Why
Curiousity is the Harbinger of Revolution

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In a discussion on Infoshop.org recently I was reminded of an experiment an Indian physicist did. What he did was put a PC in a wall in the slums of New Delhi, and watched what happened. What happened, perhaps unintuitively, was one of the most remarkable insights into the human psyche. As the experiment played out the physicist noticed who made the most use out of the computer, and then noted the behavior of the people who used it.

The results, were amazing. Ghetto children, aged 6-12, would make most use of the PC, to the point of being able to browse the internet, download music, draw, and teach themselves English. No outside assistance. No outside guidance. They just did it.

Human beings are curious creatures. There are few things one could say are ”natural” tendencies. After all, our societies have existed in a similar state for as long as historical record goes back, and we can see that while many of them are similar, there’s nothing innate to all human societies as a whole. You look at the feral children which we have discovered, and it becomes obvious that

the ”natural” tendencies of the human are quite small. But I posit that curiosity is one of them.

There are certain ideologies within the movement which are anti-curiosity. They beg to create a form of mysticism to declare away the universe and how it operates, in order to ”fulfill” that innate desire to understand how things work. The Church kept people from reading for hundreds of years, if not thousands (too lazy to check). And rightly so, as we have seen that with the dissemination of knowledge the power of the Church has become increasingly weak. If you read the link I provided, we can see children walking up to this completely foreign object, moving a mouse around, and determining how things ”work” within the confines of that system. There needn’t be someone there telling them to click this or that, or to open this or that or how to do this or that. They simply *learn*. The human mind is inherently a pattern recognition engine, this is pretty much the consensus within neural research. It soaks them up, patterns, that is. So once you understand this, it isn’t so remarkable that some street children in New Delhi could walk up to a computer and figure out how it works.

But I believe the state wants to suppress our curiosity, and indeed, our expression of that curiosity. It wants to keep us simplistic beings incapable of understanding anything more than being drones doing whatever specialized job it has shoved down our throats. Not in any sort of nefarious, covert, evil way, just part of a self-perpetuating system of, well, irrationality. It feeds us irrational religion, irrational mysticism, irrational consumerism, to the point that we are incapable of actually understanding our world, and indeed, not desiring to understand our world because that innate curiosity is fulfilled. I’ve made mention before, of the whole ”restless legs syndrome” pill that they have out now. It came to my attention because I actually do get fidgety at night and kick my legs around a bit, but it subsides after awhile and I have control over it. I don’t really need a fucking pill. But the commercials that one who is afflicted by this habitual practice are happy to explain that they affect

sive specialization; someone wrote a book designing how to make steam engines and other machines, and, well, I made it 20-30 years later). It's a simple smelting process, and a smelt can be made of rudimentary materials. Quite literally the difference between industrial age, and primitivism is several thousand years of knowledge, nothing more. You could put me in the middle of a forest by a river, and I could come out of that forest with a steam powered boat in a few years at most. This idea of the self-contained technology, the self-describing, self iterating technology is far better than that of the technologies which capitalists own and produce. Their technologies are based on the impossible levels of academia required to understand it, and they make no efforts to make that technology known to anyone, because it would be disastrous to their profitability. If anyone could make anything, then, well, there'd be no need for insane production lines where people slave away making worthless bits of plastic.

Proprietarianism is the bane to curiosity.

the motorcortex neurons so that you can sleep at night. But that's utter fucking gobbledy gook. It makes no sense. I no more understand what those commercials are talking about than I understand how rockets work. Actually, I know more about rockets than the crap such commercials attempt to explain away in the 30 second spot it has to do so. What we're faced with in everyday life is the suppression, and indeed, theft of our curiosity. A world inundated with work, with hierarchical structures, and property make this the case. Though I'm struggling here to explain exactly why this is the case.

One example might be the TV. A TV costs a bit of money and taking one apart and trying to figure out how it works is a task in futility, you'd lose yourself in the jumble of specialized technologies that exist within one. The cost of entry dissuades you from actually taking one apart, and once you do so the complexity related to the technology is essentially beyond you, with the information related to that technology bound up in patents, and electronics documentation that only higher education could give you, which is in itself a costly process. It's not like some evil thing, it's just how things are. Capitalism perpetuates these systems, to its own benefit. This is why I envision a world where you could tear apart a TV, without worrying about the entry fee, and having access to the design documents that make up the whole of that TV. I was a kid and I took apart several Tvs. Naturally I never figured out how they worked, though I understood the basic watered down principles that are explained to you to suppress your desire to actually, truly, understand. I remember getting cut very badly on one tube I'd taken apart, and freaking out because I thought that it had "radioactive particles" inside. The bits in the tube are poisonous, but I don't think they're radioactive (actually I'm pretty sure they're not to any significantly measurable extent). I just gleaned that from the typical "warning! X-ray radiation risk" sticker that is pasted to every CRT tube that's out there.

If it is hard for me to figure something out, then I probably won't even attempt to try. I think this goes for many people. If I'm dissuaded from understanding how one simple thing works, if not by the complicated specialized technologies in it, but by the lack of information related to it, it becomes a task in futility. Why waste my time learning something that capitalism has locked up in boxes, keeping me from ever understanding it? And I'm not talking about academic manuals that "show you" in highly convoluted language requiring years of education to understand, I'm talking about those kids in New Delhi. They learned how to operate a computer because computer GUI systems are learnable through observation, trial and error, curiosity. Thus I would want my documentation to make that TV in such a simple to understand form that all technology related to TVs could be self-described and understood. I don't need to know how that IC component works to understand that it goes in a certain place, but I'd want the ability to see how that IC works in any case. Capitalism, capitalist science, and capitalist technology is rooted on this higher educational learning system, which is why the entry requirements are so impossibly high for most people. It isn't that technology cannot be simplified and understood by anyone, it's that capitalists have insured that those who use technology cannot understand it without it being difficult to understand. It is the status quo, inherently. Academic language, proprietary information. If information were free there would be no way to profit from it.

I envision a world where ALLogy (and information in general) is freely accessible in this way. No barriers to understanding, you could sit down, and even if it took you a few days, you could go over the design documents of a given technology and learn how it worked to the very minute details of electronic circuitry. Self-describing technologies, that require little more than a simple manual that can be played with, just like those children in New Delhi played with their GUI system, to the point of teaching themselves a foreign language. Instead of an LCD being described as lots of

chemical reactions and lots of convoluted mathematical constructs to get there using arbitrary element tables, it could be described in concise glyphs for each level you operate. The first glyph being representative of "LCD." Click on this, and then expand, and then you get the constituent parts of that LCD. Each part being composed of even still a more simple component. If you want to make an LCD, you just go to some place where they are made, and press a few buttons, and voila, you have one. If you want to understand how that LCD operates, you play with that simple GUI until you have determined how it works and how it is manufactured. Then you can go to that place where LCDs are made and have a bit of common understanding with those there who have simplified the manufacturing process to the point of pressing that button.

People act as if technology is beyond the grasp of a given human being, that without this large swarm of specialized individuals working together for a common goal, it couldn't exist. I don't believe that this is the case, at least, with regards to the "working together" part. Of course I must admit that specialization is necessary for a given bit of information to come into existence, but I believe that this can be a gradual process, and as long as the information of others is contained, then it lives on in other individuals. I call this passive specialization, that is, it doesn't exist at any one point in time, nor does it have any capacity for coercion or manipulation. If someone writes about some observation or something that they've made, and you read about it months later and make it, there's no issue. However, if someone is making something, and they require you to contribute back, then you're stuck on a factory line somewhere. The technology I am discussing here does not require anyone on any part of the chain of production.

I had a thought experiment on the Infoshop.org forums before I stopped posting there again. Basically, I believed I could make a steam engine simply by being dropped in the middle of a forest somewhere. And I still believe that to this day. I have made a Gingergy Machine (which I should note is the prime example of pas-