (de)construction this way is that it is too tightly coupled to the nothing but.' Instead he argues for the widening of our scope from strict social constructivism to a broader constructivist view. This perspective takes into account our biological and cognitive processes which also 'construct and mediate reality, but while they may be organised or exploited by social forces, they can in no ways be reduce to them.'

Davis aligns his approach with experimental metaphysician Bruno Latour's understanding that there are different 'modes of existence'. Within such a perspective of our world, 'there is no single logical or scientific or metaphysical level' that explains all of reality, indeed he writes 'the will to knowledge is not the only category that allows us to interrogate the diversity of being'. Thus, there is an argument to be made for the seeded potentialities of new meanings germinated by the mixing of low and high

culture and nurtured by the decomposition of old schools. The navigation of our hyperreal state does not mean one must resign themselves to nothingness but rather requires one to recognise that there are multitudes of ways to be.

Baudrillard seems to acknowledge the need to reconfigure our sense of meaning in a quote attributed to him “once you are liberated you are forced to ask who you are”. When the foundations of truth and reality that we relied on to give us our identity turn out to be constructions then how do we begin to reformulate our sense of meaning?

Here I turned to the existential thinking in Buddhist and Absurdist philosophies that deal with emptiness, meaninglessness, the Void and the Absurd.

Buddhist Philosophy

The common concern between postmodernist thinking and Buddhist thinking in the deconstruction of reality led me to consider how Buddhism reconciles the apparent meaninglessness of non-constructed reality. Specifically I was interested in the commonalities between the concepts of hyperreality, McLuhan’s medium as the message and the Buddhist conception of Maya.

McLuhan states that each new technology is an extension of the individual and its effects are transformative on one’s relationship with the world. For example, the sequentiality of language is understood to facilitate rationality. For McLuhan the medium, which is synonymous with technology, entirely alters one’s perception of reality. Reality then becomes warped by it because we begin to construct a new kind of reality based on these new extensions. We cease to know the ground with our feet when wearing shoes. In the same way, Buddhism recognises the illusory nature of reality as Maya. Beyond images that might persuade us of permanence, beyond language which might persuade us of rationality, logic, and objectivity, beyond our phenomenological senses that might persuade us of material reality lies emptiness and the Void.

McLuhan and Baudrillard might persuade one to be critical of hyperreality which mediates our reality to transcend ideology, while Buddhists might persuade one to see through Maya and realise that reality is ungraspable to escape suffering. I believe both are required to live a meaningful and authentic life.

Buddhist practice involves reaching a state of awareness and connection with emptiness by letting go of mediated reality, by seeing through Maya. However, this does not necessarily mean that one cannot return to the world of meaning. Knowledge and meaning based on social conventions and systems of information are useful for communication. A zen expression of 'stinking of zen' is reflective of the idea that one should return to a normal and humble state of being after being enlightened. Rejection of meaning having seen through Maya is not the purpose of buddhist thinking.

The famous zen poem succinctly puts 'before I studied zen I saw rivers as rivers and the mountains as mountains, then I had some understanding of zen and I saw rivers were not rivers and mountains were not mountains, now I see the rivers were rivers and the mountains were mountains again.' It is a common idea that zen should be used like soap, used to clean one's self and then washed off afterwards. Zen should not stick to a person. Alan Watts who was a seminal figure in popularising and intellectualising buddhist thinking in the west, suggests that one should see life is just a game and not take it too seriously.

This idea that one can straddle both sides of meaning and non-meaning appealed to me and is what is explored in my comic outcome.



The 'young man' character is introduced to the open waters of meaninglessness by an 'old man' who sings its praises only to find it unimpressive and disappointing.



He feels confused and lost on which direction to swim back. However, in his indecision he floats on top of the water for a little while and becomes one with the emptiness.



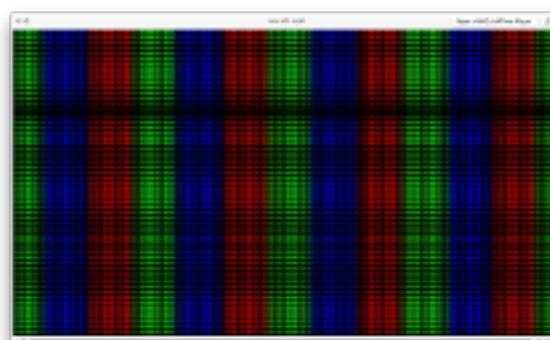
The comic ends with the young man's new found appreciation for swimming between the grounds of truth and the currents of non-truth.

Zen tries to short circuit the process through sudden awakening through non sensical koans. What is the sound of one hand clapping? One considers this earnestly and whole heartedly and cannot find an answer. There is no answer. When one realises there was no answer because the

question relied on a false premise, the same falsities that remain stubbornly in our logical mind, we have the chance to realise reality as it is for a brief moment, beyond conception and beyond language induced rationality.

In an animation outcome titled 'What does it mean to be?' I utilise the zen kick of non sensical and often humorous koans while incorporating McLuhan's idea of media technology to relate it to a contemporary context.

The animation opens with the question 'what does it mean to be' only to seemingly buffer. Within that space where media technology fails the user begins to perceive its frames on a physical dimension, a step removed from its influence. This distance created allows the introduction of a sequence of images that zooms into the screen, from the loading circle to the pixel array, to the single pixel and then to the photons emitted by the pixel. The photons are animated in a manner which illustrates the way it moves through the liquid crystals when manipulated by a LCD (liquid crystal display) screen.



Thus, the animation answers the question ‘what does it mean to be’ by simply pointing towards the natural processes that we are all a part of. During this process of zooming into the pixels the audience also becomes aware of the screen as a medium itself, to perceive it wholly rather than entrance by the content. Then the original content stops buffering and resumes to reveal that the full sentence was ‘what does it mean to be a pixel?’ In this non sensical ending, in which the viewer must question whether they were meant to relate to a pixel, there is the potential for a zen kick.

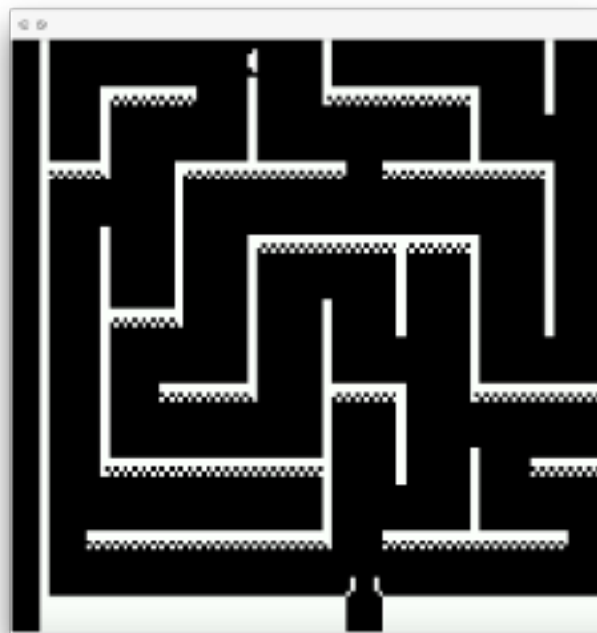
Absurdism

Albert Camus deals with meaninglessness differently, in *The Myth of Sisyphus* he details the philosophical problem of the Absurd. The Absurd is the strange core of our human condition where we seek meaning in a world that is devoid of it. Camus’ solution is to continue in the face of the Absurd. In an everyday conscious revolt against the Absurd circumstance of our own life, we take agency while fully awake to the truth of our existential condition and are able to savour our uniquely human struggle.

I reflect this somewhat bleak outlook through a game which is titled ‘My Purpose is to Find the Middle’. The game is mainly consisted of dialogue which tries to captures the soulfully desolate tone of Samuel Beckett’s Absurd dramas.



The gameplay itself is quite limited, it involves controlling a character through a series of mazes to reach the centre of the labyrinth. Each level completed triggers a dialogue in which the character contemplates what might be in the middle, the source of his purpose. Unsurprisingly the player discovers that the middle is empty. In that emptiness he has the decision to either continue or rest, a false choice as it alters the dialogue but in either case the game returns back to the beginning anyways.



The game is reflective of our meaningful agency to control our lives in the face of meaninglessness. The in-game character suspects a transcendent meaning and a transcendent world - which, if the imagination allows, is true since to the character we are the transcendent beings which gave them purpose - however they have the possibility to make meaning in their endless endeavour. The game demonstrates that it is up to us to find meaning in life, especially now that deconstructive postmodern attitude has left us with little fundamental truths to live by. Jean Paul Satre remarks that 'existence precedes essence', we are without meaning until we create one.

If anything, now may be the most ideal historical time period in which individuals have the potential to live meaningfully and authentically. With the distinctions of high and low culture gone, dogmatic beliefs squandered and fundamental truths about reality deconstructed, we are left with an overwhelming amount of freedom. It is an exciting prospect that, within the pluralism and relativism that grows from postmodernity, anyone can find meaning in just about anything, to create one's own purpose to live by. As my tutor Ken Hollings said 'when the centre becomes meaningless suddenly the margins and fringes get a lot more interesting.' This is the optimistic spirit that I want to bring forth, that even though nothing means anything we can create our own meaning. This is something I will continue to embed into my work and world view.

Conclusion

As the recent Covid pandemic shows, reality can be lived purely through media technology and society can become atomised and divided into clusters of individual existence. We are increasingly living in a world where hyperreality is pushed to its extreme.

Simultaneously, our attention is increasingly sought after by large tech corporations who want to maintain engagement, collect data and sell the individual to targeted advertisers. Thus it is within the interest of these large global corporations that we remain unaware of hyperreality, that our daily life is synonymous with the services they provide, until the sum of our human existence becomes analogous with the free market. Yuval Noah Harari noted in an interview 'when you have too much power you try to conceal it'.

Indeed, the forces of cultural hegemony are strengthened by the constructions of hyperreality in which reality is indiscernible from simulacra, or rather simulacra become real. These powerful corporations are able to conceal their large amounts of power by blending into the pervasive background of reality mediation. We do not see Facebook, Instagram or Youtube when we engage with these services, we see friends, family, news, entertainment, etc. As such late capitalist ideology seeps into all spheres of our human experience.

Therefore, we must begin to question the very basic tenets of our life, the unconscious and habitual thought patterns constructed by the indirect forces of cultural hegemony, or we risk walking through life in submission and compliance. To that we must revolt, in the same way we must revolt against the meaninglessness of life. In everyday waking life we must assert our agency to create our own meaning.

It is my interest as a graphic communication designer to use my knowledge of image production and semiotic systems to reveal the construction of our reality. In a very optimistic sense, to disrupt programmed behaviour and empower the viewer to make conscious decisions. To create a more aware society. To create a more equal society. Likewise I do not want to impose my own ideology, I only wish to empower my audience.

I borrow from Buddhist and Absurdist philosophy only to make the claim that we can live in harmony with a meaningless world, that the breaking down of old values and old construction does not necessarily lead to chaos but perhaps a liberated and peaceful life. Ultimately, my aim is to aid my user in navigating hyperreality through the practice of deconstructing frameworks and reconstructing meaning. What one makes of the world from there is one's own decision.

Davis writes, "On the one hand, the decentered self becomes a charged vector of exploration and creative re-invention; on the other, it spins like an aimless and lonely satellite through random space."

Let us use deconstruction to take us out of repressive orbit, and through reconstruction become a satellite headed towards exploration and creative re-invention.

Word count: ~5300