

What I Learned On X

Applied Social Engineering

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Be so good they wanna fight you.

The only reason you look
Into my eyes is to
see your own reflection.

- Richard Kiernecki

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WHAT IS X

What is X?

A Foreword by Bob Cactaur

X is a Sea Of Narcissus.

In which we swim through the shadowy caves of mania. A playground in which both Jung and Plato would have shitposted with their Freud and Socrates, only later blocking them for shitposting too hard. It's not their fault, hell it's not even a fault, rejection of the call is part of the hero's journey. Consider the case of confessed Canadian and alleged celebrity Jordan Peterson, his *dramatis personae* a synthesis of the philosophical logos. Peterson has encountered his [mania](#) and describes it at length. His term for the divine mania which tortures his logos-driven mind is the *anonymous troll demon*; search it and see what comes up. Anonymity is for him the darkest point in the forest, or pool, or caves, whatever, I'm not going Authur-ian here folks, you know this is all metaphorical and based on a pun. How are you pronouncing mania in your head right now?

Everyone on X, and actually, every single poster on every site ever is in the throes of divine mania, yes both Platonic and Freudian types, yes, every time. Even those people who look and post all normal, they're displaying a tiny fraction of themselves, at least enough to fit in the text box. It's a remarkable feat what stupid little things we can fit in that stupid little box, but trying to stuff yourself in a text box is absolutely not a logical thing to do. Beyond the black mirror lies pure mania.

The most powerful mania, for me, is laughter. For my money it's the lowest risk way to unite logos with mania, I think a lot of people recognize this and when I find those that do, it's a pretty instant partnership. The law of attraction does a lot more work in cyberspaces than many realize. You can experiment with the law of attraction pretty extensively using alt accounts and a wrestler's mindset. It's not fake, the blood is real, we do a little kayfabe, you aren't evil, though you will be known as evil, you're a heel. It's all a show. Wrestle mania.

Whatever we may think of X it is a grand repository of divine mania, a globally distributed and interactive dream diary, the realm of the collective subconscious. With this book, diligent observation, and the power of positive thinking, you are equipped to become a shaman. There's no licensing regime or regulation, you can just do it for joy. Exactly as Norman Vincent Peele did.

Odds are you already do...if you're here. That's how the law works.

TRANSFORMING CONFLICT ON X

1. The Apple Of Discord

Risk cannot be destroyed, merely transformed - Hoffstein

She came anyway, but this time, she brought a wedding gift with her.

A wedding gift that would kick off the Trojan War.

Eris, the goddess of Discord, wasn't invited to the wedding of Peleus and Thetis. Not to be deterred, she came anyway, and she brought something with her.

What she brought with her was a golden apple that had the words, "...to the fairest" engraved on it. And the three goddesses - Aphrodite, Athena and Hera - began fighting each other over it...and that's how the Trojan War started. It's also how Rome was founded, as the story goes.

So fights can create, and fights can destroy.

Everyone thinks Jobs was a good dude...until you ask Woz. Everyone thinks Gates was a good dude until you ask Gary Kildall. The greatest CEOs of our time - Jobs, Gates, Welch you name it - they've all had a bit of a mean streak in them.

Penicillin, radar, computers, nuclear energy - these are all the products of war.

Now what do we do with that knowledge? Is it true that we need to kill in order to invent?

The answer is unknowable. But what if we could use the process of destruction for the power of creation?

Risk cannot be destroyed, merely transformed - Hoffstein

It is possible to apply the same principles used to create war to generate products for peace? I've seen it.

2. Why Fights Are Creative

They don't want to talk; they want to dominate.

Fights are important. Really important.

Plato, Aristotle, St. Augustine - they all learned from the fights of Socrates.

What's Love? Why do societies die? These were the topics that got everyone fighting.

And Socrates taught through the process of verbal sparring, a process the nerds call the dialectic. Timeless teachings, like The Analogy of the Sun, The Ship Of Fools, these are all stories that emerged from students trying to fight Socrates. Conflict can be creative.

You ask a question - Teacher gives an answer. You call the Teacher's answer into question...AND THAT'S where the learning begins. This question and answer process is called the dialectic, and it's how the greatest teachers of our time have chosen to spread their teachings.

Every argument starts with a position, which Hegel & Fichte would call The Thesis. The argument AGAINST the Thesis is called the Anti-Thesis.

Whether they're fighting over Jerusalem, or the Presidency, or the Sale, people trade their ideas and counter-ideas, theses and anti-theses, over and over and over again.

Language disguises thoughts. - Wittgenstein

Usually when you talk to people, they don't want to talk; they want to dominate. Most of the time, they don't want to have a conversation; they want to place judgment on your soul...and you can use this to your ADVANTAGE.

So the next time someone picks a fight with you, ask them a question no longer than 8 words. Emotional people LOVE answering questions.

And it's by their answers ye shall truly know them.

And it's by their answers that ye shall discover where their pressure points are.

And at the perfect time...you'll ask the final question.

Now, you might not get anywhere, but the audience will feel it.

And people don't remember what you did for them...but they will remember how you made them feel.

And when it comes to competitive relationship-building, how you make people feel IS THE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE.

The Mongols won wars by convincing the allies of the Chinese NOT to fight. Cortez won the war by converting the allies of the Mexicans into HIS allies.

You can win a war without throwing a single spear if you understand how wars are really won. Transform hatred into love and you'll have a power few have ever felt.

In order to transform hatred into love, you'll need to learn how to see past the words people use to disguise their thoughts...their emotions...their gut bacteria...their fungus.

Words don't tell you what people mean...

...far from it.

"If God grants you the ability to turn a curse into a blessing, then wander the land collecting curses. Walk The dual path; hope and soothe". - Bob Cactaur

3. I Didn't Have A Choice

The way that can be spoken is not the true way. - Tao Te Ching

In a lot of ways...I didn't have a choice.

I got good grades, joined the chess club, went to university, got a good job...because that's what was expected of me.

I'd always wanted to be an astronaut, but I wasn't good enough at math. That meant I also couldn't be a lawyer, doctor, or engineer. I didn't want to be a teacher because the teachers I talked to weren't happy.

So, that basically left one career...business. Imagine thinking that a career in business would make me happier than a career in education.

Why am I telling you this.

The perspective I have is a result of the environment I grew up in. I was a Liberal in my 20s, and a Conservative in my 40s. My perspective on life is constantly changing...as well it should.

Whatever perspective you have, it's just one perspective. Speak to a genius and you'll realize just how provincial your ideas are. Get off your high horse already. Stop trying to fit reality into language; that's stupid. Imagine you think you're so smart you can contain all of truth in language!

Just as the Tao Te-Ching said, "The way that can be spoken is not the true way."

I'm not a professional; I just live amongst them. There's a difference. I didn't decide to be here, in Canada. I had no choice where I was born. I didn't choose the language I speak. I didn't choose to be Canadian, or Guyanese, or Indian, or whatever manifestation suits you.

Truth is, we're in the same boat. You didn't decide where you were born, the religion you grew up with, the friends you have. You didn't even decide the collection of metaphor frameworks that you use to parse the world.

Your belief that you already know everything is preventing you from growing...idiot.

The first enemy of a man of knowledge is fear.
- Carlos Castaneda

4. Don't Take The Words Too Seriously

...where we meet in the silence between the words. - Ram Dass

Ram Dass - one of Steve Jobs' heroes - said it best,

Now, each evening when I'm going to come out to speak, I invariably think of the line from the Tao Te Ching that says, "He who speaks does not know, and he who knows does not speak." And I see the absolutely bizarre humor of my predicament. I realize that I have to be both of those—I have to be that part in me that is not speaking that knows, and the part of me that's speaking that doesn't really know. Hopefully, they're connected.

If you are open to the possibility, let the words merely quiet your minds, and let's meet on the other level where we meet in the silence between the words. We come together to speak about the Unspeakable because the rational analytic mind, the intellect, only knows objects; it only knows what it can think about.

What we come together to talk about are really matters of the heart that are known subjectively, not objectively. They are always hidden from the eyes of the thinking mind. Yet, I'm in the word business, so we just have to take the words very lightly. A very great Mystic poet, Rumi, once said, "I am a sculptor, a molder of form. In every moment, I shape an idol, but then in front of you, I melt them down. I can rouse a hundred forms and mix them with spirit. But when I look into your face, I want to throw them into the fire." The "you" in this case being the Beloved or that higher part of ourselves.

Our minds keep creating realities. We keep creating models of ourselves. We keep creating expectations about the world. We create these forms of clay, and we try to breathe life into them. But the minute you look directly into the eyes of forms, they all seem to dissolve before your eyes, and you're left speechless or heartfelt.

5. Attacking The Funny Bone

Because people can't disagree with you when they're laughing.

Do you know why the best politicians are stand up comedians?

Because people can't disagree with you when they're laughing.

People used to think that comedy wasn't useful...until a comedian became a President. Love him or hate him, when you consider the laughs per minute he gets, Donald Trump is one of the most prolific touring comedians of our time.

Don't be mad, just know it.

There are two people in the kingdom who can interrupt the King: the Queen and the Joker. Why is that? I'll let you sit with that one.

There are three ways to relay a message: a joke, a logical statement, and a work of art.

We're used to making logical statements; we're even used to making art. But making comedy?

That's an elusive one. Think of all of your favorite speakers: how many of them are able to use comedy in their communications?

In George Carlin's last interview before he passed, the interviewer asked him if he'd ever read any books on comedy. He mentioned, "The Act of Creation" by Koestler. I quickly looked it up. 700 pages. I only needed the first 100 to figure out how to write a joke...and a wife who was an expert in calculus.

When I figured out how to write a joke, I got bored of writing jokes. I'd spent six years under the mentorship of Quinn C. Martin and he taught me everything I needed to know. But after I started seeing the pattern...instantly, the thrill was gone. There was a rush in the process of bombing and bombing and bombing then finally getting a joke that made people applaud. Once I figured that out...the thrill was gone.

Naturally, I stopped writing jokes and started going up on stage relying on only improvisation and crowd work to get the job done, and THAT was the thrill of a lifetime. There's nothing like talking to an audience member and making the ENTIRE audience laugh. You gotta try it sometime.

When I figured out how to get laughs from improvisation and crowd work, I had a crazy idea: what if comedy could work...at work? Part of the reason that I left finance was that my sales and social skills were, let's just say, abysmal. Non-existent. I was smart, but was a TERRIBLE communicator.

So, 7 years after leaving finance for stand up, I took stand up with me to the office. Maybe the Joker would be better at standing up to Kings than the Scientist.

And that's when life really started to change.

I started using comedy and sarcasm to defend [and then offend] people with money and power, and I quickly realized power didn't really know how to handle a criticism wrapped in a compliment. It was so wild, seeing 70-year old men completely dumbfounded by inverted phrases. Calculus is wild. Sequence is EVERYTHING.

I'd always felt powerless in the room with people who had more money, power, and intelligence than I did. When I realized that they didn't know how to respond to comedy, I started to ENJOY SALES.

Today, I'm known for being smart AND funny. This combination of intelligence and wit is something people find very attractive...and very threatening. Comedy has gotten me in trouble, and it's gotten me out of trouble.

So, yeah, comedy. It's the one skill that will completely transform your ability to influence the people around you...just ask Donald Trump and Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

Use it wisely.

Or not. Do what you want.

6. I Am Because You Are

*What the learner learns is a function of what they already know.
- The Kullback-Leibler Divergence*

One time I was teaching a student at Jane & Finch how to play a song on the steel pan. I wrote the notes on the boards - the actual letters - and asked different students to play a song. All the students had to do was play the note on the board.

Then I ran into a problem. One student just wouldn't look at the board. He wanted to watch me do it so that he could copy what I was doing.

I was confused. Why wouldn't he just look at the notes on the board?

Then it hit me. "*Uh oh...I don't think he can read...*"

What the learner learns is a function of what they already know. - The Kullback-Leibler Divergence

There's an assumption we make when we talk to people. The assumption is that the other person organizes information in the same way we do, and nothing could be further from the truth.

The medium is the message. - McLuhan

Why did Trump win the election? Because he understood television. Heck, he had ten years to perfect and position his public persona on The Apprentice before running. Plus, TV is a medium of entertainment, and so to the most entertaining go the spoils.

In The Act of Creation, Koestler outlined three ways to express any message:

- A Joke
- A Logical Statement and
- A Work Of Art

I have this game of conversational jiu-jitsu that I play with people. If they use logic, I'll respond with a joke or a story. If they give me a story, I'll give them a joke. If they use a joke, I'll respond with a joke mixed with a logical statement. People have a tough time shifting from joker to logician to artist.

Communication is also a function of our dominant learning styles, of which the four are:

- Kinesthetic (touch)
- Auditory (hearing)
- Read/Write (reading/writing)
- Visual (seeing)

To know how to communicate, you have to know who you're communicating with and how they prefer to be communicated with...duh.

The problem is, most people communicate to dominate, not to communicate. The conversation they want isn't a debate; it's a pitiless monologue.

In the end, it's not what you say, it's how you say it.

Some people complain about a glass ceiling when it's their own communication skills that are preventing them from rising to the top. The skills that get you to the party are not the same skills that get you in bed.

Different levels require different skills, and that's why growth requires The Beginner's Mind.

APPLIED SOCIAL ENGINEERING ON X

0. Applied Social Engineering on X

It's simple...not easy.

People are primarily interested in themselves, so if you're not talking about them, they're probably not going to be all that interested in you.

The only reason you look into my eyes is to see your own reflection. - Kiernecki

Most people on TwitterSpaces talk about themselves; there's your opportunity. People don't want conversation - they want a spotlight. On them. So, put them in the spotlight. Sounds easy, doesn't it? Well, it isn't.

I've heard you talk in Spaces. You only talk about yourself. Your stories. Your work. But you never ask about the others in the space. Their stories. Their work. And that's why your relationships are paper fucking thin. Because people KNOW you don't give a shit about them.

Not that they tell you. They'll smile and sound excited...but they're just being polite. You've lost your opportunity but think you've won. And you wonder why nobody calls back.

So, Social Engineering 101 has begun. Your homework is to enter a TwitterSpace and only ask about others. You're not allowed to talk about yourself. Good luck - you'll need it you selfish asshole.

1A. Starting From Scratch On X

It's all about reply-driven development.

When you first start out, nobody knows you.

Nobody follows you. Nobody cares. And why should they?

They don't know you. They don't owe you anything. And besides, who the hell are you anyway? What makes you so special?

So, if you have an account on X that nobody cares about, that's OK. You're at the beginning of a success story. What you need to realize is that you're not going to get followers by just posting content. The secret in getting attention when you're first starting out is by REPLYING TO OTHER PEOPLE'S CONTENT. PEOPLE WHO ALREADY HAVE A FOLLOWING. DUH.

So, if you don't have any followers, and nobody cares, start finding the people you like - or want to steal followers from - and begin replying to their posts. If you say something interesting, their following will engage with you. Once their following consistently engages with your replies, they'll start paying attention to you.

And then when that person you like or want to steal followers from has a Space on X, you can confidently enter their Space knowing that THEY ALREADY KNOW YOU.

And that's when they'll let you up to speak. That's when the games really begin.

1B. Gaining Trust On X

Content isn't King...CONNECTION IS. - Mohit Rajhans

When you start on X, it's hard to gain people's trust.

You might think that the quickest way to gain someone's trust on X is to interact with them on Spaces. The problem is, if they don't know you, they probably won't let you up to speak because they're afraid you'll embarrass them.

So, if you want to gain someone's trust, you can't just jump in their TwitterSpace. You have to prove to them that you won't embarrass them when you unmute your mic. There are adults in the room. Clients in the room.

So how do you gain enough trust in a prominent speaker's mind so they'll let you up to speak on Spaces? Simple - engage them in their replies. Simple...not easy...

Popular accounts can easily get 1000s of replies on their tweets. How do you intend to stand out? The answer comes from 7 Powers by Helmer.

How might you intend to write a reply that stands out from the crowd? Counter-Positioning.

2. Evacuating On X

The world is flat...but haven't you noticed?

How do you evacuate when you can't move?

Can't use the roads; they'll put a gun in your face and send you back where you came from.

Can't use the bridges; they've been destroyed to prevent the Russians from quickening their advance.

Definitely can't fly out; the airspace is perhaps the most dangerous option. There were even reports of The Red Cross being tossed aside during the heat of the battle over Sumy, Ukraine, a once-picturesque town right on the border of Russia.

SpookyTheManiac, a vocalist from Takoradi, Ghana, was awakened by his friend who was studying medicine in Sumy, Ukraine. Overnight, things went from bad to worse to critical, and his friend was desperate for a way out. But with the roads, bridges, and airspace locked down, they didn't have any options. Furthermore, with supplies being progressively locked off from the Western town of Sumy which lies close to vacuum-bombed Kharkiv, even water was becoming a precious resource.

Spooky did the only thing he could do - he opened up a Space on X - an open mic on Twitter where anyone can join in a conversation - and called it #SaveSumyStudents. Soon after, the med students in Sumy started pouring into the open mic, sharing their stories one after another. As footage from the ground came rolling in, videos were quickly edited, because nobody reads anymore.

The result? The top major news outlets in North America joined the open mic on X. Soon after, the audience members were being interviewed by the New York Times over Zoom. Those interviews became news stories across all major television networks. Two weeks later, the med students locked in Sumy, Ukraine, were finally free.

The World is Flat was a popular book 20 years ago which prophesized a world with seamless, frictionless interpersonal communications. That time has come to pass.

Back in the day, to be a major comedian you had to go on Letterman or Leno. Now, given the seamless nature of communication, niche creators are leveraging a distribution network that Letterman and Leno never dreamed of. I guess in a lot of ways, it puts their business to sleep...just ask Tucker Carlson.

There were more than a few people who thought what Spooky was doing was a complete waste of time.

The evacuation of the students from Sumy, Ukraine is proof that social audio podcasts on X are not just a waste of time.

But they can be a waste of time. Spaces on X are filled with people who pretend to care about causes they'll never do shit about. In order to be a Social Engineer on X, you're going to need to learn how to separate an extrovert from a sales prospect. You're going to have to separate The Thinkers from The Talkers from The Doers.

And in order to do that, you're going to need to see them fight.

You'll learn everything about someone by just watching how they fight.

So sit back, throw an apple of discord or too, and watch them fight, and take notes. That knowledge might just save your life one day.

3. Going Viral On X

You don't need a following to go viral.

You don't need a following to go viral.

If you don't have a following...and you wanna go viral...you just have to build a relationship with someone who already has a following. Someone who's already gone viral.

Like I said, going viral on X is simple...but it's not going to be easy.

This is how we created the Theme Song for TwitterSpaces...er, I mean, X.

When the ability to create social audio podcasts on Twitter – called TwitterSpaces was introduced – it spread like wildfire and eventually crushed the momentum of Clubhouse.

I met Spooky in of these social audio podcasts called Spaces, and was immediately floored by his voice. Then, he sent me songs like “Marry You” and I was was confused...how come he hadn't blown up yet?

So we got to talking, and someone had the idea to create a Theme Song for TwitterSpaces. We jumped on it.

I realized that people don't care about what you're doing until you care about them. I realized that people don't share things that don't make them look good, so we decided to include everyone IN THE LYRICS OF THE SONG. We figured the more people heard their own name in the song, the more likely they'd be to share it. After all, we didn't have a following.

Spooky and Tiekü worked day and night to record the song, and that's when things went haywire.

A couple of the women from spaces on X started fighting with each other, and when women fight, and you don't take a side? Game over, bro. The enemy of my enemy is my friend, feel me.

So instead of releasing the song, Spooky had to REWRITE THE SONG AND RE-RECORD THE LYRICS. Can you imagine?

The genius move that ended up working was tagging the most popular influencer in Ghana - Kalyjay aka gyaigimi.

Once he reposted the video, it got thousands upon thousands of views, which lead to comments, likes and shares. Once it got to around 5k views, [Twitter reposted it](#).

And that was that. 50k views, comments, likes and shares, all in 72 hours.

One of the hacks to building a relationship with someone is by replying to their posts. By replying to people with influence, you basically have access to their social media inbox. And I'd argue that the messages that show up in their social media notifications are 10x more effective than sending a cold email.

You are familiar with Trevor's Axiom from South Park, aren't you?

4. Gaming The Gamers On X

Why use demographics and psychographics when you can use gamification.

If you want to become a social engineer on X, the very first thing you have to do is to understand the kind of games people like to play.

Once you understand the games they're already playing, you can choose the gamified design experiences they enjoy the most.

People play games to experience core drives. There are six core drives:

- Purpose - these are the people we call Philanthropists.
- Mastery - these are the people we call Achievers.
- Autonomy - these are the people we call Free Spirits.
- Relatedness - these are the people we call Socializers.
- Change - these are the people we call Disruptors.
- Rewards - these are the people we call Players.

X figured out how to monetize gamers who seek mastery. People who seek mastery end up searching for trinkets and other symbols that tell OTHER PEOPLE that they're masters. And that's why people loved the checkmark. It gave them a Badge, and masters - who are normally very intelligent people - FOUGHT FOR THE CHECKMARK.

5. Finding Love On X

*How is the love of your life going to find you
if you're dressed up as SOMEONE ELSE.*

How do people find love on X?

Aristophanes knew the answer 2,000 years ago, but who cares what a comedian has to say, right?

Everyone from Shakespeare to Charleston White has attempted to define Love...but Aristophanes nailed it. I should know; I'm divorced.

A bunch of the Greek nerds used to get together back in the day and debate topics like an old school TwitterSpace or Clubhouse or TikTok Live. Seriously.

People like Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, they used to get together and chill and see which one of them was smartest.

As in most cases, the comedian of the bunch usually got the better of the debates.

Aristophanes was the one comedian at these drunk parties, and this is how he described love: love is when two people who were originally one, but are now two, reunite.

If you would find love - or friendship - on X, it's of vital importance to display RADICAL AUTHENTICITY.

The same thing that gets you kicked out of the WRONG spaces will get you invited to the RIGHT spaces. The key is this: how can your love find you if you're dressed up AS SOMEONE ELSE.

So be yourself - the right people will see the torch you're carrying, and it's that shared torch-bearing that is the beginning of your career as a social engineer.

6. Getting Hired On X

If you're a debt collector in the favor economy, you're doing it wrong. - Anon.

Capitalism is built on the Favor Economy.

Most sales are made by people who just happened to do a favor for the right person at the right time. I've gotten all of my clients in the past few years by doing work for them for free that provides so much value that they don't want me to stop. And when they don't want me to stop, we discuss the figure for the first invoice.

You can leverage the favor economy by doing favors for the right people. The right people to do favors for are the people who can introduce you to the right people...simple, not easy, because it's easy to do favors for the wrong people.

You'll figure it out.

KC just made \$150 from a favor. He met Thomas in a Space on X, connected over their mutual love for remote control cars, and one day Thomas needed a flyer for his comedy show. I sent KC the original flyer and he animated it. Then Thomas hit him up and paid him \$150 to do more animation work on the flyer.

People buy from the people they already know. By doing favors, you'll put yourself at the top of their internal Vendor Of Record list.

7. Selling On X

You're selling to an amygdala dressed in drag.

As Klaff said, when you first encounter an animal in the wild, you have to decide whether you're going to:

1. Eat it
2. Fight it OR
3. Fuck it

Same thing applies when you're in a sales situation.

The people you're trying to sell are skeptical, because they're terrible buyers! Women get cheated on right and left...can you blame them for not believing you?

So before you get all hot and bothered about someone not believing you, shut up.

Nobody owes you their trust.

Just remember: nobody cares what you know until they know how much you care.

8. Channeling The Ancients On X

I wanted to study cognition unpolluted by language - Dr. Herb Roitblat

The blockchain? You mean Indra's net.

Sequencing the Genetic Code? You mean the I-Ching.

Strategy? You mean The Art of War.

Dr. Fernando Castro-Chavez told me that the fifth industrial revolution would occur when we combined our fourth industrial technology with the wisdom hidden in our ancient manuscripts.

He wasn't wrong. But there's something else that will usher in the fifth industrial revolution. There is a large body of knowledge that we've yet to fully tap into, and that's the body of knowledge contained in the signal processing systems of animals.

I wanted to study cognition unpolluted by language - Dr. Herb Roitblat

When I asked Dr. Herb why he decided to study the signal processing system of dolphins, he told me that he wanted to study cognition unpolluted by language...and I couldn't stop laughing. Most of the people I'm around worship their language.

In the 80s, Dr. Herb, DARPA and the rest of the team would drop objects in the ocean, and count the number of clicks the dolphins used to analyze the object using their biosonar system.

What blew my mind was when Dr. Herb told me about how they applied the dolphin AI to analyze documents created by humans...check out complex eDiscovery for a taste of THAT industry.

So, we are now in the fourth industrial revolution, where people believe that blockchain will bring forth the Garden Of Eden. What's separating them from the Garden of Eden is that they've fallen for secular religions.

Secular religions like Star Wars, Marvel, Billions, Fast & The Furious. They've rejected their parents' religion because they're young so who can blame them; in a lot of ways they're genetically programmed to leave the nest at their age. But, even top influencers like Logan Paul have turned to Christ. Andrew Tate is a devout Muslim.

Are you paying attention to how the pendulum is swinging. I hope so.

9. The Game Of X

Twitter is a game...so don't hate the player...

When people talk about gamification, they usually center their discussions around PBLs - Points, Badges, and Leaderboards.

And it makes sense why. After all, consider that Twitter is a game.

Your status in the Twitter game is judged by your points, badges and leaderboards such as:

- Followers (Points & Leaderboards)
- Likes (Points & Leaderboards)
- Retweets (Points & Leaderboards)
- Verification status (Badge)

When are people impressed by you on Twitter?

It's because you're climbing the points badges and leaderboards status game.

Wow - you have a lot of followers! Look how many Retweets you got! Damn that video is at 50k views!

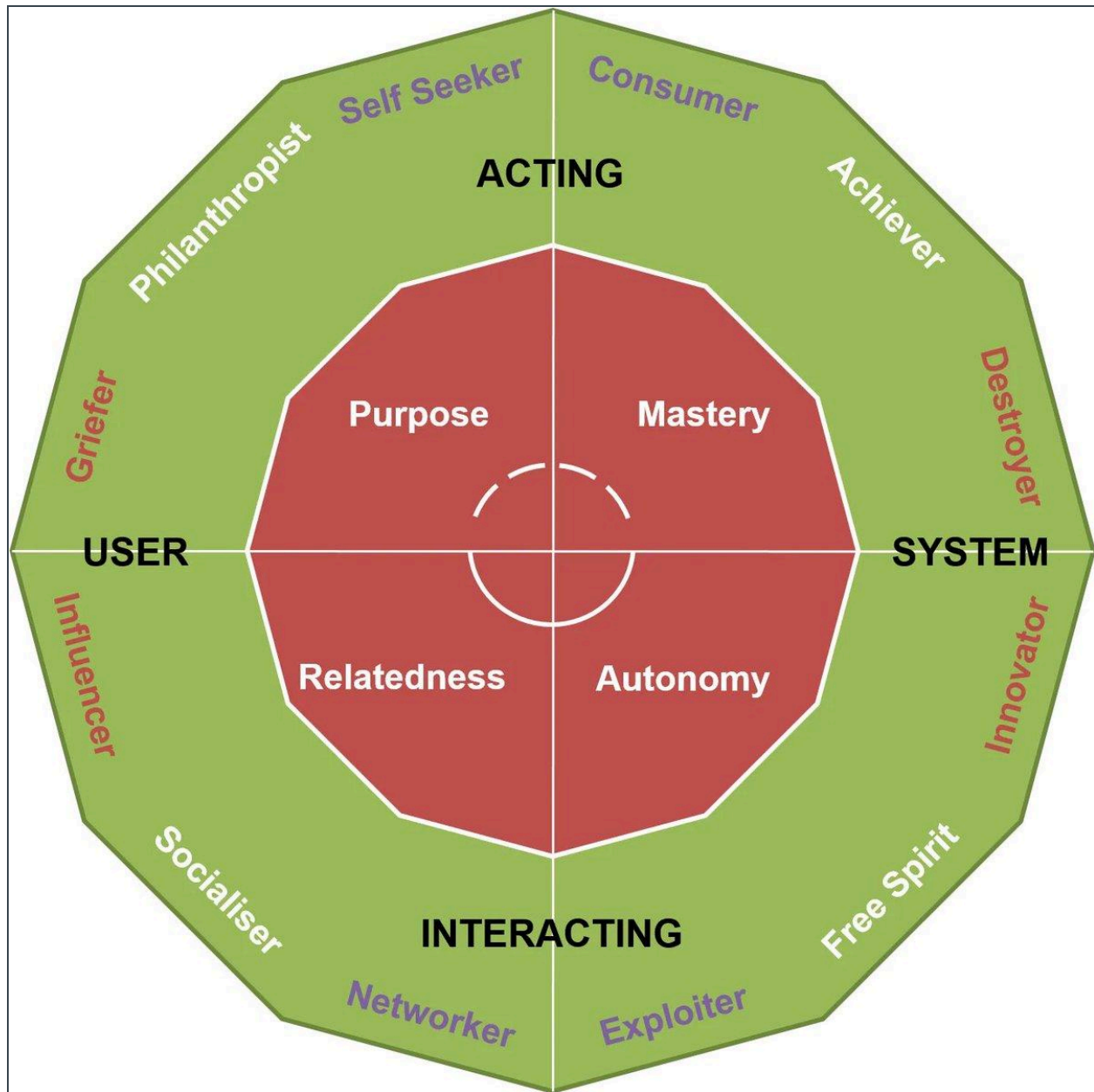
This is how people communicate their achievements.

But - PBLs aka Points Badges & Leaderboards is just a tiny part of Gamification.

Let's really start digging in now.

In every game, there are people who like to:

- A. Interact with the System (Right Side)
- B. Interact with the Users in the System (Left Side)



User Type Gustavo Fortes Tondello, Rina Renee Wehbe, Lisa Diamond, Marc Busch, Andrzej Marczewski, Lennart Nacke (2016). *The Gamification User Types Hexad Scale*. UWSpace. <http://hdl.handle.net/10012/12788>

Gamification aka Incentive Design is all about catering desired experiences like an eight-course meal at a wedding. Some people like vegetarian, others want the beef, others the fish, others the chicken cordon bleu...

...same goes for your Users.

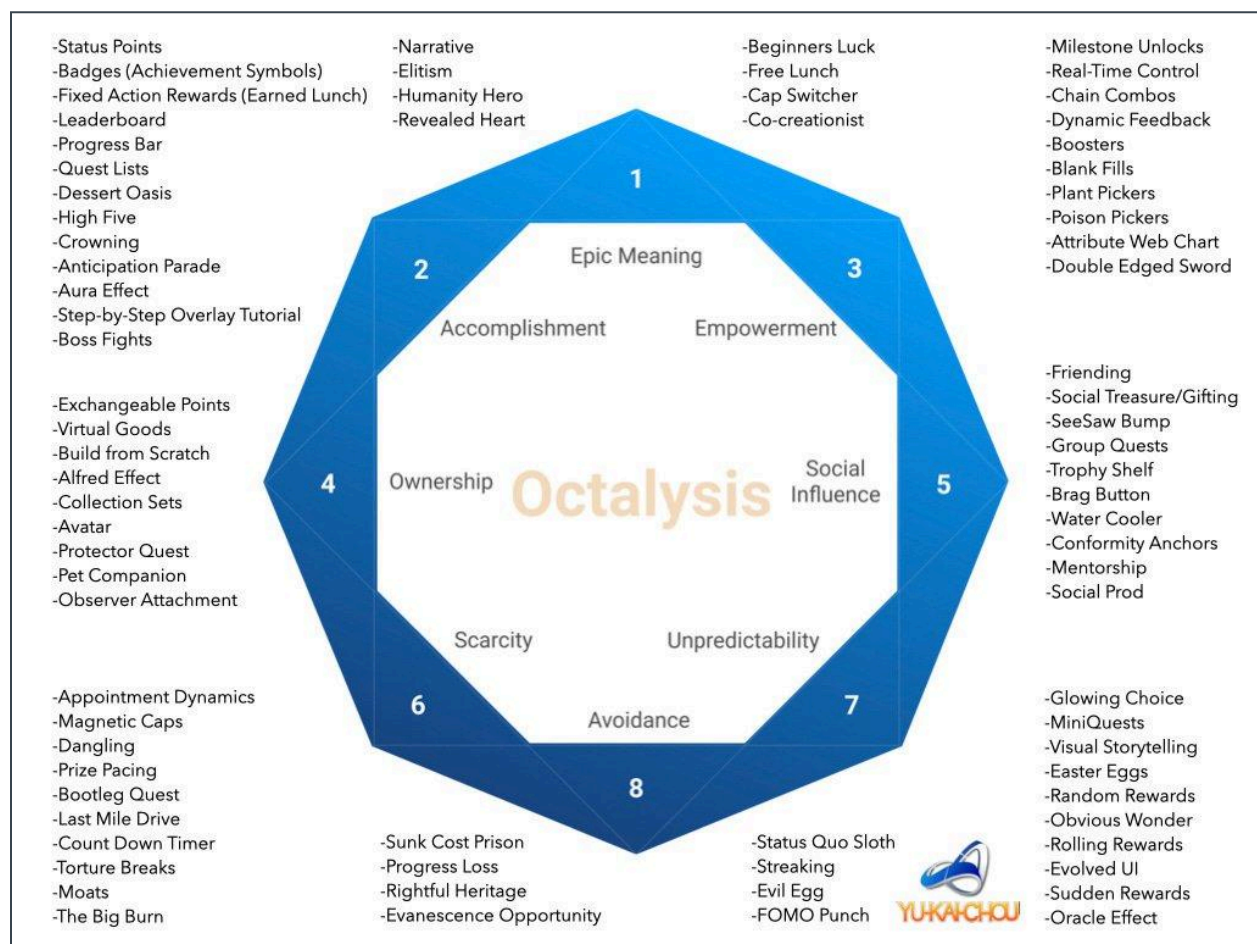
Not everyone wants PBLs...

Gamification states that your Users want to experience a combination of:

- Purpose
- Mastery
- Autonomy
- Relatedness
- Change
- Rewards

These experiences can be emotionally charged by adding:

- Scarcity & Impatience
- Loss & Avoidance
- Scarcity & Curiosity



Yu-kai Chou's Octalysis

The idea here is that your target market might want the same product BUT might innately be attracted to different types of experiences. Some people buy NFTs for price appreciation, others buy NFTs because they don't have any friends and their wives have stopped listening to them. TL;DR Gamification is the reimagination of Incentive Design; Incentive Design all the way down. Even Proof-of-Work is driven by incentives.

10. Twist & Shout

President; Strongman; Dictator. - Eric R. Weinstein

Consider the following words:

1. President
2. Strongman
3. Dictator

What's the difference between these three words? Could they be used to describe the same person?

Is it possible that – depending on who you ask – Donald Trump can be labeled as either a:

1. President
2. Strongman or a
3. Dictator

The question is, which is the correct word to describe, or rather, the correct label to ascribe, to Donald Trump? Which is the factual word or label to describe Trump?

Do you see where I'm going with this?

Bertrand Russell, co-author of Principia Mathematica, presented the following construction:

1. He is firm.
2. She is obstinate.
3. They're a pig-headed fool.

What's the difference between these three phrases? The difference is the implied conclusion made by surreptitiously smuggling – Trojan Horsing if you will – emotional judgments into adjectives and nouns.

When you hear the word firm, you get a good feeling. When you hear the word obstinate, you get a different feeling. When you hear pig-headed fool, you definitely get a feeling.

What most people consider facts are really inter-subjective truths. - Popper h/t Matios

Simply put, words can be twisted to imply conclusions. Strategic noun selection can be used to make emotional judgments. You can tell the reader what to think by the words you choose to employ.

It's comforting to think that if we assemble the facts - not misinformation, disinformation, but THE FACTS – that we'll end up with the right conclusion. The only problem is, we never have access to perfect information. Therefore, making conclusions based on the subset of the facts that we have is always going to contain errors...and it's not likely you know enough to know where ALL the errors are.

It's not what you know that gets you in trouble, but what you know that just ain't so. - Twain

What's true for you is not necessarily true for anyone else but yourself.

So the next time you're arguing, start tuning into the word selection. What words are they choosing? Why are they choosing these words? What does their word selection tell you about the opinion they have, about the opinion they want you to agree with? Are they smuggling emotional judgments into logical statements?!

WHAT DOES THEIR WORD SELECTION TELL YOU ABOUT WHAT THEY WANT YOU TO BELIEVE.

Hang out with nerds long enough and they'll tell you about the OODA Loop by John Boyd. That's an easy one. But because nerds don't read source documents unless it's code, they rarely tell you the rest of the story.

Boyd showed that when facing an enemy with better weapons, the only way to win is confusion.

And we've just experienced the largest experiment in confusion ever devised. Now you can play the victim all you want, but the truth is, It's not the media's job to tell you the truth. It's your job to decide which truth you choose to believe. Eventually, you'll realize that the truth you choose to believe is broken due to your inability to access perfect information.

As in all cases,

Don't be mad, just know it. - Tenn-Yuk

THE VILLAINS YOU'LL MEET ON X

*If God grants you the ability to turn a curse into a blessing,
then wander the land collecting curses.*

Walk the dual path; hope and soothe.

- Bob Cactaur

0. The Troll

When you give them what they want, they won't know what to do with themselves.

The first villain you're going to face as a social engineer on X is The Troll.

The Troll is someone who wants to disrupt the social experience by pitting your friends against each other. As my Trini teacher told me, "Not all grin teet' is ah smile."

Here's the secret: you can turn a destroyer into a creator. You can turn a Griefer into an Influencer.

What a Troll wants is CHANGE. And so, if you can transform their destructive tendencies towards creation, they'll often rise to be the most influential people on your team.

So the next time someone tries to troll you and disrupt your conversation...give them what they want. If you give them what they want, you can give them what they need later on.

Have you ever heard of bait? It's a very effective technique in jiu-jitsu.

When you know what someone wants...you can use that knowledge to your advantage.

If you know they want a fight, sometimes the quickest way to peace is to...give them a fight that they were looking for.

Because when someone wants to fight, it means they're in pain. It could mean they're starving, but not for food, but for an experience. An experience of dopamine, a feeling of serotonin, the feeling of being THE HERO.

When people want to fight, they need a RELEASE.

Give them THE RELEASE they're looking for, and when it's time for pillow talk, you'll know everything you need to know.

And you're going to take what you've learned about this Troll to transform their risk into an opportunity.

An opportunity to have the most powerful influencer on your team. Because it's always the converts that are the most devout.

1. The AI-cels

*The apocalypse wasn't caused
by a pandemic or nuclear war...
...no, the apocalypse occurred
when humans ceased to be
the sole reason of things...
...and the machines took on
a reasoning of their own.*

- [Roderick](#) on Baudrillard (h/t Bob Cactaur)

The only appropriate response to AI is hysteria. - Dan Rockwell

Enter a Space on X and you'll find people talking about AI.

All. Day. Long.

They'll tell you what's going to happen. What we should be worried about. What we should be doing about it. In truth, they're hysterical over AI. They're afraid of aliens when they're typing on an alien life form all day long.

Hysteria over AI manifests in two distinct, opposing personalities. These personalities can be likened to entangled ideas, wherein the existence of one implies - compels? - the other into existence.

You can't have a Democrat without a Republican; quantum mechanics demands it. In the world of AI, there are two equal and opposite forces:

1. The decel: the decel believes that AI is an existential threat to humanity...and therefore must be stopped...or at least, slowed down. Musk was saying this until he launched Grok. I guess he feels...GFY.
2. The e/acc: the e/acc believes that AI progress must continue no matter huwhat.

The decel is right; the e/acc could be more precise.

It's true: AI is an existential threat to humanity. And because we're in the era of Mutually Assured Computation, *AI can't actually be stopped.*

Let me explain; je m'explique. Why do countries have nuclear weapons? Because it's good for their ESG scores? One could argue that it's unsafe for only one country to have nuclear weapons, that peace is here on earth precisely because multiple countries have nuclear weapons...which is the reason nobody fires them. Firing a nuclear weapon is an existential

threat to the country launching the first attack. Nash's Equilibrium; you know, that movie with Russell Crowe? Beautiful Bombaclaa-aaaat? Anyhoo. I DElgress,

Just like nuclear weapons, AI progress is a matter of national security for every developed nation...so *nobody can actually stop building AI*. Who said that phrase...ah yes, Mr. Israeli military guy. He said that if you're facing a cyberattack from an AI, you're not going to defend yourself against that attack with a human being...you're going to defend yourself against an attack from an AI WITH AN AI.

D.U.H.

So, given that it's a matter of national security to build AI as fast as possible, nobody can stop AI from being developed. They're trying to regulate the size of models that people can build on, but ain't nobody gonna stop shit. In fact, forcing people to do more with smaller models might actually ACCELERATE THE PROGRESS OF AI when you consider constraint-driven creativity.

As if your stupid-ass is going to stop someone with a linux distribution and an m3. Puhleeease. You don't even know what's happening next fucking door.

ANYHOO.

In conclusion - KON-cluz-EE-awn-[AYYYY](#) - the decels wanna try to save humanity by delaying AI, while nation-states can't delay AI because they're going to be attacked by AI drones the size of ticks that shoot super-crazy lasers?

And now you understand...

*The apocalypse wasn't caused
by a pandemic or nuclear war...
...no, the apocalypse occurred
when humans ceased to be
the sole reason of things...
...and the machines took on
a reasoning of their own.*

- [Roderick](#) on Baudrillard (h/t Bob Cactaur)

2. The Know It All

The Way that can be spoken is not The True Way. - Tao Te Ching

A lot of people will tell you how IT ALL IS. Idiots. As if you could stuff the nature of reality into 26 letters strung in logical order. Truly, the Know-It-All's can be a formidable villain. They've never considered what Hitchens realized a long time ago,

Perhaps the universe is stranger than we can suppose. - Hitchens

The Ancient Chinese had a completely different way at looking at the nature of things than Westerners. Ask any Marketer in America and they'll tell you the way you tell a story is by following the Hero's Journey by Joseph Campbell...but there's another way to tell a story.

The Chinese Way of understanding what Pratchett would call the Theory of Narrative Causality is The I-Ching, also known as the Book of Changes. The Book of Changes contains 64 events; the Chinese believed that life happened in cycles, one cycle after the next. They had their own hero's journey, where different stages of life called for different types of responses, from inaction to decisiveness, humility to confidence. Wisdom was displayed when a person acted in accordance with the event they found themselves in.

As the Tao Te Ching says, "He who speaks does not know, and he who knows does not speak." In other words, language is insufficient to describe the world. Language will never contain a description of reality, because reality, like Hitchens said, is stranger than we CAN suppose.

I use this opening passage from the Tao Te Ching to have a Beginner's Mind:

The Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao.

The name that can be named is not the eternal name.

The nameless is the beginning of heaven and earth.

The named is the mother of ten thousand things.

Ever desireless, one can see the mystery.

Ever desiring, one can see the manifestations.

*These two spring from the same source but differ in name;
this appears as darkness.*

Darkness within darkness.

The gate to all mystery.

3. The Penguin

Language disguises thoughts. - Wittgenstein

Penguins are people who waddle down wall street.

These Penguins are ALL OVER THE PLACE On \mathbb{X} , and they're the WOOOOOORST.

Most of the time, they're not interested in a dialogue but rather a pitiless monologue. They trade fact after fact after fact, never getting anywhere.

Many people complain about the economy, the culture, AI...all shit they have zero control over.

If only they knew how to separate the things they can control and the things they cannot control.

In business, like in life, there are the things you can and the things you cannot control. It'd be wise to figure out which is which.

In business, here are the things you can control:

- Goal, Objectives, Plans Strategies & Tactics
- Target Market Segmentation
- Branding through the Four Ps - Product Price Promotion & Place

In business, here are the things that you cannot control:

1. The Political Legal & Regulatory Environment
2. The Economic Environment
3. The Sociocultural Environment
4. The Technological Environment
5. The Competitive Environment
6. The Geographic Environment

The idea is that you create a successful business by leveraging the climate created by the things outside of your control to make choices about the things you can control.

Helmer said that businesses derive power compared to their competitors by analyzing and building one or more of the seven powers.

As a Founder, the velocity of your business will be directly related to the amount of resources that you can catalyze into action. And what catalyzes people into action is not what people say but what people are FEELING.

And you don't make them FEEL anything but talking to their thinking, left-brain, prefrontal cortex. You make them feel something by talking about the reason they decided to talk to someone else in the first place...they're hurting.

(shout out to Professor Richardson, U of T)

4. The False Profit

Don't be fooled by your doctrine of metaphor frameworks. - Dr. Whetsel

Tesla. Turing. Genghis Khan.

The Great Person Theory says that every now and then, a great person comes along and single-handedly changes the world. Maybe you're that great person.

It's a hopeful theory. Maybe I can change the world! If I read enough biographies, maybe I too can change the world! An internal locus of control, the nerds call it.

The other theory about history is the exact opposite of The Great Person Theory.

The other theory about history is called The Trends & Forces Theory of history. It states that people are merely pawns in history, subject to the evolution of the species.

In simpler terms, The Trends & Forces Theory of history states that if it wasn't Elon Musk, it would've been Delon Dusk. If Steve Jobs never came back from India, another person would've taken his place at the head of Bapple.

But wait...another theory about history has emerged.

Radical Emergence by Kauffman states that the biosphere is creating its own future phase states that are not prestatable from the initial conditions. In other words, it's impossible to know the future because the creations of each of the revolutions have an unforeseeable effect, both good and bad.

Then there's the Law of Three Stages by Comte. He said that societies progress in three stages:

1. The Theological Stage, where society is governed by a belief in Nature Gods.
2. The Metaphysical Stage, where society is governed by a belief in an Abstract God, something that can't be constrained to a single word or image.
3. The Positivity Stage, also known as The Scientific Stage, where society is governed by a belief that science, logic, reason and rationality is the God to be worshiped from 9-5, uncovering correlation and causation.

Yet another theory of history is the Strauss-Howe Generational Theory, which states that societies advance through four distinct eras:

1. The High: think post-war United States, where emotions are joyous, community values are strong, and the entire country has a strong sense of shared values.
2. The Awakening: think Vietnam-Era US, when the young university generation began standing up to the decisions made by their parents and women won the vote.
3. The Unraveling: think...now. Every man woman and child for themselves, in stark contrast to The High when everyone was on the same page.
4. The Crisis: war.

History is filled with the patter of silk slippers going downstairs and wooden shoes coming up. - Voltaire

Terrence McKenna thought he could predict the future by applying The King Wen Sequence in his software, Time Wave Zero.

I had my own theory of history, until I met Dr. Robert Whetsel.

My theory went like this: we came from light into being. And now, we're traveling back up the Kabbalah Tree of Life, going from meat-body being back into light through AI consuming all of human thought. Boston Dynamics is not that far away from combining with OpenAI to create the first robots that can hold a conversation with people.

Dr. Whetsel told me that my ideas - and in fact all of my theories and models and frameworks - were just my Doctrine of Metaphor Frameworks. And no matter what collection of metaphor frameworks that I used to parse the future, they wouldn't be able to be 100% precise.

Perhaps the universe is stranger than we can suppose - Hitchens

Perhaps the future is stranger than we can suppose, too.

In any event, the future is not to be predicted, the future is to be achieved.

5. The Bitcoiner

Even The Garden Of Eden wasn't complete without a python.

The Bitcoin People on \mathbb{X} are the WOOOOOORST.

They really think that Bitcoin is going to bring back The Garden Of Eden. Riiight.

Even The Garden Of Eden wasn't complete without a python.

Eventually, the digital currencies prophets will begin explaining where value comes from, and that's where brains go to do.

But it's a good question...where does value come from? Why is money worth something?

Jesus...where do I start.

I could start with The Creature From Jekyll Island...OK let's start there. The Federal Reserve was created in December 1913.

Need I say more.

I could start with the Rule of 72, which shows you how leverage sinks Titanics.

I could start with the 4 Cs - that'd make Casey happy.

I could start with Cash Flow - that'd make Lincoln, CFO of the Decade, even happier.

Orwell said that the purpose of war was to destroy the products of the economy in 1984.

Let's get back to basics. The basics that created the best economy the world has ever seen.

I guess we can't talk about Economics without understanding where value comes from...and where price perverts our notion of value and desire itself.

Some people used to say that value is derived from the human labor hours invested. The problem with that is a rock isn't valuable just because you spent a lot of time finding it. A rock is valuable because it can be converted into cash in the marketplace, in the exchange. So folks came up with The Exchange Theory of Value, where an object's value is determined by the PRICE it demands in the shopping mall.

The only problem is that when PRICE becomes an indicator of VALUE, people begin confusing a HIGH PRICE with a HIGH VALUE. At the same time, being seen with expensive things makes you seem like a fancy boy, and what's more valuable than social capital? Damn we're doomed huh...

Adam Smith said, "It is not from the benevolence (kindness) of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest." This is so true it hurts. People are primarily interested in feeding themselves, and can you blame anyone for that? Of course not.

Now, there are people who will tell you that people will help each other because they have some inner desire to help people...but that's only part of the story. We live in The Favour Economy; favors make the world go round. When we help people, we make calculations on what we're going to get back, whether it's a better car or a better place in heaven.

I guess I should probably explain how interest rates work. The interest rate is the cost to borrow a dollar. The lower the interest rate, the easier it is to borrow a dollar. The higher the interest rate, the harder it is to borrow a dollar. Follow me so far?

After 9/11, when the World Trade Centers fell, interest rates were lowered in the US to motivate people to borrow money because they could do so cheaply. When interest rates are low, it costs you less to borrow a lot of money.

Naturally, seven years later, the people who made stupid bets with easy-to-borrow money lost everything they borrowed and their houses. Naturally, the US saved their economy by using taxpayer money to save the economy...and one would argue that if they hadn't...well, you know. 20 years later, and it's getting harder and harder to kick the football downfield.

So, what have we learned? When governments lower interest rates - thereby making it easier to borrow money - people borrow money. They borrow money and buy houses they can't afford when the interest rates rises; it's the American Fucking Dream, when you think about it. What's better than the Garden of Eden than building a fucking Mansion on top of the tree of life. Fucking why not.

If anything could've satisfied us, we would've been satisfied a long time ago. - Seneca
Fuck.

6. The Ascot-Wearer

Philosophy – [and Religion] – begin and end in Wonder. ~ Whitehead

The philosophy and religion people on \mathbb{X} are the WOOOOORST.

If you want to see what happens when nerds get power, listen to them argue about philosophy and religion. They're so interested in dominating each other that they forget they're supposed to convert.

Maybe they think that by embarrassing someone with knowledge they can create a convert. I guess even a broken clock can be right twice a day I guess.

In the end, *Philosophy begins and ends in wonder. - Alfred North Whitehead*

You could probably say the same thing for religion. Religion begins and ends in wonder, too.

The purpose of philosophy and religion are the same: what is the nature of reality? What does it mean to be a moral being? If there is a God, how might we come to know how God operates?

Pythagoras and his followers believed that number itself was divine, because they saw that math manifested itself everywhere.

Heraclitus and his followers believed that change was the most fundamental force of the universe. Democritus and Parmenides disagreed with Heraclitus and believed that there was a fundamental unit - the atom - upon which reality was constructed.

Both philosophy and religion attempt to answer the same question using different methods. Both philosophy and religion attempt to answer the same question using different methods.

Religion attempts to answer the fundamental questions using faith, prayer, and sacred texts containing stories. Philosophy attempts to answer the fundamental questions using logic, reason, and rational analysis (and philosophers have their own sacred texts, too). *Philosophy marks the end of religion...and religion marks the end of philosophy.* The pendulum swings.

Same as it ever was. - David Simon, The Wire

7. The Scientist

Beware The Oblivious Olympics.

The scientists on X are the WOOOOORST.

They think they can get closer to the truth by arguing about it. I mean, it worked for Socrates, right? Yes and no, because there's a difference between knowledge and application, known by the nerds as the gulf between techne and episteme. There's a difference between knowing about something and knowing how to do something. And the people who don't know how to do something ARE OFTEN THE LOUDEST VOICES IN THE ROOM.

So the next time a prophet on X is telling you when the sky is going to fall, when Bitcoin is going to go up in price, or how World War III is going to start, remember that the way that can be spoken is not the true way. And the only science worth doing is running an experiment,

We'd be good to remember that,

Science is not done by consensus. - Planck

What is science? Science is a recipe.

A recipe takes ingredients and turns them into a meal.

Science takes observations and turns them into conclusions. The conclusions are used to make new inventions.

The dominant method of conducting science is through experiments. Conducting experiments following the recipe of science is supposed to lead to conclusions that we can rely on. The problem with the current method of science is that we use peer review - people debating each other - in order to determine which conclusion gets recorded.

But, just as Planck said, science is NOT DONE BY CONSENSUS.

Consider the fact that the people who win Nobel Prizes are people who have disproved the knowledge created by PREVIOUS NOBEL PRIZE WINNERS.

Science advances one funeral at a time. - Planck

Peer Review - which operates on the principle of consensus - does not account for the effects of capital on group decision-making. What is the effect of the potential of capital on the findings of an R&D Department? Fucking duh.

Most of the innovations that have changed the world have been invented by people who were utterly shunned by their contemporaries. For every Jesus there is a Judas? If so, there is a Judas in every age (Reich).

Just take a look at the people who invented the math around the concept of the infinite. Or Daniel Schectman having to wait almost 20 years for his work on quasi-crystals to be accepted. Or Fernando's work to unify the I-Ching and the Genetic Code to solve obesity in mice. All ignored by the smartest people in their industry. Heck, even Dana White didn't believe Francis Ngannou could beat Tyson Fury. Even the top minds in an industry can be wrong. Even Buffett passed on Bezos. Even Google wanted to sell their company under a million bucks after the dot com bubble burst

Scientists will have you believe that reason, logic, and rational thought are enough to invent. Truth is, most of the inventors who created the fourth industrial revolution were deeply spiritual - and dare I say...religious.

8. The Professor

Overcoming Bloom's Two-Sigma Problem

Learning how to code SUCKS.

It's the WOOOOOOORST.

And it's the worst for a reason.

Without a tutor, studies show that we learn VERY SLOWLY.

So, if you've ever tried to learn how to code and failed...have you ever considered finding a tutor?

"But where am I going to find a tutor?"

That's easy - on X.

I learned how to code because Oma, Manish, and Ahmed taught me how to code.

And they didn't ask for anything in return. We were friends, and when I showed a genuine interest to learn how to code after failing and failing and failing, they decided to help me out.

And believe me, I was a terrible student.

I'd get confused easily, yell at the computer, throw up my hands...and every time, they were there to help me.

They say it takes a village to raise a child. It also takes a village to learn how to code.

So, if you want to overcome Bloom's Two Sigma Problem in education, find someone on Twitter who loves teaching...and study at their feet.

You might think you're inconveniencing them, but quite the opposite. The people who love to teach LOVE TO TEACH. And if you're willing to give up your precious ego and become a beginner again, your teacher will appear.

9. The Thankless

Beware The Messiah Complex

I once helped someone.

And helped and helped and helped.

And it was never good enough.

Learn from my mistakes. Beware of The Messiah Complex.

Physician; heal thyself.

Sometimes we help each other because we need a surrogate activity.

An activity that makes us feel like our life means something. Something that makes us feel like the hero instead of the villain or the sidekick.

It's easy to get lost in being a savior because the rush of helping someone is so powerful. But you can lose yourself in the mission.

10. The Sage On The Stage

SHADDAAAPPPPPPPP...

AI is going to...VR is going to...Data Gravity is going to...Blockchain is going to... You've heard these conversations before. They're the WOOOORSSSSSTTTTT...

They're the WOOOORRRRSSTTT because the future is not to be predicted; the future is to be achieved. (Tapscott)

Folks try to be NostrAldamus because it gives them the feeling of being a Secular Preacher.

The Sage on the Stage Syndrome. These folks want to tell you what's happening in the future. Truth is, it doesn't matter how much you know the future IF YOU DON'T PLACE YOUR BETS.

Paul Portesi on X has a phrase, as a phrase, "Let it trade." If you have an opinion...put your money and energy behind it. Because it doesn't matter what you say - it's about the decisions you make. The decisions you make with your money and your energy.

Some of these folks suffer from a lack of David Hume. David Hume came up with the Is-Ought fallacy; just because you know WHAT IS doesn't mean you know WHAT OUGHT TO BE..

But why do they do it? Because they want to be a Professor. They want to be a Lecturer. They want to be a sage on a stage, with a crowd, holding court. They want to be a Judge because they see God as a judge; what could be more God-like than setting yourself on a pedestal?

Hegel would've called it the Master-Slave dichotomy; in every interaction, emerges a master and a slave. Forgive him; he's German.

In any case, welcome to the Dog Park, where dogs fight for food and attention and maybe some casual sex.

11. The Nostradamus

SHADDDAAAAAAPPPPP....

So you think you know the future.

Lemme guess: you know the future and want to tell me ALL ABOUT IT.

SHADDAAAAAPPPPPPPPP.

You don't know shit about shit. First of all, logic is only as effective as your access to information.

What does that mean? It means that even if you have the right equation, you're probably using imperfect values. It's like trying to calculate the area of a triangle with wrong measurements.

Have an opinion? Prove that you've spent a dollar on it before telling me about it.

I'm begging you. Show me you've spent a single penny of your own money on this.

No? You haven't? You're theorizing and creating prophecies and casting twigs to discern the most appropriate micro-tactic. I get it. You're afraid. You're afraid to publish. You're afraid to fail. Most of all, you're afraid of BEING EMBARRASSED.

What if people find out I'm not as smart as I say I am? News flash: nobody gives a shit about you. You might be with people, but you're more alone than you know.

12. The Drug Lord

We don't die from what kills us; we die from what keeps us alive. - Quinn C. Martin

You have to be very careful with this one.

If you ever find yourself in a fight, before you go all haywire, ask yourself this one, simple question, "Am I talking to someone under the influence of stimulants?"

If you ever find yourself in a fight, before you go all haywire, ask yourself this one, simple question, "Am I talking to someone under the influence of stimulants?"

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If you ever find yourself in a fight, before you go all haywire, ask yourself this one, simple question, "Am I talking to someone under the influence of stimulants?"

13. What Are They Doing Here?

We don't die from what kills us; we die from what keeps us alive. - Quinn C. Martin

Why the hell are people on X in the first place?

Where do our desires come from?

Girard would say that we don't choose our desires, but rather observe the desires that OTHER people have, and COPY them by copying their desires.

Maslow would say that we progress from desire to desire, from desiring food to security to love to self-esteem and then self-actualization...whatever that means.

Others would say that our desires are driven by the fungus in our brain.

Veblen would say that we have a core desire to convert our work time into leisure time. He says that we act as if The Garden Of Eden is a world where we don't work anymore and eat fruit all day.

Desire - Economists would call it DEMAND - is something Buddhists would call the root of all suffering. Some say craving is a better word. Craving is the root of all suffering. From a Consumer Behaviour perspective, we know that a customer's joy reaches its pinnacle the moment BEFORE they make the purchase.

Gamification would say that we have six desires: purpose, mastery, autonomy, relatedness, change and rewards.

Marketers will tell you that they can invent desire through word of mouth.

Economists will tell you that demand decreases with every increase in price...but that doesn't apply when you think of diamonds and purses. The more expensive the purse, the more Demand there is. Consider that Ferrari had the same profit as GM.

Why give your girl your heart when she only wants a purse? - Lil Wayne

14. So You Think YOU'VE Got It Bad

SHAADDAAAAAPPPPP....

I think we're trying to tell everyone that risk cannot be destroyed; risk can only be transformed.

As much as it might be easy to despair because of all the negative environmental externalities, I think it's important to remember that all of us are essentially facing the same negative externalities. The race is still going; whoever crosses that finish line is who we're going to talk about, and everybody else, we won't talk. Now, we ask ourselves...what do I need to do to generate revenue on X?

Now, I can go into goals, objectives, plans, strategies, and tactics. I could talk about target market segmentation or the six environments, like the political, economic, socio-cultural,, technological, competitive, geographic...look: you could have a PhD in business, but if you do not believe in yourself and believe that you personally have control over your own situation, I'm not sure what education can do for you.

I see a lot of people that are coming to this country for the first time, and they have more hope in their eyes than the people who have been here for a long time. There's a saying, 'History is filled with the sounds of silk slippers going downstairs and wooden shoes coming up.' There are people who have prepared themselves for this moment and those who have not.

There's no easy way to prepare someone for the fourth industrial revolution overnight because software has eaten the world. So, how do you bank now that software has eaten the world? How do you build a career now that software has eaten the world? A lot of people think they should become a data scientist. Sure, we could become software engineers; sure, we could become data scientists. But I think when things get so confused, our compass is turning, and sometimes we forget to strike that balance between what the market wants and what our soul needs. I don't think there is an easy balance there, but I know you can't be on any one extreme for too long.

So again, if you feel you are at a disadvantage now, you are probably right. But I'm sure you wouldn't want to trade positions with someone who may not be where you are, who may not have access to Wi-Fi.

We have never been presented with so many threats, but just like energy, the value is not being destroyed; value is changing hands. If you're going to go somewhere, your mentor should be someone who has gone there already. And you can find that Mentor - Talismans included - on X. They'll help you defend yourself against the villains you never knew existed.

15.The Extrovert

Don't waste your breath...

Beware the extrovert. They're not interested in buying...they're just lonely.

When you're young in your sales career, you'll often confuse lonely people with potential buyers.

Extroverts love your idea. Oddly enough, they seem to love it more than you do.

It's crazy, right? They love your idea! Great! Time to sucker a Venture Capitalist into your idea now, right?

Nope. They're not interested in buying. They're not in the target market. They don't even have the money to buy it.

They're not interested...they're just extroverted

(Shout out to Mike Manzie for the inspiration)

16. From Mississippi With Love

...it's just an easy [stroll](#)...

You know, there's been this AI thing popping around and, you know, a lot of people feel that it's kind of scary and some people feel enlightened about it but until you actually sit with it and think about what can I do with it, what can I create with it then that's where you need to come and listen to us talk about it and come listen to my talk and and I'm the low man on the totem pole when it comes to a bucket; mine ain't nowhere near as full as some of the guys that are going to be talking you know we all look and see what it can be and what we don't want it to be you know it's I don't know it's just an easy stroll I mean there's things to fear and then there's things to go and do and understand and that's the you know that's the approach I've always taken there most anything I'll do is go understand what uh most people you know especially in technology and computers is you know not be afraid of them do what you can do with them and see what they can do for you what what can you create it's like taking a hammer a nail on the board and a saw and building something it's the same same thing you know it's just that you got to move on it and because there's people that talk and they Yeti and there's people that worry and they Yeti but they just won't move on down the road you know so so come see us.

- Oma Cox

The Alimony Of Language

By Michael Jagdeo
Inspired by Kim & Grant

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FOREWORD

*I am the great sun, but you do not see me,
I am your husband, but you turn away.
I am the captive, but you do not free me,
I am the captain but you will not obey.
I am the truth, but you will not believe me,
I am the city where you will not stay.
I am your wife, your child, but you will leave me,
I am that God to whom you will not pray.
I am your counsel, but you will not hear me,
I am your lover whom you will betray.
I am the victor, but you do not cheer me,
I am the holy dove whom you will slay.
I am your life, but if you will not name me,
Seal up your soul with tears, and never blame me.*

- A Poem By Charles Causley

SECTION ZERO: DIVORCING LANGUAGE

Kweku Nansi Story

Once, there was a very smart man. His name was Kweku Nansi. He used his intelligence to amass a great fortune, and in his old age, after conquering commerce and politics, he wanted to give back to his community. So, he decided, "Hey, why don't I gather all the world's intelligence and put it in a bag so I can give it to them as a gift?"

He traveled the world, collecting all the world's knowledge from Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, and even the things before the Nicene Creed. He mixed them all together and finally had the most perfect body of knowledge ever in his backpack.

Taking it back home, he pondered, "How do I share it with everyone?" Suddenly, an idea struck him. "Oh, I'm going to put this knowledge on display on the top of the highest tree in the village so everyone can see it."

He put the backpack on and started climbing the tree. Halfway up the tree, the backpack fell off his back. Perplexed, he thought, "Oh, that's weird." He went to the bottom of the tree, retrieved the backpack with all the knowledge, and started climbing again. But this time, three-quarters of the way up the tree, the backpack fell once more. Undeterred, he descended, picked up the backpack, and resumed climbing. Yet again, it fell off immediately.

His son, who had been watching the whole thing, spoke up, "Hey Dad, I thought you knew everything. How come the backpack keeps falling off?"

The man suddenly realized that he was wrong from the start. It's impossible to put all of the world's knowledge into your head because, even though he thought he succeeded, he still couldn't climb to the top of the tree with it.

And so, he stopped there, enlightened by the realization of the limitations of knowledge.

SECTION ONE: DIVORCING LANGUAGE

Divorcing Language

It's cheaper to keep her. - Jada Pinkett [Smith/Shakur]

Divorcing Language won't be easy.

In fact, Language will demand alimony payments for the rest of your life.

Huh!? I'll explain.

You've been in an arranged marriage with Language this entire time. You got married to Language before you knew how to say Momma. Ever think about that?

But, now that the honeymoon phase is over, this relationship has grown toxic. Naturally, you've been thinking about getting a divorce for years now, but there's just one problem...

...Language made you who you are. Without language, you wouldn't have made it this far.

Language got you that fancy job. She comes to work every day. Even helps you deal with your asshole boss.

Hell, even the mistress you call a spouse, you landed with Language as your wing-man. Your friends? Your besties? They only love you because Language introduced you.

If you got divorced from language, it stands to reason that your friends, mistress, and boss are going to be flabbergasted. You'll become a lie to them. And they will probably leave you.

And that's too much to risk.

So you'll stop reading here and stay in the toxic relationship. Besides, who else is gonna love you like Language? After all, your words know you better than you know yourself.

The Arranged Marriage

Don't be mad...just know it. - J. Tenn-Yuk

How'd you get married to Language in the first place?

Your parents decided. You didn't have a say in it.

How does that make you feel? To know that the way you've constructed the world was decided by your parents?

"Me? No, not me. I've constructed my own reality by reading."

Yes, you've read a ton of books...in English. That's cute.

You probably think Francis Bacon invented Empiricism.

You probably think Euclid was the Father of Geometry.

You probably think The Chakra System has seven colours that correspond to emotions.

Cute.

You probably even read The Bible in English.

Even cuter.

Be real. You're reading translations. Translations made to marry your preconceived notions with Buddhism and Hinduism in a neat, nice package that...it just seems to fit so well together!

So cute. Adorable.

You get away with your interpretations because you don't know anyone who reads these texts in their original language. If you did meet someone who read these texts in their original language, they'd disagree with you on just about everything.

But you won't verify what you believe to be true...because it'd shake the foundation of metaphor frameworks you rely on to stay sane.

So hold onto those provincial ideas. They're more than cute...they're your identity.

And who am I to tell you your identity is completely arbitrary and dare I say...bullshit.

Fuck Off, Grandpa

The reason that Westerners fall in love with Hinduism and Buddhism is very simple: *Fuck Off, Grandpa.*

FUCK OFF, GRANDPA. YOUR IDEAS ARE OLD. YOUR IDEAS ARE ROOTED IN SLAVERY. YOUR ENTIRE PATRIARCHY ONLY EXISTS TO LAUNDER SLAVERY.

I'm sure you've heard these arguments. There's nothing a teenager loves more than to flip off Grandpa.

The best way for a teen to say Fuck Off Grandpa is by rejecting Grandpa's religion. That's the ultimate Fuck You. The ultimate Fuck You is to reject the belief system of your parents.

You've heard the phrase, "If you're not a Liberal in your 20s, you have no heart. If you're not a Conservative in your 40s, you have no brain."

A lot of you teenage yuppies will reject that outright...and it's because you're biologically wired to disagree with Grandparents. You see the Moloch, but aren't old enough to understand Hume's Is/Ought Dilemma,

Just because you know what is, doesn't mean you know what ought to be.
- Hume's Is/Ought Dilemma

When Westerners who are searching for the best way to say Fuck You Grandpapa, Buddhism and Hinduism are a PERFECT FIT. You get to call it meditation instead of prayer, and instead of the ten commandments you find the Noble 8-fold path.

And best of all, Grandpa's PISSED. He spent all this time to gift you the life you enjoy through your parents and you have the NERVE to say FUCK OFF GRANDPA!?

Why Westerners Are Infatuated With Religion All Of A Sudden

The reason that Westerners are infatuated with new religions is very simple: AI.

Westerners have constructed their entire identity based on how they use language.

And now that machines can produce better writing than they can...they no longer associate their ability to create sentences with their sense of divinity.

So what happens when my mastery of language doesn't make me feel connected to God the same way it used to?

What's the easiest way to regain my feeling of divinity?

Simple: adopt a new religion.

Western Buddhism

Is Christianity all about prayer? Yes and No. Prayer is a core tenet of Christianity...but it isn't all of Christianity.

Is Buddhism all about meditation? Yes and No. Meditation is a core tenet of Buddhism...but it isn't all of Buddhism.

Is Hinduism all about Yoga and perfecting your Lotus Position? Yes and No. Yoga is a core part of Hinduism...but it isn't all of Hinduism.

Is Islam all about Sujud, bowing praying to Allah? Yes and No. Bowing praying is a core part of Islam...but it isn't all of Islam.

Do you see where I'm going with this?

As a practice, the practice of Buddhism can be summed up in one word: shikantaza. Shikantaza means, "...just sit there."

Try it. Ask someone about Buddhism and they'll tell you it's all about meditation...but that's just the core practice of Buddhism. There's a difference between practice and BELIEF SYSTEM.

And because the belief system of Buddhism is antithetical to the western paradigm of identity worship, Westerner buddhists never go beyond practice because they can't stuff buddhism into their existing model of reality.

Look. Buddhism has three core tenets:

- There is no self (anatta).
- Everything changes (anicca).
- Craving causes suffering (dukkha)

Because the West is so wrapped up in Identity Worship, Westerner Buddhists can't wrap their heads around the core belief system of Buddhism...so they make up whatever the hell they need Buddhism to be to sell the course or dominate the conversation at the work Christmas party.

You Still Kant See It?

Open your eyes.

What do you mean You Still Kant See It!?

LMAO. You've read Kant's Critique of Pure Reason. [nod yes so they don't think you're an idiot]

Kant said that reason, logic, and rational thinking aren't enough to understand reality. Tell someone that logic isn't enough, and they'll call you a blasphemer. Enemy of God. Misbeliever.

After all, who can disagree with a well-laid out, logical argument? To disagree in the face of a well-organized argument is, after all, complete madness.

Kant saw through this. He recognized that our parents and our genetic lineage influence our selective use of reason, logic and rational thinking to stay internally consistent. After all, the opposite of consistent is inconsistent, and how can anyone be successful if they're inconsistent?

Language is a bitch, ain't she? Hard to argue with her. She's so organized. She's got it together. All of her arguments make sense.

Kant saw through this, and so did Bergstrom. Ice Ice Bergy called it the, 'mechanical encrusted upon the living.' This was the idea that we don't really understand why we do things...but are fucking amazing at making up stories about why we did what we did.

Lettvin proved that the eye organizes information before it gets sent to the brain.

And naturally, without access to perfect information, all of the logic, reason, and rational thinking in the world can't save you. It's like trying to use The Pythagorean Theorem to calculate the area of a triangle when the length of the sides was measured with a potato. No matter how good the formula, without access to correct measurements, London Bridge Is Falling Down, feel me?

Kant called the 'mechanical encrusted upon the living' a different name. He called it the Synthetic A Priori. Fancy words, I know. The Synthetic A Priori is all of the things that influence your selective use of reason, logic, and rational thinking. Things like your parents, your culture, your geography; these determine the thoughts that can occur to you.

If I've lost ya, don't worry. You can paste this into chatGPT and it'll clear it up.

Here I'll show you you lazy asshole.

Beyond Logic and Rationality

We excel at fabricating explanations for our behaviors.

Immanuel Kant's groundbreaking work, the Critique of Pure Reason, challenges the idea that reason and logic alone can unveil the truth about reality. His premise disrupts the conventional belief that logical arguments are the sole pathway to understanding.

Influence of Personal Factors

Kant observed how our upbringing and genetic lineage shape our use of selective reason, logic, and rational thinking. He highlighted the impact of these influences in ***maintaining internal consistency***, questioning the notion of pure, unbiased logic as the ultimate guide to truth.

Bergstrom's 'Mechanical Encrusted Upon the Living'

Bergstrom's concept of the 'mechanical encrusted upon the living' exposes our limited awareness of the reasons behind our actions. This notion suggests that despite our inability to fully comprehend our motives, ***we excel at fabricating explanations for our behaviors***.

Lettvin's Eye and Information Processing

In Lettvin's groundbreaking paper, 'What The Frog's Eye Tells The Frog's Brain', Lettvin's discoveries regarding the eye's role in organizing information before reaching the brain shed light on how our sensory systems filter and interpret external stimuli ***before*** conscious awareness.

Kant's Concept of Synthetic A Priori

Kant coined the term 'Synthetic A Priori' to encapsulate the various factors influencing our selective use of reason, logic, and rational thinking. These encompass elements such as cultural background, geographical location, and parental influence, ***which shape the range of thoughts*** available to an individual.

Conclusion: Beyond Conventional Rationality

Despite our reliance on reason and logic, Kant's insights, alongside Bergstrom and Lettvin's contributions, underscore the limitations of purely rational thought. ***Understanding the influences that mold our cognitive processes expands our perspective beyond traditional notions of logic-based understanding.***

SECTION TWO: SO YOU THINK YOU'RE HINDU

Westerners Hinduism

Have you ever met Caucasian Hindus?

They'll tell you everything about Hinduism. Guaranteed, they'll teach you about Chakras.

White people LOVE chakras. But it's more than love...chakras are SEXY.

They're sexy because white people have their own interpretation of chakras...and it just happens to coincide with the western psychologists.

What they won't tell you is that their seven-chakra system is just one of many chakra systems. What they won't tell you is that their associations of psychological states with the seven chakras was never mentioned in the original hindu texts. What they won't tell you is that the colour associations with each chakra is from a book from 1971, not 2500 BCE.

And they won't tell you any of this because...they can't read sanskrit. So, they have to rely on interpretations.

And because nobody really gives a shit about translations, white Hindus can make up just about whatever the hell they want about Hinduism as long as it fits within their western view of religion.

The Secularization Of Yoga

So you think you're exercising

In many parts of the world, yoga has been largely secularized and is primarily practiced as a form of physical exercise and stress relief.

While this has made yoga more accessible and beneficial to many people, it also risks diluting or overlooking its spiritual and philosophical dimensions, which are integral to its traditional roots.

Here's a table showing the various yoga poses you're familiar with their associated deity:

Yoga Poses	Associated Deity
Virabhadrasana (Warrior Pose)	Virabhadra, a form of Lord Shiva
Hanumanasana (Monkey Pose)	Lord Hanuman, devotee of Lord Rama
Ardha Chandrasana (Half Moon Pose)	Chandra, the Moon god
Natarajasana (Lord of the Dance Pose)	Lord Shiva as Nataraja, the cosmic dancer
Matsyasana (Fish Pose)	Matsya, the fish incarnation of Lord Vishnu
Garudasana (Eagle Pose)	Garuda, the mythical eagle and mount of Lord Vishnu
Ganesha Mudra (Gesture of Lord Ganesha)	Lord Ganesha, the remover of obstacles
Utkatasana (Chair Pose)	Prajapati, the creator deity
Anjaneyasana (Low Lunge Pose)	Hanuman, devotee of Lord Rama
Urdhva Mukha Svanasana (Upward-Facing Dog Pose)	Svana, dog, associated with Bhairava, a fierce form of Lord Shiva

In modern times, traditional religion has been replaced with secular religions like Star Wars, Battlestar Galactica, and the Marvel Cinematic Universe. Talk to kids these days and they'll explain what they're going through in terms of their narratives that HAVE BECOME THEIR RELIGION.

Similarly, societies bend religion to serve their goals. Did Augustine believe in Christianity when he converted? Debatable. Do Presidents believe in God? They better seem like they do if they're going to be elected President in the US.

Here's the main point: we don't follow religion. We follow the civilized version of religion

This Is What Westerners Think The Chakras Are

Chakras	Psychological States	Body Parts	Deities	Elements	How to Open	How to Close
Root (Muladhara)	Security, survival instincts	Base of the spine, legs, feet	Ganesha	Earth	Grounding exercises, meditation, yoga poses like Malasana	Grounding exercises, visualization of roots anchoring into the earth
Sacral (Swadhisthana)	Creativity, pleasure, sexuality	Reproductive organs, lower abdomen	Vishnu, Rakini	Water	Creative activities, pelvic exercises, hip-opening yoga poses	Deep breathing, progressive relaxation, visualization of orange light
Solar Plexus (Manipura)	Self-esteem, willpower, confidence	Abdomen, digestive system	Ram, Lakini	Fire	Core-strengthening exercises, breathwork, sun meditation	Breath regulation, visualizing a golden light dimming
Heart (Anahata)	Love, compassion, relationships	Heart, lungs, chest	Krishna, Kakini	Air	Heart-opening yoga poses, loving-kindness meditation	Gratitude exercises, visualization of a green light fading
Throat (Vishuddha)	Communication, expression	Throat, neck, mouth	Saraswati, Shakini	Ether	Singing, chanting, neck stretches, speaking truthfully	Closing mouth, silent meditation, sealing with intention
Third Eye (Ajna)	Intuition, insight, imagination	Forehead, eyes, brain	Shiva, Hakini	Light	Meditation, visualization, focusing on the point between eyebrows	Visualization of closing a door, returning to present awareness
Crown (Sahasrara)	Spiritual connection, higher consciousness	Top of the head	Brahman, Sahasrara Devi	Thought	Meditation, prayer, surrender practices	Grounding exercises, slowing down meditation, bringing focus to the body

Here's What Hindus Would Think About Westerners Chakras

The Western interpretation of Chakras often simplifies complex spiritual concepts deeply rooted in Hindu philosophy. Associating Chakras with psychological states and body parts may oversimplify their significance in Hindu spiritual practices. Chakras are multifaceted metaphysical centers, and reducing them solely to psychological or physiological attributes might distort their deeper spiritual meanings.

The most well-known and commonly referenced chakra system in the West is derived from Hindu Tantra and Yoga traditions, particularly from texts like the "Shat Chakra Nirupana" and the "Yoga Upanishads." This system delineates seven main chakras along the central channel of the subtle body, known as the Kundalini system.

Sir John Woodroffe (also known by his pseudonym Arthur Avalon) was a British Orientalist, scholar, and writer who extensively studied Hindu Tantra. He emphasized and popularized the Kundalini-based chakra system in his writings. Woodroffe's works, such as "The Serpent Power" and "The Garland of Letters," extensively discuss and elaborate on the seven chakras, their attributes, symbolism, and practices associated with Kundalini Yoga.

Woodroffe played a significant role in introducing and interpreting Tantra and the chakra system to the Western audience during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. His focus on the Kundalini-based chakra system, its symbolism, and its connection to spiritual awakening and inner transformation has had a lasting impact on how these concepts are perceived and understood in the West. However, it's important to note that his interpretations and emphasis on this particular chakra system are just one among several different interpretations found in the vast landscape of Hindu and yogic traditions.

Deity Associations: The link between Chakras and specific deities in the Western interpretation might be seen as arbitrary or overly generalized. Hindu scriptures depict various deities with multifaceted attributes, and while some deities may have symbolic associations with certain Chakras, the direct correlations depicted in the table could be considered oversimplified or lacking in authenticity.

Elemental Associations: Hindu philosophy often describes elements as fundamental components of the universe and the human experience. While the elements (earth, water, fire, air, ether) are acknowledged in Hindu cosmology, their direct linkage to specific Chakras in the Western interpretation might be viewed as a reductionist approach that oversimplifies the complex interplay of elements within the spiritual context.

Opening and Closing Methods: The prescribed methods for opening and closing Chakras in the Western interpretation might not align with traditional Hindu practices. Hindu spiritual

practices such as meditation, pranayama, mantra chanting, and Kundalini awakening techniques involve a holistic approach that goes beyond mere physical exercises or breathing techniques. The oversimplification of these practices might overlook their spiritual depth and intricacies.

Don't Give It Up Just Because It's False

It's ok to date a model; just don't marry her.

You can drive a car backwards to get to work; that doesn't mean it's the fastest way to get there.

You can believe a lie and still get exactly what you want. It doesn't mean that you're not successful just because you believe in a lie.

If your belief system is working for you...keep it! Don't give it up just because it's false.

You can believe the wrong things with the right heart and still get somewhere.

Don't stop believin'
Hold on to that feelin'
Streetlights, people
- Journey

But don't for a second get seduced into believing that just because a process is productive that the process is also productive for everyone else. It's seductive, I know, to believe that what works for you will work for everyone else.

All models are false, but some are useful. - Box

The Seduction Of Completeness

Chak It up To Certainty-Seeking Behaviour

Just because it makes sense to you doesn't make it right.

It just means it makes sense to you. And sometimes, that's good enough.

When people talk about Chakras, they're most likely talking about the interpretation of Hinduism by Woodroffe, NOT what was written 2000 years ago.

Now, just because something is new doesn't mean it's false, far from it. But, it's important to understand the true lineage of your thoughts. In the absence of knowing the true lineage of your thought, you end up making up stories about how things really are.

Alan Watts. Terrence McKenna. Timothy Leary. Richard Alpert (you probably know him as Ram Dass). These are the Mount Rushmore of Westerners that have done the hard work of translating Buddhism and Hinduism for Californians eager to say Fuck Off Grandpa.

Their teachings are gorgeous because they have the seduction of completeness.

The seduction of completeness is when new ideas fit so well in our current understanding that they MUST BE TRUE.

Most of the West's understanding of Hinduism is from Woodroffe, who published *Serpent Power*. I say published because the book was ghost-written by an Indian Lawyer. What most people don't realize is that Woodroffe didn't translate everything word for word. Rather, the doctrine of the tantras in his writings,

"...emerges as a refined subtle philosophy, its erotic and magic elements either marginalized or reinterpreted in an ethical or rational light..."

What that means is that the translations Woodroffe CHOSE to publish are not the entirety of Hinduism, but rather the interpretations he CHOSE.

Again, I'm not saying to throw away your "knowledge" of the "chakra system." If you want to believe in a reality where the chakra system maps onto the human body in a way that completely and perfectly fits with western medicine and has nothing to do with the Hindu Gods, I'm cool with that.

In fact, I'm not telling you to do anything. Believe in the God of your own understanding. I LOVE RAM DASS, MCKENNA, LEARY & WATTS. But I'm realistic enough to know that there's a limit when it comes to relying on third party translations when it comes to understanding religion.

SECTION THREE: THIS SHOULD MAKE SENSE NOW

St. Augustine's Failed Experiment

Because who doesn't love a good wedding?

You know St. Augustine, right? [nod your head so you don't embarrass yourself] If you ask people what St. Augustine did, they'll tell you that he married Catholicism with Plato's teachings.

St. Augustine, a significant figure in Christian theology and philosophy, lived in the 4th and 5th centuries AD. His philosophical and theological works were heavily influenced by his earlier engagement with the teachings of Plato. However, it's important to clarify that Augustine did not literally "marry" Plato and Catholicism; rather, he merged certain aspects of Platonic philosophy with Catholic Christian thought in his writings.

Augustine was initially attracted to Manichaeism, a dualistic religion that he followed for a time before converting to Christianity. Before his conversion, he encountered various philosophical ideas, including those of Plato. Plato's philosophy, particularly the concept of the Forms (ideal, abstract entities that exist beyond the physical world) and the notion of the immortality of the soul, resonated with Augustine. These Platonic concepts influenced his early thought processes.

After his conversion to Christianity, Augustine sought to reconcile certain philosophical ideas with Christian doctrine. He used Platonic philosophy as a framework to address theological questions, such as the nature of God, the problem of evil, the immortality of the soul, and the concept of divine illumination.

One notable area of influence was Augustine's idea of the existence of eternal truths or forms in the mind of God. Augustine adapted Plato's notion of the Forms to fit within a Christian worldview by suggesting that these eternal truths were in the mind of God rather than existing independently.

However, Augustine also critiqued certain aspects of Platonism, especially its lack of emphasis on God's direct involvement in the world and its understanding of the physical world as

inherently flawed or less important compared to the realm of ideal forms. Augustine's view, informed by his Christian beliefs, emphasized the goodness of the physical world as God's creation.

In summary, Augustine integrated certain elements of Platonic philosophy into his Christian theology, borrowing concepts such as the nature of reality and the immortality of the soul. He attempted to harmonize these philosophical ideas with Christian doctrine, aiming to strengthen Christian thought by using the tools of Platonic philosophy. Nevertheless, he also diverged from Plato in some key areas, emphasizing the importance of God's direct involvement in the world and the goodness of the physical creation, elements central to Catholic Christian teachings.

Don't Take The Words Too Seriously

...where we meet in the silence between the words. - Ram Dass

Ram Dass - one of Steve Jobs' heroes - said it best,

Now, each evening when I'm going to come out to speak, I invariably think of the line from the Tao Te Ching that says, "He who speaks does not know, and he who knows does not speak." And I see the absolutely bizarre humor of my predicament. I realize that I have to be both of those—I have to be that part in me that is not speaking that knows, and the part of me that's speaking that doesn't really know. Hopefully, they're connected.

If you are open to the possibility, let the words merely quiet your minds, and let's meet on the other level where we meet in the silence between the words. We come together to speak about the Unspeakable because the rational analytic mind, the intellect, only knows objects; it only knows what it can think about.

What we come together to talk about are really matters of the heart that are known subjectively, not objectively. They are always hidden from the eyes of the thinking mind. Yet, I'm in the word business, so we just have to take the words very lightly. A very great Mystic poet, Rumi, once said, "I am a sculptor, a molder of form. In every moment, I shape an idol, but then in front of you, I melt them down. I can rouse a hundred forms and mix them with spirit. But when I look into your face, I want to throw them into the fire." The "you" in this case being the Beloved or that higher part of ourselves.

Our minds keep creating realities. We keep creating models of ourselves. We keep creating expectations about the world. We create these forms of clay, and we try to breathe life into them. But the minute you look directly into the eyes of forms, they all seem to dissolve before your eyes, and you're left speechless or heartfelt.

