

Social Engineering, written by Freydis

Psychological Pseudo-Solutions & Causality Confusions

28.08.01 Because of the complexities and individual variances between minds, psychology lacks consistent answers, and consequently the empirical evidence is often lacking. This basically means psychology has more than enough room for the murky realm of authoritative opinions, contradictory interpretations, and pseudo-science (Freud anyone?). But the mind is a critical field of scientific investigation because it pertains to every human endeavor. So the struggle for legitimate answers continues, and this allowance for pseudo-solutions is easily exploited by mystical answer-men, gurus and prophets of the 'new and improved' humanity; just follow the twelve easy steps along with your payment of a few hundred dollars and you too can reach undreamed of levels of personal and corporate success! Yes even a nobody like you can think and act just like the superstars!

The industry of self-improvement is certainly making a few rich and influential, but not the consumer suckers, just the speakers and their publishing companies. So put away those checkbooks and credit cards, skip the seminars and the repetitive multimedia homilies by frumpy old dudes in bad suits bludgeoning the audience with anecdotes, slogans and code-words. Now you the very fortunate reader and Hology adherent get all of their expensive advice for free! And if you act now you'll even get the stuff they don't tell you that actually matters! Here are the first 'code-words': common sense and life-wisdom.

In order to fracture the fallacies within these self-improvement scams we must first critically examine the fundamental values being sold. Think about happiness, success, well-being etc. Do we each have an inner desire for a brand new Japanese SUV with tinted windows and chrome detailing? Are we all born with the desire to be our own bosses in a multi-million dollar business with a biz-jet and half a dozen houses? Hardly. Expectations and perceptions of success beyond survival levels are culturally defined, and in our culture those definitions are provided by the big billboards on the highway, the TV commercials, and the newspaper adverts, that's who!

I wonder how well the positive thinking seminars would go over amongst the homeless beggars of Bangladesh? Yeah don't worry about flooding, starvation and dysentery just think positive, use affirmations and you'll be happy and successful!

Where are we really getting our perceptions of wealth and happiness to begin with? The counterintuitive psychological phenomenon of the modern era is that unhappiness increases relative to the increase in reasons for happiness. Depression and unease are common throughout industrialized societies, yet the reasons for ease and comfort are actually at historical highs. The empirical evidence

consistently contradicts public perceptions. The reason is expectations, because as technology and wealth increases so do the collective demands for comfort, health and safety. Furthermore, media and product marketing are predicated upon creating a sense of unease to stimulate sales, in other words 'you need this product because your life is just incomplete without it, and everyone else has it already and they're doing better than you are!'

The unregulated dominance of consumer marketing over contemporary media is poison for social harmony as well as group and individual mental health, because they form an artificial world, a false idealized universe of perfection which one can only hope to attain through rampant and unmitigated consumerism. Saturation of idealized and impossible role models and unattainable ideals in wealth, happiness, body image, and social status are directly connected to the ill-health of the public. Everything from anorexia, credit card debt, waste, garbage and pollution -- the negative effects of mental pollution directly affect the physical environment. This pressure is even fueling erroneous ideologies and theologies, like radical environmentalism.

A persons sense of well being is largely defined by perceptions and relative values compared to the group average. TV and mass media have supplanted the eyes and ears of the majority, and even their communications capabilities, giving the people a false definition of happiness and affluence. A false world not of their neighbors next door but their fictional, smiling, shiny-faced neighbors with 2.2 children and three new cars on the Hollywood set a thousand miles away. *The relentless advertising culture has made the public self-conscious to the point of psychosis.* Here's a suggestion, maybe the next class action lawsuit should be against advertisers, product marketers and their media whores. A few trillion dollars should just about cover the costs of the therapists for everyone who's spent a sizable fraction of their lives watching television, driving past the endless, unavoidable advertising billboards, or reading magazines.

So you can keep your visualization methods and your positive mental perceptions as long as I can manipulate what you see and hear! Because I can control the limitations of what you know, what you can have, what you think you want, and your ideas of success and happiness. We're dealing with the difference between cognitive engineering, and social engineering.

Cognitive Engineering	Social Engineering
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attempts to design methods of thinking and mental patterns to produce superior human outcome• Person takes cue from other people	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seeks to alter environment to achieve superior human outcome• Behaviorist school• Person takes cue from surroundings• Environment influences choices

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minimizes significance of environmental influences• 'Mind out to surroundings' | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• and beliefs• 'Surroundings into mind' |
|---|--|

The success, if any, that stems from adherence to the precepts of these self-improvement seminars is merely an *altered perception of a pre-existing situation*. In other words the negative situation doesn't change, merely your interpretation of it is rearranged so you focus on the positive aspects instead of the depressing realities and flaws the unenlightened old you so erroneously fixated upon before - the glass goes from being half empty to half full.

Now that's not to negate the importance of visualization because you can't get what you want until you know what *that* is, and the more precisely you visualize the more likely the achievement of that goal. Similarly it's always important to avoid ossified conservatism within creative endeavors as well as remaining optimistic in outlook. The problem is partly the deleterious influence of contemporary scientific researchers that fixate on small discoveries within the narrow scope of their field of research and inflate it into a panacea for that rest of the world they know very little about having never spent any time or effort to study it! But also the environment and institutions with vested interests in limiting visualization to a proscribed range of marketable consumer oriented "answers". No matter how well balanced your attitude or how sharp your own mental powers every person is still fundamentally limited by environmental circumstances. Know *what* you want and *why* you want it because success is conquering environmental *and* mental barriers.

Circumvent the Cycles of Conformity

31.07.01 Positive or negative the quality of the situation matters not; what matters is how one responds to it. In times of decay the public fixates on the negative. Panic and reactionary conduct ensue only creating self fulfilling prophecies of doom. Instead during times of darkness think as the blind do, find the common factors, know the variables and extract the positive from the negative. Don't fear decay, profit from it.

Many erroneously believe that people are a variable, that they can be molded with laws and force. Truthfully, people are closer to a constant, so what changes is the situation and the environment. The surroundings are the variables; the information and the milieu is the variable while human reactions are consistent and predictable. *Throughout the turbulent evolution of the situation never alter the purpose, merely modify the means.*

The Inviolable House of Vice & Virtue

23.05.01 Much of our cultural intake is predicated upon the dichotomy of comparison indulgence, or what used to be called vice and virtue. The public needs vice as an escape from the drudgery and monotony of life. And besides that, the flowers smell a lot sweeter after a hefty whiff 'o the dog-doo. In other words, bad can actually be good when it's used as a yardstick to gauge the superior. Sforzinda, a 15th century Italian city planner, concocted the novel notion of the ten story House of Vice And Virtue that featured a brothel on the ground floor and lecture rooms and academy higher up. Although personally I would reverse the order, the point is society should avoid making the achievement of vice effortless but virtue a challenge. Neither one is separable from the other; they're part of the same building, the same society. More advanced cultures have a mature awareness of this, that vice is integral to normal human behavior as well as being inextricable from society as a whole. They've achieved the elusive conjunction of the sacred and the profane with an effort to achieve balance rather than the sanctimonious asceticism of morality through legislation and police powers.

Opposite this mature attitude is the more primitive, authoritarian, and often religiously-rooted view that vice is to be exorcised like an evil soul-hijacking demon. The Puritan, Biblical comparison is not without merit. Despite the absurdity of the proposition and the wretched results, they try anyway. And yet all this really generates is nothing but hypocritical asceticism and the double-standards so typical of American culture. The list of examples is lengthy, think of alcohol prohibition, the extensive legal restrictions on prescription medication, or even the more recent American Supreme Court decision rejecting the allowance for medicinal marijuana! Yes even a drug as relatively benign as marijuana is evidently far too dangerous to allow the thoroughly irresponsible and foolish American public to consume. But the public has two eyes and a few brain cells to look and see for themselves what's really happening and they see contrary examples. The DEA runs around like a headless chicken, proudly confiscating multi-ton drug shipments every month or so while demand increases and prices drop and few dozen other multi-ton shipments get past them. American's go south to Mexico, or overseas, and get those 'unsafe' prescription medications without (gasp!) a doctor's signed-form without causing havoc! Anymore it seems like the FDA is about as effectual as the FCC, except they use opposite methodologies, nothing goes versus everything goes.

Some places have attempted a different approach, like the legalization of drugs and even heroin in certain cases, to treat addiction without the feared concomitant explosion in abuse by locals. Once again the results contradict the doom saying American government. Or think of European standards on alcohol consumption - common and void of age limits - yet where are the alcoholics? Who chronically drinks to excess? Where are all the drunk drivers? *Legislation creates apparently counter-intuitive results because the equilibrium everything seeks is being forcibly*

distorted.

Yes America has a few rough edges for sure, and simply for entertainment value I don't think living anywhere else would suffice. Well, that and the license to complain. Prescription medication availability is one of my biggest complaints and no I'm not talking about heroin or even marijuana especially, just common pharmaceutical products with the strength to do anything. It's like you just can't get anything besides aspirin without paying a doctor a small fortune to walk in their office and give you the same diagnosis I already gave myself and get a prescription. Why do Americans tolerate being treated like infants when it comes to pharmaceutical medicine? Is it the medical practitioners lobby? Drug companies seeking higher prices? Cultural remnants or the Puritan influence? Probably all of the above, but most damaging is that prevalent fear of vice, or at least the vice of *others*. An immature, paranoid and wholly insecure culture where cognitive dissonance reigns supreme and the public mouths the view that people will abuse every substance they can get a hold of but ignores the contradictory evidence. Of course some will always abuse privileges and substance, that happens everywhere. But I would posit that the more difficult government makes access to such products the more significant the portions of the population will want it if for no other reason than the thrill of breaking the law.

Legislators and authoritarians alike are the paramount fools for they forget this universal rule of physics - every action has a reaction. The greatest gain is through the application of the least amount of force. This demonstrates the problem with using laws to manipulate public morals and behavior; in attempting to compel people to behave legally and morally they inevitably end up being rebellious and amoral. Furthermore no law is any better than the state's ability to enforce it. It's time to put a few people in positions of authority that will exercise some logic and common sense, because then they would realize that the populace will react to the edicts of government in their own best interests, not those of the legislators.

Social Engineering Authority

02.04.05 Any entity that compels cooperation through force, or the threat of force, is inherently unhealthy. The only reason to force compliance is in conjunction with flawed policy and unwelcome legality. In other words if it was something people really wanted, if it was healthy and productive in the first place, it would never require force to compel cooperation! *Thus the immediate conclusion is that all institutions that adhere to the rule of force are worthless and wholly deserving of immediate abolition.*

However, this rule only holds true in a system of free and open information because otherwise the individuals will not be able to know how to act in their best interest.

Memetic Engineering

22.04.01 With a realization of the power memetics, of ideas themselves, comes the insinuation that how one packages the message is far more critical to propagation than the content. The challenge becomes one of crafting effective memes which requires appealing packaging for the most virulent propagation. In a way it's merely propaganda revisited but with a subtle twist because it's now removed from a realm of pure communications and placed into a more powerful realm of sociobiology. Meanwhile, yet another science merges into the whole, the Hology of propaganda, religion, society, biology and culture.

Regardless of the values one places upon such endeavors the inevitability is that it will, and indeed already is, being employed. The best defense is a solid offense based upon secure understanding of the concepts and tools being utilized by righteous and unscrupulous alike.

Many memetic forces already vie for dominance. The primary question is truly how to deal with competition; opposing memes? The simplest way is to reach a wider audience and have superior appeal, overpowering blunt force. That relies upon evolving from already established ideas, in other words to get from point Z from point A requires many gradual steps in between. So the successful meme needs to make sense in that it explains things 'logically' or at least that it fits with what we already know and it must also be simple enough to propagate even through dull minds. Or by corollary it must be able to be explained - it's only as good as the one explaining is smart enough to convey it in simple ways. And if group selection is largely myth, and if individuals can outmaneuver groups by switching sides by cheating, altruism, or what have you, then the best target is not the group but the individual. Alter the beliefs of the individual and you alter the group not the other way around. But to attack is often unwise because it strengthens their resolve and creates martyrs and victims deserving sympathy. One has to take into account emotional responses, altruism, fairness and all related complexity. I think it wiser to attack the ideas rather than the people behind them, especially since a body can change ideas. The battleground is cognitive dissonance in the minds of the audience, i.e. having two opposing ideas in one's mind simultaneously, a situation most seek to absolve themselves of as soon as possible and this requires taking one idea and rejecting the other.

Affairs of the Rabble

Nietzsche: "Religions are affairs of the rabble." Continues from Ecce Homo: "I want no believers; I think I am too malicious to believe in myself; I never speak to masses."

I have a terrible fear that one day I will be pronounced *holy*..."

05.02.01 What's produced by the torturous machinations of contemporary social and technological forces in conjunction with the inexorable river of history? A fusion of known and unknown, the need for religion and science in harmony.

What word can we employ today to describe Nietzsche's philosophy? Nietzscheanism? Doesn't exactly make for a colloquial phrase in the common lexicon, and one wonders if it's fully appropriate. Not only that but the overarching concept, the ultimate goal the studious reader extracts from his works, lends itself more to inward self-contemplation than any collective movement or holistic ideology. Nietzsche wanted to smash the idols, his 'philosophy with a hammer'; the result was very spiritual and individualistic. Not surprisingly Nietzscheanism has languished in the recesses of historical philosophies with few notable exceptions, most of them stemming from abuse rather than any reverent understanding. I mean think about it, here we are at the dawn of the 21st century and the moral landscape is still dominated by the Church? Christian morality is still the source many people turn to for guidance on morality and ethics. Being a insightful scholar or a deep thinker is great, for a start, but it has to go beyond *let's form our elitist discussion salon to self-congratulate ourselves on our ubermenschen comprehension.*

Losing to religious zealots

Livid with emotion I feel that religion still has a death grip on the contemporary mind, I mean most of it has been discredited, but as things get worse I can feel the revival taking over, the fallback, the reversion to old ways I've discussed before. The anti-intellectual reaction is palpable. Intellectuals in fear of religion, the scientists may lose because they can't accept the fact that the average person is not a rationalist but instead operates with emotion and feeling. End-times, anti-technology, anti-progress, reversion factors. Religion will use all the scientific and technological progress against science and researchers making them look like malevolent failures and soon we'll end up back in the dark ages for another millennium!

That's not going to happen on my watch! I'm willing to fight fire with fire, to tread on ground that the intelligentsia fears to tread, the land of new religion. I refuse to let the tele-evangelists and the pastors and the self-serving politicians tear apart everything that our tenuous civilization has built. Instead we're going to take the good, discard the bad eliminate those cultural impediments and move on. And how to compete? Use the same tactics they use.

Furthermore, knowledge and wisdom must be imparted to the world in order to have any permanence and also be of any help (or hurt). Most of the people out there aren't going to have a clue what you're saying because they simply don't operate on an intellectual plane. But neither can we blow them off, they make up the bulk of the population and will for the foreseeable future. I mean evolving into two disparate

species is a potential outcome, but whether it be an HG Wells Time Machine dystopia or the Nietzschean supermen, it simply ceases to have any contemporary relevance except as a spiritual ideal.

Today is where you start, tomorrow is what you hope to achieve.

The point is you aren't going to change anything unless you deal with the constraints of the here and now. I think Nietzsche has unintentionally misguided a significant portion of the dynamic intellectual population and put them into a hopeful, wishful, futurist, and ironically *RELIGIOUS*, mode of thinking. The ubermensch has become a Christ figure, a saviour! A better solution is more Karl Marx and less Friedrich Nietzsche. The cosmic spiritualist meets the pragmatic, economic and political power-planner. Someone that can exist in both realms like a schizoid yet simultaneously sculpt contemporary solutions for mass-comprehension. One foot in the present for the masses and one foot in the future for the intellectuals.

Our technological capabilities have approached the level where these problems can be rationally solved. We now have the ability to manipulate information in order to formulate previously unworkable solutions. From history to archeology to the collected works of millennia of genius thinkers, it's all there. The plethora of problems that plague human civilization aren't without solution, in fact we already have all the answers! The primary problem is enacting what we know needs to be done. And the primary obstacle is fear of change connected to the adherence to outmoded idols. As I stated before the reactionary solution to new problems is reversion to old ways, conservatism, this is the answer that Islam provides to one quarter of the globe. But this really doesn't solve things anymore than sticking your head in the sand does. It merely leads to stifling social rules, brutal laws, violence and misunderstanding. The proper way to deal with new issues is to maturely analyze them and integrate the positive and reject the negative aspects, in other words, *evolution*. Likewise it is more advantageous to everyone to stay free and open to new ideas, but simultaneously that process can only work when the group and the individual have a strong sense of identity, past, present and future purpose, as only then can they properly identify healthy trends and reject dangerous subversions. *That sense of purpose and identify, more so today than ever before, is so critical to survival that it must be guarded more jealously than individual life itself even.*

Fluid Expression

25.08.00 The ideological rainbow never had more colors, or at least for those who take the effort to look for it. From Satanism to socialism ideas abound, yet cynicism is just as rife in modern life. We live in an age of mass-marketing and pinpoint advertising, where psychological warfare and exploitation is a quantifiable and

respectable endeavor. In an age of decaying myths we're pervaded by a subterranean sense that only might makes right and that in love, war, law and politics the end justifies the means. *If idealistic ages breed revolution, cynical and apathetic ones breed authoritarianism.* And alas I may be a product of cynicism as well but I prefer to call it pragmatism, either way I'll describe how the authority trap can be usurped, or at least minimized.

In exploring the interface between authority, revolution, and ideology I first think of the standard German model, the well worn Pavlovian reflex action to counter-legislate unpopular movements out of the body politic, as well as their ideas and their freedom to assemble and proselytize for various excuses, be it for public safety or the maintenance of democracy. But I would postulate that ideas themselves are not unwholesome indeed quite the opposite is needed, the greater the expression of dissenting opinions the greater the security of the society. Neither does this freedom preclude the existence of dictatorship. For true dictatorial power comes not from MICRO-management, as all the authoritarian fools think, but from MACRO-management. Give me the power to manipulate environment and I can build you a dictatorship that openly allows the expression of every idea and belief imaginable, the two are not mutually exclusive. You see this is the fallacy that entraps so many planners of the past and present - that control and order is only possible through the implementation of laws and public obedience to those dictates. Reactionary legislation is like putting the cart before the horse; it's regressive, repressive and leads to economic stagnation. It's fundamentally counterproductive to a harmonious and prosperous society; freedom, fluidity of thoughts, expression, and commerce will uphold it.

Ideas are never bad, ideas themselves don't cause revolution, and neither do the revolutionaries or cadres. Believing that is falling into another foolish trap. No revolutionaries have a prayer without communications mediums and the social milieu necessary for the popular support of their tenets and goals. Communication is critical, but what's even more important is the social environment. Example: the U\$ government lost South Vietnam not because they lacked the firepower or the willpower to win but because they couldn't compete on a personal level with the allegiance of the Vietnamese themselves. GI's torching villages, a corrupt Southern regime, and a pervasive fear of the VC guerrillas who really owned the countryside, consequently the Vietnamese fell like dominoes towards the North's side. The VC/NVA controlled the environment that the average villager existed within to a much greater extent than the South or the U\$ ever did ('they were all "gooks" anyway, right? How can you tell the difference between good and bad guys?!' Or so they thought). It's not hearts and minds, it's hunger and fear! *Terror speaks with a commanding voice.*

At any given historical moment the populace will buy any belief but only if it squares with their interpretation of the world, in other words their weltanschauung, the culmination of their education, morals, ethics, family, friend, and media influences.

These influences are what truly define what they believe and what new ideas they will latch on to; they define the boundary, the sandbox within which they play around with acceptable debate and where belief attachment can occur. *The ideas are not the problem, the proponents of the ideas are not a problem, the sandbox limitations are the problem.* This is how the Church has lasted so long even into the modern 'democratic' era. It has successfully limited the boundaries of acceptable debate thereby minimizing adherence to new ideologies amongst the people. A small minority will always contradict intentionally but we only need to fool most of the people, right? They're inconsequential, the majority will obey because they have no sense or motivation to do otherwise – *they want to be socially accepted and will do just like everyone else does.*

This social environment is a topological construct, so it determines where the masses will travel ideologically speaking. Make a hill and valley and they will inexorably seek the path of least resistance, rolling down the slope and smoothly channeling onward through the valley floor. Social engineering is the process of building and shaping this topography using tools that are the equivalent of earth-movers and surveying equipment. These tools are variegated and profuse but primarily consist of media - the eyes and ears of the masses, along with schools which educate and form the boundaries of the ideological sandbox. Church and religion further define the boundaries via morality. The economic system defines satiation and desire for change; unemployment and hunger are strong motivations for political revolution. One factor that's difficult to change rapidly is ethnic historical and cultural accumulation, something slightly foreign to Americans but clear to, say, any Frenchman. This is like the bedrock -- it can be altered with dynamite but it's usually easier to just work around it.

Interpreting and administering polity as a whole is the only way to maintain a cohesive society anymore, all else is chaos. Revolution starts with education, accelerates with communications, and coalesces with leadership and organization. It makes for a lengthy process true, but time is a small price to pay for success.

Social Engineering in Perspective

10.12.96 One might think that the world we live in is as good as it can be for now, meaning that the forces of biology, society, and politics are all balanced in a harmonious web. But is this really true?

Human evolution (diseases included) has progressed beyond the impediment of being confined, and second, with a fantastic ability to reason and make tools our species has the duty to self improve using our skills and technology. Social engineering needs a place in legitimate scientific discourse. Making the web of natural environment, economy, politics and genetics function more harmoniously.

This is no longer a utopian mental exercise but a prerequisite for survival. Social engineering is modern reality and is being conducted on primitive levels even as I write this.

By force or persuasion societies leaders must take responsibility for their true duties of collective improvement. This may take a while because today this holistic science of human evolution has not fully developed. Today scientists are just realizing that humanity and natural surroundings play an intricate role together, both worthy of preservation. Eventually economics, politics, culture in general will be integrated into a biological meta-science of human development.

Beyond scientific foundation real social engineering requires a sizeable population a sufficiently large geography and political economic structure for change to be implemented. Serious psychological adjustment needs to be made by the population too because primitive factional societies rarely allow radical, or even common sense, changes to be made without force or struggle. We need to evolve socially to the point where dictatorships become obsolete, unnecessary. Some cultures are more prepared for this change than others.

Maybe in a hundred years Europe will have developed a structural system for natural social evolution. The outlook for fratricidal America is more faint and virtually impossible without force. It's somewhat of a paradox that social engineering works best within a peaceful and sympathetic civilization, not one controlled by guns and police forces. The European union is developing the political and economic infrastructure but is somewhat limited by a small geographic biosphere given the size of the population. Maybe if Russia was included in the European Union, that would be fantastic opportunity but very difficult to implement given the lack of modern development in that part of the world.

Our historical evolution has been an epic saga of asymmetrical development. We have the technology but not the social structure or cultural advancement to deal with the consequences and horrendous capabilities associated with that technology. We're babies playing with loaded pistols and vials of anthrax, not-so-figuratively speaking.

Do we really need to worry about finding other sentient life in the universe? Some think that would bring humanity together in some kind of new era of peace and progress. But really what kind of catalyst could aliens provide that we have not already built ourselves? We could annihilate our Earth with nuclear weapons, engineer disease and vaporize those left with directed energy weapons. Soon we will be able to go the next step higher from X-ray lasers and build gamma-ray lasers capable of destroying stars, what then? Is it possible to have a more blatant force compelling us towards collective development than Earthly annihilation? Perhaps a great artificial-induced calamity is necessary for us to realize our own biological mortality and the desperate need for controlled social engineering. But could we

survive from such an event?

Another paradox is thus expressed because our group existence as an advanced collective is so tenuous. A disaster may be necessary to 'wake up' everyone but it could as easily destroy the delicate framework of technology which has taken millennia to create and is so critical to our everyday lives.

We are group derived beings with group traits perpetuated by individuals. There is no room for denial or ignorance anymore. Our civilization cannot be allowed to fail as none of us will have a second chance after a dark age because we've exploited our global resource base to the point where only advanced technology can exploit what's left. No, we can't give up or hope for brighter ones to save us later. Only one generation exists between the stars and oblivion. Rational social engineering is critical to group survival.

The Social Engineering creed: Never take by force what one can gain through guile.

"Part of the art of being an innovative theorist is to discern what are temporary difficulties born of the simple prototype model one is creating and what are fatal diseases endemic to any theory of the sort being proposed." - John D. Barrow

