Cats are as closely connected with memes in the internet world as they are with meows, and they appear to spread like wildfire with the same carelessness and nonchalance that they do with their other favorite activities, like chewing on catnip or napping. But dogs aren't as common online as they are offline. Why cats then?

Well, autonomy might play a role in it. Cats, as opposed to dogs, came to us on their own and, at least to some extent, trained themselves. Dogs, on the other hand, were domesticated by humans thousands of years ago. Even now, especially online, this feline propensity for independence is still noticeable.

Cat memes, on the other hand, are adorable and entertaining because they depict strange and unexpected behaviors. Dog memes frequently show off training and discipline accomplishments.

So why do we find this online uncontrollability so alluring?

It's very legitimate to worry in today's modern society that we are losing our autonomy or that we are always being influenced, or, to put it another way, that we are turning into dogs instead of cats.

In the internet environment, these chapters discuss how to foster feline independence and prevent canine reliance. They educate you on how powerful corporations like Youtube and Twitter are always exploiting you and serve as a passionate argument for canceling your accounts on social networks.

These chapters will also teach you

- why social networking is a trap;
- why unpredictability is more reliable; and
- why Silicon Valley youngsters choose Waldorf colleges.

Chapter 1 - Argument 1: You can be manipulated by social media, endangering your ability to exercise your autonomy.

You might not be aware of it, yet you are confined. Even though the cage is tiny and can easily fit in your purse, there is still enough room inside to enter.

Furthermore, while you are in this cage, you are being observed, controlled, and examined just like a scientific creature.

Just take into account the facts if the above seems a little paranoid. The cage is probably a smartphone, which almost everyone owns. Naturally, you aren't physically confined within, but every time people utilize it to access social media, algorithms—not experts in lab coats—are monitoring and controlling you.

The information that these algorithms have gathered about you—such as when you check in, how long you remain signed in for, and what you purchase—is subsequently based upon the information of thousands of many other individuals. This makes it possible for the systems to forecast your behavior.

How? What if an algorithm discovered, after analyzing a ton of data, that individuals who consume the same foods as you discover a certain presidential figure less attractive while her image is framed in yellow as opposed to blue?

It might not sound like a shocking or evil finding, but imagine if the campaign staff for this politician gets a hold of that knowledge. According to statistics, you are more inclined to support her when marketers offer you political advertising with her blue-bordered image.

Social media corporations are also free to sell your information without any remorse. You are their product; you are not their client.

Their customers are advertisers or businesses who purchase your personal information to use it to influence your purchasing decisions or political voting. This, in the writer's mind, amounts to outright behavior modification.

Marketing has historically been deceptive, but it has only lately become possible for ads to be customized according to your specific tastes and internet habits. This customization is not 100% precise and just has an agency. You might not like green like the majority of individuals who have a diet related to yours, so you wouldn't vote for the politician with the green border.

However, numerical impacts are trustworthy when applied to the full population. Therefore, the likelihood that you have been misled is higher than not.

Chapter 2 - Addiction is built into social media networks.

If you were a kid, you might get a chocolate bar right away anytime you said "please." Naturally, this would cause you to ask for things very frequently.

Imagine if occasionally asking for the sweet you want doesn't work. Do you anticipate using the word "please" more or less frequently in light of this sporadic failure?

Although it might appear contradictory - after all, why engage in an action if it doesn't result in the intended outcome? - According to a study, you would likely begin thanking people more frequently.

This phenomenon, which is valid including both people and animals, was first identified by behaviorists decades ago. Data that is somewhat inaccurate is frequently more appealing than data that is 100% dependable.

Social media, as we are all aware, strives to maintain our attention, and they accomplish this by making use of this behaviorist insight.

Sean Parker, the founding president of Facebook, referred to it as a "feedback loop for social validation." An individual may occasionally, but not always, enjoy your posting or image. People become dependent on this aspect of unpredictability.

Additionally, social networking engines frequently include some randomization as well. These algorithms, which go by the name of adaptive algorithms, are always changing to be more interesting.

How adaptable are these algorithms? Let's imagine an algorithm displays an advertisement to you a second following you view a cute cat video. This approach will occasionally run a quick test. For example, it might do this to see if showing the advertisement after the movie increases your likelihood of purchasing the advertised product.

The ad may be displayed to you for three and a half seconds if the first two and a half seconds weren't successful in getting you to make a purchase. However, what if neither of these options works?

The algorithm occasionally performs a jump to prevent hitting a wall at three seconds. It will attempt to wait, say, one or five seconds. The program never stops evolving thanks to this randomness.

And much like sporadic social cues, algorithmic uncertainty similarly adds to the addictive nature of social media. Silicon Valley parents send their kids to Waldorf colleges, where gadgets are typically not allowed, because social media is so seductive.

Addiction can lead to a certain type of madness, that may cause you to become disconnected from the individuals and environment around you. We are all becoming hooked as a result of social media.

Chapter 3 - Argument 2: The digital marketing model is overly intrusive and risky.

Lead was once an ingredient in house paint, but over time, the proof of its risks became overwhelming. Despite this, there was no widespread protest against individuals holding up their homes. Rather, lead-based paints stopped being used as the norm marked a series of opposition and agitation.

We ought to use a similar strategy when using social media. We are not required to ban the internet, cell phones, or digital socializing; doing so would be equivalent to outlawing home painting as opposed to outlawing a certain type of home paint.

The author uses the term BUMMER to describe the dominating economic model of social media, which we need to eliminate.

BUMMER is an acronym that stands for Behaviours of Users Modified & Molded through an Empire for Rent. Imagine that it is a device that alters our behavior, gathers information about us, and then makes money by selling it to advertising.

Since the information gathered by BUMMER's methods is statistical, it cannot be used to predict with precision what a specific individual would do or like. However, it can almost certainly predict what the majority of individuals choose to do or prefer.

Six parts make up the BUMMER system:

A - Asshole supremacy through attention acquisition. In essence, this signifies that social networking is set up such that the obnoxious, loudest users attract the most notice.

B - Interfering with each other's affairs. As previously noted, BUMMER businesses pry into people's life by monitoring their online behavior.

C: Shoving information down everyone's throats. Users of social media are inundated with tailored content all the time. Consider your Facebook news feed, for example.

D - Subtly influencing other people's conduct. On social media, algorithms influence your behavior and persuade you to do things like provisions.

E - Getting paid to let the most reprehensible assholes discreetly manipulate everyone else. Companies that sell user data to advertising as well as other 3rd parties do so to generate revenue. They occasionally share information with shady bad actors, like the Russian state services, who use it to manipulate individuals.

F - Fake society and Fake mobs. Online, a huge portion of "people" are bots, which adds to the general artificiality of society.

Facebook and Google are the only two American businesses that fully utilize the BUMMER marketing strategy and hence contain the following six among its features. Some of these elements may be present in other businesses, including Wikipedia and eBay, but not each of them.

It's critical to keep in mind that no one technology is solely responsible for the problems facing society today. The BUMMER marketing strategy's reliance on deceiving individuals who employ technology is the problem.

Therefore, keep in mind that you don't need to stop using your smartphone or going to your favorite websites, just like people didn't have to cease painting homes. You should quit utilizing BUMMER services, please!

Chapter 4 - Argument 3: Social network has the power to make individuals jerks.

Many people believe that you should pick your potential mate depending on how you behave around them. This pearl of knowledge, however, applies to technology as well as partnerships.

Social networking can promote scumbag conduct. On social media, insulting posts, patronizing remarks, and trolling are all fairly prevalent. Even during the mid-1970s, while social networking was still in its infancy, the author saw that his behavior increased when he employed it.

There weren't any analytically personalized feeds or up/down voting. However, the writer could frequently find himself in contentious online debates over irrelevant topics, such as which person understood more about different brands of pianos.

People frequently fall victim to the competition for reputation and approval on social media. Here is where factor A of the BUMMER digital marketing—Attention Capture Resulting in Asshole Supremacy—comes into play. Sadly, the greatest assholes frequently receive the most notice, which has a domino effect: more individuals are compelled to grow up and act more like assholes.

What causes this to occur? According to the author's theory, every one of us has a switch inside of us that may have been turned to either the lonely or group mode.

Despite being more careful, individuals are more creative and uninhibited when they are alone. Due to their lack of concern for where they fall in the hierarchical order, they often seem to be friendlier.

When social status concerns take precedence above all other considerations, people shift into pack mode.

Consider the influential politicians and entrepreneurs who contest the reality of climate crisis, for example. They have gone into full-pack mode. They believe that climate change research is a cunning scheme intended to strip them of their own money and influence, which are the things that grant them status in society within their "gang," since they are so preoccupied with these things.

Because social acknowledgment and social status are the only things that count on social networks, it pushes us to stay in group mode. This leads to a statistical movement in society as a whole toward acting more like an asshole since, broadly speaking, the more offensive and wrathful a post is, the more notice it garners.

There are other models available! For example, LinkedIn approaches it uniquely. There, career success takes precedence above social posing, and individuals there typically behave better.

Chapter 5 - Argument 4: Social network helps spread false information on a large scale.

In real life and online, other people frequently influence our decisions. Need a trustworthy medical professional? You'll probably use Google to search for information and compare reviews. You're looking for a hilarious clip to view. Most likely, you'll choose the one with the most views.

But consider this: Due to bogus persons, that doctor appeared highly in your search queries and that clip has had a lot of views.

The term "fake" does not imply "superficial." When we say fake, we take it literally. Online, fake individuals are commonplace. Although their profiles may appear genuine at first, fake-people manufacturers, or businesses that offer phony followers for money, actually control the accounts.

For instance, a New York Times piece from the beginning of 2018 claimed that the average cost of 20,000 phony Twitter followers was $225.

Services like Ashley Madison, where users can allegedly meet adulterous people and plan an affair, arguably could not function at all without phony people. It has been claimed that the website employed fictitious ladies to persuade users to buy more expensive profiles.

Here is where factor F—Fake crowds and Faker community—comes into play since fakeness is a problem for people outside of the BUMMER community as well because it distorts the truth there as well.

For example, BUMMER frequently produces the craziest conspiracies. This occurs because BUMMER sites are all about gaining attention and spreading paranoia and ludicrous notions is a great way to do so.

Fake news, sensationalism, and memes are just a few of the various ways that conspiracy theories are disseminated. The bots behind the bogus accounts also take up these stories, links, and memes in BUMMER's echo chambers, where they are loudly amplified.

Just think about getting shots. Without vaccines, we would still be suffering from diseases that now seem like relics of a past era. Vaccines have saved innumerable lives. However, some parents choose not to get their kids vaccinated despite the immeasurable benefit that vaccines represent.

They have been persuaded by BUMMER's paranoia-inspiring phony stories, hashtags, and advertising to believe that vaccinations are bad and hazardous and that they result in autism, among other absurd assertions.

This is terrifying. More clever people are basing their ideas on information spread by people who don't exist, which puts more kids in danger of dying from diseases that we ought to no longer be concerned about.

Chapter 6 - Arguments 5 and 6: Social network makes us less empathetic and pits people against one another.

Fire!

In a busy facility, uttering this ominous monosyllable might have deadly results. It could start a stampede, which could result in fatalities. Conversely, if you say it as soon as you see flames shooting out of an occupied car's engine, you just may save the driver.

Context is crucial. It does not just dictate the outcomes of a particular statement, but it also gives that statement meaning. In addition to indicating the firing of a weapon, shouting "Fire!" can also indicate that you think a piece of certain music is hot.

Depending on the situation, we constantly modify our language and delivery. If you were speaking to a class of children, you wouldn't employ the exact manner or candor that you would while you were having a romantic meal with your partner.

BUMMER alters context, or more precisely, it places individuals into its context. Numbers that represent the input you've supplied to the BUMMER system are crucial to the context of BUMMER. How many people have liked your posts? How many people follow you? On BUMMER platforms, these measurements come to symbolize the person you are.

As a result, individuals will go to great lengths, including using other people's comments in silly settings, to increase their numbers. Also, keep in mind that numerous of these "individuals" aren't human.

Not only does this render worthless anything you post online, but it also demonstrates how superficial civilization is.

BUMMER encourages safe behavior by placing a premium on gaining more likes, views, and followers. Numerous reporters have been forced to sacrifice comfort on the temple of traffic optimization to thrive in this atmosphere, rendering their labor almost as useless as any other form of internet sensationalism.

Empathy is also damaged by the absence of a framework. Even so, you can't have sympathy for someone if you can't comprehend them.

Herein lies the role of item C: forcing information down the throats of individuals. On BUMMER systems, everyone's feed appears differently due to algorithmic customization.

Content that has been specially crafted for each of us is being fed to us. The inability to comprehend those who have encountered different stuff results from this.

Imagine being present in a setting where everyone is using their phones. It's impossible to pinpoint the cause of someone's sudden anger or sadness. You can assume that they read or saw something disturbing, yet you can't be certain of what it was.

Online, it constantly works like this. Because BUMMER strips us of our one shared experience with tailored feeds, we appear crazy to one another.

Chapter 7 - Argument 7: Social media thrives on unfavorable feelings.

Living in a society devoid of meaning or sympathy is a surefire way to be unhappy. However, BUMMER businesses also take away other aspects of your enjoyment.

Inevitably, social networking networks set absurdly high expectations for appearance and social position. After all, every individual on that social network will be what you're comparing yourself to while you're online, not just your friends or your coworkers. Furthermore, you are probably not the most attractive or successful person around.

In essence, Facebook researchers practically bragged about their capacity to inflict unhappiness on their targets without the latter being aware of it.

Why brag about something like that? Remember that Facebook's people are indeed the product, thus the capacity to influence users—whether favorably or unfavorably—will inevitably attract Facebook's actual customers, the marketers whose objective is to influence potential customers to purchase their goods.

Naturally, Facebook highlights the good it is bringing to the world, including the social connections and international network it has enabled. However, there is no reason why these clear advantages could not emerge without the unmistakable drawbacks enforced by BUMMER. When you could maybe just connect online without being tricked, why would you accept that your actions are monitored and your information traded in return for social contact?

One of the reasons for this is because BUMMER is the sole game available in the area. Although we may be aware of the negative effects of social media, we nevertheless use it to engage in competition because we are competitive and strive to attract the most followers or post the most interesting information. After all, it appears like everyone else is doing it as well.

However, competing with everyone else—which is basically about everyone—is a definite thing to ruin, so believing that you lost is another cause for discontentment.

BUMMER services need you to be miserable. After all, you wouldn't interact with BUMMER unless you were happy and simply hanging out with buddies in the everyday world. However, if you're continuously feeling insecure and nervous, you will become more inclined to feed the BUMMER system by, for instance, clicking to view the number of likes your photo has received. It makes you dependent and allows BUMMER businesses to reap ever-increasing revenues.

Chapter 8 - Argument 8: The things you give up for free are what social media businesses use to generate a bunch of costs.

You have probably been told that many positions will soon be mechanized, making individuals who currently hold them obsolete.

Just consider translators as an example. Nowadays, people frequently utilize appropriate translation tools like Google Translate rather than hiring a professional translator. Although such equipment is frequently referred to as "smart," this only uses data that Google collects from users.

Google's computers aggregate untold billions of translations produced by actual individuals each day. A poem might be translated from French to German for a colleague using Google Docs. Since Google is free to utilize any data you submit on a BUMMER platform, it can employ that transcription to improve its algorithms.

To put it another way, BUMMER businesses fail to compensate people for their contributions, much alone the data they supply, even as they warn that individuals will eventually be replaced by machines. Or, to put it more crudely, the BUMMER engine makes people more financially vulnerable.

The BUMMER marketing strategy should be changed, which is the most obvious option.

This is not inconceivable in any way. Ted Nelson, a forerunner in the field of information technology, put up a plan in the 1960s that would allow users to send and receive small payments in exchange for access to material on a digital network.

The individuals who made the greatest contributions to the architecture of the internet, however, rejected this concept. These individuals advocated that technology ought to be public and available, which ultimately resulted in the commercial marketing strategy used by BUMMER.

Because Google and Facebook were initially attractive since they were free, these businesses were able to expand so quickly. But by opening a Google or Facebook page, we gave our consent to be watched and gave up ownership of the stuff we create when using their platforms. The trade made was not wise.

Making consumers pay a little monthly fee for the material they use would be the greatest way to undo the harm. Given that the utilities are now free, this can sound negative. However, users would be capable of earning money from contributions in addition to paying.

Chapter 9 - Argument 9: Social networks have a harmful influence on the government environment.

People in democratic nations are more prone to trust in progress. For instance, they do not believe that the nation in which they currently reside would stop being democratic; instead, people view democracy as the cornerstone for several additional advantageous advancements.

BUMMER is also altering this, though. As follows:

The initial users of a novel social networking site are typically hip, educated, and youthful people who genuinely want to transform society. Although they work to change things for the better, BUMMER is keeping track of their routines, deeds, and loves and dislikes. Simply put, it is what BUMMER systems achieve.

These youthful idealists are adversely affected by this. They are herded together, which makes it feasible to bombard people with information that, based on statistics, is likely to cause people a little less forgiving or impatient.

Or, to put it another way, it divides them and feeds tribalism.

Here is a concrete illustration:

There were significant LGBTQ victories in the US in the decades before the 2016 presidential election. As same-sex marriage became legal, trans persons were more accepted and felt more at ease coming out. Without a doubt, social media played a role in these advances.

BUMMER, however, has a propensity towards asshole conduct, as you will recall. Once the jerks themselves realized this, they started spreading hate speech online that was specifically directed at LGBTQ individuals.

For the first time in ages, these views were unexpectedly more tolerable. And now, those the author describes as "remarkably violent anti-LGBTQ personalities" have indeed been elevated to the highest positions of government in the United States.

This election system will go on as long as BUMMER remains in power. When an idealistic, upbeat movement starts to take shape, it will become a targetable demographic that the

biggest assholes in the world can control and harass. To put it another way, the election system will be hampered once BUMMER is in office.

Chapter 10 - Argument 10: Digital networks represent a fresh conceptual structure that reduces people to "hackable" objects.

It is indeed fair to equate utilizing BUMMER products to becoming caged and to compare BUMMER businesses to cognitive psychologists who monitor and influence your behavior all the time. This contrast, however, falls short of expressing the scope of such BUMMER phenomena.

In the end, society as a whole is being misled, not simply a select group of individuals in a small number of isolated research.

BUMMER and religion are similar in this regard. It is a structured system that affects and directs a sizable portion of the global populace in covert and overt ways.

Consequently, utilizing BUMMER is equivalent to embracing, in the author's mind, "a new spiritual structure."

The most enigmatic and important concerns facing humanity are attempted to be answered by spiritual practices. Why are we here? What is the point of life? What happens when we die? Asking these questions, which are outside the scope of science, is part of what distinguishes us as humans.

These questions have a comprehensive and straightforward response from BUMMER: life's goal is optimization.

Part of Google's purpose is to arrange the world's data. This means "arrange all reality" in Silicon Valley since, in the world of technology, information equals real things. However, individuals on social media are constantly battling to improve their online visibility by appearing higher in search results or creating films that are easy to view. This ethos excludes all notions of spirituality and unfathomable wonder.

Both the mind and the body are essential things that will inevitably be compromised. The structure of enhancement provided by BUMMER has thus replaced the previous spiritual framework.

Society's belief in the uniqueness of humans is threatened by this theoretical framework. It equalizes them with almost everything, including software packages, machines, and other devices that can be optimized. It destroys our spirits, in other words.

BUMMER not just violates your privacy and dignity, but it also robs you of a fully realized episode that is individuality. As in the BUMMER universe, all that exists of you is a collection

of automated process acts and behaviors, the total of your likes and comments on your postings.

Delete your accounts if you desire to regain your soul.

Ten Arguments For Deleting Your Social Media Accounts Right Now by Jaron Lanier Book Review

Browsing social networking sites is similar to being caged in a scientist's lab since you are always being observed, scrutinized, and controlled. BUMMER, the business strategy used by the social corporate entities that are monitoring you, is the root of the issue instead of any specific system. This marketing strategy is based on providing your information to marketers who want to influence your behavior and persuade you to make a purchase. It also promotes asshole behavior, robs individuals of their financial dignity, stifles democracy, and diminishes our understanding of what it means to be human. Until a better system is developed, you should deactivate your social network accounts.

Get away from BUMMER for a while.

You've probably had some positive social media experiences, so you may not wish to remove your accounts. Consider giving yourself a break for, perhaps, a week or indeed a month and watch your feelings. Until you take a vacation from BUMMER, it might not be clear how dependent you have gotten on social networks and the negative effects it is indeed holding on you.

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