

# **A Nietzschean Analysis of Cybercrime and Deviance.**

**by**

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment for the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Central Lancashire

March 2020

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to thank my supervisors Dr Terry Hopton, Dr Mahmood Chandia and especially Dr Tim Owen for their advice and guidance during this research project. I would like to thank Dr Owen for his dedication, unending inspiration and wise counsel. I could not have achieved this without your enthusiasm and support.

I would also like to thank my wife, Joanne who is the rock in my life. She keeps me grounded and I am constantly inspired by her kindness and support. I could never have completed this project without you.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this work to the memory of my sister Nina. She was taken from us very suddenly and is missed every day. I know she would have been proud to see this work finished. This thesis is for her.

## ABSTRACT

The intention of this thesis is to examine various types of online deviance, such as ‘trolling’ and other forms of cyber bullying with special attention paid to the deviance which occurs on social networking sites and peer-2-peer file sharing websites.

The central claim of this thesis is that deviant behaviour can be influenced (encouraged, magnified) by ‘*ressentiment*’, which can reside within the individual. This ‘*ressentiment*’ forms part of a complex array of situational factors called ‘*Flexible Causal Prediction*’, whereby individuals may experience a particularly strong influence on behaviour but are not predetermined to act in certain ways. In this thesis the author uses Nietzsche’s philosophical notions of ‘*Nihilism*’, ‘*Slave Morality*’, ‘*ressentiment*’, ‘*Will to Power*’ and the ‘*Übermensch*’ to build an existential picture of deviant behaviour.

The author also draws upon the criminological/sociological notions of ‘*Drift*’, ‘*Master Status*’ and the ‘*Techniques of Neutralisation*’ (Sykes and Matza 1957) to introduce the new concepts of ‘*Flexible Causal Prediction*’ (previously referred to as ‘*Causal Probability*’); and the idea of ‘*Situational Influences*’. This undertaking is done with the intention of building upon the Meta-theoretical work of Owen (2007 – 2015), which seeks to build bridges between the social and physical sciences. The theory of ‘*Flexible Causal Prediction*’ is also applied to the deviant activities of internet trolling and anti-social behaviours to demonstrate the influences on behaviour.

Nietzsche’s philosophical notion of ‘*Slave Morality*’ and ‘*ressentiment*’ will also be extended when looking at some radical social justice movements, such as ‘AntiFa’, ‘Black Lives Matter’ and the ‘#MeToo’ movement to demonstrate the role that ‘*ressentiment*’ may play in behavioural choices. To assist this analysis Saul Alinsky’s 1971 book ‘*Rules for Radicals*’ will be referenced to demonstrate how the rules are based on a collectivist ‘herd’ mentality of slave ‘*ressentiment*’ and how these rules have themselves lead directly to deviant behaviour, online and offline and how a political correct ideology could be responsible for encouraging such behaviours.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION, METHODOLOGY AND META-THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The seeds for this research project were sown in the author's previous work called 'A Critical Engagement with Piratical Opinion' (Noble 2012) in which the views expressed by (so called) internet deviants were examined to better understand the motivations behind criminal behaviour. This not only provides the reader with a better understanding of their motivations/justifications, but also some indication regarding the identity of the person(s) committing acts of piracy. During this study it became increasingly apparent to the author that the sentiments expressed by some users resembled the Nietzschean notions of '*ressentiment*', '*slave morality*' and '*nihilism*'. Furthermore, the author became increasingly aware of a sense of users 'reinventing' themselves on the internet so that they could enjoy some form of 'higher' status. Acts of deviancy (in this case 'piracy') were the currency by which one could establish for the 'self' a greater status amongst one's 'peers'.

It became obvious that there are similar traits on social media in the attitudes and utterances by some users and in political demonstrations. It also became apparent to the author that a '*slave morality*' form of collectivist '*ressentiment*' may underpin some of the actions and declarations of internet users. That a '*slave morality*' form of collectivist thinking was helping to shape the narrative of some online individuals and groups. Some of these political pressure groups create a class of victimhood to give themselves moral authority over others in highly polarised contests for power. Offence appears to be the currency of conflict, with conformity to the '*herd*' morality being the goal.

This became the backdrop to this research project, the motivations of individuals and groups from a Nietzschean perspective. To assist the reader some of the key concepts which informed this project, will briefly be examined. Although it should be added that these are only summarised at this point as they are more fully examined in the main body of the text.

#### **Nietzschean Concepts**

The Nietzschean philosophical ideas, which we will be focusing on in this work are summarised here to clarify them in the mind of the reader. Here is a brief outline of the concepts which will be discussed in greater detail during this work:

## ***Slave Morality***

“...the highest standard for the value for all individuals.”

(Nietzsche, 2013, pg.115)

‘*Slave morality*’ is a form of ‘*herd*’ mentality, where values emerge out of a ‘*ressentiment*’ and born of repression. This group mentality will seek to impose its own values over other groups, most notably when the ‘*herd*’ possess feelings of impotent rage against what is perceived to be a ‘dominate’ other. ‘*Slave morality*’ therefore seeks to level the playing field; it promotes mediocrity as a virtue whilst simultaneously deflating the value of achievement. Mediocrity then becomes the code of ethics for the ‘*slave morality*’ of conformism and infantilisation. As Armstrong observes:

“Instead of strengthening ourselves for competition, we blame others, and then pat ourselves on the back for not being like those dreadful people”

(*Ibid*, pg.80).

This weakening of character and self-worship will become obvious to the reader as we progress through this work; particularly when highlighting the actions of some social justice movements and moral entrepreneurs. Nietzsche (*Ibid*, pg.22) suggests that these traits are “a hatred born of weakness” by the powerless or those that inhabit a lowly status.

### ***‘ressentiment’***

As noted above, ‘*ressentiment*’ is born of feelings of inadequacy and a relativistic view of one’s circumstances in comparison with another. If one perceives another as enjoying status and privilege above that experienced by the self, one does not ask how it was earned, but instead develops a feeling of entitlement towards the goods/services/status that the other enjoys. To the ‘*slave morality*’ the question is not ‘How can I earn those possessions?’, but rather ‘Why don’t I have them?’. The latter point deriving from a feeling of entitlement and the former from a position of enquiry. The ‘*slave morality*’ therefore becomes a projection of these feelings directed towards other groups.

“...the man of ‘*ressentiment*’ ...is not sincere or naïve, neither honest nor candid with himself. His soul squints; his mind loves dark corners, secret passages and hidden doors, everything covert appeals to him as his world, his security, his comfort...”

(Nietzsche, 1887, pg.27)

Nietzsche also notes that ‘*ressentiment*’ is vital to the ‘*slave morality*’ and is an objective reaction to external stimuli and is fundamentally a reaction (2013, pg25). ‘*ressentiment*’ is the “*irresistible gravitation to the “objective” instead of the “subjective”*. Therefore, we see how the resentful seek satisfaction in “*imaginary acts of vengeance*” (*Ibid*).

Nietzsche makes the point that the strong individuals do not allow ‘*ressentiment*’ to consume them, rather being ruled by ‘*ressentiment*’ is for the “*feeble and weak*” (*Ibid*, pg.27). To be possessed of ‘*ressentiment*’ is to frame another as an “*evil enemy*” (*Ibid*, p.28) and himself as the “*good one*” (*Ibid*). The evil ones are regarded with a “*cauldron of unabating hatred*” (*Ibid*) by those who have “*learned to consider himself as an end and as supreme, as the culmination of history*” (*Ibid*, pg.31). These attitudes and sentiments will be demonstrated when we look at the deviancy of some individuals and groups in this thesis.

### ***Nihilism***

*“What does nihilism mean? That the highest values devalue themselves. The aim is lacking: “why?” finds no answer”*

(Nietzsche, 1968 pg.9)

The disillusionment of the ‘*slave morality*’ is born from the impotent rage felt by those who have not yet mastered themselves. If one allows ‘*pessimism*’ to become the over-riding world-view, then valuelessness and meaninglessness become your moral valuations. It is polarising and extremes become predominate (*Ibid*, pg.11). When one feels entitled to things without having done anything to deserve them, then the value of these ‘*things*’ is diminished. It does not foster a sense of appreciation because they are essentially disposable; one can simply demand a replacement. Eventually nothing will be of value and everything becomes empty of meaning. We shall see this later in this work when we examine the tortuous transitions and reality denying that a Politically Correct (PC) culture places on language, which acts as “*a symptom of strength on the part of the value-positers*” (*Ibid*, pg.14).

### ***The Will to Power and the Übermensch (Overman)***

*“What is good? – All that heightens the feeling of power, the will to power, power itself in man. What is bad? – All that proceeds from weakness. What is happiness? –*

*The feeling that power increases – that a resistance is overcome...*”  
(Nietzsche 2006)

To help us understand motivation we have the concept of ‘Will to Power’. This can be different depending upon the subject; the ‘*slave morality*’ seeks conformity and inflating mediocrity whilst exercising power over others. A ‘Noble’ morality would focus on self-improvement and discipline of the self. The Will to Power is turned inwards in some and outwards in others, domination of the ‘self’ or domination of ‘others’. In short, without first having a measure of self-discipline to seek domination over others becomes an exercise in the baser instincts.

Bound up within the concept of the Will to Power is the notion of the Overman (Übermensch). The Übermensch seeks to overcome the baser instincts by forging a mastery of the ‘self’. This may manifest itself as self-discipline and moral fortitude, self-reliance and honesty.

*“The man who has overcome his passions has entered into possession of the most fertile ground.”*

(Nietzsche 1886)

For Nietzsche man is something that should be overcome (2008, pg.11):

*“The human is a rope, fastened between beast and Overhuman  
– a rope over a abyss”.*

(Nietzsche 2008 (ed.), pg.13)

In this analogy Nietzsche is helping us to understand how human beings can improve upon their base origins and that we can either be ‘going-over’ or ‘going-under’, we are a bridge and not a goal (*Ibid*, pg.13). This notion of self-overcoming to be the best version of yourself, self-effacing, virtuous and free willed is central to a ‘Noble’ type of man.

### ***‘Meat’ space and ‘virtual’ space***

Part of this study will seek to clarify if there are any possible distinctions between what could be termed the ‘*physical*’ self and the ‘*on-line*’ self. It will examine to what extent these two realms of existence conflict with each other; then ‘*cyber-space*’ offers liberation over the confining effects of the ‘*physical*’ form in both acquisition and norm deviance. The delineation between ‘*meat space*’ and ‘*virtual space*’ must be explored to fully understand how the two

inform and influence each other. Could it be that for some individuals a virtual existence (perhaps we could call it '*head space*'), is merely a manifestation of their conscious thoughts/personality/character etc. made '*flesh*' by computer technology? And would it be reasonable to conjecture that online communities such as those that file share, are mirror images of real world communities (Palfrey and Gasser 2008)?

It is the author's contention that no online experience can never be truly '*virtual*' or intangible as in all cases it must be grounded in the physical. In other words, there must always be someone operating a computer terminal/mobile device etc. and that the intangible cannot exist without the physical. Indeed, it could be said that it is the '*intangible*' which is acting upon the influence of the '*physical*'. Therefore, we are obliged to acknowledge the influences upon the physical component in any study of human behaviour combined with social influences and notions of disposition. Neuroscience, biology, genetics, bio-psychology and physiognomy operate in tandem with social factors (Owen 2009), to create a unique set of conditions within the individual. This creates a locus of thought, emotion and mental activity that is open to bio-social stimulus within a given set of circumstances that is unique to an individual. Although everyone's experience can be said to be like that of another, (e.g. individuals may experience an emotion which equates to shame) every individual's experience is unique to them. Owen's notion of psychobiography in which the asocial aspects of the person (such as inherited disposition reflecting the influence of genes and neurons) finds resonance here (Owen and Noble 2015).

In order to understand behaviour we must first understand how these spheres of influence act upon the individual. It is tempting perhaps when discussing online activity to do so in purely social terms and ignore the physical component, but this would be wrong. We should acknowledge that physical influences can play their part just as much as the social aspects (Ridley 2000). Nor must we fall into the trap of believing that bio-genetic factors pre-determine the temperament/character/actions of an individual. For this, the nature vs. nurture debate will be addressed and discussed by debating '*Flexible Causal Prediction*' as an influence upon the decision-making process. We will also examine Owen's framework which, side-steps the nature-nurture divide by acknowledging Ridley's idea of 'nature via nurture' (Owen and Owen 2015, pg.22). It also offers a more balanced synthesis than either the 'over socialised gaze' of mainstream criminology or the biologically top-heavy, reductionist Socio-biology of Walsh and others (*Ibid*).

Consideration will also be given to the notion that in some cases individuals '*drift*' (Sykes and Matza 1957) into the situations in which they are presented with the means and opportunities to commit deviant acts. From we progress onto a discussion of the situational forces, which may come to bear upon the individual; and which may influence the decision-making process and affect behaviour in any given situation ('*Flexible Causal Prediction*'). This also acknowledges the different bio-social aspects to behaviour and reminds us that the 'physical' and the 'psychological' cannot be examined in isolation, one cannot study one aspect without reference to the other. As Owen's framework will be drawn upon, the meta-construct of 'dualism' will be examined with regard the latter point whereby there will be discussion of how these 'physical' and 'psychological' aspects are linked and how they can be examined separately.<sup>1</sup>

The concept of '*drift*' acts as a segue in to taking a '*Flexible Causal Prediction*' approach, which develops and channels Owen's meta-theoretical framework whilst maintaining a flexible ontology and an acknowledgement of flexible causality. This will act as a synthesizing tool for multi-factorial analysis and acknowledges the realist influences of everyday life that shape the norms of an individual's behaviour within a situation. This paradigm acknowledges that whilst influences may have significance over behaviour, individuals are not causally determined to behave in any specific way. Rather, the author posits the notion of '*Flexible Causal Prediction*' indicating the possibility of not only certain forms of behaviour being dependent on influences exerted upon the individual, but that a certain course of behaviour is not determined to the exclusion of all others; instead it is the most probable at that time. The theory also acknowledges that behaviour does not always follow logical or rational events, which may occur and considers notions of decision making, for example; it could be suggested that '*ressentiment*' is to some degree illogical because it is based on perception and not empirical truth. It is a person-centred theory, which uses an etiological framework to examine the influences that are causally '*probable*' and focus upon long-term changes in behaviour (on a macro level) as well as the incidents that punctuate an individual's life (on the micro level). The intention here is to promote a better theoretical understanding of the causal processes involved in formulating deviant behaviour in all their forms. This is an etiological approach, which asks the question;

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<sup>1</sup> To do so does not entail denying that they may be linked. The author will not be pursuing a type of Giddensian 'duality of structure' in this work.

could situations be prevented?, to direct the meta-constructs of Owen's framework. The clear intention is for '*Flexible Causal Prediction*' to demonstrate a 'hands on' approach to crime prevention as outlined in the conference paper 'Towards a genetic social approach to conflict' (Owen and Noble 2015).

During this research project the author will focus upon the phenomenon of cybercrime, adding to the previous research undertaken in 2010a, 2010b & 2012 regarding the attitudes and behaviour of those who commit online deviancy. In previous studies the focus has been on intellectual property crime, however this work aims to broaden the net to include topics such as trolling, hate speech, radicalism and other electronically augmented deviancy. It seeks to follow the criminological and sociological tradition of information gathering from the objects of the study, allowing theories to be developed, amended and where necessary discarded.

In Matza's (1964) rejection of the predestined actor model he acknowledges that a deviant is responsible for his own behaviour. The techniques of neutralisation allow the individual to alleviate the psychological pain, which can be caused when one's conscious pricks one. It is a way to anaesthetize the soul, of protecting yourself from psychological pain and the realisation that you have inflicted some form of harm on others. When we examine some of the justification/excuses for trolling we can see how these techniques are employed. This strategy also becomes apparent when we examine the behaviour of individuals who attempt to impose power over others and excuse deviant acts of political violence. Stan Cohen's (2001) book '*States of Denial*' also details how these techniques can be used to make a person morally blind. These techniques will be detailed as they are encountered in this work.

I incorporate the philosophical concepts of Friedrich Nietzsche; in particular drawing upon his notions of '*Slave Morality*', '*ressentiment*', '*Nihilism*', '*Übermensch*' and the I as conceptual devices, which will help us to understand some forms of deviant behaviour online (such as 'trolling' for example). The anonymity of the internet does not automatically guarantee that a person will indulge in deviant acts, but if the will to deviancy exists then the internet acts as facilitator. The question is then why *not* be deviant? In this work the author will be defining those areas of thought which have lead to deviant behaviour, paying attention where necessary to the concept of political correctness.

By exploring how we can interpret the Nietzschean notions of '*Slave morality*', '*ressentiment*',

*'Nihilism'*, the *'Will To Power'* and the *'Übermensch'* we can define and clarify their meanings in relation to modern life. It is this interpretation of Nietzsche and its application to our notions of internet-based/augmented deviance, which is central to this doctoral study and sits within a larger theoretical framework incorporating the concepts of David Matza (*'Drift'*, *'Master Status'* and *'Techniques of Neutralisation'*) and Erving Goffman, actor analogy with front and back stage behaviour. The genetic-social framework of Tim Owen (2009 and 2014) which combined with the new concept of *'Flexible Causal Prediction'*, will help to bring these theories together. Concentrating upon the issue of cyber-related/augmented crimes and acts of deviance, we can further our understanding of the ways in which *'digital deviance'* is influencing aspects of modern society. It has been argued that the internet amplifies deviant behaviour by offering a space lacking in constraints and supervision leading to disinhibition (Suler 2004). But far from being the norm of behaviour, some online areas, such as comment sections on P2P torrent pages demonstrate self-regulating, sophisticated, autonomous and hierarchical community structures which are self-contained and promote conformity to a specific set of cultural values (sharing is caring).

A question to consider is this: how are human values transferrable to the intangible on-line sphere of society? In short, does digital deviance indicate a crime-ridden society, or a significant force for socio-cultural change, driven by new technologies and consumer demand? Could the *'deviance'* of today be the *'norm'* of tomorrow?

One object of this study is to examine the activities of individuals across P2P file sharing networks and those that *'troll'* on social networking sites (such as Facebook and Twitter). This netnographical (Kozinets 2002) approach is taken in order to discuss the effects, which anonymity may have upon behaviour and to place it in context with the Nietzschean notions of *'Slave Morality'*, *'ressentiment'*, *'Nihilism'*, the *'Will to Power'* and the *'Übermensch'*. It is the attitudes towards Intellectual Property (IP) and the effects that anonymity may have upon the behaviour of the individual which will be in focus. These Nietzschean concepts will be employed in this study to give this work a unique and original understanding of online deviance.

## **Methods and Methodology**

Data was collected at regular intervals throughout this study to find new and productive streams of data and to put my new theoretical ideas to the test. A similar study was conducted by the author (Noble 2012) and the fluidity and responsiveness of the web environment meant that

many changes have occurred in the intervening time. As Nentwich (2003, pg.460) points out it is the '*chaos produced by a wealth of information*' over computer networks that leads to new forms of creativity. It is not the intention here to collect a mass of statistical data regarding the volume of use, financial values, etc., rather the author is looking for qualitative data surrounding the beliefs, opinions and interactions of users.

In the early stages of the thesis there was some qualitative research of P2P file sharing networks, internet forums, news feeds and chat rooms to examine the views of internet users, motivations and what types of intellectual property are being shared; plus, other general behaviour patterns. This approach raises the methodological problem of incorporating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the way that data is collected. It also raises ethical questions about gaining access to sources of information not previously available (Nentwich 2003, pg.62), and which may present a multiplicity of starting points from which a researcher may enter the fray (*Ibid*). In order to protect the author and research participants in ensuring no laws were broken whilst collecting the data compliance with ethical guidelines governing research was observed at all times during this study. No attempt was made to gain access to restricted or illegal websites; and where necessary, identities are obscured to protect the research subjects from any possible harm, which may result from the findings of this project. The intention is to leave the field of research undamaged by the project.

Based upon the author's previous research (2012) the starting point for the empirical gathering of data began with the KAT (Kick Ass Torrents) website and their discussion forums and file sharing pages. This was used as a springboard into other areas of discussion, gathering data and responding to events as they occurred. It was also strategic to maintain a vigilant watch upon news items, blogs and social media feeds which reacted to the changing nature of contemporary events and displayed many of the traits under discussion. This not only demonstrates the symbiotic nature of user and technology in forming opinions, but also how identity is manifest in the online world.

Access to useful websites may at first glance appear to raise some ethical questions about the access to intellectual property and involvement in activities, which either promote or participate in IP theft. Both concerns are without foundation as file sharing websites merely act as a host for the activities of others. Direct involvement is required if you wish to steal IP and such activities are facilitated by electronic technology, which cannot be directly observed. It

therefore follows that during this research process the author cannot be involved in the exchange of IP simply by observing the circumstance surrounding the act, nor can there be any intervention if there is any suspicion that a crime is being committed. To commit an IP crime, a user would need to install the appropriate program (bit torrent client) and actively connect to a web site where you would have to search and actively select IP to download; this cannot happen accidentally. The purpose of the empirical data collection is not to collect technical data (i.e. file/data formats, etc.) rather, it is to collect the up to date thoughts and utterances of individuals as they are asynchronously expressed on these electronic meeting places. The observation of the individuals involved does not require direct communication between observer and subject as electronic emissions of the variety found on file sharing websites are in the public domain and not in private communications. Most users in these electronic forums do seek to mask their identity; however, all efforts have been made to anonymise any user that appears to offer clues to their 'real' identity. This is to protect the research subjects and leave the field of study as the research found it, without inflicting harm or causing harm to happen to any individual. Because of the 'public' nature of these social areas and the clandestine nature of the activities, it is not considered necessary to obtain consent from those being observed; although all efforts are made to protect the identities of file sharers. Although this research may appear to have something of a covert nature, the 'dialogues' of internet users takes place in a public space that can be accessed by any individual. It is in this vein, and that of my previous Criminological studies of human behaviour, that this research project was conducted.

Data was collated and filtered to weed out any useless information, keeping just the relevant and interesting information. Forums, comments and users' profiles on the KAT website have proven to be a fruitful source of information in the past and is the main site for the early section of the research study. The value of such information was determined by the author with regard to the tone and content of statements as there is a lot of 'spam' which will be excluded from the results. This study is looking for the expression of opinions and attitudes of the individuals that frequent file sharing networks to 'gain deeper insights into consumption motives, concerns and experiences' (Langer and Beckman 2005).

In this study the author has broaden the scope of my research to include interactions upon social media; especially when users react to real-world incidents, such as terrorist attacks. The main sites used were Facebook and Twitter because of their highly popular nature and the ease of

use. Information was gathered in real time as events unfold to capture the utterances and interactions of social media users. A good example of this is the data collected whilst the Manchester Dog's Home (Chapter Four) was on fire and the Twitter chat that accompanied it.

Part of the study examines the effects of anonymity with reference to the phenomena called 'trolling', in which one individual uses the anonymous qualities of the internet to verbally/psychologically abuse another. This takes the form of an extended literature search based upon high profile news stories, other research and the experience of those that have been 'trolled'. For personal protection against becoming a victim of this type of behaviour and to ensure that privacy and ethical problems are avoided there is no active participation with those that 'troll'. This study seeks to extrapolate theory from the available resources and to introduce new theoretical concepts into the wider study of crime and deviant behaviour.

Once data was collected, filtered and ordered it was then put through a Nietzschean analysis to enable the extraction of new meanings from these interactions/activities online. The analysis discusses whether Nietzsche's ideas of how mankind would 'become' in the 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> century have been realised in some form via the internet. The purpose of the methodology in this study is to discover outcomes, which previously would not have been possible and to demonstrate how each work node has impacted upon the substance of the study. It also demonstrates why this topic has been chosen, its originality and the place it occupies alongside other fields of information within the criminological spectrum.

The methodology involved in this doctoral study is broadly speaking a twofold plan consisting of a wide ranging meta-theoretical development based upon literature and theoretical discourse and of empirical evidence gathered from various internet and academic sources. The former is to facilitate the growth and development of theory based on the seeds of former theoretical flowers; this way the genealogy of thought can be mapped and applied to the situation under examination. The latter part of the methodology is required to maintain the focus of the author's vision and supporting the theoretical claims which are being made here in this study and ensuring that the thesis is a contemporary reflection of events.

As previously stated the research methods that are to be employed during this study will focus particularly upon data gathering exercises involving blogs, forums, Facebook, Twitter and P2P

websites (such as KAT). In short, these online spaces have active participants, which were examined to harvest useful data for analysis and are in the public domain. There is, however, a significant problem with this data collection which, occurs when the law regulates access to file sharing websites (such as KAT) and the ISP denies access to the domestic user of the internet due to a court order having been issued preventing access to specific sites. Access to these sorts of websites can be obtained by anonymising an internet connection, but this would bring us into a possible grey area of legal responsibility as it would be unclear as to whether the user would be breaking the law. Put simply, it would be illegal to break the restriction imposed on access to a site such as this, even though no illegal activity will be undertaken. Although accessing a website is not in itself an illegal act, it has been effectively criminalised by the censorial restrictions imposed on ISPs by the court. Any serious attempt by a file-sharer to overcome these restrictions could be adopted with little risk to the user, so the question is, why bother with restrictions? By restricting access to such websites, the court has effectively driven the practice underground and impeded academic study in this field. Because of the highly theoretical nature of this research, the author will be relying, to some extent, upon the work of others in the fields of criminology, sociology, philosophy and other social and biological sciences, such as neuroscience. It is difficult to 'capture' the precise moment at which criminal decisions are made and study the processes by which they came into being under what we might call 'laboratory/controlled conditions'. However, we can create theoretical models based upon actual instances of deviance and examine the pathologies of the individuals that commit them. For this, the development of a meta-theoretical framework based on causal influences and employing some of the concepts of Owen (2014), Matza (1964) and Nietzsche (1881 – 1901) will help to give a holistic view of deviance. The purpose here is to spark fresh debate and to generate new ideas surrounding the problems associated with individualism and unique conditions which occur in an online environment; and to pave the way for future research.

It could be argued that a meta-theoretical approach is essentially reductionist because it is another form of grand narrative. To have contributions from several different philosophical and theoretical sources will muddy the waters leading to an unclear and mystifying conclusion. This would be a misconception and misunderstanding of the purpose of this thesis. The next section will aim explain in detail why this is so and what the purpose of metatheory is in this thesis.

## Meta-theoretical development

“...a thought comes when ‘it’ wants to, and not when I want it to”

Nietzsche (2008)

The basis of the meta-theoretical framework is to avoid one simplified, reductionist unified theory for the explanation of crime and deviance. What we seek here is a complex series of interlocking fragments from established theoretical paradigms, which will help understanding a complex whole. Put simply, although each individual theory may not be appropriate in explaining all causes of crime there may be a kernel of truth in each. If we can extract these small but valuable insights, we could build a flexible and complex whole, which will help us to understand crime and deviance. We must remain ontologically flexible and keep our knowledge as broad and relevant as possible; a daunting and difficult task.

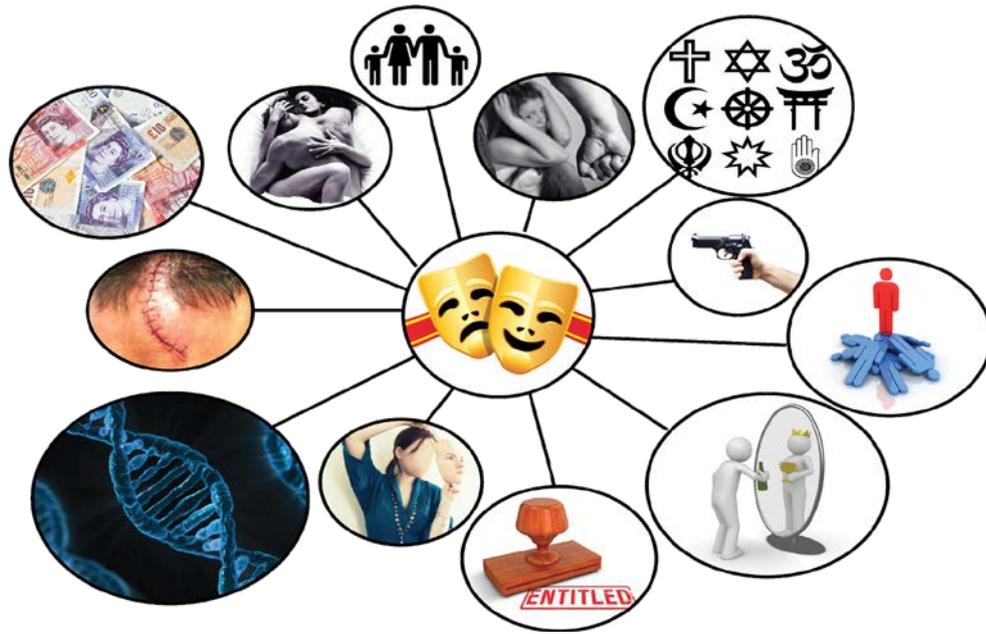
At the heart of Owen’s meta-theoretical concept is the need to formulise a non-reified concept of neuro-agency in a way that acknowledges the plasticity and mutuality of genes, neurons and environment and avoids illicit reasoning. ‘*Flexible Causal Prediction*’ is designed to fit with Owen’s codified framework and used as a useful meta-construct with which to ‘apply’ the framework. Owen and Noble’s [2015] conference paper, ‘Towards a Genetic-Social Approach to Conflict’ demonstrates this application.

A source of inspiration for the ‘*Flexible Causal Prediction*’ came from Sykes and Matza’s (1957) concept of ‘*drift*’ to locate the decision-making process within an individual that is neither committed to nor against criminal/deviant actions. This paradigm allows us to acknowledge the fact that no one is completely criminal or law abiding, that we can ‘*drift*’ between these two ‘states’ dependent upon the influences at work on us. This will allow us to employ another useful paradigm into our framework, that of neutralisation to help us understand how our conscience can be calmed after the event.

The ‘*Flexible Causal Prediction*’ approach will allow us to formulate a development of the meta-theoretical framework, which will encompass etiological influences from a variety of sources. This anti-reductionist work will be broken down into smaller component parts and explained in simple terms in order to build a complex whole, to clarify the nature of the work without understating its depth. We must acknowledge the role that understanding must play

within such a framework, not only of theoretical perspectives but also by employing empathic devices to follow individual motivations. This is intended to be a long-term strategy to better understand the causal process, which culminates in certain types of behaviour (i.e. Deviance).

Here is a visual tool to help us understand the concept of ‘Flexible Causal Prediction’ and how influences act upon our cognition/decision making processes:



(Owen and Noble 2015)

This model provides a meta-theoretical framework in which theories of deviance and human behaviour can be placed. It considers the influences of biological variables and societal influences upon the individual; acknowledges the effect of these variables, whilst not diminishing the role of the actor in the decision-making process; seeks to explain how sensory experience (both physical/genetic and societal) are filtered through an individual’s ability to contextualise upon experience, current options and future outcomes; and then seeks to place the individual as a rational decision maker whose will (or morality) can overcome biological and social impulses, thus highlighting the possibility that genetic-social factors can overwhelm (or diminish) the ‘will’ of the individual. For example, in this chart a pathway leads from the bio-social variables directly to actions, bypassing the cognitive stage. This has been labelled as ‘Impulse’.

An impulse can however be interrupted before it reaches the action stage of the model by the individual. An example of such instances is where someone is in the grip of some form of addiction and is attempting to resist temptation (i.e. giving up smoking, or someone exercising 'anger management'). This may also help explain 'crimes of passion' in which the will seems to have diminished significantly, allowing deviant acts to be performed by individuals that would normally be judged as 'of sound mind'. It is also the contention of this model that the cognitive decision-making process is the seat of what is commonly referred to as 'morality' or 'free will'. It is also the conjecture that this morality is developed from the interaction between the bio-social factors at work upon the individual from birth. A moral self is developed and matured from birth reaching maturity at varying stages dependent upon the individual's own psychobiography (Owen, 2014) and socio-biology.

This development can vary greatly from person to person and indicate that individuals develop what may be considered a mature morality at different stages in their lives. It may be the case that the concept of a 'mature morality' is an individual's reaction to bio-social influences and that as those influences change that maturity changes. The main aim of this framework is to create a cluster of theories, which will increase our scope of understanding, rather than relying upon single narrative explanations that fail to explain the causes of deviance by utilizing a reductionist framework. What is proposed here is a framework which institutes a multi-stranded approach to the study of human behaviour, seeking to incorporate various perspectives to varying degrees to complete a 'bigger picture', thus avoiding reductionist approaches which deflate many important variables to fit the theory. In short, the facts are not sacrificed to make the theories work; they are eclectically selected to help us reach a viable conclusion. Owen and Owen (2015, pp. 19-21) have suggested a neural Darwinist approach to morality, that morality has evolved from the role that neurons play in agency (hence neuro-agency).

To help us clarify the role that influence plays upon the individual during any decision-making process, we will employ a useful analogy, that of a corridor. In this thought experiment, we must visualise an individual travelling on a conveyor belt along a corridor, the corridor represents the chronological flow of time in a forward direction and the conveyor belt the inexorable march of time itself (in other words, the individual can only move forward at the same measured pace). As the individual travels along this corridor they are presented with decisions in the shape of junctions through which they must pass in order to continue along the corridor. As these decisions appear the conveyor belt splits into different directions to pass

through different passageways and the individual can hop on or off according to their decision at that time. The individual cannot see what awaits them in each of the passageway (the future), but they can project or summarise possible outcomes based on what they know (or at least think they know) or wish to happen. In this respect, a person is not determined to behave in a way that is deterministic by reference to the certainty of outcomes; plans can change and outcomes can be unpredictable. As such, it is almost impossible to say that taking a certain decision will categorically lead to the desired outcomes, just that there is a high probability that certain acts will produce the outcome we desire. For example, eating a sandwich will have the desired intention of relieving personal hunger, but it may also have the unintended (or undesired) consequence of giving me food poisoning. Insofar as the consequences of an action can be predicted based on what knowledge we possess and what we expect to happen, there may be other factors, which we are unaware of that impact upon outcomes. As such we could find ourselves in unexpected situations (or hospital, if we eat the wrong sandwich).

During the passage along this corridor the individual is exposed to influences, which help shape their values and the ways they react in certain situations. This influences the choices they, which in turn feeds back into the decision-making process. This feedback loop (to employ a technical expression) is important for the assessment of prior experiences, our reaction to them and the likelihood of similar outcomes. Some of these influences may have a greater hold over the individual than others, depending upon the enormity of the event and the impact it has upon the person. For example, a person that suffers abuse at the hands of a trusted adult at an early age may feel the influence of this event (or these events) for the rest of their lives, like an intense light that always radiates on them and casts a shadow over their 'view' of the future world. By the same token, some influences in early life may be all but forgotten to the conscious mind, but surreptitiously still cast a shadow over thoughts and thereby exert an influence. In all cases, the shadow of deviance is inescapably connected to us but must be cast by the light of another to define it.

Is it possible then that, as we make our decisions along this corridor, that we can be lead into territory, which has an abundance of deviant influences? By making decisions that lead to further deviant acts, we could find the influences of these deviance(s) come to outweigh any non-deviant ones. We may even be born into a situation in which there are many deviant influences (for example, parents that participate in criminal activity), overwhelming us with definitions of behaviour which we come to accept as 'normal' (à la differential association).

As these influences increase it may become harder for the individual to resist them (but it is important to stress that it is not impossible to resist), so that it becomes a routine activity. This demonstrates how subtle incremental changes over a period can lead to significant changes in behaviour. The criminological perspectives '*Differential Association*', '*Routine Activities*' and the Chicago School's '*Social Disorganisation Theory*' are mostly closely linked with this sphere of influence and indicate how criminal/deviant activities can be normalised and are made rational by the individual. These theories stress the role that the environment plays within the matrix of theories and how such influences can affect behaviour.

The '*Control Theory*' paradigm goes one step further and considers the role of '*attachment*' and '*commitment*', which are symptomatic of actions and beliefs feeding back into decision making and behavioural patterns. It is this feedback loop, which is indicative of autonomous rational decision making as it implies that events can influence decisions as they happen; that decision making is not merely based on logical or rational calculations divorced of emotion and disposition. It may be difficult (if not impossible) to quantify how someone '*feels*' but it nevertheless may hold an enormous influence over the actions of the individual. For example, there is a wealth of definitions that tell us that stealing is wrong, deviant, criminal, anti-social, etc., which all go to influence one's behaviour (i.e. do not go around stealing things). An individual may join a gang and although he/she may not go around stealing things, the gang would require him/her to partake in a robbery. If loyalty to the gang was strong enough, he/she would or could take part in the robbery because they '*feel*' it is the right thing to do because loyalty is the strongest influence. Therefore, in this example, the influence of the gang is stronger than the desire to conform to civil standards of conduct, thus sublimating the desire to be law abiding and become part of the '*herd*'.

However, it is important for us not to forget the role that our physical disposition may play in this decision-making process. So far we have acknowledged social and historical influences in this thought experiment, but now we must consider '*physical*' factors. By physical we refer to the biological or the body as a factor in decision making because it is important to acknowledge that all experience is based in the physical, in short without the human body (and the brain) there would be no '*personality*' or '*essence*' to speak of. To the best of our knowledge the human brain appears to be the seat of our thoughts, personality and '*will*', and without acknowledging that physical factors (such as injury or handicap) can have an influence upon the quality of this we would be ignoring an important component of our decision-making ability.

Consider the famous case of Phineas Gage (Harlow 1868, cited in Wickens 2000, pp.148-151) whose personality changed after receiving a brain injury. In such a case behaviour and the resulting decision making, which arises out of personality is affected. So, someone may receive a brain injury, which alters their personality to such a degree that they no longer see anything wrong with violent and aggressive behaviour. That injury would therefore exert an enormous influence over them and the way they behave. One could even argue that if it causes a great enough change in their personality they become a different person to whom they were prior to receiving the injury.

There are, of course, some instances in which the decision-making process is taken out of our hands; for example, when we are very young and cannot do anything for ourselves. In this instance, we have limited neuro-agency (Owen 2015) to act upon influences, so if a baby is hungry it does not yet possess the ability to acquire its own food. The baby can cry, but in crying someone else must interpret this as meaning "*I'm hungry, feed me*". Without being able to articulate this sentiment with more clarity (as in using language to be plainly understood and avoid misinterpretation) and not possessing the ability to get its own food, the baby is reliant upon others. Indeed, the very fact of one's birth means that they are the product of the decision-making process of others.

Similarly, we entrust ourselves to the care of others and they make decisions on our behalf; such as deciding to accept medical treatment or boarding an airplane. In both these cases, we have decided to entrust the decision-making process to another (surgeon and pilot, respectively), we do not push these people aside and do it for ourselves. However, these decisions are made based upon the influences involved such as previous experience, the experience of others and our expectations of the outcomes. There may also be psychological or biological influences such as phobias or medical conditions, which may affect the decision.

In some instances, decisions are forced upon us; for example, if we were to be imprisoned for a crime. Although it could be said that (unless we are completely ignorant) this is the punishment for criminal acts within a civil society and that by being part of this society we tacitly agree to abide by the rules. One cannot pick and choose the laws one wants to obey to suit one's desires in the same way that we cannot discriminate against individuals on the grounds of ethnicity, gender, age, etc. We could therefore assume that there is a balancing act between finding the value in our lives (indeed creating our own set of values and norms) and the actions or

obligations which are required of us as citizens in a civil society.

Returning to Nietzsche's notion of '*Übermensch*' let us consider what this means within this thought experiment; how would such a person behave? As we know, the '*Will to Power*' refers to unrestrained liberty from the '*Slave Morality*', which means that the influence of the '*herd*' would be rejected by such an individual. Decisions would be made on what the individual thought would be considered the best or correct thing to do, if this coincided with the '*Slave Morality*' then so be it, but it would not be the basis for making such a decision. In his work '*The Quintessence of Nietzsche*' (1909, p.61), J.M. Kennedy examines the notions of '*Master*' and '*slave moralities*' and concludes from Nietzsche's writings that the "*cowardly, the timid, the insignificant, and those thinking of narrow utility*" are to be despised (Nietzsche 1975). For Nietzsche the struggle for the '*Noble type*' of man is not to seek the approval of others, but to have the determination to say that I can form my own judgment (*Ibid*, pg.62). The Noble man is the ideal to aspire to and the model for humankind to achieve betterment without inflicting harm on others, the weak are to be pitied along with their bland and banal ways of thinking and acting. As Bull (2011, pg.145) highlights it was Nietzsche's fictional character '*Zarathustra*' who entreated his followers to become hard, that by withstanding pleasurable stimuli they would prevent "*softness*" and "*mildness*"<sup>2</sup> (Nietzsche 1884, quoted in 2008, pg.307) of character features of Christian ethics which he felt had weakened mankind.

Conversely, individuals may decide to follow the example of others and align their decision making with that of others (i.e. following trends and popular beliefs) to relieve themselves of any taxing emotional or mental effort. This is not said cynically with an implication that individuals are too lazy to think for themselves, but rather that heuristics can vastly speed up mental processes and therefore physical actions. Social scientists have long sought to understand the mental short hand that we use to categorise and sort the mass of sense data that confronts us every day. Such techniques are vital for the fast and effective processing and implementation of our decisions, but like any such instrument of reasoning it can lead us down illicit and illegitimate paths of reasoning.

The '*herd*' or '*slave morality*' as Nietzsche calls it leads to conformity for its own sake, a

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<sup>2</sup> In a letter to Overbeck Nietzsche discourses upon hardening "*for the sake of education, occasional cruelty*" - [*Friedrich Nietzsche: Sämtliche Briefe, Kritische Studienausgabe*, ed. Giorgio Colli andazzino Montinari 30<sup>th</sup> April 1884]

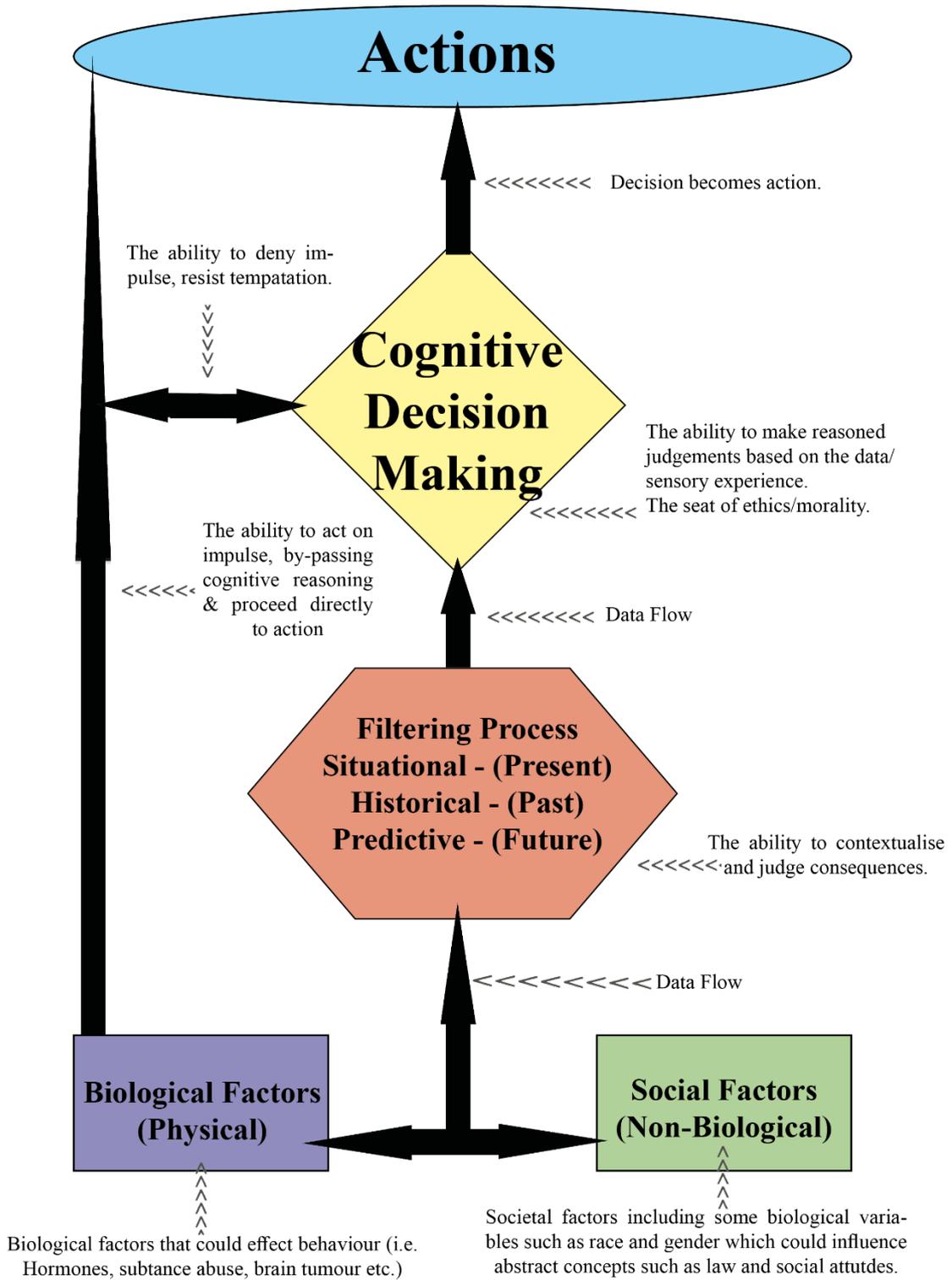
sublimation of individuality and banalisation of that which seeks to strive beyond mediocrity. For example, by referring to everything as ‘awesome’ the term ‘awesome’, is devalued and loses the impact and essence of its meaning in short if everything is awesome then nothing can be awesome. Nietzsche himself states that a “*model of treating every will as equal with every other will, would be a principle hostile to life*” (1887, pg.62). It is by elevating the mediocre that the ‘slave morality’ exercises its ‘ressentiment’ against those individuals that seek to reject the mediocrity presented by the ‘slave morality’. Cate (2002, pg.502) cites Nietzsche’s hallmarks of the ‘man of ‘ressentiment’ as one who looks for shortcuts and is generally “covert, sly and underhand”. Indeed, it seems now that in our society, some individuals will endure any amount of ill treatment and subjugation in return for their fifteen minutes of fame and success without effort; a concept which may remind us of what Nietzsche describes as:

*“...those who abase themselves, the dog-like type of man who lets himself be mistreated, the fawning flatterer [and] above all the liar”*

(Nietzsche 1975 p.176).

This is echoed by Bull (2011, pg.170) who equates this sort of seemingly limitless levelling as “*a form of socially constructed nihilism, a way in which humans join together to become less than they might otherwise be.*”

To further demonstrate how genetic/physical drives and societal factors influence the actor, another representation of the ‘*Flexible Causal Prediction*’ model on the next page.



This diagram shows only a handful of influences, which may be exerted upon an individual at any one moment, as situations change the nature of some of the influences will change, whilst

others may remain constant. The intention here is to demonstrate causal influences in any environment, not solely in ones involving cybercrime. The hope is that it can be rolled out across all forms of situations in which deviant behaviour can occur.

This chapter discusses the influence that the physical world has upon the online sphere of existence and vice versa. It will examine case studies in which individuals have committed known 'deviant' acts and place them in context to their physical presence and situational environment. In other words, was there an environmental or physical factor, which could have influenced their online behaviour (i.e. mental illness, some form of addiction, learning difficulty, etc.) and does prolonged exposure to the internet have a causal influence on behaviour? In other words, can prolonged indulgence to internet-heavy experience have 'physical' effects upon the individual, which may result in physical changes that turn affects behaviour, perception and the decision-making process?

The phenomena of Internet Addiction Disorder will also be discussed in detail together with examining recent research that claims to show how prolonged exposure to the internet results in physical changes in the structure of the brain. If White Matter and Grey Matter are altered during episodes of internet use, then this could potentially have an impact upon a generation of internet users. Further, discussion will take place about the nature of addiction and what constitutes the addictive nature of any given stimuli; what takes place (i.e. chemical changes within the brain); and what affect does this have upon the physiology and decision making of the individual.

We must also look at the unique set of conditions that prompt this change in brain chemistry and examine ways in which this may influence our behaviour and decision-making processes. At all times a 'situational' perspective is being taken, which acknowledges the 'realist' elements of life, without seeking to attribute causal determination as an explanation for behaviour.

An analogy between the working of the human body and brain function and computer technology is not a helpful one. It is a seductive notion, but one which is entirely fallacious and reductive in tone. As complex as computers are, they are not as complex as the beings that created them. Computer technology must be considered a tool, an extension of mankind's desire to mould the world around them and not an entity. They are 'means' and not 'ends' and computer/brain comparisons in this context are not helpful to our understanding.

As we spend greater amounts of time interacting with others using computers and mobile electronic devices, then in some sense, those devices become an extension of our personalities. In other words, the systems that are bound up in communication and dialogue with others and the world in general, are integrated with our thoughts and speech and are quite often personalised by the user. It is hard to imagine communicating without using some form of electronic device or of receiving information without looking at a screen, despite the comparative newness of this form of expression. Even the terms we use are indicative of human physiology and further strengthen and blur the dividing line between the self and technology. Although they are an important means of communication, they are not the sole means.

If we accept that technology can come to embody an extension (or expression) of the 'self', is it possible that we can imbue technology with our characteristics? Technology is passive by its nature and must have instruction from an individual, therefore we could say that technology reflects human characteristics otherwise we would be guilty of reification. Owen criticises Sheila Brown's (2015, pg.26) claim that we are unable to distinguish 'human agency, culpability and motivation' from 'technology and non-human objects' and that 'virtual criminology' (*Ibid*) is "an under-theorised and reified account of agency" (*Ibid*). He clarifies this statement:

*"Brown's notion of the merged hybrid between human and technology does not hold water and no cyborg is yet capable of contemplating its own finitude in the Heideggerian sense"*

*(Ibid).*

But can human characteristics be influenced by technology? In other words, is it possible for the user to develop computer like qualities, alienating themselves from the physical 'self'? At first glance this may appear to be a fanciful notion, but if we stop to consider that individuals perpetrate harm and injury against others using technology and that this harm displays a lack of empathy, could we say that this is the influence of the technology itself? We can inflict harm on others, but because of the impersonal nature of the technology does it allow us to neutralise that harm in our own psyche? Have computers given us a greater capacity to numb ourselves to the suffering of others and lose our empathy?

Let us take bullying as an example; in the physical world, bullying requires a certain amount of emotional distance on the part of the bully, which is needed to prevent remorse for the deeds

committed against a victim. Cognitive dissonance and neutralisation techniques will be in evidence to protect the bully from the harm of their own actions, but most importantly they are more likely to see the results of their actions (crying, bruising, bleeding, etc.). Bullying in an on-line setting already has an emotional distance inherent in it, even in asynchronous conversions (such as IRC) because emotions may not be adequately expressed in characters in the same way that they would be in 'person'. Therefore, it is the author's contention that, bound up within the act of cyber-bullying are neutralisation techniques which numb the 'self' because the victim is unseen and consequently the suffering is unseen.

### **Exposure to extreme images and forming political view points on the internet.**

Let us first consider the causal influences, which may be involved in the phenomenon of the 'Self-starting Terrorist'. This will help us to understand how the psycho-biography of the individual can be influenced by what one observes on social media and the internet. As stated previously:

*"The phenomenon of the self-starting terrorist has been defined in recent years by the use of the internet in the development of extremist beliefs. The ability for disaffected individuals to search for and find material that appeals to those that are in search of meaning. Messages are enforced with extreme imagery creating a PTSD effect, making individuals weak and vulnerable to indoctrination."*

(Noble, 2017a, pg.248)

The psychologically damaging effects of seeing a video, which depicts true life atrocity are used by criminal gangs as a type of 'shock' tactic. For example, a video of two Mexican drugs dealers being beheaded with a chainsaw was posted by users on Facebook along with other executions in 2013. Facebook banned decapitation videos following widespread condemnation (Chorley et al 2013). It was judged that such videos are psychologically damaging and bolster the aims of terrorist and criminal groups, by instilling fear in the viewer (Noble 2017, pg.242).

The use of 'shock tactics' (as a propaganda tool to promote causes) to indoctrinate, offend and disgust has been widespread on social media. Animal Rights groups will often post distressing images on their Facebook feeds designed to create anger, outrage and shame. This is a form of social engineering designed to manipulate the audience. It will create feelings of shame, horror, anger and 'ressentiment'.

### **The effects of viewing extreme images**

The purpose of exposing individuals to images of atrocities and distressing scenes of cruelty

can be categorised as designed for several purposes:

### ***Spreading terror and fear***

A propaganda tool used by terrorists to disseminate their message rapidly across social media, almost in 'real time' before the news media can verify its authenticity (Noble 2017a). Criminal gangs such as drug cartels, can use similar methods to instil loyalty and deter betrayal amongst their ranks (Hastings 2013).

### ***Promotion of political agendas***

Terrorist groups require publicity for their cause and the natural conduit for this is the internet. Having an online presence means that terrorist groups can promote their political agendas, establish a 'go to' place for recruits who sympathise with them and keep their presence in the consciousness of the public.

### ***Consolidation of extremist beliefs in recruits.***

Disaffected individuals can find the '*ressentiment*' they need to reinforce their own self-worth and to frame their oppression. Exposure to scenes of atrocity help to burn this into their psyche and the perceived injustice make their cause 'righteous'. This promotes what Nietzsche would call 'reactive emotions' (Nietzsche 1887, pg.59) and allow 'vengeance' to be labelled as 'justice'.

### ***The Polarising Effect***

The polarising effect upon the viewer will depend upon personal '*ressentiment*' and alienation. For example, somebody may be horrified by witnessing an act of atrocity but does not possess the alienation and '*ressentiment*' that makes them want to commit acts of violence. For others, witnessing the acts of violence may be the catalyst needed to make their '*ressentiment*' bloom.

This not just simply related to acts of atrocity caught on camera, but also extends to propaganda with a political emphasis. In the American presidential election of 2016, social media became a battle group of opposing opinions, allegations and spin. At times it became quite heated with people on either side of the debate vehemently denouncing their opponents. As Nietzsche observes:

*“speaking generally, there is no doubt but that for even the most reasonable, even-handed individuals it requires only a little hostility, malice or insinuation to make them lose their composure, equanimity and objectivity”.*

(Nietzsche 1887, pg.60)

Nietzsche understands that ‘*ressentiment*’ can be just below the surface of a person’s demeanour and could erupt given the correct stimuli. These are people who have not learned to control their ‘*ressentiment*’, they are ‘*slaves*’ to it and do not have a free out-look. These are reactive, resentful people of bad conscience.

### ***Curiosity and a search for belonging***

Appealing to the disaffected, to the alienated and those who are resentful and dissatisfied, offers them a sense of belonging, comradeship and hope. The search for belonging to a group or ‘*herd*’: to sacrifice your own individual identity and responsibility to the collective. Come to us and we shall give you meaning and purpose; but also, we shall punish those that have made you suffer is a powerful message.

### ***Creating a believable fantasy***

A propaganda tool designed to appeal to the resentful, to give them an ideal world to strive for in which they will find fulfilment. This taps into their own subjective and relativistic sense of inadequacy and ‘*ressentiment*’ by offering them a promise of status. Once a resentful individual has started down the path of the postmodern subjectivist and relativism idealism, then they need a fantasy to sustain them.

### ***The Sensitising and Desensitising effect***

Regular viewing of violence may also have two further effects:

- i). Sensitise you towards the deviant and the suffering of ‘your people’.
- ii). De-sensitise you to the death and suffering of the ‘enemy’.

If an individual is planning or is being primed to commit acts of atrocity, then exposure to scenes of death over a protracted period may give the individual the determination to carry it out. They may see the suffering of people with which they have a connection to and feel anger, whilst also witnessing the defeat of their enemy with some joy and satisfaction. This can be described as a form of conditioning, training used to encourage the resentful to strike at others perceived as being oppressors.

### ***Atrocities unfolding in real-time***

Quite often social media users will report on major news events before they are reported on by news agencies. The ubiquity of handheld devices and social media networks has ensured that the worldwide dissemination of information is faster and more diverse than ever before. In this multi-territorial spread of data, which is placed in the public domain, there will be an element of shocking and disturbing content. Images can be perverted and misconstrued to convey a political/ideological message; memes are particularly good at conveying messages. It can also allow social media users access to extreme material of the type we would associate with the 'dark web'.

*“News media will harvest the data put on social media and recycle it to make their own news broadcasts, even consulting social media live on air to obtain information. The danger is of course that this data is unconfirmed and of unknown provenance, making it potentially inaccurate or misleading. Ever since the live broadcast of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, watching events unfold and witnessing extreme violence and atrocity has become prevalent upon social media. From execution videos to war footage and scenes of animal cruelty the internet has become the main source for extreme viewing material.”*

(Noble 2017a)

I further draw our attention to the Islamic State execution video '*Although the Disbeliever Dislike It*' in which 22 people are beheaded. It has been analysed by the Quilliam Foundation (2015), which made this observation that the video:

*“...does not merely target global jihadist, IS supporters and potential recruits; rather, it is aimed at international security services too and, of course, the media. Showing the executioners' faces was a taunt, a way of emphasizing the perceived inability of the international community to do anything to stop IS”.*

(Quilliam Foundation 2015 pg.7)

The messages that this video conveys is one of appearing to be invincible and a propaganda tool designed to display ruthlessness and promote fear in the enemy.

### ***Unwitting accomplices in a propaganda war***

Without realising we could find ourselves as unwitting accomplices in the spread of extremist propaganda and potentially helping terrorists exploit advantages from live social media.

*“During the terrorist actions on France in 2016 some requested that twitter user not*

*tweet pictures and videos of the terror attacks. The reasons for this could be twofold; a). It assists the terrorists by furnishing them with 'intel' as events are happening, b). It spreads publicity of the attacks adding the message of fear that the terrorists wish to spread."*

(Noble 2017)

The danger that unverified or false information can be circulated on social media could result in confusion at the scene of an event. When a terrorist attack occurs people will naturally go to social media to get information about what is happening; they may even be people involved in an incident who are trying to get information for escape and safety reasons.

The problem of 'Fake News' or 'e-Hoaxing' became prevalent here as recognised verifiable news sources are either: i). Being ignored in favour for live reportage from social media users ii). Getting their information from social media and playing 'catch-up'. As observed (2017):

*"During the French terror attacks of 2016 BBC rolling news media was significantly lagging behind reports by people on social media. It now has become common place for TV news media to report material from social media feeds as a source of breaking news."*

(Noble 2017a)

### **Real or Fake News?**

With the rapid and confused influx of data, which we associate with terror attacks we encounter a significant area of concern; how can we assess what we see is genuine? During the German terror attack in Munich of July 2016, it was reported that images showing the alleged aftermath of a terrorist knife attack in a shopping centre was circulating on Twitter. These images were fake and were in fact pictures from a similar sort of attack, which took place in South Africa several years earlier. When we watch news reports from a reputable source, then we can assume that the facts have been verified. On social media this veracity is much more difficult to establish.

A picture was published on Twitter during the attack and was alleged to demonstrate the identity of the terrorist. It is however fake and is a composite image, which has been circulating on social media for some time and had already featured in other terrorist attacks. This is the original image alongside the image that was superimposed over the top (Appendix one, pg. 18).

The objective of this image manipulation appears to be an attempt to link an alleged white

nationalist to the terror attacks, which is further demonstrated in this screen shoot in Appendix one, (pg. 18).

### ***Self-Radicalisation and the ‘Lone Wolf’***

The ‘self-starting’ terrorist is a phenomenon which has gained attention over the past decade. Stefanone (quoted in MacManus 2015) states:

*“ISIS has a unique recruitment style; that is, very personal attention over a very long period of time. In many instances, when people are persuaded or pushed into action, it is the result of a long, effortful recruitment process. I think that is very unique when it comes to online recruitment. ISIS stands out in that regard”.*

(Stefanone, quoted in MacManus 2015)

Forst (2009 pp.189-191) demonstrates the internet can be used strategically as a ‘rage enabler’. Perhaps we could say that it also acts as a ‘*ressentiment*’ enabler’, if the message of the video is one of oppression.

An individual’s alienation from society can be amplified by contact with extremists (and/or extremist content) on social media as noted by Stefanone (cited in MacManus 2015). But we could go further and posit that contact and exposure to extremist videos could in some individuals act as a focus and amplifier for ‘*ressentiment*’. Individuals who are experiencing alienation because of their circumstances, failings and shortfalls can transfer their ‘*ressentiment*’ and rage onto a third party. This focused ‘*ressentiment*’ could be specific to a religious or political idea, which manifests as a ‘righteous’ action in their view.

In other words, the inadequacies of the individual became transferred in to a sense of group identity in which a victimhood mentality is created. Group solidarity creates an ‘echo chamber’ effect, which reinforces the central oppression narrative.

It is interesting to note that the ‘group’ exists as a belief in online sources, in which the person consuming the media believes that they are part of a larger network.

In a report by von Behr, Reding, Edwards and Gribbon, (2013), on behalf of the RAND Europe, there was a study of 15 self-starting terrorists and the ways that the internet influenced their extremism. They make five useful observations:

- “1. *The internet creates more opportunities to become radicalised.*
2. *The internet acts as an ‘echo chamber’: a place where individuals find their ideas supported and echoed by other like-minded individuals*
3. *The internet accelerates the process of radicalisation.*
4. *The internet allows radicalisation to occur without physical contact.*
5. *The internet increases opportunities for self-radicalisation.”*

(von Behr *et al.* 2013, pg.xi)

It should be noted that “that these methods do not account for all self-starting terrorists” (*Ibid* pg.32), but there are some common elements that we can observe in the self-radicalisation process. The internet is not the only influencing factor that amplifies ‘*ressentiment*’; instead the internet should be looked upon as a mode of radicalisation rather than a single method.

### **Individual disposition and psychobiography**

There could be other factors which make a person particularly vulnerable to radicalisation; in some cases there has been evidence of learning difficulties or some form of dysfunctional behaviour (such as mental illness or drug addiction) which makes an individual vulnerable to manipulation and brainwashing. As discussed in chapter three, some internet trolls excuse their behaviour by blaming alcohol abuse; that they would not have exhibited their ‘*ressentiment*’ of others if they were not under the influence. Similarly, if an individual suffers from Asperger’s Syndrome (or some other form of learning difficulty), which could influence their behaviour then mitigation could be offered. A good example of this is the convicted troll Sean Duffy who claimed that Alcohol and Asperger’s Syndrome (Morris 2012) had contributed to his ‘miserable existence’.

If we were to look at this in terms of psychobiography, we could see that reaction to extreme material could influence the “*unique, asocial aspects of an actor’s disposition, behaviour and self-identity*” (Layder cited in Owen 2007). If we take Owen’s meta-theoretical framework and apply it in this situation we will see that genes can “take their cue from nurture/the environment” (Owen 2006a, pp.897-917) the nurture in this instance coming via the internet.

Hamm (quoted in McKelvey 2015) states that “*The radicalisation process has been triggered by a personal crisis - the loss of a loved one, the loss of a job*”, which drives the individual into searching for new meaning or belonging. They may have a sense of alienation from the family/society they live in and want a cause to belong to that gives them meaning and allows an opportunity for ‘*ressentiment*’ to be exercised.

If a person regularly seeks out and views scenes of suffering and violence they may become jaded by such scenes and are gradually desensitised towards them. As Zygmunt Bauman (1994 cited in Carrabine 2008, pg.117) posits, people can become desensitised by the images of violence and suffering portrayed on global media to such an extent that it promotes “mass indifference to the spectacle of cruelty” That does not imply that all people take pleasure in viewing the suffering of others; but rather they are fatigued by the emotional turmoil and discomfort that a sudden distressing image can have. This can be described as charity fatigue, when one is subjected to scenes of suffering to stimulate conscience and financial contribution. Combine this with a generation of people that have had access to the internet from infancy and there is a danger that their interactions and world view could be mainly informed by what they see on the screen. There is an element of instant gratification associated with the neuro-agency and brain function where social media technology is concerned. A narrow focus of interest and a lack of any substantial meaning or effort have allowed conditions for radicalisation. It could be said that they are especially vulnerable to being nurtured or influenced by information from the internet.

Oxford University Neuroscientist Baroness Susan Greenfield (Krotoski 2010a) believes that those who grow up using the internet develop “*a triumph of the senses over the meaning*” where there is “a strong premium on sensation” (*Ibid*) which makes people unaware that “*actions have consequences*” (*Ibid*). Further to this she states:

*“If you give a human brain an environment where actions don’t have consequences, if you give that brain an environment that is just literal, where there is no significance, might it not be the case that, that brain stays in an infantilised state.”*  
(*Ibid*)

Baroness Greenfield suggests that a narrowed world view, in which violence (for example) is depicted without consequence and where human interaction is ‘virtually’ transmitted and not ‘face to face’ leads to a cognitive dissidence in the mind of the individual affected.

All that is required for a situation to emerge in which improper associations are made with violence, cruelty and conscience is a disaffected individual (perhaps we could say ‘undeveloped’ to use Greenfield’s terminology), a stimulus which provokes a reaction and a conduit for supply. In this scenario we can imagine how the individual would be open and

receptive to persuasion of a negative variety.

The ease of access and the influence communications can have is expressed here by former American Vice President Al Gore (Krotoski 2010a) who states; *“The entry level for individuals is extremely low and the role of ideas, knowledge and information is central”* (Ibid).

The ubiquitous nature of social media has facilitated a much greater exposure to images of death, destruction and abuse. Pressure groups use images of cruelty to shock people into supporting their cause, terrorists use images of atrocity to further their aim of creating fear and spreading terror. The impact of these images upon the psyche of the individual can be profound, influencing the neuro-agency of that person and leading to decision making and actions based on their individual pathology. With such a complex pattern of behaviours and stimuli we can say that individuals must be studied as a holistic unit where greater understanding is needed of influences we come under.

### **Social Justice Movements**

Extremist content, propaganda and ‘fake news’ are not just qualities that we can assign to bona fide ‘terrorists’ but also, as we shall see later in this work, are part of the normal practice for pressure groups such as #BlackLivesMatter and #MeToo. In 2017 some social justice activists regularly caused havoc, disruption and property destruction across America college campuses. In one extreme case a Professor of Social Justice was filmed assaulting someone with a bicycle chain in a sock causing a head injury. If this is the kind of behaviour that college students in America are seeing from their tutors, then it is hardly surprising that they indulge a proclivity towards violence.

Social movements do have an element of ‘bandwagoning’ about them that could lead some to mistake popularity with legitimacy. Because platforms, such as Twitter, have very limited space in which to express views, arguments are subject to reductionism. This could be misleading and as the author points out (2017 pp.248-249):

*“Exploiting the weaknesses of others for nefarious ends is a common ploy and not simply confined to terrorism, hackers will appeal to people’s vanity or greed to perpetrate a fraud. This is essentially a social engineering technique which plays upon the emotions and reactions of individuals to the material they are exposed too on the internet, coupled with their own disposition and social circumstances.”*

(Noble 2017a, pp.248-249)

Some individuals reading messages about oppression may find some appeal in the message as it exploits their own narcissism, gives them a sense of entitlement and moral superiority over others. This may be especially damaging to immature persons who have a very limited life experience but are being told that they have been subject to centuries of oppression. This creates '*ressentiment*' for past deeds, which in no way are reflected in their modern-day experiences.

*“This narrowing of teleology which is presented by internet usage may not allow a person to fully develop as a human being; in other words, they never fully mature and remain emotionally immature.”*

(Noble 2017a)

The emotional immaturity of some individuals becomes evident in the student protests which occurred in America during 2017 in which students sought to change the fabric of academic life into nothing more than a crèche for adult infants. When individuals act in this way it circumvents the due process of law and they begin to commit (or threaten to commit) acts of violence; they cross the Rubicon into proto-terrorism acts.

This chapter has demonstrated how '*Flexible Causal Prediction*' can help us understand the inner conflicts, which can occur within the locus of the individual. Also, how the decision-making process is manifest as a confluence of influences competing as autonomous, rational decision making and not a pre-destined actor model of behaviour. This is to help us understand how decisions are made rationally based on the influences, but also how irrational behaviours can occur.

The Author has demonstrated how Nietzschean philosophy can help us understand the notion of '*Flexible Causal Prediction*'. Also, how multifactorial analysis is important in understanding an anti-reductionist framework. The intention now to focus on Nietzsche's concepts of '*ressentiment*', '*Nihilism*' and '*Slave Morality*' to further understand how they affect individuals as part of a FCP matrix of influences. We shall begin by re-evaluating some of the author's previous research in the field of Filesharing and then go on to demonstrate that '*slave morality*' is manifest in the act of intellectual property crime.

## CHAPTER TWO

### INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY CRIME

This chapter will discuss intellectual property crime in Nietzschean terms, with reference to ‘*slave morality*’ and ‘*ressentiment*’ by examining and building upon previous work undertaken (Noble 2001 & 2017) having previously made the claim that consumers have a mistaken notion of owning property, that there is an assumption that when we purchase an item that we own it absolutely and in perpetuity. What we are in fact purchasing is a license to access content via a form of media, (i.e. CD, DVD, Blu-Ray, Digital download etc.) which controls our restrictions on use.

The widespread use of technology and the technological advances, which have liberated content from the medium it is supplied in, are responsible for the crisis amongst right holders caused by internet piracy. When P2P file sharing became a widespread and accepted practice amongst a generation of internet ‘savvy’ users it raised some interesting questions. What motivates people that file share? Does an individual that file shares fully understand what it is that they are doing? Are they aware of the property ownership rights?

In a discussion of the use of Digital Rights Management (DRM) (Noble 2017b) We examine how DRM is used to impose scarcity upon intangible goods. In a pre-digital era, consumers would purchase a physical object (such as a book), which contained the intellectual property. As observed:

*“Supply and demand models are driven by scarcity, the more limited something is in its availability, then the rarer it becomes and potentially the more valuable. Some items have an intrinsic sense of worth because of their natural scarcity, such as gold or diamonds; whilst others must have their scarcity artificially generated for them. For example, limited print runs of books or limited-edition DVDs create an artificial scarcity which in turn seeks to create demand amongst consumers. Some items are generated with scarcity because of the expense of production and cost of purchase, such as luxury goods, whilst some have to become scarce for a short time to capitalise on trends and fads.”*

*(Ibid, pg.198)*

Physical goods deteriorate over the passage of time, while electronic files are not subject to the same entropy, hence the enforced scarcity of DRM. When infinite copies can be produced,

which are indistinguishable from the original article then this changes the landscape and thus attitudes of the consumers and the producers changed because of these advances.

In previous work (*Ibid*, 2017 pp.199-200) it was discussed how the perception of ownership may be a cause for confusion amongst modern consumers:

*“For example, when an individual buys a book they own the paper it is printed on, the ink used to print it and the glue that is used to bind it; but the substance of the book remains the property of the copyright holder. Similarly, with music and other forms of media which are sold in a physical format, what we are in fact purchasing is a license to access the intellectual property of another contained on that media. This license is not in a form that we would easily recognise (like a driving license for instance) it is bound up with the format that the content is packaged in. For example, a CD disc is comprised of plastic, ink and paper and inherent in the format are physical restrictions on what the user can do with it as well as a statement of ownership which details the restrictions in the law.”*

(*Ibid*, pg.198)

Here the point is made about the mistaken notion of ownership amongst consumers. The rights of the ‘physical’ do not translate well to the ‘intangible’; therefore, content creators must find new ways to control the dissemination of their intellectual property. It was observed on how the purposes of digital Rights Management are to:

- (i). Prevent any unauthorised copying of IP.
- (ii). Prevent the unauthorised sharing of IP.
- (iii). Prevent the resale of IP.

(*Ibid*, pg.198)

This assertion of property rights and the use of DRM have led to consumers losing some rights to which they are used too. For example; the 1<sup>st</sup> sale doctrine (the ability to resell any legal owned property) is restricted or in some instances not available. A consumer may suddenly find that they cannot copy an item, share it or resell it because of the restriction imposed by DRM .

The legal disclaimers, which are included with an item such as a DVD emphasise this control over property. Thus, highlighted “*Not for Resale*”, “*All Rights Reserved*”, “*No Unauthorised Hiring*”, “*No Unauthorised Lending*”, “*No Unauthorised Public Performance*” and “*No Unauthorised Radio or TV Broadcast*” (*Ibid*, pp.200-204) were highlighted as examples of

these restrictions. But, despite these restrictions it could be argued that the entertainment industry helps to propagate a mistaken notion of ownership in its advertising strategies.

This contradiction is noted:

*“The purpose of these restrictions is clear, it is about asserting one’s ownership over IP, it therefore follows that we don’t actual ‘own’ anything other than a license, but the general consensus and attitude of the buying public would appear to be one of ownership rather than licenses and access rights. The myth of ‘ownership’ is encouraged by the content creation industries who will entreat consumers to “Own it now on DVD”, without specifying the details of ownership. For example, the advertising campaign for the DVD release of the James Bond film ‘Spectre’ explicitly says “Own It Now””.*

*(Ibid, pg.203)*

The line between the ‘physical’ and the ‘intangible’ becomes even more blurred when we examine the rhetoric used in anti-piracy advertising campaigns:

*“You wouldn’t steal a car  
You wouldn’t steal a handbag  
You wouldn’t steal a television  
You wouldn’t steal a movie  
Downloading pirated films is stealing,  
stealing is against the law,  
PIRACY. IT’S A CRIME”*

*(Cited in Noble 2017b)*

Here we can see that the act of ‘intangible’ theft becomes equivalent to theft of a ‘physical’ object. This conflation is not completely understood by consumers who seem to place more ‘value’ on the physical goods they possess.

Copyright owners must proactively enforce their rights to ownership by placing measures (such as DRM upon their products. But as we have seen in previous work by Noble, this causes ‘ressentiment’ amongst consumers. Furthermore, as also observed (*Ibid*, pp.204-205) DRM can be reverse engineered, in other words stripped of its capabilities to allow copying, which highlights the belief that this may lead to confusion and contradiction:

*“The only purpose served by DRM appears to one of stating ownership, a reminder to the consumer that they do not own this item, which in essence contradicts the ‘Own It Now’ rhetoric.”*

*(Ibid, pp.204-205)*

When one is being encouraged to 'own it' we are not encouraged to question what it is we actually 'own'. It is my contention that this can develop a sense of ownership amongst consumers which is misleading and could lead to '*ressentiment*'.

### **The '*ressentiment*' of Consumers**

Restrictions placed upon consumers could help us understand what generates '*ressentiment*' and how file sharing could be described as '*herd*' behaviour. Digital piracy could partially be explained with reference to the '*ressentiment*' of some consumers when faced with restrictions, but also with a broader '*slave morality*' of entitlement.

In 'A Critical Engagement with Piratical Opinion' (Noble, 2011) internet file sharers were observed across several different Torrent sites and collated their comments. They express many diverse views about many different topics, but one can detect a distinct note of '*ressentiment*' and entitlement amongst some users. Often it is believed that consumers are being exploited by large companies; there is '*ressentiment*' over cinema ticket costs, CD and download costs and the restrictions that DRM places on electronic content. They even express entitlement to goods because of a perceived exploitation in past purchases. In response the content creators and copyright holders must increase the punitive actions against offenders and step up protection measures. But this creates problems, it causes '*ressentiment*' and presents a bad public image which engenders '*ressentiment*' in some. Also, DRM measures can be reverse engineered, which makes them expensive to develop and ultimately useless.

So why bother with DRM? It was previously stated that:

*"DRM is clearly a failure in its intended purpose of restricting the dissemination of IP, a quick look at the Pirate Bay website will make this clear. Furthermore, it has a negative impact upon the consumer as it deprives legitimate users of the rights that they had previously enjoyed."*

(Noble 2017b, pg.204)

Perhaps we could go one stage further and say that Copyright Protection measures help to contribute to the general '*ressentiment*' of the '*slave morality*'.

There appears to be a variety of social solidarity amongst file sharers where the label 'pirate', 'downloader'; or any of the other epithets to describe their shared morality are used to give them succour and ease their conscience. They have a common cause, 'sharing is caring' which

helps foster the hegemony of the ‘herd’. ‘*Slave morality*’ is further emphasised by framing their activities as a struggle against oppression under the guise of consumer rights and freedom of speech. Whilst it may be observed that there is some legitimacy to their claims, it does not tell the entire story. The devaluing of property and the ‘free for all’ nature of sharing as a communal activity has its roots as ‘*slave morality*’. A flavour of this is demonstrated by this post from the Pirate Bay:

*“...the heart of the enemy is the banking industry” and “the point is to keep you in permanent debt, and therefore an employee of the bank”*

(Pirate Bay user quoted in Noble 2011)

What is essentially a criminal act is framed as an act of resistance to elevate a criminal activity to the status of cause.

Previously Noble (2017b, pp.206-207) observed how file sharers attempt to ease their own conscious with the Techniques of Denial and Neutralisation. It helps when you are in a morally reprehensible area to have some form of justification on hand to anesthetize the psychological pain of ‘bad conscience’. The ‘*slave morality*’ may tell itself that rewards are unfairly distributed and that they are victims of a misfortune, which is beyond their control. A postmodern relativism afflicts them in that they measure their own personal failings against the perceived success of others. It has been stated that:

*“Further to this justification we see attempts to absolve culpability for criminal actions with reference to injustice and struggle. Claims of exploitation accompany some of these criminal activities online and are used as evidence of social inequality.”*

(*Ibid*, pg.206)

Noble (2011) also cites this quotation for Pirate Bay user ‘icl’ who describes the Pirate Bay in philanthropic terms:

*“The Pirate Bay is under attack by large corporations and governments to stop the largest free library in the world. We are actively supporting the Pirate Bay’s efforts in keeping online through donations and political influences”*

(Pirate Bay User ‘ICL’, cited in Noble 2011)

Some file sharers argue that they have an entitlement and that they are owed free media because

they have paid for things in the past. In the 2011 study the following attitude was observed:

*“I’ve paid these people thousands of my hard earned cash, now its my turn”*  
(BitTorrent user ‘heatgirl’, *Ibid*, pg.60)

Also, comments were noted such as “dues paid, enough said” (*Ibid*, pg.59) and a clearly resentful and relativistic comment by user named ‘movieguy27’ when he states:

*“...why would anyone support mainstream artists for? (sic) Justin Beiber, Jay Z, Eminem, Green Day, Kesha, Lady GaGa are all rich. While you’re working and busting your ass for \$9 an hour at some shitty job these people are sitting in hot tubs full of money in mansions with more money then they know what to do with it. A person downloading an album instead of buying it won’t hurt them.”*  
(*Ibid*, pg.35)

And similarly, user ‘Crillie’ (*Ibid*) was quoted who states the following about the rap artist Eminem:

*“He’s Rich. When ur(sic) out working for money to buy his album he’s bathing in money doing nothing”*  
(Pirate Bay user ‘Crillie’, *Ibid*)

Also ‘TowerMac’ (*Ibid*) who simply says; “*these sort of artists are swimming in money*”.

The ‘ressentiment’ reaches a peak when the user ‘Myke420’ (*Ibid*, Pg.36) “*Kanye West should be murdered in a slow and torturous manner*” because “*he should be removed from existence*”. This statement is emphasised and expanded on by anonymous users who comment “*go to murder Kanye and give money to have him put down*”, to which another anonymous user replies; “*I will pay 50000 for his death*”.

While these may be idle threats of no serious consequence, it does give a window into the mind of the resentful postmodern narcissism which is symptomatic of the ‘*slave morality*’. Some uploaders (or ‘seeders’) try to shift the blame onto the person downloading:

*“For promotional use only...  
Remember to support the artist”*  
(Pirate Bay user ‘NoFs’ *Ibid*, pg.31)

Some judge the content as not worthy of their attention and defend their actions thus:

*“Downloading this just saved me from wasting money on this mediocre album”*

(Pirate Bay user ‘t3hveg’, *Ibid*, pg.34)

*“I’m glad I didn’t have to pay for this album!”*

(Anonymous BitTorrent user, *Ibid*)

As previously discussed the relativity of perception within the *herd* mentality means that any money spent (or saved) can be used to justify actions, as his quote from earlier demonstrates:

*“He’s Rich. When ur (sic) out working for money to buy his album he’s bathing in money doing nothing”*

(Pirate Bay user ‘Crillie’, *Ibid*, pg.35)

This condemnation of the condemners is something that was observed in this quote (2011 pg.58):

*“If Facebook is free and he stole the idea for Facebook in the first place then why shouldn’t I steal the movie? Surely this should be free also?”*

(Pirate Bay user ‘xinthose’  
discussing pirating the movie ‘Social Network’)

Clearly the debate surrounding ownership and theft is a confusing one in the minds of those that file share. The wider public perception of ownership may contribute towards this misunderstanding when the contradiction between the rhetoric of ownership comes into conflict with the rights of the copyright holder. It must be acknowledged that litigation and increased security (in the form of digital locks) do not solve the problem. It may even help to promote and develop antipathy towards those that hold copyright and distribute content rather than having a deterrent effect. A fundamental change is required in the way that IP law administrates digital content to acknowledge its intangible nature, instead of being predicated on ‘physical’ grounds. Licenses and education could hold the key, with a strong emphasis on allowing the consumer to decide how they obtain access to copyrighted content.

### **Politics of File Sharing**

The politics of sharing has a distinctly collectivist flavour, the ethos is ‘Sharing is Caring’ and

on sites such as ‘Kick Ass Torrents’ (KAT) we see rewards for sharing and enabling the sharing of data (Noble 2011).

From research carried out for this thesis, a comment on the thread ‘Should it be legal to tape movies in theatres (sic) for personal use?’ (KAT 2014 – Appendix two) contained this comment by user ‘renhoek93’: “... *this is why i (sic) like Communism the communist actually support the freedom of sharing everything*”. This user later states their belief that:

*“TV shows & stuff to me are not property they are art that belongs to everybody in the world not just monster corporations & besides when i buy something the money should be going to the real content creators not the corporations witch (sic) is sad because that’s where the money goes.”*

*(Ibid)*

What is this user saying here? First there is a clear refutation of property and property rights; secondly the redistribution of property; thirdly the user frames the ‘monster corporations’ as the enemy to inspire a feeling of conflict. So here we have three distinctive elements that chime with left wing politics; the de-valuing of individual property rights, re-distribution of said rights and the demonization of private industry.

‘renhoek93’ replied to discussion about the value of art and the law

*“Yeah well i don’t care i hate how people say america is so free when really in reality its not. (Sic)”*

But then ‘renhoek93’ becomes confused as he/she attempts to conflate acts of piracy with sharing. renhoek93Uploader:

*“Okay before i start this let me clear some things up i am not against Copyright itself just how it works in the digital age i agree that yes credit should be givin& all so some forum of copyright does needs to exist but at the same time we should be allowed to share our favorite movies TV shows music games ect. &lets think about it is it really stealing? i mean come on all people are doing is sharing there CDS/DVDs & stuff that they own with other people just in a digital computer files so your just getting a copy from somebody else its not actually stealing its sharing & copying stealing is me going to the store and taking the CD/DVD off of the shelf & walking out with it without paying for it that is stealing now my question to you guys is do you think it should be legal to tape movies in theaters for personal use? like if someone just wants to share it or give it to a friend leave your thoughts below.”*

Pringlescan Super User:

*“So you want people to just be able to steal things? America is free but there has to be some rules in place or it becomes a lawless place to live. Funny though this law to you makes America less free, that’s funny as hell.”*

renhoek93Uploader:

*“I did not say that i said in my opinion America is becoming less free because our freedoms are being taken away yes i agree stealing is bad but i don’t see anything wrong with sharing okay this is a bad example but say i have a DVD i don’t want anymore & so i give it to a friend & he has it now or i lend it to him to borrow for a weekend is that stealing? come on maybe it is to the feds but they need to learn to share now i am gonna end all this seeing as how you guys are bitching at me for being pro piracy & for having a different view on the subject i will no longer reply to feature post on here if this thread turns into a debate thread where people argue back & forth i am staying out of it.”*

An earlier post from July 2012 entitled “(File) Sharing Is Not Piracy!” (sic) by user APisEZ (see appendix two pp.19-22) contains an interesting attempt to justify file sharing:

*“say there was a village in Africa and only one man has the strength to get food from miles away. Say there was a cloning machine where he can clone the food and offer the other 25 people in the village. Yes, he did do all the work but it’s not like the denizens are taking anything from him (only the copied goods). This is the same idea with music/movies/pics/games/ software/etc. Of course, these materials are not as essential as food, but it’s the same concept.”* (sic)

*(Ibid)*

Here we have a rather crude attempt to place file sharing on the same level of morality as sharing food. This conflation is symptomatic of the ‘levelling’ involved with the ‘*slave morality*’. It seeks to justify morally wrong actions by a false equivalence.

In the next paragraph the user tries to establish a victim narrative in which the ‘ordinary civilians’ are somehow being oppressed by big companies.

*“The one man against 25 is the ratio of the government agencies/ artists/companies against us, ordinary civilians who can prosper and create new ideas and spread them to the world. This can help defeat cancer, for instance, if someone with the heart to learn medicine in an impoverished area (such as parts of Africa) but cannot buy textbooks to learn the disease in depth but has a community computer that has internet. This guy/girl can help the world in any area/field. Information inspires us,*

*whether it being music, books, programs, etc. Finally, blocking information hinders this process of sharing materials that has been going on since the start of humanity.”*  
(sic)

*(Ibid)*

These utopian ideals are a mask to hide the ‘ressentiment’ of the ‘slave morality’ and place a philanthropic spin to help ease the downloader’s conscience and make the cause righteous.

Earlier in this chapter we discussed how people are perhaps misunderstanding property and rights and what they own. The user ‘APisEZ’ demonstrates what could be described as a wilful misunderstanding to fit a narrative.

*“...sharing material in the manner of torrent sites with users that don’t profit from anything in my opinion is legal...it’s like sharing a dvd with a friend; u just give him the dvd instead of him buying it...that, in the eyes of the big companies, is piracy because they just lost a sale...and do u think that’s wrong to share in that manner...in my opinion, no...so, it won’t be any different if he copies it and puts it to his computer...all of this talk about piracy is money and politics these days and I’m sick of it...u may disagree, but it’s true...for instance, Spain & switzerland ruled out that file sharing materials through peer-to-peer websites is legal as long as their is no profit...”* (sic)

This is typical of the ‘slave morality’ of ‘ressentiment’ and entitlement, but not everyone on the forum agrees. The user known as ‘Mertado’ replies:

*“When you obtain something you didn’t pay for, which normally has a cost associated with it, you’re stealing. We’re all doing it here. Get used to it. ... You’re still a pirate. Get over it.”*

This quotation perhaps demonstrates a level of self-knowledge by this user, that they can acknowledge the wrongdoing of their actions. It demonstrates that not all users are blind to the implications and ramifications of their actions. That some may simply be behaving in a form of ‘bad conscience’ or have not yet reached a state of mental maturity.

In the intervening period between the end of the 2012 study and the beginnings of this doctoral research, changes occurred to these internet sites. The site ‘BT Junkie’ became defunct and now no longer exists, ‘Demoniod’ suffered a similar hiatus, which interrupted its operation, but now is back up and running on the internet. The main site of study KAT suffered restrictions on access for users, but was swiftly overcome with the use of a proxy server; which

meant that for a while users could connect to the main site via a redirection. Such proxy site connection could be found by simply doing a Google search and required no additional software installation to access the site. The legalities of accessing the KAT site became unclear at this point as accessing the site does not necessarily mean that an illegal act will follow. To infringe copyright a user must install downloading software (known as a 'torrent client') and actively connect to and download data. Therefore simply accessing the site is not an act of illegal undertaking, but by restricting access to these sites by order of the court it is unclear whether it is illegal when just simply looking at these sites.

These problems aside, we can find a rich vein of information from these websites, which will help us understand the motivations and psychology of internet users. The KAT site community forums prove particularly fruitful in this study and add some interesting data to the conceptual model. But to understand the philosophy or creed of those that indulge in the many various forms of cyber-crime, we must extract some significant meaning from the interactions, discussions and messages, which are posted on their online spaces. This will mean digging down beneath any face value appraisal that we may assign to their social interactions to find other meanings and interpretations. We may need to take a psychological perspective in which we examine the influence of social situations upon the individual and the possible impacts of socialisation upon certain forms of behaviour. Also, to better understand what it means to have an online presence we will draw upon some of the great philosophical ideas and see what they can teach us about our online lives and what it means to have an on-line 'self'; how can an individual define their 'self' differently 'online'.

### **The KAT Rules of Sharing.**

Acceptable behaviour online is not simply a case of unregulated utterances directed at whoever is there to receive them, quite often users seek to regulate the behaviour of others. For example, the 'Do's' and 'Don'ts' of file sharing websites can be best summarised by examining a thread entitled "*KAT Rules for Dummies.... A quick reference guide*" (KAT, 2011 – see Appendix two, pp.61-88) which gives users a general guide to 'good' behaviour. Interestingly there are more 'Don'ts' than 'Do's', implying that the emphasis is upon placing controls upon behaviour rather than the positive re-enforcement or of praising 'good' behaviour. There are eight 'Do's' which range from specifics about avatar size and 'sig' limit, to more general rules such as "*Help in every way you can*" (*Ibid*) and "*Be creative and have fun*" (*Ibid*). Here it should be observed that there is a heavy emphasis upon appropriate communication; with users

asked not to spam, to report fake torrents and communicate with moderators to solve problems. It is generally observed that these positive rules do contain within them negative aspects as they seek to impose some sort of restriction and to regulate for the common good, so it could be said that it promotes conformity and obedience rather than active engagement. Here it is worth mentioning that Nietzsche's notion of '*slave morality*' will play a significant part in our understanding of these behaviours, but more on that later.

When we move onto the list of '*Don'ts*' we see two types of rules; rules which seek to regulate bad behaviour (naturally) and rules which seek to regulate the '*sharing*' activities of users. Some of the rules clearly crossover from the list of '*Do's*', such as requests not to spam inboxes, be rude or flame (targeted attack on a user by others) and not to post "*obscene, racist, hateful, rude or threatening*" content. The regulations for controlling bad behaviour are naturally more complex and explicit than those suggestions for good and deal mainly with infringing behaviours relating to '*sharing*'. For example, there are quite stringent rules concerning the types of pornography which can be shared between users:

*"9- The following types of pornographic materials are NOT welcome on Kickass-Torrents:*

- Child pornography;*
- All types of zoophilia;*
- Any materials that involve real sadism, masochism, torture and violence;*
- Real rape and forced sex .*
- Any type of pornography that may provoke violence, conflicts or hatred.*

*If you upload any of these torrents your profile will be deleted and IP banned without warning."*

*(Ibid)*

Other rules deal with behaviour, which affects what we could call the administration of torrents, in other words actions which would have a direct impact upon the function of the community. Some of these resemble the rules of etiquette you may expect to find in a private members club or in a sporting arena:

*"Don't give links to torrents outside of kat unless it's not found on kat and is clean  
Do not, rate, or give feedback more than three times total per torrent.  
Do not multi comment on torrents.  
Do not comment or rate torrents that you personally have not downloaded  
Do not comment or rate your own uploads. (it's ok to answer questions or give help)  
Do not abuse the rep points system*

*Serial numbers are only allowed by PM  
Do not argue with mods in the open forum. (Use the pm's to discuss things)"*  
(Ibid)

The issue of identity is tackled by one rule which simply states; “12- Don’t create multiple accounts.” a catchall rule that is not expanded upon, the brevity of which perhaps reflects the futility of enforcing such a rule.

From observing these rules it became apparent that the emphasis is clearly placed upon discouraging unwanted forms of behaviour, good behaviour is described in less explicit terms and from that it can assume that it should be taken as ‘*common sense*’. Bad behaviour is censured, and good behaviour is taken as read, if you are doing nothing wrong then you’re not being chastised and can enjoy the privileges afforded by membership of the community. The emphasis is on conforming to the ideals of the group and you are rewarded for the correct/acceptable behaviour by inclusion and the benefits that status entails (i.e. access to privileges).

Codes of conduct are given further codification in a thread entitled “*KickAss Netiquette – all members please read*” (started by user ‘*Suzitastik*’ – KAT Elite member, 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014, see Appendix Two), in which netiquette is defined as “*a set of rules for behaving properly online*”. Amongst the ten rules of “*respect, ethics and tolerance*” are entreaties to: “*Remember the human*”, “*Know where you are in cyberspace*”, “*Respect other people’s time and bandwidth*” (Ibid) as well as using the correct grammar to avoid accidentally offending or breaking the social mores. Also there are commands which seek to promote civility by “*Help(ing to) keep flame wars under control*”, “*Be forgiving of other people’s mistakes*”, “*respect other people’s privacy*” and for those with status “*Don’t abuse your power*”. Social solidarity is the aim with advice to “(L)ook after your community and your community will look after you” (Ibid).

Above all the one golden rule of the KAT Netiquette espoused by ‘*Suzitastik*’ is:

*“Golden Rule: Treat others as you would like them to treat you”*

(see Appendix Two, pg.31)

With this rule we immediately can see parallels with both Immanuel Kant’s notion of the

*'Golden Rule':*

*"Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."*

(Kant, cited in Blackburn 2008, pg.154)

And also with the Christian belief as it is written in Matthew 7:12:

*"So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets."*

(Biblehub 2014)

This doctrine is by no means confined to these examples alone, but what I can see from these instances is the moral genealogy of the netiquette on the Kick Ass Torrents and how these community values are a form of *'Slave Morality'*.

### **Slave Morality**

Contained within some of the roles of the social structure of the file-sharing community are elements of power and authority over others; note for example that the user known as *'Suzitastik'* is listed as *'KAT Elite'*. There is a stratified hierarchy in this community based upon achievement in which users can gain status and therefore power, which will distinguish them from others. Bound up within the process of sharing and helping others is a process of accumulation, a stockpiling of credentials to justify a future higher status amongst users in the community. In the community thread, *"The Beginners Guide To The Site"* (KAT 2012, 30.09.12), the Super User known as *'AhrimanThorn'* outlines the steps by which one may improve one's status on the site. Users are ranked from those who individually have the least power (simply called *'User'*), through the various stages to the highest rank of *'KAT Staff'*. Status is earned by your activity; you can increase your *'rep'* (reputation) depending upon how you interact with others; reputations can go down as well as up, so the emphasis is clearly upon being helpful within the community. Those that are elevated become part of the administration of the site:

*"All of those who have an elevated position here work without pay. They give their free time to ensure the smooth running of the site and try to make the experience for all of us a good one; please do try to be patient with them because they are often kept busy indeed, if you need help though they are here for you."*

(AhrimanThorn – Super User. KAT 2012, 30.09.12)

When users achieve an elevated status that gives them power over other users, it separates them from the *'herd'* of the community and allows them to promote cultural values within the microcosm of the community. The file-sharing community appears at first glance to be a democratised meritocracy, in which all can achieve greater status if they are willing to conform to the norms of the group to score achievements which translate into status. The greater the achievement, the greater the status, but this also means the greater the conformity and sublimation to an ideal form of behaviour. It can be seen here that, whilst there are some users that rise above the rest, most users will remain subordinate to a higher class of individual that exercises power over them. But, whilst the superior ones have power, it can only be obtained by exercising the golden rule, thereby promoting and perpetuating a *'slave morality'* amongst the file sharing community. They are in fact no more than a superior form of *'slave'*, championing the sentiments of the *'herd'*.

Nietzsche's notion of a *'slave morality'* is rooted in Christian morality, which he believed promoted conformity and mediocrity, the passive acceptance of moral values amongst human *'herds'* with obedience being the order of the day. These human *'herds'* are commanded by a small number of individuals that have elevated themselves above the *'herd'* by exercising *'The Will to Power'*. It is important to remember that this *'will to power'* refers to mastering your passions and controlling them, (i.e. self-control). This for Nietzsche is a process of evolution in which the strong have a duty towards the weak and that domination of the weak is almost a by-product of this process because the weak do not have self-mastery.

Nietzsche describes a colossal process by which the sovereign individual is a person that is *"unique, freed from the morality of custom, the autonomous 'super moral' individual ... (a) man of personal, enduring and independent will..."* (Nietzsche 1887, pg.45). Nietzsche cited Napoleon (amongst others) as an individual who walks to the beat of their own drum and rejects popular morality to engineer a greater plan or purpose to master their own destiny. Once this mastery of the self has occurred the individual also gains mastery over circumstances, to be responsible for oneself and affirm oneself (*Ibid*, p.46). The sovereign individual develops a conscience and his standard of value means that his word can be relied upon.

File sharers, by contrast, have become *'False Masters'* to excuse and rationalise their actions. They undergo a process of negation, which seeks to undermine certain aspects centred upon

acquisition and financial exchange, followed by re-evaluation based upon free exchange and sharing which seems to have occurred. It is during this re-evaluation that file sharers gained the upper hand, yet clearly not all file sharers are equal with some trajectories going up and others descending or never rising above a lower level.

It could be argued that a '*slave morality*' gave birth to the file sharing movement and it is this '*slave morality*' which sustains it through time. The '*will to power*' is a creative force, which generates and is not parasitical, hence the disdain for '*leechers*' within the rhetoric.

The '*slave morality*' is born from feelings of '*ressentiment*' (*Ibid*, pg.25) and the suffering of impotent individuals who find themselves powerless. These '*weak*' individuals create a belief for themselves which helps to rationalise their suffering and comforts them. The strong individual exercises their '*will*' and rejects this moral sense, which impedes their freedom. In other words, the strong have rejected the moral, religious and institutional ties which bind the individual, sublimating their will. In file sharing networks we can see this '*ressentiment*' played out in actions, such as the actual act of '*sharing*', which involves negation and the re-evaluation of values. In other words, the content must have some '*value*' otherwise people would not '*share*' it, but that value is no longer financial. The '*goods*' exchanged still retain their value as '*cultural capital*' (Bourdieu, 1974 pg.175), but not economically after this re-evaluation. In this sense, the file-sharer is a parasite '*leeching*' off the productive labours of the strong that have become creative by self-improvement. In this act of '*leeching*', the parasite negates the aesthetic values of the creative labours of others and reduces them to a mere commodity, a process of negation and revaluation. Worse still would be to emulate those creative souls with countless inferior imitations, thereby creating a banality in which the original is lost within a sea of dross.

Other than actions, language is a primary way in which re-evaluation occurs on file sharing networks and on the internet generally. With so much meaningful exchange mediated by language and our interpretation of it as we communicate electronically, it is important to realise its importance. To understand the role that language plays in forming and sustaining hierarchies; let us examine the '*slave morality*' further and unpack some of the detail contained therein.

For Nietzsche, the '*slave morality*' is born out of revenge and directed towards the strong with notions of good behaviour for rewards in an afterlife, which Nietzsche sees as fictional.

Therefore, the *'will to power'* is a life affirming concept which promotes inner strength and creativity, focusing on creative endeavours by controlling the forces and influences which come to bear upon us. One of Nietzsche's most famous aphorisms "*God is dead*" (2013 125 pp.119-120) could be understood as a rejection of the Christian ethic and a reference to his doubt of an afterlife. This notion was further developed by Freud who states that a belief in *'God'* is created by humanity once faith in one's parents has been lost; that one must create a replacement for parents (God the Father) which gives our life some meaning and purpose.

Therefore, the victory of a *'slave morality'* (as Nietzsche perceives it) is the morality of the weaker triumphing over the powerful (the *'herd'* over the individual) and imposing their own system of values which can trigger a change in dominant values, the weak become the strong and old values are rejected as worthless or evil. The idea of the *'Übermensch'*<sup>3</sup> does not refer to any notion of Aryan ethnic purity (as promoted by the Nazis during the Second World War) or comic book super hero characters, but rather it refers to a quality within the individual, which can accept their own moral philosophy. The *'Übermensch'* refers to the act of overcoming *'man'*, striving for betterment, overcoming one's basest instincts. It is this moral improvement and strength through self-reliance which is promoted, rejecting a more primitive form of behaviour. The strong will says *'No'* to the *'slave morality'*, it does not follow the *'herd'* and rejects the beliefs of the *'herd'*, promoting an inner fortitude. So, for Nietzsche, *'good'* can be defined as a rejection of the *'slave morality'* or that of whom-so-ever defines (regulates) behaviour in a social group or setting. Although the *'Übermensch'* may share similar notions to that of the *'slave'*, he does so not from a mistaken belief in some religious/political doctrine but because morally it is the right thing to do. If they happen to share the same values, it is not for the same reasons. What separates the *'Übermensch'* from the *'Untermensch'* is the self-improvement, cultivation and forward-thinking independence of the former; whilst the latter revels in a backwards looking *'herd morality'*.

How can we apply Nietzsche's ideas surrounding these notions to the modern environment online and to the activities which take place there? If we continue to examine the situational factors which surround file sharing; for example, we can see that a form of *'slave morality'* is being played out, with morality of the weak (the file sharer) coming to dominate the values of

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<sup>3</sup> More commonly known as 'Superman' or 'Overman', however these interpretations have been avoided thus opting for the original *'Übermensch'*.

the stronger (the corporate bodies that produce content). Referral to the 'weak' and the 'strong' in this context it is not intended to be used in any derogatory sense, it merely makes the point that corporate bodies have more financial and lobbying power than the average individual. When individuals come together as a collective (i.e. in the collective activity of 'sharing') they can be said to possess a diffuse form of power. Perhaps what we are seeing is a shift of morality from the powerful (corporate) to the 'slave' (consumer), which has been enabled by technology as the will of the 'strong' is usurped by that of collective 'weaker' individuals with a shared morality. In time we may see this emerging 'dominant morality' itself being usurped and replaced as the power to influence others collected in individual roles within social structures.

Yet the situation amongst the file sharers and their relationship to each other and to the corporate giants they appear to conflict with is not as clear cut as this. On observing amongst file sharers, there is a stratified hierarchy which creates 'slaves' of differing status, in the same way that a corporation would have a management structure or an army its ranks. Hence in opposing the corporate giants that produce the music and films that they covet; they themselves have mirrored some of their organisation. They have created a structure which contains power and influence concentrated within certain roles (the 'Masters') and diffused across others (the 'herd'). But in attempting to create the role of 'Master', with all their hierarchies and achievements; all the 'slaves' have done is to reinforce and emphasise the 'slave morality', thus rejecting that which seeks to rise above the mediocre. They have strengthened the 'herd', codified it and given it substance.

If, as Nietzsche posits, the strong seek to dominate the forces which operate upon them, then in an on-line social environment could it be said that the prospect of 'control' by the strong is more likely? By that, could we say that as social situations on-line are constructed in an abstract digital setting, could we harness the creative forces which forge these environments and master them? Can we become 'strong' on-line when we are 'weak' in the physical world? If we are weak in the physical world can we show our 'ressentiment' using the internet, thereby exercising a psychological need to dominate others?

Has this notion of a 'slave morality' been exacerbated by the medium of the internet or is it an expression of a popular culture, which exists outside the realm of the online world? Could it be that the internet is how we can become 'Übermensch', freed from the constraints of our physical being and social situation? Obviously, Nietzsche's notion of a 'slave morality'

precedes the birth of the internet by a century, but what is perhaps unique about the internet is the extraordinary global reach and immediacy compared with previous technological developments. This globally reaching communication has led to a greater commodification of information in which content creators and gate keepers (i.e. search engines, influential bloggers, etc.) hold powerful positions. This has gone together with the dominant capitalist economics of the free market and may indicate what Nietzsche calls the nature of the *'lust for power'* which is pursued for the sake of money and the accumulation of wealth, whereas before it had been for the sake of God (Nietzsche 2005) Does this accumulation of power (in the economic sense) indicate the *'will to power'* by individuals within the corporations that populate global capital? Have they harnessed the creative drive to succeed, mastering their own destiny? Are those that file-share the weak that exercise their *'ressentiment'* upon the strong by illegally sharing the content they create, is this their revenge manifest? Or are file sharing sites a bid for power by the strong within the *'herd'*? Are the corporations which make content just a different form of *'herd'*? Are we seeing *'slave herds'* doing battle against one another?

This leads us to the question of what role does the internet play in the distribution of how *'slave morality'* is realised in our modern lives? When we look at what we could be called a *'file sharing ethos'* can we identify a shared set of values and customs, which define a common interest (or *'slave morality'*). Also, could it be said that any *'slave morality'* amongst file-sharers is symptomatic of a reductionist cultural narrative? This type of reductionist narrative appears to have become an imperative for many with actions centred upon acquisition at the lowest cost (or ideally free AKA stolen) in accordance with the capitalist cultures of Western Europe and North America. If this is the case, then how are these narratives constructed and what forms of language do they use to operate online?

The use of semantic terms on file-sharing forums is interesting as it indicates a level of understanding about the online environment and the way in which *'realities'* are created using language. Users often refer to their physical self and online presence as two separate existences and often bemoan one while championing the other. What some users seem to value most is the freedom of self-expression that the internet provides and the ability to find likeminded people with whom to communicate and *'hang out'*.<sup>4</sup> This search for the likeminded, for

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<sup>4</sup> We can see this demonstrated in the forums of Kick Ass Torrents – See Appendices two and three

sameness could be a manifestation of Nietzsche's '*slave morality*' by seeking out social groups which conform to our beliefs and give us a sense of belonging. Alternatively, I would suggest that it is an exercise in the '*Will to Power*' as individuals seek to abandon the mediocrity imposed by the constraints of the '*physical*' world and embark on a voyage of intellectual discovery and achievement. After all, in the intangible environs of the internet you can create a new identity for yourself, re-invent your persona and live a cerebral existence through the medium of electronic technology. In this last scenario you could be an '*Übermensch*' on-line, but it could be argued that the '*Master*' would have no equals and would distance themselves from the '*herd*' except for situations in which they were dominating them. If this is the case, then the internet (or electronic media in general) becomes the tool by which they establish their dominance over others.

### **The 'Real World' Vs. The 'Apparent World'**

“The “real world,” however one has hitherto conceived it – it has always been the apparent world once again.”

(Nietzsche 1968 pg.305)

It may be possible that for some users of modern technology, the world could perhaps be divided into two theoretical spheres; the '*real*' world of the intellect in which thoughts and values resides and the '*apparent*' world of the senses, which provides us with sense experience. Here the influence of Immanuel Kant in which an external world of existence informs our understanding of the world and our intuitions which give us a sense of what things mean '*a priori*'. It is our experience of things that happen to us, coupled with our intuition that shapes the meaning and direction of our interactions online. For example, our intuition may tell us how to behave in social settings, but our experience of the online world may be at odds with this belief. So here we have a conflict between the way that we *should* behave and the way we think we *must* behave, leading to a form of synthetic judgment (Kant 2000 pp.261-262). In situations where this judgment manifests as aggression then we can say that a deviant/anti-social act has occurred; potentially because the '*deviant*' made the wrong judgment, did not know how to behave properly or was immature.

If we were to accept this duality of real and apparent worlds at face value and apply it to our modern existence a parallel could be drawn between our intangible existence online (via, Facebook, chat rooms and alike) and our physical existence of work, eating, sleeping and so

forth. Indeed, it could be argued that for a significant portion of today's population existence has physical and intangible components reflected in the use of technology, which shows every sign of increasing as generations are introduced to communications devices from an increasingly earlier age. If you are disenchanted with your circumstances in the '*apparent*' world you could invent an alternative persona with which you come to identify as being the '*real*' you. You may even switch between the two spheres depending upon the situation, circumstances, inclinations or time of day. The two could be radically different from one another and reside within the same individual; there may even be multiple personas which co-exist without a hint of schizophrenia. Essentially these people are social actors, choosing which '*act*' to put on at any given time, creating personas which they inhabit to give them license to escape from the '*normal*' ascribed behaviour patterns.

This raises some interesting questions: is it morally acceptable to create a new persona if it involves the deception of others? For what purpose do individuals create these new identities? In addition, if an individual creates a new identity and steadily comes to identify more with this than their original one (in other words the one which another knows them by), does it cease being a deception and start to become the way that person *is*? Does the original identity then become the deception? Those that seek to undergo gender re-alignment surgery are quite clearly stating that their identity is in conflict and that, to resolve this internal conflict they create a new gendered persona; that outward physical appearance reflects internal thoughts and feelings. Does it therefore follow that those that inhabit multiple identities online are struggling with similar internal conflicts? Perhaps it could also be said that such conflicts are a symptom of a modern society in which we are forced into such conflicts by the ubiquity of modern ICT and the pressures to participate and conform to societal norms. Should you decide that you wish to retreat from the digital world and limit your use of modern communication tools, you may be viewed as '*odd*', '*eccentric*' or '*anti-social*' by a generation which has grown up using them. Also, by the act of non-participation you are effectively cutting yourself off from areas of modern life which are beneficial or are only accessed through ICT (i.e. online banking, news and weather updates, etc.).

How individuals define themselves with their allegiances and personal philosophy/beliefs is a strong aspect of an online identity. Strong sentiments concerning a greater good or higher authority/allegiance are prevalent on the internet. Even notions of mortality are tacitly dealt with by the language and constructions/conventions that are used in some online social forums.

Nietzsche's belief that Christian morals promote the belief that there exists an afterlife (which is of greater importance than your current existence), a notion (in his view an erroneous one) of immortality. We can see in some of the rhetoric of the internet that notions of immortality exist, for example RIP Facebook pages have become virtual grave stones for the 21<sup>st</sup> century in which the memory of an individual can be kept '*alive*' in perpetuity (or at least if people want to maintain it).

A person could select from a plurality of moralities, incorporating both moral and immoral in any online/offline setting. Individuals can research and select their own religious and ethical beliefs to suite their disposition. Christianity, Islam, Atheistic or the Pirate Party all host their own websites alongside a myriad of other philosophies, religions, genders and political persuasions waiting to be selected by the search engine's algorithms. If ever a '*slave*' wanted to find a mentality to define them, then the internet is certainly the place to do it. You can find your own form of '*slavery*' (belonging) online.

Nietzsche's conception of eternal recurrence (2013, pg.194) is designed to make us think in ways about rejecting a belief in a world which puts all values beyond it. That the sacrifice in this life reaps rewards in the after-life. If we can only realise that this subjugates the individual will and reason, then we could come to realise that there is one world, one life, one existence. With this revelation there is a feeling of empowerment, thus giving a sense of freedom from the moral restrictions of such beliefs

When belief, identity and belonging are closely linked (as in those of that have the Christian morality of the '*slaves*'), and if belief is lost, then so is identity and belonging. If one were adrift on a sea of doubt and uncertainty, one would perhaps seek to create one's own sense of belonging based on shared values with others of similar interests, such as a file sharing community or radical religious belief.

Secular belief systems have become increasingly popular, but they do not appear to have diminished religious beliefs and extremism in belief systems of all kinds; leading perhaps to conflict and what Nietzsche calls "*a symptom of declining life*" (Nietzsche 1888). Belief systems can be created by anyone and spread using the internet and other ICTs and is no longer exclusive in the purview of organised religious and political parties. One can become the

'*Master*' of any situation (however small) that gives your life definition and meaning and allows others to be drawn to you. You can create a persona and hide your identity, invent the rules and take command over your dominion and that of others.

So, by performing these actions one becomes a '*Master*', the authority within a domain which has a higher status above the '*herd*'. This is of course a perversion of Nietzsche's notion of Master Morality as it is not concerned with personal development but with status inflation. When one becomes a '*False Master*' or '*Slave Master*'<sup>5</sup> one has not mastered the self, instead the self has become mastered by the individual's '*ressentiment*' and become manifest.

A quality, which the internet possesses (compared to other mediums of communication between individuals) is the ability to be easily anonymous in real time (synchronous) as well as over a prolonged period (asynchronous). Before the inception of digital technology it was difficult to have a dialogue without being identified (and potentially placing yourself in peril or at least having to take responsibility for what you said and did)' now the internet has released its users from the shackles of identity. Should they desire to create a new identity or be anonymous, they now have the means to achieve this with the minimum of skill and application needed to reach this goal.

The power of anonymity in the online environment is to allow an internet user to collapse distance/time and create intimacy (minus identity), without occasioning any harm to themselves (although they may cause harm to others) and the opportunity to try out multiple versions of the '*self*'. Anonymity in this sense is situational as it requires the internet as a medium for communication to play out a '*role*' that the individual would not normally play. We are not anonymous in all social situations; although we may be '*part of the crowd*', we all have the potential to be identified unless we take measures to prevent it. Although being part of a crowd may help to lose our sense of personal responsibility (LeBon 1896) it does not absolve us from culpability. It is difficult to determine whether anonymity causes deviance or whether anonymity is a by-product of a user's desire to be deviant. The internet offers a powerful means of insulation from the consequences of deviant behaviour by de-individuation, shifting attention away from the '*true self*' and transferring it to extremely arousing external stimuli. It

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<sup>5</sup> The terms '*False Master*' and '*Slave Master*' has been created by the author and is not from the Nietzschean cannon.

is perhaps this notion of reduced accountability which blurs the boundaries between the criminal and legal, the moral and the immoral in the minds of *'deviants'*.

If an individual creates a new persona to commit acts which are generally considered to be deviant, does it then allow for adequate distance between the *'true self'* and the *'created self'*, so that they (the *'true self'*) is shielded from psychological and emotional (perhaps even physical) harm? A form of cognitive distant as a technique of neutralisation; "*I know I'm doing wrong but it's not really 'me' it's the 'other me', so I'm not responsible*". An individual can negate their neuro-agency (Owen 2014) and shift responsibility to a new identity which they feel subordinate to, thereby assuaging (neutralising) any guilt they may feel.

In a situation such as this it would be difficult to assert that a *'created self'* is a form of *'Master'* or *'dominant self'* created to wield power over *'slaves'* (the weak), because the intention is to conceal *'true'* identity. The true *'Master'* mentality would not shy away from identification by creating alter-egos engineered to persecute others. Therefore, someone who is an internet *'troll'* is not exercising the *'Will to Power'* but instead exercising their *'ressentiment'* at some inadequacy within themselves. Trolling in this regard would be the public expression of deeply held personal inadequacies (psychological and/ or social aspects of a person's disposition)<sup>6</sup> expressed as the *'herd morality's'* predilection towards *'ressentiment'*.

Social situations (whether online or in the physical world) are constructed from the arbitrary definitions which bind those involved, specifying what is acceptable and what is not, and the roles played within that group by individuals. So, in the case of a file sharing forum (for example) an individual will need to know what the correct behaviour is; what is expected of them by others and to be socialised into it. For example, they would have to know that it is acceptable to *'seed'* but not to *'leech'*, to be polite and not to *'flame'*. In this sense an individual will need to understand the situational rules in which they exist so that they can behave appropriately. Bound up within these environments is the individual's identity; this can be significant for any potential social mobility across hierarchies that the individual may hope to achieve. Put simply, the face must fit.

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<sup>6</sup> These views are diametrically opposed to the Christian moralistic framework e.g. 'Do not do unto thy neighbour that you do not want to be done to'.

Identity is important as the image you portray to others will help fellow users create situational settings in which to place you, as in Goffman's notion of role playing and creating impressions for an audience. For most users, situational rules would appear to be obvious (or taken for granted) and it is when some individuals display improper socialisation that this becomes obvious. Most users unconsciously adapt to the new social situation, cautiously at first then with growing confidence as they learn the social structures and dynamics of a group. When one transgresses the norms of a social group one must be accountable for the actions one takes, (i.e. we must take responsibility and face the consequences). But to be transgressing rules/norms/morals whilst being anonymous requires cloaking your identity (masking the quality that makes us accountable by facing censure) which will make us free from the consequential actions of others but not from our own conscience.

The act of anonymising oneself may allow a user to create an illusion that they are empowering themselves with such actions. Nietzsche would probably classify the act of anonymising yourself as an act of cowardice because rather than overcoming your '*self*', you are essentially shielding yourself from the consequences of conflict. This act of shielding, preventing yourself from feeling pain (Nietzsche thought that pain would be the soil that the '*self*' would grow in) infers that you do not have the courage of your convictions, being more akin to his notion of the '*slave morality*' and religious sublimation. Your identity is suppressed, that quality of uniqueness which distinguishes you from the '*herd*' is removed, therefore so is your responsibility and your accountability. The exception to this would be in a case when an individual is living under the yoke of oppression and shields their identity to prevent physical harm; but even in this example, it could be classified as '*ressentiment*'.

As stated earlier in this work, one may have a very different identity in the real world to that displayed online. Here we are reminded of Freud and the conflict between id, ego and superego, as Gray (2013, pp.109–110) observes; "*For Freud there was no true self to be found. The mind was a chaos and imposing order on it was the task of reason.*"

It could be conjectured that a person's online identity may be a manifestation of what they perceive to be a particularly appealing trait in their behaviour, one which we come to see as defining who we are. Creating our own morality/norms of behaviour/values/social structure as suggested by Nietzsche in "Beyond Good and Evil" (2008, 201, pg.87), which creates an environment for 'new perspectives for moral judgements', (i.e. political correctness).

Or it may form part of a strategy we employ when we want to give a certain image of ourselves when creating a persona for others. As Twenge and Campbell (2009, pg.113) have also observed; “(S)ocial networking sites encourage users to highlight only certain aspects of themselves.” This allows an internet user to present them in the best light, displaying the best photographs and emphasising the best (or ‘coolest’) aspects of their personality. For example; on a file sharing website you may wish to establish your sharing credentials so that other users may confer some form of status upon you, quite often this will be linked to good deeds performed in the community. Another useful concept is Matza’s notion of ‘*Master Status*’ (Matza 1964) which may also be applicable if we consider the ability for us to select ‘*status*’ which we prefer to be identified with, whilst acknowledging the multiplicity of statuses we occupy.

Are we not several identities bound up in one? Different situations require different ways to deal with problems, people, etc. One status may not fit all within one individual? Because we are not homogenous compared to others nor even within ourselves (hence people are mostly unique, their personality made up of many layers), even within the relatively large, if not potentially infinitive framework of the internet, we still struggle to ‘fit’ in and such rules or framework may thus cause the conflict within ourselves due to the many, varied personality layers. Actors change their ‘act’ depending on the situation.

### ***Language and projection***

Bound up within the creation of an online identity is the negation, re-evaluation and reconstruction of language and the way that users reconstitute themselves using a variety of associations to help frame their online personas within a social context. In other words, the process by which people describe themselves through language, avatars, labels etc. that helps to give meaning to a temporal existence over the internet. New forms of speech then become taken for granted (their meanings within a specific situation become the norm because of their familiarity) and spill over into other areas of their social world. The value of language is re-evaluation so that meanings can be changed and biases made until the original values are lost. This process of negation is cited by Nietzsche to help explain how things can reach a state in which they have no value (*‘nihilism’*) ready for new values to be created. By creating new values for language then the ‘*Master*’ exerts their strength over the ‘*slave*’, control the meaning of the language and you control the meaning of the discourse. Glenny (2011, pg.95) highlights this attitude amongst internet deviants known as ‘*Lone Wolves*’ who are, “*often uninterested in*

*amassing a fortune and more concerned to elevate themselves as 'Masters' within their peer group."*

This is seen as a tendency to read texts in a negative sense, which is to say looking for the negative meanings and offence. This can have a detrimental impact upon the reader in that by engrossing oneself in certain texts could have a detrimental effect on one's psychological world view, perhaps more so on susceptible people and/or non-critical readers. This engrossment pushes out other perspectives and could be part of a radicalisation process.

The ambiguous and illusory meanings within language can obscure a word's original meaning, re-tooling language for a purpose can illuminate this further. As the structures and meanings that lie beneath the surface of language change the interpretations, it is possible that misinterpretation (deliberate or accidental) can occur as words are re-invented so that they can be repurposed, re-tooled and/or customised to give them new meanings and new significance. Because we understand the meaning of language through the context in which it is used, we must acknowledge the circumstances in which it is used to grasp the correct meaning. This allows meanings to be fudged to nullify or obscure their impact or true meaning, for example observe the picture in Appendix two (pg.34):

The message here appears to be that piracy is not theft as it does not deprive someone of the original item; it merely makes a copy of it. It underlines this point with the legend "*Imagine your car gets stolen, but it's still there in the morning*", clearly equating piracy with notions of physical property and completely ignores (negates) IP theft and loss of sales and other forms of loss. It fails to acknowledge the intangible nature of IP theft and its potential impact upon the '*real*' world. The language game here appears to be one of interpretation to repurpose the word '*piracy*' to shed any unlawful or immoral connotations. If we look at the circumstances in which this was used, a discussion thread entitled "*Is Piracy Stealing?*" (KAT 2013, see Appendix Two pp.34 - 60), to understand why it articulates such a sentiment.

There is much discussion surrounding the definition of the word '*Piracy*' and whether it is stealing, involving a lot of semantic arguments which incorporate political, moral and philosophical dexterity to achieve a certain aim; that of justification. In one impassioned plea the user '*QuillWG*' conflates '*stealing*' with the right to make copies of legally obtained material (i.e. copying a bought CD) and states that they buy more music now than they did

before they began ‘*torrenting*’. But they also state that they make illegal copies available to others when they say that they: “*only upload music that they like, and I only upload music that I have purchased a physical album of*”. They believe that as it is their ‘*property*’, they have unlimited rights to do anything they like with it; this includes sharing with others and making available for download via torrent sites. The rules of language in this situation are open to interpretation and we can take our meanings from it depending upon what we hope to get from it. In this example the aim appears to be that of justification and excuse, others could read this and feel better about their criminal activities.

Some users of file sharing sites like to place the blame for illegal sharing squarely at the feet of the content creators themselves, a neutralisation technique known as “*condemning the condemners*” (Sykes & Matza 1957). The user known as ‘*lycanmoon*’ states that the content creators are culpable because they have put temptation in the way of the online consumer by giving them the means and opportunity in which to pirate. Therefore, they argue it can be no surprise that intellectual property is copied, clearly implying that copyright theft is a foregone conclusion; it was quite simply destined to happen. This is an argument also used by ‘*villareal123*’ who states, “*why would they make blank cds for you to buy if your (sic) not going to do anything with them*”. One user calls manufacturers “*thieves and hipocrits (sic)*” (‘*Rhubarbfiian*’) over the levies charged on blank recording materials.

More rage (‘*ressentiment*’) is directed at the content creation business by users such as ‘*Manpie*’ who state “*Industry c\*nts can f\*ck off. About time they gave something back to us – POWER TO THE PEOPLE!!!*” This last statement could easily demonstrate Nietzsche’s ‘*slave morality*’ as there is clear ‘*ressentiment*’ directed at a successful industry and an unfounded sense of entitlement. The user ‘*Didi569*’ has a similar credo when they state that before the internet boom all files on the internet were free and it was not until “*the greedy bastards took over to rip us of (sic)*” that sharing became an issue. This statement completely ignores several important factors (such as historical context, technological development and such) and instead chooses to focus on a reified notion of industry as exploitative. They further go onto plead poverty and site industry rhetoric as being erroneous:

*“Get real, the idea of theft was not introduced till the music industry realized they had missed the train and the good old rip off days are over. If I could not get it for free I would not buy it, I’m broke. So how much are you loosing?”*

(user Didi569 cited in Noble 2011)

Intellectual Property Rights appear to be less deserving than personal liberties, as the user ‘QuillWG’ states:

*“The entire intellectual property monopoly can go to hell, and especially their supporters, who think it’s okay to stomp on my property rights because it’s their work.”*

(user QuillWG cited in Noble 2011)

Rhetoric such as this implies a sense of struggle, of opposing sides in a conflict and a means of justification for their actions. As we will discuss later in this chapter the creation of conflict and a deviant ‘*other*’ helps with social cohesion and gives the group a sense of identity by polarising opinions. But overall, we can see here how the ‘*slave morality*’ and ‘*ressentiment*’ play an important part in file sharing communities by fostering the ‘*herd*’ and weakening the stronger. The aesthetic appeal of art is reduced to a ‘*can’t pay, won’t pay*’ argument disguised as a class conflict between the haves and have not’s. In short, they are what Nietzsche may call “*cultural philistines*”, whose weaknesses (i.e. ‘*ressentiment*’ and the ‘*herd*’ mentality) have robbed them of the strength to appreciate beauty (Bull 2011, pg.151) by their botching and impoverishment.

This impoverished attitude is demonstrated by one user who states that they “*would never in a 100 years purchase or ever pay money to see*” (RT22) content but instead “*watch it for the simple fact that it’s there and it’s free*” (*Ibid*). What this person wants to know from their peers is the rhetorical question that: if you have no intention of paying for content, does it therefore follow that there can be no loss of sale? In other words; if an internet user has absolutely no intention of ever paying for content does this free them from culpability? They would appear to be arguing that no loss of sale appears to equal no crime committed or no harm done; even though content was consumed there was no deviant intent and consequentially no harm done. They then attempt to excuse their consumption of the IP by claiming that it is ‘*free*’, (a potentially erroneous notion depending upon the type of content and the context in which it was acquired) and that it was just ‘*there*’. The user then further qualifies their ‘*no harm*’ principle (a technique of neutralisation) by saying that no loss of revenue has occurred because they have no intention of ever selling or distributing it, but instead have recommended to another who then purchases a copy generating a sale. It almost seems to be making the absurd claim that they have done the content creator a favour who is therefore in *their* debt, a bizarre functionalist sentiment.

A question arises: is there a human trait for making excuses, rather than to own up to a mistake/criminal act? Small children demonstrate this ability beautifully: the sweet was there and because it was there, I ate it. I didn't put it there. There is an assumption that children should be equipped with morality and ethics, when in fact they must be taught it. Perhaps file sharers are people who have not fully understood or been taught morality and ethics?

Here it would appear that by claiming that intellectual property is there for the taking, as though digital downloads were merely pebbles on a beach, with no visible restrictions on acquisition, it frees the consumer from any culpability. This equates to a technique of neutralisation, which frees the transgressor of blame because of the availability of the object taken by placing the acquisition on the same footing as something found in the street. The clear implication being that; if the property is not directly in the possession of any one person then it is fair game for whoever stumbles upon it. It ignores any moral obligation that we must hand in lost property: and it becomes morally acceptable to acquire in this way as though one had picked up a coin in the street and allows us a meta-rule (Goffman 1971) by which we can account for our actions by way of an excuse which does not make us directly accountable.

Let us momentarily set aside the conceptual implications of the term '*free*' as it appears here, the concept of content just being '*there*' requires some unpacking. It is reasonably safe to assume that in an on-line environment nothing is simply just '*there*', it must be placed. So, to consume it you would have to actively seek it out to acquire it. To give an example: if someone wanted to download the latest James Bond film (because he/she had an interest in it but had absolutely no intention of paying for the experience), then they would have to source a free (in other words illegal) copy. This would require a certain amount of technical ability and resources, plus knowledge and application to find the relevant file; even then it would not be clear whether it was the correct content and quality until the file was opened in the appropriate media player. In addition to this, I would have to wait for the file to download which could be a considerable length of time depending on file size, band width, etc. All these conditions undermine the concept of items simply being '*there*' to stumble across as though they were part of your daily routine (unless your daily routine consisted of digital piracy, of course). Furthermore, there is the contradiction between having no interest in experiencing the material and going through the steps to download it. The conflicts suggested by these arguments are at odds and bely the notion that digital piracy can be done '*accidentally*' in these circumstances.

The ethos of '*sharing*' is emphasised with this statement "*sharin is carin so forget that its stealin why you on here in the first place (sic)*" ('*lisaleo*'). With an acknowledgment here that it could possibly constitute theft, we see how the socialisation process occurs through peers and those in the hierarchy. This is consistent with the neutralisation technique known as '*an appeal to higher loyalties*' (Sykes & Matza 1957), namely that of the community; whilst acknowledging that logically somebody must have been deprived of their property.

The argument put forward which posits the notion of sharing as a form of cultural practice, which big business is attempting to control and restrict because of potential damage to profits is clearly Marxist in origin. The sentiments expressed are ones which suggest a bulwark against Bourgeoisie's cultural commodification yet are more aligned with the '*Lumpenproletariat*'. These sorts of arguments help to polarise the debate about intellectual property creating an enemy which binds the group together, what Mead (1934) called a '*generalised other*' (1934). By creating a deviant '*other*' group cohesion is maintained by having a shared experience and fostering a common sense of identity, sharing a metaphorical '*place*' online in which to share similar views. Increased exposure to a social group or setting will help to increase the influence that the group has upon the individuals within it and help to perpetuate it. A social situation in which sharing is the dominant ideology must have an open and inclusive nature with participation being the order of the day. Share and share alike not only becomes the motto of the group it becomes the purpose without which the group may not exist, a form of collective consciousness.

There is an interesting parallel between this spirit of participation with the '*everybody does it*' justification for cheating as highlighted by Callahan (cited in Twenge and Campbell 2009, pg.207). If cheating is a norm of behaviour, then to abstain from cheating would put an individual at a disadvantage; therefore, obtaining an unfair advantage (i.e. illegally downloading and sharing content) becomes customary within an online community.

To give the reader an insight into how deeply ingrained the culture of '*sharing*' is within the on-line community (and the wider population), we must examine a post by the user '*tonowando*' in which they reproduce an alleged White House Blog written by Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator Victoria Espinal (dated 23/02/2010). According to this thread Espinal asked the public for their views and suggestions about IP and amongst the many

anonymous replies is one which details how over their life time they have ‘shared’ various media with others. They state how they shared comic books, vinyl LPs, 8-track Tapes, Cassettes, VHS Tapes from the 1950s through to the year 2005 when they bought a home computer. After a while they “*found that the internet was a community like a town or a city*” and “*found that this Internet community was organised around sharing*”, so they began using the internet to share, not just media but also advice and information. This person concludes their statement by asking whether a lifetime of ‘sharing’ equates to a life of crime; “*from my first 5 cent comic book back in 1955 to my Internet sharing in 2010, have I lived a life of crime, breaking the rule of law?*” The argument here is one of acceptable behaviour under previous circumstances (situational frames) being extended into current circumstances. This person does not differentiate between the ‘physical’ and the ‘virtual’ or the ‘past’ and ‘present’, rather they lay claim to acceptable cultural practice making behaviour (an appeal to higher loyalties in disguise).

Interestingly, the debate is not entirely one sided, some take issue with the claims made by others and point out the flaws in reasoning, the user ‘*MuzikMaestro*’ states “*No matter what bs reason we try to make it sound like it’s not stealing it is*”. The user known as ‘*Scarlet\_Blade*’ makes the distinction between tangible and intangible goods and points out the possibility that “*most torrenters (even myself most likely) probably take more than your average house thief*”.

Perhaps notions of negation, re-valuation, language games and neutralisation techniques can be crystallised in this statement by the user ‘*Scarlet\_Blade*’; “*It really depends on your personal belief of what ‘stealing’ actually is*”. This seems to sum up what we might consider how each person qualifies their activities and assuages any potential feelings of guilt that they may feel. This sentiment is echoed by one user who replies to another rather lengthy diatribe with: “*the jist of your argument seems to be that you don’t agree with the laws of your land so therefore it isn’t stealing?*” (‘*steveosafc*’). This typifies the self-serving logic of the language game used by some file-sharers to assuage their culpability, to negate and re-evaluate the meanings of the language they use. An over-riding sense of entitlement coupled with a perverted sense of ‘injustice’ directed towards their personal circumstances.

Most users that will read the views expressed in this thread will be individuals that participate in downloading activities, some of which may contravene copyright laws. They will also have been demonised in the popular press and they may well have feelings of guilt or

culpability (albeit subconsciously) surrounding their activities. The language game in these cases would seem to be the re-affirming of the legitimacy of their activities by repurposing (re-evaluation of) the language to suit their needs. As alluded to before, this may very well be a manifestation of the '*denial of responsibility*' used as a technique of neutralisation by those widely considered wrong doers. But for the language game to work in these circumstances, it requires acceptance by a group of people to reinforce its meaning. This self-reaffirmation between individuals would require the creation of a double standard in which they create a new form of behaviour for their on-line self which is different from the off-line self. Put simply, they would not behave in the same way that they do on-line as they do in person, they create a situational frame for themselves.

As previously stated, personas are created online by users in a way Goffman (1959) would describe as a '*front*' or performance, which users act out to create an impression for onlookers based on context and environment. In this example, personas are created from textual elements that are weaved from familiar terms and acknowledge labels (such as being called a '*pirate*') with personalised elements (such as gender or real name) or attribute (being a student or football fan). The resulting synthesis can indicate something about the user which tells us about their self-awareness or self-knowledge and how they come to view their self in this situation; and helps to re-enforce their identity to themselves and others '*Master Status*' (Matza 1964). This chimes with Heidegger's philosophical notion of ontology in which being is derived from examining our experiences (phenomena), how they appear to us (phenomenology) and becoming aware of the limitations of our environment. This examination of '*being*', of knowing what it means to exist within the limitations of our ontology may influence the status we prefer to be associated with (rather than the one which is conveyed upon us externally). Therefore our '*online self*' may be heavily influenced by these factors, dictating the limits and appeal of aspects of personality and behaviour traits when constructing a social image; even rejecting the limits placed upon us in the circumstances of the physical world.

As we have briefly discussed before, it is entirely plausible that users may have multiple '*selves*' which they can pick and choose from depending upon social situation, preference, desire or any other number of variables. Owen's concept of psychobiography (2015, pg.18) can give us an insight here. Each identity may represent an individual aspect of an individual's personality that they may wish to present as the dominant aspect at any given time, depending upon the asocial, inherited aspects of the person or disposition (*Ibid*). On-screen personas may

be complex and become a form of role playing, especially if the behaviour contrasts with the normal everyday behaviour of that person (for example a normally polite person being rude and aggressive online). This may help to explain the “*schizophrenia of crime*” (Burke 2009), the “*apparently contradictory duality of attitude to criminal behaviour*” in which an individual can indulge in deviant behaviour and whilst maintaining an expectation that others will not transgress their personal rights. It would help us to understand how seemingly ‘*normal*’ people commit ‘*deviant*’ acts in private whilst maintaining an image of respectability in public. Individuals may simply be choosing their persona dependent upon that situations that they ‘*drift*’ into and their disposition at that time. This is not to undervalue the effect of agency on the individual; rather it is to say that agency is expressed through the selection of preferences from personas (situational norms) that we already have or can invent.

### **Situational ethics and decision making**

We may have to evaluate the variety of social situations that individuals find themselves in and discuss the situational ethics that each situation presents; and how these must be viewed in context (with an eye towards flexible causation). Here we look towards Owen’s (2015) conception of ‘flexible causation’:

*“...a flexible picture of causality in which genes play a part, but environmental influences and the underlying mechanisms pertaining to psychology play a part also”.*

(Owen 2015, pg.26)

This ‘situationalist’ approach will have to view the individual as a locus for the various influencing factors, external and internal, in which the decision-making processes are made, placing the individual right at the heart of the meta-theoretical framework. Flexible causation affects the way in which rules are applied, depending upon the different circumstance offered to individuals, and then the opportunity to employ self-serving logic with a conflicting morality may occur. As we have seen previously in this chapter users re-interpret the meanings of language relevant to the needs and draw some dubious moral conclusions in the process. This ability to hold contrary or opposite moral beliefs is common amongst internet communities and is by no means confined to file-sharers, or indeed the internet, the internet just makes it easier to exercise this moral flexibility.

As Tapscott (1998) points out, the internet is an environment which is in flux, boundaries

change as do the perceptions of normative behaviour depending to some extent upon the environment in which they emerge. These boundaries are tested by deviant behaviour, behaviour which could be an expression of personal power and autonomy or a manifestation of role confusion. File-sharing communities have cultures with hierarchies just like other social structures with some individuals achieving status above that of other members. It is within these boundaries that individuals come to form meaningful incarnations of themselves which they wish to project to others to portray some significant aspect of their personality at that time. Aspects may change depending upon the situation (who is present, disposition, biological factors, etc.), so utility is perhaps the criteria upon which persona is selected. The likelihood may be that certain aspects of behaviour will be re-occurring depending on individual disposition, for example if an individual is prone to aggressive and bullying behaviour online then it would be fair to say that that person has a predisposition towards bullying and aggression which may precede and/or exist without their internet use. The desire to bully others online may indicate a desire to be a bully prior to internet use but may also indicate a lack of means to accomplish this. Similarly, if one wants to share music with friends in a pre-internet environment then it is reasonable to expect one to bring this type of activity into their online world.

Mary Midgley (1978) suggests that human beings have evolved with a natural, innate need for a culture of shared human aims and values (pg.44). If we consider what this means within the context of an online community, would it help us to understand these temporal experiences? Online communities such as these also give its members' certainties such as kinship and an unambiguous set of social obligations. In a world of uncertainty, users can take solace in the relative calm and '*normalcy*' of a chosen on-line environment. In this plane of existence, an individual can have (for them) an agreeable identity which is accepted by others whilst not placing their 'real world self' in jeopardy. The online space is an extension of the public sphere, which the state cannot effectively control and gives individuals with a shared intent an opportunity for reasoned dialogue as espoused by Habermas (1962). As generations change behaviours, adopting strategies in which multiple personas become a part of everyday life, then this may be passed on and eventually become the '*norm*' of behaviour; an accepted part of everyday life.

At the heart of normative behaviour is the decision-making process that the individual must make before acting upon a course of action. The decision-making process involves the

assumption of knowledge and the sifting and weighing of evidence, the individual becomes the locus for a complex flow of social and biological information in which any component part may carry more influence than the other.

As a starting point the author has taken the concept of *'drift'* as describing a state in which an individual is neither committed to nor actively against deviant acts, they *'drift'* through different social situations in which they may find themselves presented with the opportunities and means to commit deviant acts (Sykes and Matza 1957). It therefore does not automatically follow though that the individual will commit deviant acts just because they are presented with the opportunities. Many people find themselves in situations where they could commit some act of transgression without any other person being aware, but refrain from doing so; the question then becomes, why not transgress? What influences that individual's decision making to make them not want to transgress the moral and legal imperatives? Why obey the rules?

The next question we must ask ourselves is why do some decide to commit deviance and others do not? What influence was there which made them override any law-abiding or moral sense that the individual had and enabled them to decide to commit a deviant act? We must also ask the question at what level is the individual aware that they are committing a deviant act? Do they see their behaviour as acceptable or does the individual employ a form of sense deception (i.e. a technique of neutralisation) or other self-serving logic strategy?

For any answers to this we must look upon the forces which come to influence the decision-making process and build a theoretical framework, which helps us to understand the complexity involved in making it. It is this understanding of how the decision-making process shapes behaviour that is key to *'Flexible Causal Prediction'*; it is the rationale which underpins the notion of *'neuro agency'* in individuals and demonstrates how *'decision making'* is exercised. An important aspect to acknowledge in this framework is its flexibility, which is meant to reflect the diversity of humanity and the individuals within it and, although we may see commonalities between them it is worth bearing in mind that an individual can behave in unplanned and unexpected ways. Not all decision making is rational, and the framework developed within this doctoral study can acknowledge these anomalies in predicting behaviour.

To comprehend better how the decision-making process may work, Nietzsche's philosophical ideas surrounding *'the will to power'* and the *'slave mentality'* have been incorporated. This

will help us to understand how some may sublimate their decision making in favour of a *'herd'* mentality where it is simply easier to *'drift'* along with popular (or received) opinion rather than to question pre-conceived notions. This may provide us with ideas why some individuals come to lose their identity within groups, choosing to be part of a greater entity (a group/society/religion etc.) rather than assert their individuality. Nietzsche talks of *'ressentiment'*, amongst those afraid to stand alone, directed towards the individual that rejects common notions and questions the status quo. Also, being examined in this work is how this situation may be played out over the internet and in real life, looking at examples in which the *'slave mentality'* seeks to bring the individual into the *'herd'* and the suppression of autonomy (moral responsibility).

In addition, to help the reader interpret the correct meaning of the discourse that we may find in internet forums and other forms of discussion it is helpful to use the notion that language can be re-tooled or re-purposed to suit a need. 'Techniques of neutralisation' have already been referred to previously in demonstrating the purpose of re-tooling language in the individual's attempt to avoid troublesome ethical dilemmas which may give them cause to feel uncomfortable with some of the decisions they make.

During this work the subject of identity has also examined the subject of identity with reference to Goffman's (1959) notion of individuals as actors with *'front'* and *'back'* stage personas (1959) to explain how individuals can inhabit contradictory roles, what Burke (2009) calls "*the schizophrenia of crime*" (2009, pp.304-305). Again, we are looking at a decision-making process in which we consider how social actors decide to behave in a certain manner depending upon the situation. As situations change the decision on how to behave may change to accommodate the expectations of what is considered *'normal'* behaviour in a given social situation. The *'back stage region'* of behaviour refers to a regression from face-to-face interactions of the *'front stage'* type. When regression takes place, it allows for the normal standards of conduct to be swept aside, facilitating a more liberal approach to behaviour; such as being more likely to be candid, aggressive, rude and antisocial. Put simply, we are not putting on a *'front'* or mask by which we present our constructed image to the world, we voice our inner most thoughts without sugaring the ones which are the more unpleasant to avoid offending others. It may be that the distinction between *'back'* and *'front'* stage behaviours have become blurred across internet platforms, leading to poor decisions about how to act because the expectations are unclear. Some individuals may simply be bad at making those

decisions, thereby bringing their behaviour under the umbrella term of deviance because they have made poor decisions on how to act. Or, as Meyrowitz (1986, pg.139) points out “*whether clinical definitions of regression are actually defined situationally.*” In other words, behaviour patterns arise out of the different situational contexts in which the individual finds themselves.

### ***‘Flexible Causal Prediction’***

*“The world in which you live from day to day is made from habit and memory. The perilous zones are the times when self, also made from habit and memory, gives way. Then, if only for a moment, you may become something other than you have been.”*  
(Gray 2013, pg.193)

To understand this etiology of crime and deviant deviance in this context better and how individual situations and ‘*Flexible Causal Prediction*’ (Owen and Noble 2015) operate, there are a few terms created to help the reader to follow some of the concepts involved in the discussion.

These terms are:

***Causal Environments*** – the matrix of influences which play upon the individual in any given situation. As previously discussed, influences can be multiple and varied with different situations, consisting of varied influences to create an environment for a situation.

***Flexible Causal Prediction*** – The ways in which situations can influence and affect behaviour, for example, some influences may be more compelling than others. Significance will change depending upon the situation, for example, in a file-sharing situation there will be a high significance for the act of ‘*sharing*’, more so than simply ‘*leeching*’ (not sharing content). It is important to remember that influence does not determine behaviour, individuals are not causally determined.

***Situational Norms*** – The expectations (for example, how to behaviour) for situational environments; in other words, the context in which an individual is seen by others and themselves and frames their behaviour. Therefore, ‘*Norms*’ are made up of ‘*Influences*’ and help to create the ‘*Environments*’ in which individuals act and interact. Therefore, some situations/environments will have expectations of ‘*normal*’ behaviour; any deviance from the norm will be anti-social. These ‘*norms*’, like human behaviour, is plastic (pliable or mouldable)

and will vary depending upon the situation and react accordingly.

We can see here that to make sense of the decision-making process we must also employ some psychology to realise fully the mindset of internet users that (broadly speaking) indulge in ‘deviant’ activities. We must also develop an understanding of ‘causal significance’, which is to say that situations can affect behaviour and influence the attitudes and dialogue between individuals (Situational Norms). What we will be observing here is a locus between the psychology, philosophy and personal disposition (including biological factors) in tandem with societal factors which influence the individual within the situations they are presented with online (i.e. their causal environment). Overall this section will help us grasp the social/biological/psychological influences which are outlined in the meta-theoretical framework as being part of the decision-making process.

The genealogy of these ideas can be seen in the work of Owen (2015) and his genetic-social framework. Owen synthesises social, biological and psychological ideas into his meta-theoretical framework in which he:

*“...developed out of Sibeon’s [2004] anti-reductionist ideas to incorporate ten ‘new’ meta-concepts and an important focus on the biological variable in analysis which was previously neglected by Sibeon.”*

(Owen 2015, pg.18)

What we shall be discussing here is the effect that ‘Causal Environments’ may have upon the individual and what component parts of the situation have the most influence (Causal Significance) and how ‘Situational Norms’ affect ‘acts’ and ‘actors’. Overall, the intention here is to examine this aspect of the meta-theoretical framework (i.e. the situation that individuals find themselves placed in) so that we can discern fully the effect that influence has within the framework itself.

Nietzsche is scathing about the notion of cause and effect, stating *“that things- in-themselves cannot be related to one another as cause and effect, nor can appearance be so related to appearance”* (1968 553, pg.300). We may be deceived by our synthetic concepts, leading us to make incorrect interpretations on which to decide our actions. What must be emphasised here is the role of influence rather than determination in this situational framework; just because one is presented with certain choices within a situation, we can never fully predict the outcome. We can,

however speculate upon the probability that certain courses of action may take.

Owen's (2015) concept of functional teleology can help us in this regard in helping us avoid invalid forms of analysis whereby social phenomena is explained in terms of the 'effects' "where 'effects' refers to outcomes or consequences viewed as performances of functions." (2015, pg.18). Put simply it is a fallacy to explain the causes of phenomena if there is no intentional planning by actors. Concepts such as 'internalised racism' and 'sexism' could be examples of this.

### *Situations*

If we are to look at the situations that individuals find themselves in, then we must consider the requirements that are placed upon the individual within given situations and the rules that language imposes and their purpose. Returning to the notion of 'drift', if we consider that each actor may 'drift' into situations where they are presented with a system of rules within which each of these situations will help to define behaviour. Behaviour is then formulated by the individual based on a decision-making process which is influenced, in turn by these system rules as well as other forces (biology, stimuli, social pressures, etc.).

If, speaking in broad terms, society is not one whole system but rather a collection of smaller systems, coupled in series, parallel or opposition to each other and then the whole is a totality of systems, it therefore follows that individuals can inhabit differing situational systems and experience different power dynamics within each one; perhaps inhabiting several different personas and acting differently from situation to situation. They can, put simply, act according to the rules of the situation and experience a cathartic social environment on demand. Returning to Goffman's (1959) actor notion, we have here individuals acting out the different aspects of their personalities in different social settings with reference to the Language games and systems bound up in each setting.

We must be careful not to commit the cardinal sin of reification when we discuss 'actors', as Owen states:

*"An actor is an entity that, in principle, has the means of formulating, taking and acting upon decisions. Therefore, 'the state', 'society', 'white people' etc are not regarded as actors."*

(Owen 2015, pg. 20)

Reification therefore is ascribing qualities to an object or institution which does not have ‘neuro-agency’, the decision-making ability that allows us autonomy. We will see reification later in this work when we examine the rhetoric of some social justice movements and their attempts to demonise opposing groups.

Individuals may be drawn to environments which have certain situational norms because they feel some form of empathy with the ethos ascribed by the rules of the language games involved. The disposition of the individual will influence the decision-making process of that individual when they decide which situations they want to be involved with. Therefore, an individual may choose to place themselves in a situation that allows them to exercise their personal beliefs or philosophy. If this is the case, then the rules are clearly there to weed out opposition and define what is acceptable. If an individual does not adhere to the rules within a given situational system, then they will be deviant; for example, on the KAT social forums we have seen rules detailing what is acceptable behaviour; rules which in a different situational setting may not be applicable. The rules of situational settings are designed to promote harmony within the environment, but it is useful to remember that situational systems can be in harmony or opposite to the other systems that help the individuals involved forge their sense of identity.

An example maybe found in the act of sharing. On the KAT website, pornography is exchanged, yet there are rules which govern the types/variety of pornography which can be shared. It could then be stated that certain forms of pornography are acceptable and part of the norm for users of the KAT file sharing system. Sharing pornography with unknown individuals (i.e. strangers) forms a pattern of normal behaviour in these situations; you would not employ the same ‘Situational Norms’ in other circumstances. For example, you would not approach a stranger on the London Underground and offer to share pornography with them, even if you are subject to the same *‘influences’*.

An individual may define themselves with reference to their place within each situational system (with emphasis upon the situational system they prefer) and their relationship within these systems both oppositional and collaborative.

*“About the philosopher... there is absolutely nothing that is impersonal; and it is above all his morality which proves decidedly and decisively who he is – that is, in*

*what hierarchy the innermost drives of his nature are arranged.”*

(Nietzsche [6] pg.9)

But whilst some individuals may find themselves drawn to environments in which the situations suit their own personal disposition, it does not follow that behaviour is causally determined. Just because there may be impulses, urges, desires and/or compulsions to seek gratification, it does not mean that the individual follows through with the requisite action. Such impulses, urges, desires and/or compulsions may exert a strong influence but there may be other factors in the mix which help to prevent them coming to fruition.

Individuals can react to events, as Owen observes: “Genes can be ‘switched on’, and external events-or free-willed behaviour- can ‘switch on’ genes” (2015, pg.21). Genetic impulses may be ‘switched-on’ by biological factors which generate behaviour that could be labelled as ‘criminal’ or ‘deviant’, when they interact with other social and psychological factors.

What has been explored here is the concept of ‘*Flexible Causal Prediction*’, a rule which states that in a situation in which actions and deeds can be chosen, certain factors may exert a strong influence over behaviour, but does not determine the behaviour of the individual. The individual could postpone, deny and/or delay the gratification that these strong influences may give to that person, sometimes in ways that (at first glance) seem to be illogical or counter-intuitive.

This conception of motivation is like Owen’s idea of neuro-agency; in that individuals possess the ability to choose whether they engage in criminal activities or not. That individuals can calculate the rewards compared with the potentially negative outcomes or actions which offend the moral prohibitions of society. Here this work differentiates in ‘*ressentiment*’ as a power force, which is where we return to Nietzsche’s concept of ‘*Übermensch*’, an individual with the ability to choose their own fate, resisting coercion and following their own will. In short, the human animal could be said to be a calculator acting under factors which influence their decision-making process, based on an object value system of pleasure/pain, sacrifice/rewards. Actions are made but not determined, although these could possibly be predicted (‘*Flexible Causal Prediction*’).

The following chapter will be taking the concepts discussed here and applying them to the act

of internet trolling. Some specific instances will be examined and the 'causal situations' described, which lead to the deviant act; together with the post hoc neutralisation techniques when individuals were brought to justice. The intention is to draw the reader's attention to the practice of internet deviance and how it occurs as an act commissioned within individuals.

## CHAPTER THREE

### TROLLING ON SOCIAL MEDIA

This chapter will be taking an in-depth look at the act of ‘trolling’ and examining the actions of convicted internet trolls and discussing the characteristics of trolling. The Nietzschean philosophies will be used to understand the actions of these trolls and their motivations. In addition, the techniques of Neutralisation to help explain and understand how an individual can commit a demonstrable harm and yet feel no regret or remorse. Also discussed will be the use of memes as a form of troll and how they can convey a message in a media where brevity is the order of the day. All these aspects are incorporated into the new concept of ‘*Flexible Causal Prediction*’. Let us begin with an examination of characteristics and the various modus operandi of the internet troll.

Internet Trolling is a form of behaviour that essentially delights in provoking strong, often emotional reactions from internet users. It shares some of the characteristics of cyber bullying and is quite often random and done for kicks; to relieve boredom or to satisfy some form of status anxiety. There are many subroutines of behaviour which come under the umbrella term of trolling, making it a difficult behaviour to identify and define. The author defines it as an act which entails seemingly uncalled for aggression and confrontation by a person who may withhold their ‘true’ identity. The intention is to cause anxiety, offence and harm, quite often justified in the name of fun or the exercise of free speech.

The ‘*Online Disinhibition Effect*’ (Suler 2004) is referred to by Cyber-psychologists as removing the breaks that identity would have upon behaviour, that anonymity becomes the catalyst which leads to toxic behaviours.<sup>71</sup> But despite Suler’s analysis of the factors which allow the breaks to come of behaviour, he does not address the fundamental notion of drive(s) towards a certain way of *being*. In other words, the internet and anonymity does not create deviance, it simply facilitates it; therefore, a drive towards deviance must exist prior to the mechanics of the ‘Online Disinhibition Effect’.

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<sup>7</sup> John Suler (2004) cites six factors in the formation of Online Disinhibition effect; 1). Dissociative Anonymity; 2). Invisibility; 3). Asynchrony; 4). Solipsistic Introjection; 5). Dissociative Imagination; and 6). Minimising Authority.

After the event, actions can be justified, or neutralised to employ a sociological term, to help rationalise behaviour and shield the deviant from any harmful notions of self actualisation (of realising the harm they have done to another).

### **Nihilism and The Will to Power.**

*“Young people, with their characteristic anger and awe, seem to find no peace until they have falsified people and things, so that they can vent their feelings on them: youth by its very nature is something falsifying and deceptive.”*

Nietzsche (2008, pg.31)

Any discussion of internet trolling must confront the question: why become a troll? Why upset and offend people in this way? What is it about the individual that compels them to deface a Facebook Memorial page and what possible pleasure can be gained from it?

This question can be answered in Nietzschean terms as a sense of ‘*nihilism*’ on the part of the ‘*troll*’, coupled with need to exert power over another individual. Then by exercising this power, the ‘*troll*’ can gain a sense of status over another, which they may not ordinarily experience and by defacing memorial sites, they are making nihilistic claims about the values that those sites espouse (family, friendship, mourning, etc.) whilst at the same time secretly coveting them. To understand this, we must first explore the Nietzschean concepts of ‘*Nihilism*’ and ‘*The Will to Power*’ in more detail.

### ***Nihilism and Trolling***

Blackburn (2008) defines ‘*nihilism*’ philosophically as “*the state of believing in nothing, or of having no allegiances and no purposes*” (Blackburn 2008, pg.252) and from a psychological perspective Colman (2006, pg.506) states that “*in its most extreme form*”, ‘*nihilism*’ is a “*denial of reality; more generally, denial of objective truth, or radical philosophical scepticism*”(Ibid).

Nietzsche himself says:

*“What is Nihilism?... The devaluation of the highest values... Nihilism stands at our very door. What I am about to tell you is the history of the next two hundred years. I describe what is coming, what must inevitably come, the rise of Nihilism.”*

(Nietzsche, cited in Kennedy 1909, pg.330)

As Tanner (2000, pg.36) points out, what Nietzsche means by '*nihilism*' is the denial of value, which if viewed in a '*trolling*' context would mean that the '*troll*' is denying the value of whatever is the target of their activity; not the denial of all value. For example, when Mr. X trolls a Facebook memorial page he is rejecting the values expressed on that page, he is saying that they are worthless and imposing his own set of values, which are there to cause offence or amusement. As Nietzsche argues '*nihilism*' steps back from the brink because the negation of value must have (as a pre-condition) a value in or of itself (Bull 2011, pg.123). Therefore, the negations of value would logically be followed by the imposition of new values, which seek to exert power and are symptomatic of the alienation arising from dissatisfaction and pessimism from within the individual. This could be classed as a form of '*self-narcotisation*', in which an individual could get over their internal void with acts of cruelty (Nietzsche 1968, pg.20).

'*Nihilism*' according to Nietzsche (1887 cited in 1968) is a "*symptom that the underprivileged have no comfort left*", and that transgressive acts are a display by the nihilist that they have placed themselves; "*on the plain of the opposite principle and also want power by compelling the powerful to become their hangmen*" (*Ibid*). So that in their actions a nihilist is making an assertion for power, despite the possibility that doing so may be detrimental to them. Some would have the void for their purpose rather than be void of purpose.

One of the functions of the Criminal Justice System is to punish people who have caused harm to society by breaking the law as a form of retribution. This retribution could also be interpolated as a form of '*ressentiment*' practice by the law-abiding against the deviant via officially sanctioned agents (prisons, police, courts). But we can also practice punishment upon ourselves and each other as individuals. Punishment is integrated into the moral fabric of our lives from being infants with the discipline of parents and guardians to instil a sense of right and wrong. Naturally we feel outrage at the trespasses of others and take glee in the suffering of the deserving offender. It is not surprising therefore to think that, as Nietzsche states:

*"To witness suffering does one good, to inflict suffering does one even more good – this is a harsh sentiment, but nonetheless a fundamental one, ancient, strong and human, all-too-human."*

(Nietzsche 2013, pg.52)

By exerting our will over another, we give ourselves self-affirmation that it is a form of revenge and pleasure in which we experience gain from the loss of another of another. As already noted an internet troll may be an individual who inhabits a lower social status than those which are the target of their attentions who enjoy some form of notoriety, wealth and status; conditions of existence which are absent in the troll's life. Therefore, the troll will gain satisfaction from the suffering (loss) they inflict upon the person with higher status delighting in the "*sheer violation; and the lower, the more abject the creditor is in the social scale, the more this delight will be cherished*" (*Ibid*, pg.50). The troll wants to paint the other as their social inferior, but what they are in fact making, is a tacit admission of their own perceived failures. It is their own internalised '*nihilism*' and alienation which is turned outwards as a form of revenge; a coping mechanism to distract them from their own shortcomings. It will also give them a sense of power in an otherwise powerless world that they inhabit.

An example of this self-referential '*nihilism*' can be found in the work of Furnell (2002, pp.48-49) when he discusses the online identity of computer hackers. In hacker culture "*many hackers regard their online name as being a whole new character*" and that the selection of aggressive names is a form of compensation "*because they feel inadequate in the real world*" (*Ibid*). It then becomes a matter of disguising your true self and projecting an image to be perceived by others. This could potentially be the genesis of self-image practices amongst internet deviants, which has its roots in hacker culture from the 1980s and 1990s. This is echoed by Glenny (2011, pp.86-88) who details how a young man named 'Renu' decided it was time to abandon his identity to become a hacker known as 'JiLsi', even adopting a pirate avatar to represent him online. His intention seems to be to escape the restrictions of his physical world (drug habit, debt, poorly paid employment and poor university performance) in search of prosperity and kinship.

### ***The Will to Self-Aggrandisement***

The 'Will To Power' is quite often mistaken as an act of dominance by one individual over another, of aggressive and hostile takeover or subjugation. This is most likely due to perversion of Nietzsche's texts following his death by the National Socialists and Elizabeth Forrester Nietzsche, with Nazi being soldiers sent into battle with a copy of Nietzsche along with their bullets. Also, the selective use of aphorisms taken out of context; "*What does not kill me makes*

*me stronger*”<sup>8</sup> (Nietzsche 2008), being a good example of how selective meanings have been used to establish the image of Nietzsche as a right-wing sage. Yet it is this common mistake which has influenced our postmodern society, especially if we consider the actions of apparently senseless cruelty perpetrated by individuals over the internet to consolidate their status. These individuals do not display the “*mockery of one’s own nature*” (Nietzsche 1977, pg.215) needed for self-overcoming, but rather mocks the values of others whilst attempting elevate their own position. It is the “*benefiting and hurting of others [which] are ways of exercising one’s power over them*” (Nietzsche 2013, pg.38); so, by committing acts of cruelty an internet troll increases their power and “*hurt those to whom we need to make our power perceptible*” (*Ibid*).

But what of altruism and the benevolence espoused by those that run the KAT website? Can those be exercised for similar reasons; the display of power over others?

*“We benefit and show benevolence toward those who already depend on us in some way (that is, who are used to thinking of us as their causes); we want to increase their power because we thus increase our own, or we want to show them the advantage of being in our power – that way, they will be more satisfied with their situation and more hostile towards and willing to fight against the enemies of our power.”*

Nietzsche (2013, pp.38-39)

By helping the average user of the KAT site an individual with status (for example a ‘Super User’ or ‘KAT Elite’) not only consolidates their own power and status but adds to the power of those lower in status because it elevates their own. It also gives the average users the concept of enemies with which to grow stronger and fight alongside those other users (the ‘herd’). The enemies in this case could be defined as the businesses which control and distribute content; the governments which legislate alongside those opportunistic companies; and individuals who seek to impose order and pursue copyright infringers.

### **Trolling and social incivility.**

*“...ignorance meets egoism meets bad taste meets mob rule.”*

(Keen 2008 cited in Twenge and Campbell 2009, pg.119)

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<sup>8</sup> This quote was prefaced with “*From the military school of life.* – “[Twilight of the Idols, Maxims and Arrows 8].

Evidence of trolling can be found all over the internet and there does not seem to be any part which has not been touched by this form of deviance. For this study we shall concentrate upon several sites and types of trolling which offer up some interesting questions regarding motivation, intent and reward. The phenomena of ‘R.I.P. Trolling’, which primarily takes place on social networking sites would appear to involve a premeditated and ‘*thoughtful*’ approach to their activities. We will also look at a less considered and more reactive form of trolling which we are likely to see on Twitter where instant messages can appear. This latter involves more reactive participation and perhaps less thought about the consequences of the actions of trolling. The intentions and purposes, along with the motivations and influences upon trolling will be discussed at greater length in forthcoming chapters.

Eleven characteristics of trolling behaviour have been defined as follows: (*Ibid* pp.114-118):

**1. Anti-social behaviour**

An anti-social action is one which seeks to disrupt the social cohesion of a given situation with disruptive behaviour. An example of this would be if an individual joined an online conversation (such as a Facebook feed) by being rude and ‘spamming’ and other elements that appear anti-social. Harassment and being the target of unwanted attention is a basic tenet of anti-social behaviour. Some trolls defend their actions by claiming that they did not know at the time that the behaviour they inflicted upon others was unacceptable; John Nimmo, it is alleged, did not know his behaviour was inappropriate (Cockerell 2014).

**2. Actions designed to cause offence**

The statements and actions made by ‘trolls’ are deliberately made with the intention to cause the most offence and upset, to wound individuals and groups of people with their explicit and extreme comments. This is the most obvious and possibly the most important understanding of the definition. Some comments may be ‘offensive’ to some, but do not constitute anti-social behaviour; as one might expect to occur during a heated debate. For ‘harm’ or ‘offence’ to be taken it will depend upon the context of the speech and the reaction of interlocutors to the utterance. It is important to acknowledge the intent of the utterance so that we do not confuse ‘trolling’ with free speech.

**3. Designed to mislead – ‘Fake News’**

This is a form of ‘spamming’ which is akin to ‘fake news’ stories that are circulated via social media to create a ‘buzz’. An example given by Noble (2017) is the false rumour that began to circulate in 2015 that actor Morgan Freeman had died in a car crash (see Appendix three, pg.89). It created a reaction and belief amongst users of social media for a short while, until it was debunked. This hoax (or e-hoax as it is known in connection with the internet) is linked to a form of predation known as ‘Catfishing’.

Catfishing is a social engineering technique common amongst dating websites which involves bogus social media profiles to mislead the victim into giving money, sending explicit/intimate photographs or as a publicity tool (Facebook ‘like’ farming).

#### **4. Provoked and unprovoked comments**

Unfortunately, an individual does not need to do a great deal to become the target for unwanted attention, simply by having a social media presence an individual can become the target of abuse. Internet abusers do not necessarily react to the actions of others, abuse can be a product of ‘*ressentiment*’ based on the subjective inadequacies of the troll. Their intention is to direct abuse at a suitable target and selection of this ‘target’ may be entirely arbitrary based on their mindset. When twitter troll John Nimmo was on trial for offences against the feminist campaigner Caroline Criado-Perez, his legal representative (Paul Kennedy) stated that “Nimmo had no particular opinion on the campaign but had seen the topic trending on Twitter” (Kennedy quoted in Cockerell 2014). Nimmo was simply following the ‘*herd*’ instinct of the ‘*slave morality*’. On other occasions trolls may well be reacting to an event which simulates their ‘*ressentiment*’, prompting an extreme over-reaction/unjustified moralising. TV celebrity Craig Revel Horwood became the victim of trolling when he and his partner (Damon Scott) announced their intention to adopt a child (Martin 2015). This obviously provoked a judgmental reaction amongst trolls because they are a same sex couple. The same occurred when Ruby Tandoh revealed on social media that she was gay (Pocklington 2015) where messages of support were mixed with offensive and cruel comments. The resentful trolls filter their experiences through a postmodern relativistic view of their circumstances and the perception of others. The trolls judge their inadequacies with reference to the success of others, thus the success of others is directly connected to the lack of success in themselves.

#### **5. Extreme in nature and content**

The 'rage' of the trolls is manifest here in the extreme nature of their speech. To get the greatest reaction, most trolling is quite extreme in nature. The online abuse may involve religious, ethnic, gender and racial slurs designed to stimulate the maximum amount of offence in sensitive individuals. For a troll to do this effectively they must possess a certain amount of empathy so that they can cause the greatest amount of offence. In this sense a troll must be 'sensitised' to the emotions of others to avoid confusion in the minds of the recipients which would dilute the impact of their sentiments. Generating fear would appear as an objective for the internet troll, as in the case of Sorley and Nimmo in which Judge Howard Riddle is quoting as saying that it is "hard to imagine more extreme threats" (quoted in Cockerell 2014).

## **6. Creates and defines victims**

Trolling helps to define the popular 'victimhood' narrative amongst internet users and is entirely dependent upon the perception of the 'victim'. Victims of trolling feel harassed and victimised with the 'untruths', slander and vitriol that the unwanted attention of a troll can bring to their lives. Not only do the aggressive acts of trolls create victims they also define them by highlighting an aspect of a user's identity and using this as the basis for the abuse.

It may be obvious from a user avatar/username/profile that they belong to a certain religion or ethnicity because they signal that 'status'; then this may act as the focus for the troll's abuse. From this a labelling effect may occur in which a victim may intensify (or amplify) the hurt that they experience out of proportion to the offence of the comment. It can even be the case that 'offence' is conflated with 'harm' even though the intention may be innocuous. Some claims to 'victimhood' are simply vehicles to push a '*slave morality*' and fosters a sense of vulnerability and the idea that special measures and treatment are required. Undoubtedly, trolling causes offence but does it constitute 'harm' in all cases?

It will also influence the offline world, as it did with MP Stella Creasey who had a panic button installed in her home (Cockerell 2014). Individuals may consider themselves to be 'survivors' rather than 'victims' to prevent themselves being doubly victimised.

## **7. Power and dominance**

During the act of trolling, the troll is attempting to exert their dominance over others, by being rude, offensive and threatening. The troll is displaying the '*ressentiment*' they feel in relation

to the perception of others. The success of others only highlights their own relativistic ‘*nihilism*’; their inadequacies which they haven’t dealt with. An act of trolling becomes an act of asserting dominance over others and consolidating their own position within their own relativistic opinion of themselves. By using belittling and aggressive behaviour, the troll intends to cow others in the ‘group’ and feel better about their own lack of achievement. If a troll presents a forceful and aggressive persona they are attempting to assert their authority over a group. Individuals within that group may seek to align themselves with the troll to protect themselves from the negative attention of the ‘*slave morality*’, joining in with the victimisation of an individual.

Noble (2017c) gave an example of the aggressive trolling campaign conducted by Frank Zimmerman against MP Louise Mensch (see Appendix three, pg.89) in which threats were made against her and her family following the riots of 2011. Zimmerman sent offensive and threatening emails which stated:

*“We are Anonymous and we do not like rude cunts like you and your nouveau riche husband Peter Mensch. We are inside your computer, all your phones everywhere and inside your homes.  
...So get off Twitter. We see you are still on Twitter. We have sent a camera crew to photograph you and your kids and we will post it over the net including Twitter, cuntface. You now have Sophie’s Choice: which kid is to go. One will. Count on it cunt. Have a nice day.”*

(Zimmerman, quoted in Morris 2012)

Here Zimmerman is attempting to create a sense of fear by association with the hacktivist group ‘anonymous’ and promoting a notion of omnipresence and surveillance to inflate his status and the threat.

## **8. Hunting in packs**

The ‘*herd*’ mentality of the ‘*slave morality*’ becomes evident when groups of trolls try to assert their dominance. When a person becomes a target of abuse it can prompt others to indulge in the same behaviour in a snowball effect of escalation as deviants follow trends on Twitter and other social media. This becomes a survival technique similar to those one may observe in the wild, in which pack animals will pick on the weakest ensuring their own survival for the time being. In some instances, a victim has been trolled to suicide, which has occurred in situations involving multiple trolls, thus magnifying the harassment significantly. It follows

therefore that trolls are in some sense demonstrating their strength to other trolls and sharing their '*ressentiment*' as a '*slave morality*'. Thus, the relativistic postmodern attitudes of trolls seem to know no bounds and are seemingly insatiable.

## **9. Addictiveness**

Modern technology has created a ubiquitous platform for trolls to indulge in a narcissistic thrill of gratification from their activities, triggering "*primal instincts of hunting*" (Eaton-Masters cited in Daubney 2015) and described as "*Electric Heroin*" (Hall cited in Daubney 2015) in the popular press. The nature of trolling may facilitate an immediate reward/gratification experience for the deviant, in which they can see the 'results' of their 'work' very quickly. Psychologically this can be gratifying perhaps fostering addictive behaviours and feeling good to the resentful.

A postmodern obsession with status and power occupies the resentful; it promotes a narcissistic concern about their entitlement to the benefits enjoyed by others.

## **10. Adept with technology**

As part of their trolling a user may employ several different identities and create new profiles to avoid administrator attempts to exclude them from the social network. Troll Peter Nunn created several twitter accounts in his trolling campaign against MP Stella Creasy and Caroline Criado-Perez (BBC 2014) and Charles Fitch is also known to have created several social media profiles. Isabell Sorley and John Nimmo between them used 86 separate twitter accounts to troll Ms. Criado-Perez in 2013 (Cockerell 2014). This could be defined as standard practice; a troll does not generally want to be identified as it would potentially incur retribution from the victim.

## **11. Anonymity**

We have just observed that trolls regularly create pseudonyms or avatars, which do not reveal their identity. They may create an avatar or which may be deemed as offensive or aggressive and is consistent with the notion of dominance over a group. The reality is probably very different; the individual is a weak person or someone who does not inhabit a socially significant role within the peer group/society. In some instances, as with Frank Zimmerman (Blacker 2012), it is symptomatic of serious personality disorders and the deluded fantasies generated by the deviant. By reshaping themselves into a new persona they can give themselves a status

and enjoy power over others, which they would not normally experience. The online disinhibition effect (Suler 2004) can be observed here, in which anonymity acts as a deviancy amplifier releasing individuals from the brakes that would restrain their behaviour. Equally the effect of anonymity upon the victim can also act as an amplifier of the threat felt and the distress caused:

*“The fact that they were anonymous heightened the fear. The victims had no way of knowing how dangerous the people making the threats were, whether they had just come out of prison, or how to recognise and avoid them if they came across them in public.”*

(Judge Howard Riddle quoted in Cockerell 2014)

These observable characteristics will help us to see that trolling has several elements in common with other forms of online deviance. For instance, both cyber stalking and cyber bullying can involve a victim being the target of unwanted attention or hate speech in which victims are created and defined by some characteristic they possess; and which is classed as an essentialist property of the group.

A threat of violence from an anonymous source is a powerful one, the victim of such threats can never be sure if they have serious intent or not. On the off chance that a threat is genuine, should all such threats be taken seriously? People make threatening statements as part of their normal discourse, when someone says “I’ll kill you”, most of the time there is no serious intent; it is rhetorical. How then are we to assess the threat level of an online utterance?

It follows therefore, that threatening activities in which a person or group become victimised by aggressive, hateful or unwanted attention should fall under an umbrella category we shall call ‘online anti-social behaviour’. It is interesting to note that under the January 2013 Amendments to the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, stalking and bullying can be regarded as general activities which are broadly defined as acts of harassment involving:

- (a) *following a person,*
- (b) *contacting, or attempting to contact, a person by any means,*
- (c) *publishing any statement or other material*
  - (i) *relating or purporting to relate to a person, or*
  - (ii) *purporting to originate from a person,*
- (d) *monitoring the use by a person of the internet, email or any other form of electronic communication,*
- (e) *loitering in any place (whether public or private),*
- (f) *interfering with any property in the possession of a person,*
- (g) *watching or spying on a person.*

If we examine the characteristics of cyber-bullying (as listed by BullyingUK 2015), we may see correlations such as: harassment; denigration; flaming; impersonation; outing and trickery; cyber-stalking; and exclusion (Ibid). There may be some areas in which the definitions cross over, but it mainly indicates some confusion over the definitions as they apply to the online and offline worlds.

### **Synchronous and asynchronous**

Conversation online can be broadly defined into two categories: Synchronous, which involves the real time communication between interlocutors as one would expect in normal conversation; and Asynchronous in which the conversation is open ended, which is to say extended over a period (i.e. Message boards, Facebook feeds etc.).

### ***R.I.P. Trolling (Asynchronous)***

R.I.P. trolling seems to have no other purpose than to cause offence and is a blight upon social networking sites such as Facebook.

This form of trolling is asynchronous because the interlocutors are not communicating in real time, messages are left and reacting/inter-actions take place over a prolonged period and not within, what we may think of, as a normal timeframe. Asynchronous conversations can last indefinitely and operate on a macro level, but these are also made up from smaller scale synchronous conversations.

This form of trolling is manifest on YouTube comments sections, popular news comments and blog feeds to name just a few. Anything in which a view of any description can be expressed is fair game for the troll.

Some Trolls also manipulate images to create ‘pseudo photographs’ with the intention of humiliating and hurting. Some, as in the case of Sean Duffy, are convicted of sending indecent or offensive images posted online and quite often on R.I.P. Facebook pages.

### ***Chat Trolling (Synchronous)***

Trolls can find absolutely any subject to pass comment upon, but the more controversial a topic,

the more likely they are to do so. Any subject that is in the public eye will result in a plethora of trolling activity. For example the recent death of comedian Robin Williams resulted in trolling directed at his daughter Zelda Williams on Twitter,<sup>9</sup> the result of which was that she deleted her Twitter account.

When South Yorkshire Police searched the home of singer Cliff Richard in August 2014 there appeared a host trolling directed at the singer himself and his fans. The Cliff Richard Facebook page was targeted after the singer posted a rebuttal of abuse allegations and received thousands of comments (supporting as well as trolling) within the first 24 hours (see Appendix three, pg.90). The trolling took place over Facebook and Twitter (amongst other sites) and created a lot of work for administrators as they had to delete the trolling posts as they appeared. Many of the trolls were quick to remark upon his appearance, religion, career and allegations of alleged abuse.

The trolling in this case consisted of textual and visual content, many of which are potentially libellous and defamatory. Because of this it is not possible to reproduce them here (for fear of perpetuating the libel), but a milder example has been reproduced in Appendix four. The side by side images demonstrate that trolls can be technically proficient and creative in their trolling, not simply relying upon insults (see Appendix three, pg. 90). Even a seemingly innocuous conversation can take a nasty turn and end up as an act of trolling.

The ‘causes’ espoused by some trolls can be arbitrary and decided upon the popular persona of the people involved. An example of this occurred in March 2015 when T.V. presenter Jeremy Clarkson abused and assaulted Top Gear producer Oisin Tymon (Sawer 2015). The reaction on social networking in support of Clarkson and abusing the victim of the assault demonstrates the misguided cognitive distortions of the trolls (see Appendix three, pp.91-92).

Nothing appears to occupy trolls more than an artificially induced sense of righteous indignation, especially when there is perceived to be someone spoiling the fun of others. From these Tweets we can see discourse on violence and harassment directed towards Tymon; although it is interesting to note the exchange between Twitter users Beck and Palmer to

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<sup>9</sup> A picture claiming to be a post mortem picture of Robin Williams was circulated on Twitter but was later claimed to have been faked.

observe that anti-social ‘speech’ does not go unchallenged.

When trolls are motivated to be anti-social then accusations can very quickly get out of control with death threats and vilification escalating across social media. On 11<sup>th</sup> September 2014 a fire engulfed Manchester Dog’s Home killing approximately 60 animals, within a few hours of the incident occurring allegations were made on social media platform Twitter naming an individual with photographs and details of his personal life. At this point it was unclear whether the person involved was responsible or not, however it did not stop many Twitter users from circulating details and making death threats (see Appendix four, pp.105-107). There was little if any attempt to establish the facts before publicly ‘shaming’ the alleged miscreant, threats of violent retribution became extreme and the family was taken into police protection after details were made public.

It is now an appropriate point to discuss the differences between bad behaviour in the ‘physical’ world (i.e. in the street) and computer mediated interactions. Although it is important to note that we are not trying to conflate bad behaviour with actual violence. Rather, the discussion which now follows asked the question raised previously: ‘What is it about the internet that makes people want to behave badly?’

It could be said that some people are just badly behaved and that they naturally would behave badly in all walks of life, including when using the internet. This may be so and carries a certain amount of logic, but what of the individuals that would not normally behave badly towards others? To use a concept from Matza (1964), what about those who ‘*drift*’ into bad behaviour? What enables or encourages these people to follow this course of action?

The role that anonymity may play in online deviance is thought to be considerable, as it is the act of relinquishing one’s identity and therefore responsibility, which is the driving force behind trolling. But this is not simply the case that anonymity by itself is the sole motivating factor that leads to anti-social behaviour. If that was so, then everybody who made themselves anonymous would be a deviant. It can also be observed that some deviants do not bother to make themselves anonymous and can be identified in their ‘real’ lives. The answer would appear to be more fundamental concerned with the motivations and influences upon the individual and is more complex than a simple cause and effect interplay between the technology and the user. We must

remember that technology is an outlet for deviance and not simply the cause. Motivations for behaviour can be influenced by external factors but not determined by them.

In the Owen and Noble (2015) conference paper, ‘Towards a genetic social approach to conflict’ and the Owen, Noble, Marshall, Owen and Speed (2015) article ‘Building Bridges between the Biological and Social Sciences’, it was demonstrated that the causes for behaviour are multi-factorial. Over-deterministic and reductionist models of theorising should be avoided. It was here in these papers that the concept of ‘*Flexible Causal Prediction*’ was put forward to demonstrate the complexity of human behavioural etiology.

The explanation of ‘*Flexible Causal Prediction*’ is given as follows:

*“To understand ‘Flexible Causal Prediction’ the reader must imagine that the individual is open to influences upon their decision-making processes. These influences are numerous and multi-factorial. Each influence by itself or in tandem with others does not represent a deterministic account of human behaviour; rather that influences as simply that, influential. These influences can be strong or weak, singular or multiple, but they are not deterministic, if they were then we would not be accounting for the seemingly logical nature that behaviour sometimes takes. Instead ‘Flexible Causal Prediction’ acknowledges influences and posits that influences can strongly affect decisions/behaviour but does not determine the decisions/behaviour made. It attempts to acknowledge the unpredictability and illogical nature of some behaviour patterns but reference to a complex nexus of influences. It also examines the situational elements which may affect the individual, there may be unique elements to some scenarios which exert their own influence(s) and need acknowledging in the conceptual model. This would include physical characteristics of the environment alongside teleological and genetic-social ones which could influence Owen and Owen’s notion of ‘Neuro-agency’ and flexible causality (2015). ‘Flexible Causal Prediction’ sits within a large genetic-social framework as a sensitising device to conceptualise exactly this sort of multi-factorial analysis.”*

(Noble 2017)

Trolling behaviour could therefore be the product of a range of different influences coming to bear upon an individual’s decision-making formulation in any given situation. The important question is: what are the strongest of those influences and how did these influences lead to deviance in some and not in others? Why do some gain mastery of the self, whilst others seek to dominate and enslave the will of others?

### **A Nietzschean view of Trolling**

*“To witness suffering does one good, to inflict suffering does one even more good –*

*this is a harsh sentiment, but nonetheless a fundamental one, ancient, strong and human, all-to-human”*

(Nietzsche 1887, verse 6, pg.52)

Nietzsche’s psychoanalytical understanding of human beings can give us an insight into the trolling activities committed online. If we accept that trolling could be a manifestation of ‘*ressentiment*’ felt by those afflicted with the ‘*slave morality*’, then what reward could the troll experience by a seemingly senseless act of abuse? Nietzsche gives us an answer with his discussion of punishing debtors and rights of ‘*Masters*’ in his work ‘On the Genealogy of Morals’ (1887).

If we consider the act of trolling as inflicting a punishment for the ‘*ressentiment*’ felt by ‘trolls’, because of the relative deprivation they feel at some aspect(s) of their living circumstances; then we can understand the method of ‘self-justification’. They appear to themselves as the ‘creditor’ and the object of their ‘*ressentiment*’ is the ‘debtor’; so, by: “punishing the ‘debtor’, the creditor shares in the *rights of the masters*” (*Ibid*, pg.51). From this act of inflicting punishment we can derive a sensation of pleasure resting within the punisher. The greater the difference between the social stations of the creditor/debtor then the greater the pleasure felt at the suffering of another. As Nietzsche makes clear suffering can be a compensation for the debts of others.

The ability to be anonymous is not by itself a strong enough influence to behave badly, the individual must first want to behave in such a manner. They may be driven by a will to behave in ways that exert power over others, to dominate other individuals and improve status. The will is not the ‘Will to Power’ in which one has mastery of the self; rather it is will of resentful mind, which seeks a subjectivist levelling. As previously discussed, Nietzsche discusses his concept of ‘*ressentiment*’ and how this comes from his notion of ‘*slave morality*’, in which the mediocre seek to lower the achievements of others to inflate their own values and possess a smouldering revenge (Nietzsche 1887, pp.32-34). Put bluntly; ‘[S]lave morality is essentially the morality of utility’ (*Ibid* 1975, pg.260), the resentful man is a man of ‘bad conscience’ (Nietzsche 1887, pg.60). As Nietzsche states:

*“...a resentment experienced by those who, deprived as they are of the proper outlet of action, are forced to obtain their satisfaction in imaginary acts of revenge.”*  
(Nietzsche 1887 (2013 ed.), pg.25)

As I have observed that ‘*ressentiment*’ comes from a postmodern relativistic feeling of inadequacy, of discontent connected to an individual’s circumstances and an impotence or rage at their circumstances compared to the perceived success of another. There is a correlation between their own disadvantage and another’s (perceived) unfair advantages, which leads to an imaginary revenge for their ‘injury’. So, to assert him or herself, the internet troll seeks to dominate others and sublimate their own feelings of inadequacy by creating a trolling ethic, which comes from a ‘*slave morality*’ (Noble 2017). But how can imposing suffering upon another by an act of cruelty produce pleasure for the troll? Nietzsche may have the answer when he discusses suffering as a compensation for debts:

*“It is because the infliction of suffering produces supreme pleasure, because the injured party will receive in exchange for his loss (including his vexation at his loss) an extraordinary reward: the pleasure of inflicting suffering – a real feast, something that, as I have said, was all the more appreciated the greater the difference in rank and social status of the creditor.”*

(Nietzsche 1887, pg.51)

Nietzsche understood very well the appeal and delight of wielding power over another, especially when “*the lower and more abject the creditor is in the social scale, the more this delight will be cherished*” (Ibid, pg.50) because it gives them a taste of power and a higher social position. This can compensate them for the failures and disappointments in their own lives and simultaneously makes the assertion that the other is no better than they; and that they have enjoyed an unfair advantage.

These themes of creditor, debtor and the attempts to exchange power and inflate social standing are ones that will be returned to throughout this work. These sentiments are based in ‘*ressentiment*’ and are indicative of the ‘*slave morality*’. As previously stated (2017):

*“In a situation in which trolling takes place the perceived injustice and resentment of the troll manifests itself as an act of revenge upon the victim. It then becomes pleasurable for the troll to ‘feast’ upon the suffering that these actions create, the pleasure being all the greater if there is a greater difference in social status. For example; a person of low socio-economic status (such as Isabel Sorley and John Nimmo) trolling a recognisable and respected academic (Caroline Criado-Perez for example) (Lewis 2014), the difference between their statuses is significant to this hypothesis. This may be accompanied by an over weaning sense of entitlement and a lack of modesty, inflating their own needs and desires ‘into cosmic and metaphysical values’ (Nietzsche 1968 pg.19). This reasoning would naturally seek to diminish the rights of others in favour of their own, negating the values of others.”*

(Noble, 2017c)

Nietzsche says that it is “the satisfaction of being able to wield, without a scruple, his power over one who is powerless” (Nietzsche 1887 pg.50). Here it is not difficult to imagine the delight and satisfaction a Twitter Troll may feel in exercising power over another individual who is better placed in the social hierarchy:

*“...the delight in sheer violation; and the lower the more abject the creditor is in the social scale, the more this delight will be cherished, and is quite apt to have the effect of the most delicious dainty, even seem the foretaste of a higher social position.”*  
(*Ibid*, pp.50-51)

Noble (2017c) also observed that by exercising and implementing their ‘punishment’ on those that the troll perceives as enjoying unfair advantages or makes them feel inadequate when their own achievements are juxtaposed; they give themselves “free rein to despise and ill-treat a creature – as an ‘inferior’” (*Ibid*, pg.51). They lay claim to entitlements of the status, privilege and domination that they imagine their victims would ordinarily enjoy. “The compensation consequently consists of a claim on cruelty and a right to draw upon it” (*Ibid*).

Nietzsche would also indicate that cruelty is a part of human nature, which has been manifest “as a normal characteristic of man” (*Ibid*, pg.52) since time immemorial. If this is the case then it may go some way to explaining the drive towards cruel behaviour in ‘*Flexible Causal Prediction*’ terms as an influence upon decision making alongside the myriad of others, which can be present in any given situation.

Trolling ‘ethics’ (if it can be so called) are ultimately nihilistic and seek to hold valueless the concepts it attacks; such as family ties, love and grief as demonstrated on Facebook R.I.P. pages (Noble 2017). When trolls deface a memorial social media page they are not only causing offence to surviving relatives and friends, but they are also attempting to negate the value of their grief. It is an act of ‘*nihilism*’, which sees no value in the mourning of others and suggests that existence is in some sense worthless. This could be interpreted as a reflection upon their deeply held impotencies and rage; and in this sense it could be said that an act of trolling anesthetizes the troll’s internal (psychological) pain. It gives them instead a sense of pleasure for a short while, but afterwards to get the same reward they must once again cause offence. Trolling therefore becomes an act of despair in which the traditional Christian-moral values are repudiated, with the emphasis now placed on displacing negative emotion onto others to

dominate them. The values of family, mourning, expression of love, etc. are recast as meaningless by the trolls who sees no moral worth in these expressions and “*positing himself as the meaning and measure of the value of things*” (Nietzsche 1887–1888, 1968 (ed.), Pg.14).

### **R.I.P. Trolls and ‘ressentiment’.**

R.I.P. Trolls for example do not see the distress and anguish that they cause to the families of loved ones whose internet pages they have defaced, for them it may appear that there is no victim. In one well known example, BBC journalist Declan Lawn (BBC 2012) tracked down an internet Troll named ‘*Nimrod Severn*’ (real name Darren Burton) who had posted racial abuse and had defaced several RIP Facebook pages. When confronted about his activities and the harm he had done his reaction was simple: “*F#ck ‘em!*” (*Ibid*). One of the most shocking aspects of this confrontation was that the troll himself tried to justify his activities as a right to free speech because “*Facebook is an open forum, you’re entitled to your own opinion*”, which implies a certain level of mendacity and alienation; when you are fully aware that your comments would deliberately cause harm and inflict hurt on others. His reaction to the possibility of a nine-week custodial sentence for Incitement to Racial Hatred was a dismissive “*Nine weeks in jail? ... What’s that?*” (*Ibid*). Here we have Nietzsche’s concepts of ‘*ressentiment*’ and ‘*Slave Morality*’ played out for all to see; someone so alienated from his ‘*physical*’ existence that the only way they can get succour is to abuse others. It would appear from this example that the person in question is expressing their dissatisfaction with their own personal circumstances and inadequacies by trying to weaken those that are stronger. Unprovoked attacks of this nature are symptomatic of ‘*ressentiment*’ and of internet trolling.

This cruelty of character, which appears to be a prominent feature of the trolling persona is something Nietzsche anticipates:

*“...I have warned of the continually growing sublimation and apotheosis of cruelty, which pervades the whole history of higher civilization (and in the larger sense constitutes it).”*

(Nietzsche 2013, pg.52)

But this form of cruelty, rather than being an expression of delightful pleasure at the spectacle of others suffering, is the “*dangerous shiver of cruelty turned against himself*” (Nietzsche 2008, pg.121). That by negating the values that he/she would wish to have as their own, they in fact injure themselves, “*saying No where he would like to say Yes*” and “*wanting to do harm*”

to the fundamental will of the spirit” (*Ibid*). This is the source of the alienation, this is the ‘nihilism’.

The justifications that Burton gives for his behaviour reveal a form of post hoc rationale, an attempt to neutralise the harm created. According to Bracchi and Carey (2012), Burton states that those offended by his remarks can simply ‘log off’, that they don’t have to view the offensive comments and images. This remark would imply that all spaces on the internet constitute a form of common ground, open to all to say and do as you please. This of course is not the case in our physical world, those vandalising a memorial or grave site would find themselves in trouble; similarly, if one was to heckle the deceased at a funeral, then you could expect angry and outraged mourners. Then why not expect the same reaction on the internet also? To cause offence in the manner that Burton has done you must first locate a scene/site in which you know that you can cause the maximum disruption. It is unlikely that a person would walk into a church during a funeral and make racist or bigoted comments about the deceased; yet this is just as much a public space as a Facebook memorial page. Therefore, if one does not expect to be accosted at a funeral/memorial site/graveyard etc. then why would you expect a random stranger to make a special effort to abuse you (or the deceased) on a similar site in cyber space? The short answer is, you would not, it goes against all the social norms and taboos of our society and furthermore, it would be impossible to troll on a whim or by accident in this form; there must exist a drive to behave as a deviant.

In a strange twist to the Darren Burton story it transpires that his partner (Kirsty Chapman) may herself also has been a Troll who operated under the pseudonym of ‘Percy’. Under this disguise, it is alleged that Miss Chapman targeted memorial pages on Facebook (Bracchi and Carey 2012); but whilst she admits to reporters that she has trolled in the past, she claims that she herself is the victim of trolling, perhaps by her own partner.

The truthfulness of these accounts, as with so much that is said by individuals on the internet, must be taken with a pinch of salt. There is reference to a recorded Skype conference in which it is claimed that Darren Burton makes revealing claims about himself and Kirsty Chapman’s trolling exploits, which he later tried to excuse as a “wind up” (*Ibid*). The intention it seems was too “f##### his head up” (*Ibid*) (meaning the interviewer), because he had exposed trolls in the past (*Ibid*). Whether you believe this rationalisation or not, one thing is apparent, you can never trust anything that is said by a troll, they are mendacious and delight in confusion.

Presumably, this contradiction was for the ‘Lulz’ and not meant to be a serious admission of intent. Nevertheless, the unwanted attention soon meant that Burton himself became the target of trolls; which goes to show that there is no loyalty amongst trolls.

It is often difficult to identify instances of trolling as a malicious attack on another individual with serious intent to cause harm or playful high spirits. Goffman’s notion of ‘*stigma*’ (1963) may give us an insight into this as he asserts one can inhabit a “*two-role social process*” (*Ibid*), taking part in legitimate pastimes and clandestine activities at different phases in their lives. Similar to Matza’s (1964) notion of ‘*drift*’, what may start off as quite mild may result in something much uglier if allowed to develop unchecked. Any internalised breaks on behaviour can be neutralised for the individual to commit acts of deviance, so for example as one ‘*drifts*’ more towards extremes of behaviour those norms are weakened.

Internet troll Darren Burton (aka Nimrod Severen) was confronted by BBC journalist Declan Lawn (BBC Panorama 2012) and confronted about the affect his activities have on his victims. Burton’s reply essentially is a negation of the rights of the victim, he is saying that he is entitled to his opinion no matter how rude or offensive it may be, and that it assumes dominance over another individual(s). In his words “*Facebook is an open forum*”, therefore he has the right to say whatever he pleases with no justification for his incivility, just an exercise of rights.

Sentiments of discontent or ‘*ressentiment*’ can be causal influences caused by things such as job satisfaction, social status and the perceived privilege of others. There may also be biological and/or genetic causes for deviant behaviour such as brain tumours or schizophrenia. These ‘influences’ upon behaviour may have the upper hand at any given moment, but this does not result in determinism. Colm Cross and Sean Duffy (Lewis 2014) have claimed that mental illness played a significant part in their behaviour and was used as a defence strategy. As previously stated:

*“In ‘Flexible Causal Prediction’ terms this would mean that the influence of mental illness combined with situational influences experienced with the access to technology, was a stronger influence towards deviance than any against such actions”*

(Noble 2017c, pg.124).

Here we must consider a couple of interesting matters: does the immediacy of internet services help indulge and encourage some individuals to gratify their base urges? If an

individual has problems controlling their impulses, then is the presence of social media acting as a deviancy amplifier to those with problems of self-control? In other words, are the brakes on behaviour slacked in an online environment? If there is a strong 'reward' (experienced as some form of neurological pleasure i.e. dopamine) then could this immediacy indulge an addictive personality? So much so that the reward for anti-social behaviour on the psychobiography of the individual feeds into and encourages deviancy?

This notion of self-gratification would suggest that there potentially exists a strong narcissistic influence, which finds pleasure in others suffering, like the concept of Schadenfreude. Information technology has enabled the best and the worst in people, as Gray (2004) remarks:

*“Once a new technology is out in the world anyone can use it. At that point it becomes a weapon in human conflicts and an embodiment of human dreams. We are not masters of the tools we have invented. They affect our lives in ways we cannot control – and often understand. The world today is a vast, unsupervised laboratory, in which a multitude of experiments are simultaneously under way.”*

(Gray 2004, pg.21)

Forst (2009, pp.168-169) states that “advanced technology does not distinguish between saints and sinners”, thus technology is neutral and devoid of agency and yet has become the conduit for uninhibited and morally questionable actions by otherwise seemingly 'normal' and 'ordinary' people.

We have yet to see or understand what the long-term effects are of exposure to social media technology and the connectivity that is essential to it. Could a generation that has instant access to any form of stimulation online possibly develop traits and behaviours, which could be potentially damaging? Will it change the way that humans consume information and think?

*“Miss Sorley was a ‘victim’ of new technology as she did not understand the impact of what she was doing”.*

(Sean Caulfield, Isobel Sorley Defence lawyer quoted in Cockerell 2014)

Griffiths (2011) states that the anonymity and the disinhibition affect that the internet may have over an individual can contribute towards a lowering of the emotional guard. This may cause people to 'troll' in the heat of the moment (cited in Castella and Brown 2011). To get carried away in the 'heat of the moment' implies a lack of autonomy in the individual; that the actor was overcome by forces which were stronger than their sense of morality. But there may be

more to this as Griffiths adds; “It is usually carried out by young adult males for amusement, boredom and revenge” (*Ibid*). Let us examine some of the influences which could lead to a ‘heat of the moment’ disinhibition effect.

There can be a clear financial incentive to trolling, controversy generates traffic and traffic means income. For example, You Tube allows advertising on some of its videos which effectively means that content creators can monetise their output.

Provocative and confrontational content can generate interest and drive views towards a channel. That said, it must be noted that You Tube has begun to de-monetise videos in what has become known as the ‘Adpocalypse’. It appears to mainly affect content with ‘conservative’ leanings, which has led some to assume that You Tube are exercising a political bias that contradicts their Common Carrier status.

About click-bait Noble (2017) had this to say:

*“...trolling is a deliberate strategy, almost a business plan it could be said, exploiting the media and using social engineering to provoke the desired effect. The question is how to tell the difference between a truly held belief/view (however absurd, farfetched or crazy it may seem) and what is little more than an actor playing a part. A grey area such as this raises the question; when does the censure of trolling in the public domain become an attack against the freedom of speech?”*

(Noble 2017, pg.???)

There is a thrill of pleasure that comes with trolling, as the Economist article of the 31st March 2011 points out, “(O)ften trolls are just out for the LOLs”. Once we have acknowledged that people troll just for fun we must then look at other factors which encourage this behaviour.

It has also been noted that in some instances that the consumption of alcohol was an influencing factor in the trolling act. In one example Isobel Sorley claimed that alcohol played a large part in her trolling offence. In another example, when Noel Edmonds tracked down and confronted his internet troll he summarised it thus:

*“We shook hands ... it was very much a student prank in its origins, no doubt alcohol was involved and he was very apologetic and realised the seriousness of what he had done,”*

(Noel Edmonds, quoted in Dowell 2012)

Here we have another interesting aspect, the post hoc rationalisation and supposed contrition of the troll once ‘outed’ and/or confronted. It would be interesting to observe that this is a direct result of being caught in the act, where refuting one’s own part in misdeeds is impossible.

The internet and social media have provided individuals more ways in which to occupy their time, so when boredom strike and novelty is required the internet offers an individual great potential. Social media seems to be an abyss into which people spend their precious time so perhaps it is only natural that at some point they may succumb to temptation whilst experiencing boredom. In a previous work Noble (2017c) observed that, “*in an environment which encourages immediate gratification it would not be farfetched to assume that boredom can lead some people into deviant behaviour.*” Hardaker (2014) also cites boredom as one of the many factors which are responsible for trolling behaviours, along with a need to validate oneself and loneliness.

Kenneth Tong (Appendix three, pp.93-94) exhibited a bizarre form of revenge with his campaign against celebrities in 2012. As observed (2017) “*His trolling bears the hallmarks of Nietzsche’s ‘ressentiment’ in which this individual seeks to belittle the status of others whilst elevating his own*” (Noble 2017). For example, when he trolled actress Rosie Huntington-Whiteley he stated:

*“Why vilify me when it’s @RHW that’s the culprit. All she needs to do is tell me to stop and I will behave.”*

(Evening Standard, 10th August 2012)

Tong is a former Big Brother contestant and is clearly obsessed with his own notoriety and status with an overweening sense of entitlement, as this tweet demonstrates:

*“With all my controversy and continued notoriety, twice over, I deserve to be Verified by Twitter. Do you lot agree?”*

(Ibid)

And

*“Cannot believe Rossie Huntington-Whitely blocked me,”*

(Ibid)

Tong is clearly a man of resentment, concerned only with his own status and sense of narcissistic entitlement whilst seeking to dominate others. A '*slave morality*' is quite evident from these quotes from his twitter feed as they betray a deep sense of inadequacy in which fame becomes the ends and the means.

Anonymity on the internet is debated with regularity, especially when connected to acts of trolling behaviour. Suler's (2004) concept of the 'disinhibition effect' caused by anonymity suggests that the internet is a form of deviancy amplifier. Hardaker (2013) also compares the anonymising effects of the internet to the '*Ring of Gyges*' for ancient mythology. In her hypothesis Hardaker states that the effects of bad behaviour when conducted using computer mediated communications removes important social and physical cues to the consequences of your behaviour on others. It allows us to emotionally divorce ourselves from the harm that our actions can cause upon others. For example if one is abusive toward someone Face Book we are insulated from observing the upset and anger of the victim (*Ibid*).

What is it about anonymity that makes some people behaviour badly? Is it the 'invisibility' of anonymity, or is it the negation of responsibility that anonymity allows? Probably a combination of the two, but also there must exist the *will* to be deviant. In the same way that some people who return lost property because of moral or ethical values, there are those whose disposition is towards unethical and immoral actions.

### **The Techniques of Neutralisation**

The classic criminological study by Matza (1964) '*Delinquency and Drift*' in which he examines the justifications for criminal and morally problematic acts, should be familiar to many readers. The basic premise was that criminals are no different from you and me and that we can '*drift*' in and out of deviancy. We should now consider how his concept of the 'Techniques of Neutralisation' can be applied to the excuses, justifications and defence of internet trolls.

### ***Denial of Responsibility – 'I didn't do it' & 'I didn't mean to upset anyone'***

Quite possibly the first response when confronted with an allegation of trolling is simply to lie about it. Perhaps the miscreant could begin by flatly denying responsibility and then shifting towards a 'I didn't mean harm' defence when confronted with facts.

This former position may spring from a mistaken belief in the anonymising powers of the internet. If the ‘troll’ thinks that their identity is safe, they may simply decide to deny any charges against them. However evidence of deviancy may force them to take a more nuanced approach.

### ***Denial of the Victim – ‘Fair Game’***

This technique denies the presence of a victim; it makes a ‘fair game’ argument which suggests that if a person has a social media presence then they must be tough enough to expect some negative behaviour. This is perhaps amplified by the emotional and physical distance between the troll and their victim? As Twitter troll Robert Ambridge (aka ‘Old Holborn’) has stated in an interview:

*“Nobody wears the victim badge more readily than the British... If you loudly declare yourself a victim then others will clamour to defend you in the faint hope that their ‘moral compass’ will be seen to be shinier than their sinful neighbours. You can instantly join their collective and become part of the hysterical digital mob – safe in the comfort and security of not standing on your own”.*

(Ambridge quoted in Daubney 2015)

Ambridge is negating the harm he has done by denying the status of his victims, he is implying that his individuals are revelling in their victim status and are not true victims.

### **Denial of Harm/injury – ‘It was just a joke’**

When trolls try to excuse their activities by denying that any harm was inflicted on others they will attempt to diminish their intent to inflict harm also. They may claim that ‘It was only a joke’, or that they ‘weren’t serious’ to reduce the *mala in se* of their actions. They may claim that no harm was intended, it was a misunderstanding or that the victim needs to stop being so sensitive.

This could be a form of deception, perhaps even self-deception; Peter Nunn at his trial in September 2014 describes his rape jokes as “*really really funny*” and that his victims should treat rape threats as a compliment (BBC 2014).

### ***Condemning the condemners – ‘They are fair game’***

If self-deception is a useful strategy for the deviant to rationalise and present an ‘authentic’

defence, and to achieve this some cognitive distortion and dissonance may need to be employed.

The troll may invent a reason which justifies the trolling to themselves, that the person targeted is somehow deserving of negative attention. The perception of politicians, celebrities and other people in the public eye may be enough to encourage internet trolling. This distorted perception can also be used to frame the deviant as a victim. A good example of this is:

*“After internet troll Charles ‘Chuck’ Fitch was exposed on television by Fox 2 channel reporter Rob Wolcheck he began legal proceeding against those he had trolled, claiming he was the victim. He filed a Personal Protection Order (which is normally associated with instances of stalking and domestic violence) against an individual he had trolled.”*

*(Noble 2017, pg.130)*

#### ***Appeal to higher loyalties – ‘I’m doing it for free speech’***

Free speech becomes a contentious issue when it is used as a defence for trolling and anti-social activities. The defence is that the internet should not be regulated, and that a person has a right say whatever they want without censure or penalty. One could understand this argument if it was regarding a political, moral or ethical viewpoint; if the person accused was engaged in serious reasoned debate. However, it can also be used to defend unpleasant activities in ways that are self-serving and disingenuous. In the work by Noble (2017) entitled ‘Trolling, the ugly face of social networking’ a good example of this was highlighted, as follows:

*“When Darren Burton was confronted by a BBC TV reporter his response was that ‘Facebook is an open forum’, clearly an appeal of this nature. Similarly, Charles Fitch claimed to be a critic of eBay and PayPal rather than a disruptive and abusive troll; as someone who ‘helps’ people. Also, the internet troll known as ‘Old Holborn’ in an interview with ITV1 reporter believes that he is a ‘satirical terrorist’ with a higher duty towards freedom of speech which overrides the offence he causes.”*

*(Noble 2017, pg.130)*

Suler’s notion of the ‘*online disinhibition effect*’ can give us a better understanding of the influences by which individuals adopt modes of behaviour. It discusses how identity and behaviour are bound together, how the ‘*Gyges effect*’ (Hardaker 2013) can lead to deviance and why we should seek to inflict ‘harm’ upon others when seemingly anonymous.

### **Deviancy amplification and anonymity on social media.**

By being anonymous, a person feels disassociated from any sense of responsibility, from their identity. Therefore, if a person cannot be identified as a perpetrator of bad deeds then one is not forced to confront the consequences of one's actions. The individual can therefore dissociate themselves from the actions that they commit under the cloak of anonymity.

Internet trolls may exploit the opportunity to be unseen. By being invisible to others in the same environment you are exercising a degree of power as others are not aware of your presence. Therefore, others are not aware of your presence until you decide to reveal yourself. This invades the privacy of another and means that they do not have the ability to 'read' that person, in the same way that someone could read non-verbal cues in conversation.

Our guard may drop (so to speak) as psychologist Dr. Arthur Cassidy states:

*“We become victims of self-disclosure increasing the amount of personal information we transmit to others. A good example of this is in trolling behaviour where trolls lose self-control with the aim of inflicting emotional hurt and turmoil on postings in Facebook on vulnerable individuals. Those bereaved by suicide are frequent victims of trolls and others who lack self-regulation and control”*

(Dr Arthur Cassidy, quoted in *British Psychological Society* 2013)

In some circumstances invisibility could offer protection, so if one is determined to commit a criminal or morally reprehensible action then it will become like the ring of Gyges, protecting and corrupting in equal measure. The 'Gyges Effect' (Hardaker 2013) as it has been dubbed may be described as a gateway through which we 'drift' into further deviance. Invisibility by itself is not the cause of deviancy, not all people are compelled to act in deviant ways, but it can be a gateway to it.

### ***Solipsistic Introjection***

Interacting with others using ICT may present confusion and false notions about who that other person is. There may occur misunderstanding that cause others to misinterpret their meanings and identity. Confusion and conflict may arise when internet users must make assumptions about the identity of others, the meanings of their language that they use and other signals. How do you interpret them? Are they aggressive?

### ***Dissociative imagination***

Differences between the ‘physical’ and the ‘intangible’ are highlighted here. If one’s online ‘existence’ does not seem to be ‘real’ should it then be treated as if it is a fantasy? A fiction in which one controls a domain which has no correlation to real world existence. If this is so, then could we treat those who we interact with as ‘not real’? Therefore, if you are aggressive towards individuals online it would only be like being aggressive towards a character in a computer game; a fantasy world with no real-world consequences because trolls have denied the human behind the avatar.

### ***Minimising authority***

If there is an absence of authority, does that imply that any action is permitted? Perhaps here we can see a link to Durkheim’s notion of ‘anomie’, perhaps the rapid advancements that ICT have provided us with has a lack of proper controls over human behaviour (Burke 2009 pg.114).

### ***Egoism***

According to Durkheim, times of rapid social/technological change generate forces which challenge social solidarity and the law; resulting in ‘egoism’. Durkheim (quoted in Morrison 2006) describes egoism as occurring when social fabric breaks down and social bonds between:

*“the individual to others become slackened and are not sufficiently integrated at the points where the individual is in contact with the wider society.”*

(Durkheim quoted in Morrison 2006, pp.207-208)

We can perhaps see egoism in our previous example of Kenneth Tong with his sense of self-importance, inflated self-esteem and ‘*ressentiment*’ towards others. In this sense it could be that the image we present to others and the connections we have on social media bolster and feed our own self-image and self-importance.

The University of Pittsburgh research paper ‘Are Close Friends the Enemy? Online Social Networks, Self-Esteem, and Self-Control’ written by Stephen and Wilcox (2013) states:

*“We find that people experience greater self-esteem when they focus on the image they are presenting to strong ties in their social networks,”*

And that

*“This suggests that even though people are sharing the same positive information with strong ties and weak ties on social networks, they feel better about themselves when the information is received by strong ties than by weak ties.”*

*(Ibid)*

The findings suggest that we would get a greater reward from having somebody with ‘status’ follow us on Twitter (for example) than somebody with little or none.

Buckels (cited in Lewis 2014) developed a survey which measured personality traits amongst internet trolls using the ‘Dark Tetrad of Personality’ test. This test assesses a respondent’s propensity towards narcissism, Machiavellianism, sadism and psychopathy, and discovered that those who engaged in trolling activities displayed these traits. Using their own GAIT (Global Assessment of Internet Trolling) system they posit that enjoyment and inflicting suffering on others is resulting from an overlap of these conditions of the tetrad. This further supports the idea of resentment and desires surrounding status and power as driving factors in online anti-social behaviour.

As Hardaker (2014) observes there doesn’t appear to be any common factors associated with the circumstances and backgrounds of internet trolls. For example, at the time that these ‘trolls’ committed their offending behaviour it was reported in some news sources that they’re characteristics were:

<b>Troll</b>	<b>Biog Information/circumstances</b>
Brenda Leyland	63 year old middle class mother of two
Darren Burton	20-30 years of age, Railway worker
Robert Ambridge	53 year old recruitment consultant, father of 6
Peter Nun	33 year old father
Charles Fitch	30-40 years old, unemployed, obese bachelor
Benjanun Sriduangkaew	Science Fiction writer
Sean Duffy	25 years old, unemployed, alleged to have Asperger’s Syndrome and alcohol related problems.
Michael Brutsch	51 years old, Computer programmer
Isabella Sorley	23 year old university graduate

John Nimmo	25 years old, social recluse, shy individual
Lee Rimell	32 years old, West Midlands Police Officer
Kenneth Tong	27 year old, former Big Brother contestant
Frank Zimmerman	60 year old, odd and delusional behaviour
Reece Messer	17 years old, Claims to be annoyed at losing Olympics, immature.

It can be concluded that trolling is a form of projection, in which the psychologically painful aspect/circumstances in a person's life (the ones which give them displeasure and make them feel inadequate) are externalised (expressed) onto the internet? Perhaps it is an expression of that individual's powerlessness, and an attempt to claim some power (however brief and destructive) over another for them to experience the satisfactory feeling of possessing power? Nietzsche's notion of 'resentment' has been discussed to explain how the powerless come to express their *'nihilism'* in this manner. The next chapter I will look at R.I.P. trolling in which memorial Webpages are desecrated and ask: which values the troll is attempting to negate in their act of trolling, which could be classed as an act of 'resentment'.

The exploration of anonymity and online identity in relationship to the *'herd'* mentality will be returned to in chapter six of this thesis.

### **Memes and Trolling**

The 'meme' is an image which has a message and consists of various text and visual elements. A meme can convey a message and they are used to spread political messages, to lampoon and satirise and to amuse and delight. A meme is remarkably like a political cartoon you may find drawn by Gerald Scarf in a broad sheet newspaper, or an 18<sup>th</sup> century Hogarth illustration. If we look back through history, then we can see that 'memes' are simply a modern-day form of political and social criticism. Even World War Two propaganda resembles a modern meme in its style and execution.

This ability to depict a satirical message is no longer the privilege of a few talented individual, but rather it has been democratised by the internet and social media. On social media the meme has become a vehicle for the individual user to convey meaning in the restricted and transient nature of platforms like Twitter. It could also be noted that there are variations on memes such

as GIFs and viral videos, but for this discussion we shall restrict our discussion to images.

During this study it was necessary for the researcher to follow world events via social media and it was observed that memes are a significant part of online discussions. Almost nothing is off limits with trending topics ranging from terrorist attacks, presidential elections and other less significant events. There are some interesting characteristics to note:

### ***Mememes directed at the individual***

Internet troll Sean Duffy (Lewis 2014), targeted an R.I.P. tribute page for Hayley Bates on Facebook in which he makes direct reference to Hayley's suicide and makes it an object of scorn. (see Appendix three pg. 95). There was a great deal of social media activity surrounding the arrest of the singer Cliff Richard, which prompted a whole host of memes. The trolls attempted to have him in compromising and potentially embarrassing pictures with former disgraced celebrities, such as Jimmy Saville and Rolf Harris. There was also much chatter about conspiracy theories involving politicians and other establishment figures, which could not be verified or corroborated (see Appendix three pg. 96).

### ***Mememes and Terror Attacks***

Following the terrorist attacks in France (Nice, 2016) and Germany (Berlin, 2016) in which a car and a van was used to murder people, memes emerged criticising the reaction to the event (see Appendix three, pp.98-99). In these memes you can observe the same elements (characters, dialogue, etc.) and they are changed to suit the different incidents they refer too. What message is this meme trying to convey?

The speech bubbles contain phrases which some internet critics have used to challenge the way that the incidents were reported in their perception. If we read these speech bubbles carefully we can observe a theme, that of victim blaming. It seems to be conveying a belief that in some regard the actions of the terrorist are 'excused' because of their status as belonging to a demographic of people; in this example Muslim. The legend on the side of the van, which reads 'Religion of Peace' is a clear indication of this, that no atrocity can be attributed to a religious ideology. The speech bubbles refer to the individual as both an autonomous unit and as a product of history and manipulation. It is quite clearly aimed at the Islamic religion and seeks to draw the viewer's attention to this correlation between individual terror attacks.

This meme demonstrates another message about ideology following the Nice terror attack in

France in 2016. Here the message is ‘hate speech fuels religious terrorism’. Appendix three (pp.100) also features memes which are critical of Sharia Law and the treatment of women. The message here in the equation of Sharia Law with Paedophilia and barbaric punishments, a notion which may seem plausible to some considering the terrorist atrocities.

### ***Immigration and Politically Correct culture.***

Immigration is a subject which gets a lot of attention of social media and usually follows in the wake of a terrorist event. If a terrorist event occurs and it involves a Muslim, or suspected Muslim, then the memes come out in force (see Appendix three, pg.101).

The meme makes a reference to politically correct culture and the rights of Muslims to wear the Niqab, whilst trying to make a statement about the rights of the victims of terrorist attacks. They make claims that moral values are skewed and that the rights of some are more important than others. This may partly be due to the negative perception of politically correct culture as well as ‘*ressentiment*’ created in the wake of terrorist attacks.

One meme also conveys a similar message and refers directly to the media and to one incident of a dead Syrian boy washed up on a Turkish beach in 2015 (Smith 2015). It is critical of the coverage given to the incident compared to that of terrorist attacks, presumably because it paints refugees in a sympathetic light and has caused ‘*ressentiment*’ amongst those who witnessed events unfolding on social media and the media.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel (Appendix three, pg.102) was also the target of memes because of her policy on admitting migrants into the country, which some see as being an open-door policy. Following terrorist attacks in Germany, Merkel is portrayed in this meme as having blood upon her hands, which is a direct reference to the immigration policy of the German state.

In another meme the terrorist troubles of France are put squarely on the shoulders of political correctness.

### ***Memes as signals***

Another fascinating use for memes is it to signal one’s beliefs, shock and outrage. After the

Charlie Hebdo massacre on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2015, the meme ‘Je Suis Charlie’ appeared. It was rapidly adopted across various social media platforms and for a short while it became a way for individuals to display sympathy. This then became the trend so that after every latest terrorist attack there was a ‘Je Suis...’ for every place affected (see Appendix three, pg.103).

This rapidly mutated so that it became the profile picture of some users to show their solidarity and then Facebook filters allowed users to add graphical elements to their normal picture profiles. But this act became the focus of attention and criticism by some, as the meme in Appendix three, pg.103 suggests.

### ***Infographic KSA and the 9/11 tweet – August 2018***

Following a diplomatic row between Saudi Arabia and Canada because of concerns about the human rights record of activists in Saudi, a youth group called ‘Infographic KSA’ posted (see Appendix three, pg.104). This caused offence as it was interpreted as a reference to the terror attacks on the Twin Towers of 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001. The cryptic message; “*He who interferes with what doesn’t concern him finds what doesn’t please him*” (Ibid), was interpreted as threat. This was denied by the group who said:

*“The aircraft was intended to symbolize the return of the ambassador. We realize this was not clear and any other meaning was unintentional.”*

(CBC cited in SNS August 2018)

The sincerity of this apology was doubted on social media.

From this chapter we can see that trolling is a complex issue, with motivations and MO’s being many and varied. If we are to understand these deviant individuals better, then we must learn to put ourselves in their place. To empathise with the situational factors that led them into deviant ways. If we can understand the genesis of deviant behaviour, then perhaps we could better evaluate the excuses and justifications that these individuals give when discovered. For example, when mitigation is provided on the grounds of mental health, alcohol abuse and learning difficulties does this provide adequate scope for criminal justice option that do not require incarceration?

This chapter has discussed the hallmarks and identifying behavioural traits of internet trolls. It

has also explored how they 'troll', the post hoc reasoning/rationale for behaviour and some of the arguments which were offered in their defence. I have also explored how anonymity and the 'Gyges Effect' could be a way to understand the behaviour of some individuals and we have drawn extensively upon the philosophical notions of Nietzsche.

The next chapter will discuss the influence of the physical world upon the virtual one and examining behaviour through a Nietzschean lens. It will also hypothesise the decision-making process with reference to the criminological notion of 'drift' and the new concept of '*Flexible Causal Prediction*'. It is the author's intention to demonstrate that individuals possess a decision-making process which is based in influential factors but are not determined into a specific course of action. They are merely responding to the strongest influence at the time.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **CYBER VIGILANTISM, RIGHTEOUS TROLLING AND ACTIVISM.**

Social media has become the platform by which people discuss, argue, debate and communicate with one another. It is seen as a democratising force for good in which every voice can be heard, and all opinions can be shared. It spans territorial boundaries and reaches people in all four corners of the globe.

At least this is the rose-tinted optimist's view we know that certain countries censor the use of the internet, restricting what can and cannot be seen. Even here in the United Kingdom we are seeing hate speech laws which penalise individuals for making a joke (a topic for discussion later in this work).

But what of the social interaction within these networks? If an individual feels aggrieved or slighted, how do they achieve redress? How do we deal with outrage and should we act ourselves to combat those that we see as evil, wrong or offensive?

Cyber-Vigilantism is a phenomenon by which some people go beyond calls for 'justice' and go outside the boundaries of the law to combat a perceived injustice. It is akin to a mob mentality, which sweeps people up in a tide of outrage and revenge. It could even be said that, "*the speed of communication has overtaken the ability of some to think objectively*" (Noble2017d, pg.45) . It could even be argued that social media users are being caught up in a bandwagoning logical fallacy that because something is popular it must be, in some way, right and proper. Allegations made on social media could be described as misleading and shallow at best, so why take potentially harmful action if the truth is uncertain?

*False Accusation and the removal of due process.*

False accusation is nothing new, it existed long before the internet age and will no doubt continue to do so. What is different in this modern era is the ability to communicate immediately and effectively with a vast number of people. So, when an allegation is made across social media many people will see it; and of those some will uncritically accept it as fact.

Noble (2017d) give the example of the incident involving Kayne Kennedy and the fire which

destroyed the Manchester Dog's Home in 2014.

*“At the time rumours circulated on Twitter which quickly escalated to direct threats of violence along with family and address details. The police had to take Kennedy and his family into protective custody because of the nature of the threats that were being circulated over Twitter. Over twelve months later a website known as ‘itsinhumane.org The Animal Cruelty Register’ lists Kennedy as the ‘alleged’ perpetrator of the blaze, despite the lack of concrete evidence. In an instance such as this the implication alone is enough to condemn.”*

(Noble 2017d, pg.45-46)

What occurs next is the circulation of innuendo and rumour across social media networks. Some of the comments call for retribution and violent action against the suspected individual. These include calls for imprisonment and hanging, as well as threats of violence.

It must be remembered that at the time of the fire which killed 53 dogs there was no definite evidence that Kennedy was responsible, however rumours on Twitter were being circulated about who some people thought was responsible. Rumours became ‘facts’ and escalated to death threats and abuse towards those accused. It didn't appear to matter that the threats that some users made towards Kennedy may be breaking the law or that there could be a possibility of error. Instead, the Police became involved when personal details about address and places of work (along with images) began to circulate. Eventually Kennedy and his family had to be taken into custody for their own protection.

The mob mentality went beyond the geographical area of the fire and became a global phenomenon with Twitter users on other continents voicing threats against the alleged arsonist. From this we can perhaps conclude that it is all too easy for individuals to react to content, which promotes outrage and disgust in ways that bypass any logical and critical engagement. Not only does this appear to be the case but there is a distinct lack of reasonable response with calls for harsh punishments before the facts are even known. It was further stated that:

*“The convenience and ease of social media has created a situation in which people can react and comment with little or no substantive information. Instantaneous messaging of this sort does not allow some people adequate time to think critical about the information they are receiving, but rather to exhibit an extreme reaction. When this occurs, it would appear that outrage can become infectious and snowball into a widespread condemnation in which moderate voices are drown in a sea of*

*aggression. Complex arguments become reductive because of the 140-character format of the Twitter medium, negating the possibility of a thorough and balanced debate.”*

*(Ibid, pg.48)*

### *Naming and Shaming, Revenge and ‘Outing’*

The more that people encounter individuals in their everyday life who they disagree with or who they perceive to have committed some form a wrong doing, then the more we see the naming and shaming of so called miscreants. The Facebook page “British Armed Forces ‘The Best’” began a campaign in 2017 (Appendix four, pg.108) to locate a thief who had stolen a Poppy collection tin. It was not long before the alleged thief was identified as Nathan Beddow, at which point information started to appear about him, including photos and a newspaper article.

In another incident which took place in May 2016 the image of a man who was wearing a T-Shirt which said: “*HILLSBOROUGH Gods way of helping RENTOKILL*” appeared alongside other pictures; and what appeared to be the man’s address was circulated on Social Media (Appendix four, pg.108). In March 2015 an image was circulating on social media featuring a person which it was claimed showing acquiring animals for blood sports. Also, in March 2015 this image appears on the Facebook page “Marines of Helmand and Al anbar” (Appendix four, pg.109). In each of these examples the identities of the people in question has been researched and revealed, there have been unsubstantiated allegations made; and there have been calls for retribution.

Fake images designed to miss-inform and outrage circulate at times when terror attacks are taking place, which makes it difficult for users to know what to believe. In the images on Appendix four, pg.112, we have an image which was doctored using image manipulated software. Following the Berlin terror attack of 2016, images of the alleged terrorist attacked began to circulate. The alleged perpetrator was identified as Samuel Hyde a supposed white nationalist and fake images of Hyde appeared showing him on a rooftop car park during the incident (Appendix four, pg.111).

After the terrorist attack on Westminster Bridge of 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2017 pictures emerged on Twitter showing the aftermath of the violence. An image was circulated in what appeared to show a

Somali woman walking by injured people using her phone. The context of this image was never fully explained (or known), but it was used as ammunition by internet trolls to give misleading and false messages (Appendix four, pp.112-113). Another image from the aftermath of the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2017 terrorist attack in St. Petersburg displays a doctored image, which appeared on social media shortly after: Other pseudo-images featuring the same women also started to be posted onto social media.

What is the purpose of this? Is it just meddlesome trolling or is it an attempt to manipulate and muddy the waters? Perhaps both, it certainly makes it difficult to distinguish between truth and false-hood and to the uncritical eye it may be convincing. Furthermore, if you have an axe to grind then it is excellent propaganda.

This online lynch mob mentality demonstrates several interesting and noteworthy characteristics:

- “i) *Individuals can make massive sweeping statements about individuals and situations which they have the barest knowledge of. Ill-informed statements, half-truths and deceit are common in these social media discourses.*
- ii) *Individuals are not engaging in critical thinking or questioning the veracity of the information they are receiving. The validity of information is accepted without question, outrage and disgust appears to be the primary driver.*
- iii) *Individuals are not concerned with the consequences of actions/statements for both themselves and those who they are discussing. There is little empathy for the target(s) of abuse and no concern over the damage which may be done if they are not responsible for the deeds which they are accused of.*
- iv) *The primary response of social media communications appears to bypass higher reasoning functions, so caution is thrown to the winds as individuals are thrown to the Lions.”*

(Noble 2017d, pp.48-49)

The impact upon an individual who has suffered a false accusation can be devastating. Quite often it results in that person losing their reputation, even after allegations have been proven to be false. As the old saying goes; if you throw enough mud, some of it is bound to stick.

In June 2015 a photograph appeared on social media that appeared to be a man in camouflaged clothing holding up dead foxes (which presumably he had shot) with a white van in the background (see Appendix four, pg.114). On the van you can clearly read the details of a

company called 'Apex Interiors'. This image caused quite a stir insofar as the person pictured and the company listed received hate messages. Hunt Saboteurs then contributed to the discussion with this comment:

*"He might only lose his job, but the poor animals that they hunt and kill loose a hell of a lot more, THERE LIVES. HE looks like the big tough man with a gun but I wonder how he would react to someone who could fight back, piece of shit that he is".*

(Appendix four, pg.114)

Not unexpectedly, internet users found and contacted a company called 'Apex Interiors', but the firm denied any knowledge of this person. It may be possible to conclude that this is some form of trolling. If we look closely we can see that the logos for 'Apex interiors' on the picture and the Twitter page are different, the two companies appear to be in different locations (the van has a Preston dialling code and the twitter page appears to originate in Southport). We must also consider the veracity of the picture itself because, on close inspection it looks odd. It is low definition and not capable of giving us any detailed information, although the writing on the van is visible. It is interesting to note that by making an image low definition it is possible to hide poorly executed image doctoring.

It is not just our common or garden internet/social media user that can be fooled into action. Operation Ore conducted by the police in 2002 resulted in several thousand people being falsely accused of downloading illegal images of child abuse (Williams-Thomas cited in Barford 2013). The distress the wrongly accused experiences, in conjunction with the damage sustained to the reputation of UK policing is difficult to quantify. It calls into question the ability of the police to adequately patrol and protect individuals online; and when mistakes are made during criminal investigations (and innocent people lose their reputations), how those individuals can be protected and compensated (Hirsch and Shorter 2010).

A question which needs our attention is this: what is it that makes people behave in extreme ways in their online interactions? Not all people go '*off at the deep end*' (to coin a phrase), but a significant number of people do and are uncritically accepting of social media content. Why is this? Is there something of a 'mob mentality' amongst users?

Should the platforms on which these interactions occur be taking a more active role in the

discourse, perhaps patrolling and censoring it? Internet service providers and social media networks are protected under the ‘Common Carrier’ clause, the same as the postal service. In other words, the service is provided, but it is not the responsibility of the service provide to regulate by it.

For example: if you happen to receive a poison pen letter in the post, it is not the responsibility of the postman or the postal service. Rather it is the person sending the communication that is responsible for any offence or threat you may feel. In other words; the internet service providers are not responsible for how people use their service.

Hate speech laws come into conflict with freedom of speech. The ‘offence’ of one is the ‘hate’ of another; it takes the notion of ‘offence’ and inflates it to the status of an actual ‘harm’. It also conflates the notions of minor and major ‘harm’ into one all-encompassing category, which diminishes serious harms (such as rape and murder) whilst exaggerating very minor causes of ‘offence’ (i.e. name calling, joke telling etc.).

Once one is perceived (or should we say labelled) as being guilty of a hate speech crime it legitimises for some the use of ad hominem attacks on your character.

*“It also allows internet users to diminish the status of others online by dismissing their opinions as ‘offensive’ and subsequently worthless.”*

(Noble 2017d, pg.47)

From this point onwards, a form of dehumanisation takes place in which the ‘hate speaker’ is labelled as a ‘bigot’, ‘misogynist’, ‘cisgender’, ‘transphobic’, ‘racist’, ‘islamophobe’ and a plethora of other epithets designed to diminish status and amplify their ‘deviance’. Anything you say then can be dismissed in the popular imagination as the ravings of the socially egregious.

The notion of having a ‘safe space’ into which one can retreat and be insulated from the hurtful ideas and opinions of others is something that we shall return to later in this work. A safe space is a non-combative environment where those who share the same belief systems can be ‘protected’ from enemies. The use of the word ‘enemies’ is done so advisedly because the language surrounding these topics is coached in the extremist rhetoric of violence, conflict and

struggle. For example; some people identify themselves as an ‘ally’ to black and/or LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer) people and, by defining yourself as such, there is an implication of conflict or struggle.

### **Political Trolling**

There is a belief that the Presidential Election of 2016 was heavily influenced by social media and that trolling, under the guise of ‘fake news’ had a direct impact on the outcome. The veracity of this statement is not clear and thus far no credible evidence has been submitted to support this claim, but it does raise a few interesting notions.

- i) To begin with there is a tactic claim that people are uncritical and willing to accept the ‘surface’ interpretation of any news stories which are circulated.
- ii) There is an infantilising notion that certain members of the population are incapable of complex thought and are essentially stupid.
- iii) There is an assumption that certain demographics of the populace cannot be trusted to make important decisions.
- iv) An argument is made for greater regulation and control over what people see and hear so that they do not make bad decisions.
- v) Decision making processes should be kept out of the hands of the uneducated or those whose opinions are politically unacceptable.

Once speech is regulated then it becomes filtered through the lenses of what is politically correct. As previously observed:

*“Political bias and beliefs of any description could find censure at the hands of those determined to police online social spaces by deliberately creating an environment where people are afraid to speak their minds for fear of bullying and reprisals. The great market place of ideas and discussion could be replaced with a non-combatant, environment in which people are not encouraged to question the opinions/beliefs of others for fear of being labelled deviant.”*

(Noble 2017d)

As seen from the section in chapter one on fake news trolling (which will be discussed later in this work when examining moral entrepreneurship), there is a lack of critical engagement, which assists the formation and circulation of rumour and allegation. In some situations, the context is shifted away from actual events that take place to a filtered discussion, which forces a particular world view. Once a person has been labelled it may be difficult to dispel the perception, especially in the minds of the resentful who are dominated by their emotional reactions. We can observe a similar absence of critical thought and a propensity for bandwagoning as part of the #MeToo movement. The notion of deviancy amplification can

also be applied to the #MeToo movement which promotes a mob mentality whilst simultaneously wearing a cloak of righteousness. These notions will be explored in more detail later in this chapter.

### **Paedophile Hunters and Vigilantism**

Social media, some chat rooms and instant messaging forums have become the hunting ground for online paedophiles. Outrage following news reports of sex crimes, such as the Jimmy Saville affair, have placed such issues into the public domain and are a topic for scrutiny and discussion.

The Police have limited resources to patrol social media platforms and we have witnessed an increase in individuals and communities setting themselves up as paedophile hunters, ensnaring sexual predators and exposing them in public via the internet. The intention of such groups or communities is to do the job that they imagine the police should be doing or that they cannot do; either because of a lack of resources or from being hamstrung by rules and regulations. Moral and ethical questions are raised by complaints from those that have been wrongly accused and exposed by some of these paedophile hunters (Booth 2013). As observed:

*“The modus operandi of such groups has been to join adult dating sites assuming the persona of a young female, then await to be approached by another (adult) member of the group. They engage in conversation making it plain to the other person that they are underage (12 – 14 years normally) in order to make the potential target aware that they are not old enough to be engaged in such activities. If they persist the scene is then set for the sexualisation of the conversation, with explicit language and images exchanged, which finally culminates in a physical meeting. In some cases the ‘mark’ or ‘target’ (in other words the alleged predator) will arrive with gifts such as wine, flowers and chocolates; as though anticipating a romantic tryst.”*

(Noble 2017d, pg.50)

When the ‘predator’ is met by a camera crew who politely ask him why he is here and what his intentions are this becomes the point of confrontation, a ‘sting’ operation. They each act in different ways; some choose to run away immediately without comment whilst others remain to be interviewed. The group, armed with the incriminating information that they have collected, present it to the person they are confronting. The ‘target’s reactions varies from flat out denial, attempting to obfuscate the facts to emotional collapse and remorse; maybe a combination of the three. The events have an air of theatre about them:

*“In some extreme examples a chase may ensue in which the ‘predator’ is pursued through streets by the group members whilst questions are shouted after them. Unseemly scenes such as this certainly appeal to a base instinct and share similarities with reality T.V. programmes.”*

(Noble 2017d, pg.51)

Criminal activities such as blackmail and violence can also occur, as in the case of Adam Brookes (Rowe 2015) who was jailed in Dec 2015 for blackmailing a man that he had lured to his home address. It was reported that Brookes had placed an advert on the internet site ‘Craigslist’ posing as a 14-year-old girl to trap sexual predators. When a potential ‘predator’ arrived for the rendezvous they were instructed to strip naked by Brookes before he threatened them with a hammer. Instances such as this allow a criminal to exploit the embarrassment of potential offenders and subsequently increase potential for criminal activities. This also usurps due process and comes close to a vigilante style justice in which the civil authorities, proper evidence gathering, and lawful prosecution are circumvented. By threatening violence and practicing blackmail Brookes has in a very real sense, become a vigilante by his actions.

### ***Stinson Hunter – Paedophile Hunter***

Self-styled ‘paedophile hunter’, Stinson Hunter uses a team of people to confront online predators after they have been ensnared by a decoy identity, which the alleged predator believes to be a child. Each ‘sting’ is recorded and uploaded to the internet along with chat logs, identity details of alleged predators and other material gathered during the process.

Hunter is a highly motivated individual and in some of his interviews and blogs to camera he presents something of a crusader mentality. This is not to cast him in the same light as a moral entrepreneur,<sup>10</sup> but rather that his cause is remarkably like others who have a social/political agenda where the righteousness of his motivations may blind him to the potential damage that his activities may have; such as driving paedophile communities further underground or hampering police investigations.

An alleged predator took his own life in 2013 after being exposed by Hunter and being

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1. <sup>10</sup> We will explore moral entrepreneurs in greater depth later in this work.

interviewed by the police. At the inquest the dead man's brother alleged that the arrest and consequent infamy associated with being exposed as a paedophile had contributed to his death. He further stated that there had been no evidence provided to him by the police to support allegations (BBC 2014). In a video statement entitled 'My Story: The Michael Parkes Suicide' posted on YouTube, Hunter defends his actions and attempts to clarify his role in the events leading up to the suicide. In his statement he places part of the blame onto the police for not supporting the dead man who it seems suffered from depression; and upon the dead man himself.

*"I'm not going to apologise for it, I'm not going to feel bad for his death, because he made every single choice himself, just like I've made every single choice myself. Every single bad thing that I have done I made that choice myself, as does every single person I catch, as did Michael Parkes."*

(Hunter 8th July 2015)

He also paints a bleak picture of the deceased man and associated individuals, portraying himself (Hunter) as the victim in this situation and the target of hate groups and questions the morality of surviving relatives. This could be interpreted as a technique of neutralisation in which the responsibility is portioned out between different individuals to aggregate blame. There is also a suggestion that the involvement of paedophile hunters from other groups associated with ensnaring online predators contributed to these circumstances.

*"Stinson Hunter has been the subject of documentaries by Channel Four in the UK and 60 Minutes in Australia in which they describe his methods and take us behind the scenes. He or a member of his team will pretend to be a 13-year-old girl complete with appropriate avatar and wait to be approached by someone who is looking for sex with what they imagine is that person. The conversations between the online predators and the fake profile become progressively more sexualised and explicit in which the predator may request or send intimate photographs. Eventually a physical meeting is arranged which signals the culmination of the sting, from this point onwards is the aftermath in which legal sanctions are invoked upon the offender combined with the public shaming of being exposed."*

(Noble 2017d)

It is uncertain if this is the modus operandi used by other paedophile hunting groups/individuals, but it would appear that their methods are very similar. The online group 'Dark Justice' was established in 2014. The group claims success with their online activities. According to their website:

*“Out of the 39 people arrested 10 of them have been convicted so far the rest are on police bail/on remand awaiting court dates.”*

(<https://darkjustice.co.uk/> (date??))

And:

*“9 of the 11 people convicted on our evidence has been given custodial sentences. The rest are on police bail OR waiting for court dates.”*

(Ibid)

Dark Justice’s organisation is quite amateurish, operating *“(I)n a bedsit in Newcastle- upon- Tyne, two men are using a laptop and Smartphone to monitor the online conversations they have with adults they suspect to be paedophiles”* (Trott 2015). This lack of professionalism may strengthen the perception of the organisation as vigilante. It also raises questions about data management, ethical control and standards.

The ‘Daemon Hunter Organisation: Public Against Paedos’ was founded in 2013 and claims to be ‘staffed’ by volunteers who are ICT professionals. The staff of the Daemon Hunter Organisation collects data about alleged online predators, which they can present to the police for prosecution. They confront predators in person and expose their identities on their website; a tactic we have seen with other online groups.

Their Facebook page acts as a mission statement and states:

*“Under regional coordinators, Daemon Hunter will gain evidence for Police Forces bringing about successful prosecutions for both sharing indecent image with minors and grooming minors with intent, and aid the CPS to help bring successful prosecutions against those who are discovered, and upon conviction; expose such horrible nonces on our website with their names and locations.”*

(facebook.com/DaemonhunterOrganisation)

Their aim is to achieve this ‘without any victims whatsoever’, although it is not quite clear who the potential victims are, how they can be distinguished from ‘real’ predators and how they intend to prevent persons becoming prey to victimisation, or false accusation.

In an interview with ‘Peter’ (an alleged predator exposed by Daemon Hunter) conducted by Guardian journalist Robert Booth (Booth 2013) he claims that the issue of the other person’s age was not brought up until he was waiting in a cafe to meet that person.

However, the video footage of the confrontation suggests a different story; he is directly challenged and he admits to knowing that the individual he has come to meet is below the age of consent. The scene is one of confusion and this makes it unclear if the evidence is reliable, as it has most probably not been recorded under the strict requirements that the Police would call for evidential purposes. The police did not press charges because of insufficient evidence, but the video of the confrontation along with personal details were published on the internet by the group. This situation resulted in death threats and abuse from internet users, so much so that that he fled his home and later his wife attempted suicide (Booth 2013).

*“There are cases which I have experienced in which people who are exposed for this kind of offending end up committing suicide... The fact is that if someone is wrongly accused of this in a hugely public way, in a way which makes people with them, live near them, work with them assume they have committed this offence, the temptation to take themselves out of it may be just as great even if they are innocent”*

(Peter Davies, ACPO Lead on Child Protection quoted in Booth 2013)

### **Letzgo Hunting: Covert Internet Investigations**

This group had success in 2013 with the conviction of James Stone, but came under scrutiny in 2013 when Gary Cleary was found to have hanged himself four days after being released on bail by the police following a ‘sting’ from the group (Booth 2013). The group’s leader ‘Scumm Buster’ (sic) told the BBC “We’re not there to hurt anybody. We are there to get an explanation” (Barford 2013). This explanation of intent would seem to be disingenuous as they must be aware of the impact of their actions upon the individuals involved. Also, we see that there is no mitigation for false accusation.

In a statement dated 8th December 2014 the group talked of changes that they were making regarding protecting the families of offenders who did not have knowledge of that individual’s offending. This they intended to do by obscuring identities of alleged offenders until after prosecution, when their identities would be revealed as a matter of public record. Also, they talked about improving their practices by forging closer links and more cooperative links with the police, in particular:

*“We fully intend to ensure that the police are present at our ‘stings’ so the perpetrator can be arrested at the scene; hence he is not given the opportunity to reset his phone or go home and delete evidence from his computer. This will help the police immensely when retrieving data from the perpetrator’s devices and will*

*hopefully nurture a cooperative relationship between ourselves and the authorities who are responsible for preparing and presenting evidence to the Crown Prosecution Service. We look forward to your continued support and sharing more 'stings' with you in the future."*

(Letzgo Hunting 2014)

## **Paedophiles Unmasked**

The group was founded in 2013 with a mission to:

*"Investigative journalism delving in to the dark world of the internet Grooming and Paedophile gangs by using online decoys & technology to bring them to justice"*

(@Peados\_UnmaskedTwitter Profile).

The modus operandi is like other groups where they harvest details and offences, which will lead to exposure and conviction. They have Facebook and twitter feeds and regularly update them with information about their activities; posting details of conversation and chat logs for viewers to read.

*"There's a growing frustration among the public. Online paedophiles are at epidemic levels - police forces have seized about 300 million child abuse images over the past two years, which shows the scale of it. The feeling that the issue is not being properly tackled by the authorities leads to people trying to get involved themselves"*

(Williams-Thomas, cited in Barford 2013)

The idea that the police are unable to cope with events and need 'assistance' from publicly minded people is by no means a new one. For example, one must look back at the vigilante committees that were set up in the East End of London during the Whitechapel Murders of 1888, or to the Guardian Angels of the 1980s. What has changed is the ability to become involved in such actions and this is where information technology and social media act as an enabler and/or amplifier.

*"Wall (cited in Barford 2013) quite rightly points out that vigilante groups run the risk of 'providing evidence that isn't admissible in court'. If proper data handling techniques and chains of custody are not observed evidence is inadmissible; this is because it cannot be proven that the data wasn't in anyway changed or tampered with"*.

(Noble 2017d, pg.56)

Another area of concern is the reaction of the 'offender' once they have been 'outed' as on

some occasions it has resulted in death by suicide. These hunting groups do not have the same duty of care towards offenders as the State organisations do. When a person is taken into custody they essentially become a ward of the state and there is a duty of care towards that person even when they are receiving state sanctioned punishments. These groups have no such mandate and are only concerned with exposing the miscreants.

This can be problematic for police trying to investigate the wider implications involving an offender's associates and other potential victims as retribution amongst social member community members may lead to more criminal acts, which need to be investigated. Also, offenders may think that the nature of the crime will stigmatise them and their family, that the only options left open to them are the most drastic ones. Ex-police officer and child protection specialist Mark Williams Thomas (ITV 2014) makes this point to Stinson Hunter in a TV broadcast when he advises that: "It's a most abhorrent crime, it's a crime that the public hate and because of that people often feel there is no escape from that."

Secondary victimisation of the families of the alleged offender is described by Jim Gamble, former head of the UK Child Exploitation Online Protection Centre:

*"You are dealing with a crime where there is a stigma like no other, the smell never goes away, ... the wives and children of those individuals, of those predators or suspect predators at that time, they have lives, they shouldn't be further brutalised because of something we suspect the man in that house of having done."*

*(Ibid)*

When a suspected paedophile is exposed in public then these groups have unintentionally created extra victims of that perpetrators crimes.

Wrongful accusation is another problematic offshoot from this use of social media. Rumours quickly spread, they became accusation and accusations become outrage with demands for vengeance. Moderate voices advising caution are drowned out in an excess of indignation and condemnation. This has a real-world impact upon suspects and communities.<sup>11</sup>

The methods of these groups do not constitute proper verifiable evidence, which is collected

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<sup>11</sup> We will return to an examination of false-accusation in our assessment of social justice movements.

by a recognised unbiased authority for which data gathering and the chain of evidence are ensured. Because of the subjective interpretations by individuals who have preconceived notions about others guilt or innocence, these groups are displaying bias in their methods which would not be lawful.

Another consideration of these activities is that the type of individuals which will be caught out by this method are likely to be at quite a low level, in other words not the major players, distributors and generators of child pornography. They are easy targets and by outing these individual deviants and vilifying them on the internet it may bring some short-term satisfaction. It may give the appearance of combating abuse; but it could lead to official investigations being compromised. Serious organised paedophile rings of the sort which generate/distribute pornography on a large scale are potentially going to be harder to detect and be infiltrated by the police and other agencies because of these paedophile hunters.

### ***Vigilantism as Entertainment***

Is there entertainment value to be found in watching sexual predators getting their comeuppance? Could it be justifiable to watch another's suffering, even if that suffering is in some sense deserved? We may all have seen journalist 'stings' on dodgy builders or car salesmen on TV programmes like 'Watch Dog'. There is a certain satisfaction to be had from seeing the embarrassment and public shaming of 'cowboys' in this fashion. Perhaps then we can understand the appeal of watching paedophiles squirm, after all Paedophilia is one of the most disgusting crimes imaginable.

Observe the interest shown in Stinson hunter by Channel Four and the 60 Minutes TV programme in Australia. He generates a lot of interest amongst the public and broadcasters are keen to report on such newsworthy items. But is there is also a general trend developing towards these sorts of videos being viewed as entertainment?

US TV show 'To Catch A Predator' operates on a similar premise to that of hidden camera show. It incorporates the same 'sting' techniques as Stinson Hunter to trap and confront deviants. The programme 'sets up' a potential sex offender and exposes their actions on television in front of the cameras, as would be expected with a reality game show. A journalist confronts the suspected predator for the entertainment of the viewer and we are treated to the sight the 'offender's' discomfort. Nothing can be better than having a bogey man, a figure that

can be universally hated and which everyone agrees has no redeeming features.

However, the show was cancelled when a suspected sexual predator shot himself live on the programme when police came to his home to confront him on charges of Paedophilia (Connolly 2010; Barford 2013). The show's presenter, Chris Hansen, was to try to restart the series as a Kickstarter crowd funded endeavour called 'Hansen Vs. Predator'. In November 2015 he had successfully raised \$89,068 with the pledges of 1,220 backers.

The German TV channel RTL2 aired a TV programme which featured actors impersonating teenage girls to act as a lure to online sexual predators. It was criticised for its salacious tone and denounced as a grab for audience ratings above justice and good taste. The meetings were filmed in secret, in a 'hidden camera' show style of programming, presenting potential criminal acts as entertainment in a reality TV setting.

This TV show was also criticised for driving paedophile networks underground, making it more difficult for the authorities to monitor activities. The Justice Minister Sabine Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger (cited in Connolly 2010) stated that "(T)here is the danger that innocents will be put in the stocks and damage caused, and the rule of law will be thrown out of balance."

Offering up real-life crime as entertainment has long been a staple of T.V. programming schedules, but now we are seeing social media as a conduit for consumption. The power to communicate has exceeded the abilities of some to reflect upon their actions and to apply thought and reason to their utterances. Quite often social media can report of terrorist crimes much faster than conventional news sources; and often before the facts can be verified. Similarly, rumours about incidents such as the arson attack at the Manchester Dog's Home can be spread with consequences in the real world before the proper authorities can establish what happened and deal justly with anyone miscreants.

With activities online which seek to humiliate, hurt and harass people as a form of sport and entertainment; and appear to be legitimised by the sites, it can hardly be surprising that this lust for cruelty has found its way into popular culture. We are regularly treated to the sight of talent show contestants humiliating themselves for the entertainment of the viewing public; we can watch dodgy traders being confronted; and we can slake our thirst for cruelty on the quite often

seedy exploits of reality TV. It is no wonder that trolling is such an omnipresent feature within our social media, a wide spread desire to witness and revel in cruelty.

Some social justice activism on social media could be observed as a form of trolling against certain individuals. For example, when supposed 'Alt-Right' individuals are attacked on social media there is an assumption that any means of attack is acceptable. This involves labelling, false accusation, death threats and other forms of abuse, which is by no means unique to the 'Alt-Left' but can be seen throughout all political and non-political spheres. What however is special to them is the 'righteous trolling' that attempts to cast itself above criticism.

Late 2017 saw several high-profile allegations of sexual assault against prominent men on social media. Despite there being no trial or police investigation it was assumed (rightly or wrongly) that they are guilty. Some of these individuals admitted wrongdoing and apologised and faced public shaming and ridicule, (such as Louis CK for example). However, it does appear that the due process of the law had been circumvented in favour of a kangaroo style court in which allegation on social media is enough to condemn someone.

It also worth noting that when similar allegations are made against female individuals they do not receive the same amount of attention as their male counterparts. One could even surmise that male victims of sexual harassment are not treated with the same degree of rigour as their female counterparts. Blott (2016) details accounts of the actions taken by women which, if the roles were reversed, would be classed as sexual harassment. Female sexual predation of men is a taboo subject, the impact of which is minimised simply because they are men. This could be interpreted as a way that gender politics is used to acquire power and by selectively enforcing moral outrage. This becomes a tool for '*Slave Masters*' to gain personal power and consolidate the '*herd morality*'. Similar rhetoric is displayed by Shaun King in his demonisation of white policemen (Appendix four, pg.117).

It takes very little effort on the part of the individual to signal their approval and agreement with the righteousness of a tweet, Facebook post, speech by celebrity or other sentiment, which is the viral sensation of the day. It is so easy that it has now become a substitute for actual activity. By giving something a 'like', retweeting or changing your profile picture to include a country flag you show that you too agree with the common sentiment. But what does it achieve? Will it help fight terrorism? Will it affect real world change? Will it stop the cruelty that we

know takes place in the world? No of course not, but it may be an expression of internal anxiety and allows some social media users to feel better about themselves and lack of activity. We must also note that this may not be the case in all instances, there individuals who sincerely feel distress and concern about world events and want to express these for purely innocent motives. The difficulty comes when we try to distinguish these noble sentiments from the grandstanding and disingenuous.

A hashtag culture of virtue signalling, such as we see on social media, is reductionist because it reduces complex issues into bite size chunks, which and allows misrepresentation and for topics to be hijacked by pressure groups. One might call this ‘bandwagoning’, a logical fallacy, which can occur when perceptions of popularity are magnified by social media. For example, the #MeToo ‘movement’ ask women to show solidarity with the victims of sexual assault, a fine sentiment which no one in their right mind would disagree with. However, it also makes the tacit claim that women are oppressed by male sexual predation fostering a reductionist perception of male and female victimhood. It also carries an implied assumption that if you are not part of the solution then you are part of the problem; so, if you don’t signal your support then you are effectively an enemy. This would appear to be like the mob mentality displayed by paedophile hunters.

### **False Accusation and Mob Justice**

The #MeToo movement shares a characteristic with the vigilantism exercised against suspected paedophiles examined earlier in this chapter; that characteristic is “righteous vigilantism” (Hentoff quoted in Ravitch 2004, pg.85). It has become evident during this research that the #MeToo movement has mutated into a form of mob justice in which unsubstantiated claims or claims that are less severe in nature are given the same weight as incidents which are far more serious.

A great deal of discussion has been prompted by the idea that a rape culture exists on college campuses in America; that 1 in 4 female students will experience some form of rape and sexual assault as claimed by Krebs, Lindquist, Warner, Fisher and Martin (2007). But the study was criticised for being fundamentally flawed and consequently misleading; Fox and Moran (2014) highlight the unreliable methods, including the broad definitions of what constitutes sexual assault.

Discussions on the validity and veracity of these claims are discouraged or referred to as ‘misogyny’, ‘Mansplanning’, ‘Alt-Right’ or ‘Hate speech’. The field of discussion is narrowed down to such a degree that only officially sanctioned topics are fit for discourse, were offence of the few or the one trumps the right of others not to be offended. The danger being of course that you could accidentally stray in to dangerous waters without realising, up until the point your reputation and career have been destroyed.

An example of this has been observed when history Professor Michael Mason, whilst teaching a course on the history of colonialism, gave examples of racial epithets. The epithets were not directed at any one individual or group of people, he was quoting them from printed material for the sake of knowledge and historical context. Mason’s Teaching Assistants complained about the use of these words and claimed that they were not appropriate. Furthermore, they stated that Professor Mason had not created a safe space for students (Wente 2018).

Professor Mason was duly suspended from teaching whilst an investigation took place. However, he resigned after experiencing humiliation and public shaming. This is worrying; if a few resentful individuals can dictate the intellectual agenda in our places of higher learning, then universities can no longer be said to possess the freedom to articulate thoughts and ideas which offend the resentful.

There is a clear intent by some to prevent debate on subjects by implying that the opposite position is so reprehensible that it cannot even be entertained in any form; effectively silencing them. This form of ‘no platforming’ has its roots in ‘*slave morality*’ and has been codified in Alinsky’s ‘Rules for Radicals’ (1971).

### **Rules for the Resentful.**

“The home of the humourless, inflexible PC-ness is said to be the American university, and what some call its Gestapo is a certain kind of feminist.”  
(Grayling 2010, pg.177)

In 1971 Alinsky published his book ‘Rule for Radicals’, which for the past half century has since become the blue print for radical movements for the past half century. Let us now take some time to examine each of Alinsky’s ‘rules’ to understand how ‘*ressentiment*’ and ‘*Slave Morality*’ are motivating the powers which are driving them.

***Power is not only what you have, but what the enemy thinks you have.***

This is clearly an appeal to those who do not possess power or have a low social standing. It appeals to their sense of entitlement by fostering the notion that they could have power; but also implying that they deserve power. When we see mobs of radicals protesting outside college campus, disrupting events and damaging property this naturally helps to foster the notion of power in the minds of their ‘enemy’. Institutions may be risk averse and unwilling to attract the attention of groups such as AntiFa and BLM and therefore will be discouraged from holding events which hold a differing view point.

**Never go outside the expertise of your people.**

We can observe this in the discussion and debates between opposing sides where each will try to gain the upper hand by trying to introduce concepts, arguments and notions which they are familiar with. When you debate issues or concepts which are beyond to scope of your ideology then you are risking defeat.

*“Beginning to think is beginning to be undermined.”*

(Camus, 1942)

**Whenever possible go outside the expertise of your enemy.**

This is linked to the second rule; try to find the debate on your own ground. Make the opponent insecure; make you the ‘expert’.

**Make the enemy live up to its own book of rules.**

Use your enemy’s standards against them. Alinsky gives us the example of letter writing, but we could easily update this to texts, emails and tweets.

**Ridicule is man’s most potent weapon.**

Used when debating rational points which cannot be won; resort to ad hominem arguments. This is a manifestation of the ‘bad conscience’ that afflicts the ‘*slave morality*’ and revels in a delight of persecution and cruelty and is symptomatic of the resentful. Part of this tactic is to promote a reaction from the enemy, to goad them making some rash response that will make them appear aggressive or intolerant. Nietzsche observes:

*“Speaking generally, there is no doubt but that for even the most reasonable, even-handed individuals it requires only a little hostility, malice or insinuation to make them lose their composure, equanimity and objectivity.”*

(Nietzsche 1887, 2013 (ed.), pg.60)

A product of this tactic is to make your enemy hates you with the same venom that you display to them. An example of this occurred when radicals disrupted a talk by author Dr. Warren Farrell at the university of Toronto in 2012. Protestors harassed and disrupted the event, preventing people from attending it. They further insulted the potential attendees; calling them ‘Scum’ and ‘Rapists’, whilst trying to browbeat them with extremist feminist rhetoric.

*“...you should be fucking ashamed of yourself, you’re fucking scum. You are fucking scum! You fucking rape apologist, incest supporting, woman hating fucking scum.”*

(StudioBrulle Video 03:55 – 04:10)

The vehemence and self-righteousness with which this protestor berates a man queueing to get into the building bears all the hallmarks of a religious zealot. No insult is too debasing, no conception of that person is to inhuman, it is a situation that demonstrates clear provocation.

What is ironic here is that to lampoon, insult and ridicule your opponents, you must exercise the same rights that you are demonstrating against. They run the risk of causing offence to another party, whilst finding this unacceptable in the reverse. It demonstrates the adversarial nature of debate in which the goal is to have victory over an opponent rather than come to some form of meaningful truth or agreement.

### **A good tactic is one your people enjoy.**

When you are seeking to gain the support of the resentful it may become necessary provide some ‘bread and circuses’. In other words, they will need to be entertained because they have a selfish desire which asks, ‘What’s in it for me?’ Therefore, protests must have an element of the carnival about them, with music and chanting; there may even be violence to appease and inflate the ego.

### ***A tactic that drags on too long becomes a drag.***

As soon as the resentful supporters cease to enjoy the ‘fun’ of the protest, then a new form of entertaining protest must be established. In the same way one would expect a two-year-old to become bored with a toy; new playthings must be provided.

***Keep the pressure on. Never let up.***

The resentful must be enthused with an obsession to grind down their opponents by ceaseless and repetitive actions, which they know will slow down the operation of the opposing force. This is an appeal to the Bandwagon Fallacy in which popularity dictates the worth of a ethos or argument.

***The threat is usually more terrifying than the thing itself.***

Spreading a fear of the unknown is a tactic that we see with small children and like a small child the resentful are easily motivated by fear.

***If you push a negative hard enough, it will push through and become a positive.***

This allows the resentful to play the victim in any conflict. If you repeat the victim narrative enough times then you become identified as such. This mirrors the old saying that if you repeat a lie often enough then it becomes the truth.

***The price of a successful attack is a constructive alternative.***

If you dominate the agenda [no-platforming] and the narrative [political correctness] then the resentful have the power. If your enemy gains any ground, then it will erode the power that the resentful possess.

***Pick the target, freeze it, personalize it, and polarize it.***

Select a target, for example sexual harassment, and be selective about the targets you chose then you can personalise the attack [by targeting an individual] who then become isolated. With any support cut off, condemnation of the individual is polarised and they are made an example of.

***New Rules for 2018.***

Based on some of the behaviours observed by radicals online and on college campuses in America, Alinsky's (1971) rules could be augmented:

***(i) The minor becomes the major.***

The standards by how such things are judged have become so nebulous in the minds of the resentful that they will make outlandish claims about the most insignificant occurrences. For

example; the #MeToo movement has broadened the definition on what constitutes sexual assault and harassment so much that women can potentially publicly shame men for simply asking them out. This is a form of ‘levelling’ in which we see the ordinary and extraordinary conflated to please the ‘herd’, in this case to propel the resentful into the higher status of ‘victim’.

**(ii) *Allegations are now facts.***

A lot of what is held up by the resentful on social media and evidence of racism, sexism, misogyny, transphobia etc. are in fact false. Furthermore, the unsubstantiated allegation is enough to convict someone in the court of public opinion. The #MeToo movement has been afflicted by this to the point where serious and genuine claims of sexual harassment are merged with false claims. The resulting effect is to diminish those serious claims and the movement with reference to the many false claims.

**(iii) *Context and nuance are irrelevant***

When a person uses a word or phrase which the resentful find offensive then they feel impelled to admonish that person. This admonishment does not take into account any of the contexts by which it is uttered, it is not interested in history and changing values; it just seeks to censure. Part of this may be because of the need to rewrite the values of others to reflect their own.

**(iv) *Ruling the resentful***

The power of doctrine is the key to controlling the resentful. Because they possess a strong herding instinct, they seek self realisation by group identity and are therefore ripe for the taking. The dogma they are fed is lapped up and is unchallenged [Rule 2], ritual becomes observed [Rule 6] and non-conformists face potential humiliation [Rule 5] and ruin [Rule 12].

The resent filled radicals are like young children who have not yet learned to master their emotions. They are ruled by their sense of identity and have not yet come to terms with the truths of existence or found their own inner ‘Master Morality’. They are quick to anger, with no long-term consideration of the consequences of their actions and they are easily manipulated by moral entrepreneurs. Utterly convinced of their own righteousness, they are shielded from opposing views and the harsh realities of life in ‘safe spaces’ which keep them infantilised.

## PC Culture, law and censorship

*“‘Feeling offended’ is no defence against attack on your political or religious views by those who do not share them, and indeed it is a vital feature of a healthy society that over matters of choice there should be a vigorous debate, of which satire and humour are a welcome and often revealing part.”*

(Grayling 2010, pg.176)

As discussed in previous chapters the drive towards a politically correct discourse is an attempt to level the playing field of meritocracy; so that every opinion/status can carry equal weight. What it effectively promotes is an equality of outcome and not an equality of opportunity.

This drive towards equity is a manifestation of the ‘*slave morality*’ and ‘*ressentiment*’ towards others and a relativistic view of one’s own circumstances. In short; judging your own failures and disappointments in comparison to another’s perceived successes, and then feelings of ‘*ressentiment*’ towards the successful. This in turn forms hatred and results in deviant acts motivated by self-interest.

### ***Count Dankula***

In 2016, a You Tuber known as ‘Count Dankula’ (real name Mark Meechan), posted a video called ‘*M8 Yur Dug’s a Nazi*’ in which he had trained his girlfriend’s Pug to perform a Nazi Salute. This was a joke aimed at his girlfriend:

*“My girlfriend is always ranting and raving about how cute and adorable her wee dog is, so I thought I would turn him into the least cute thing that I could think which is a Nazi.”*

(Meechan 2017a)

Buddha (the dog in question) was trained to respond to the commands “*Gas the Jews*” and “*Sieg Heil*” with a Nazi salute, as well being shown watching Hitler at Nazi rallies on television.

*“I’m not a racist by the way, I just really, really want to piss her off.”*

(Ibid)

The video was a viral sensation seen over three million times on YouTube and everyone it seemed was in on the joke, although a minority of people did take offence.

*“To regard the meticulously planned and industrialised murder of six million people solely on the grounds of their ethnicity as a joke is outrageous, and for someone who*

*does so to claim not to be racist, beggars belief.*

*It is a form of racism which needs to be condemned just as we would any other form of racism. Just as we would condemn Islamophobia or anti-African racism.”*

(Efram Borowski – Director of the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities)

Meechan then attempted to “*set the record straight*” (defence attorney Ross Brown quoted in BBC 2018) with a series of videos explaining his actions. On the 18<sup>th</sup> February 2017 Meechan was arrested at his home under Hate Speech laws.

Meechan announced on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2017 that he was going to trial before a Judge (no jury) and asked his followers not to attempt to contact or harass any witness who would appear at the trial. He also discusses how the trial is being delayed because witnesses are not available and how this situation affects him financially and his future employment.

16<sup>th</sup> May 2017 Meechan asks his followers not to protest outside the court on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2017 (the date that the trial is due to begin). His defence council had been acquired through legal aid and he faced a possible 12-month sentence if found guilty (Meechan 2017b). Meechan defends himself from the criticism levelled at him by saying:

*“This video was a joke to upset my girlfriend, not to encourage anti-Semitism or encourage hatred toward Jewish people – that is a fact, and the reason that this trial is happening is to dispute that fact”*

(Ibid)

*“A lot of people turning up at this trial, are trying to say that I’m trying to be an anti-Semite, I’m trying to encourage anti-Semitism, I’m trying to normalise Nazism, and all that other stuff – when none of that, at all, is true.”*

(Ibid)

On the 7<sup>th</sup> January 2018 Meechan gave his viewers an update on trial proceedings in a YouTube video entitled ‘CyberPug 2017 – Trial Update’. In this he described how the prosecuting council attempted to get the charges against him increased in severity, which would result in an extended jail term should he be found guilty. This was rejected by the Sheriff O’Carrell. It was also put forth by the prosecution that the context of what was said in Meechan’s video can only be decided by the court and not by any member of the public. The prosecutor framed Meechan’s speech as a direct threat to the Jewish community and spreading Nazi propaganda,

despite having support from Jewish comedian David Baddiel and Jewish followers on YouTube. The trial was delayed until the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2018.

On March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018 Meechan was found guilty of causing ‘*Gross Offence*’ by Sheriff Derek O’Carroll under the Communications Act because of the alleged anti-Semitic and racist nature of the joke (BBC 2018). What also seems to have prejudiced the sheriff against Meechan is the support that he had in court from Tommy Robinson and Lauren Southern,<sup>12</sup> perhaps forming guilt by association in the mind of the Sheriff. O’Carroll also stated:

*“The description of the video as humorous is no magic wand. This court has taken the freedom of expression into consideration. But the right to freedom of expression also comes with responsibility”.*

(O’Carroll quoted in BBC 2018)

The reaction to the verdict was one of condemnation with prominent comedians Ricky Gervais and David Baddiel defending Meechan taking to Twitter to express their dismay. Gervais wrote:

*“A man has been convicted in the UK court of making a joke that was deemed ‘grossly offensive’. If you don’t believe in a person’s right to say things that you might find ‘grossly offensive’, then you don’t believe in Freedom of Speech.”*

(Gervais quoted in BBC 2018)

In an interview after the verdict was announced, Meechan spoke about the guilty verdict:

*“I know why I made the joke. You know why I made the joke. Everybody knows why I made the joke. What my intent was and the context that was provided. And what we have learned today is that that doesn’t matter... you don’t get to decided what you mean, we decide what you mean... that is literally what happened today.”*

(Meechan quoted in Robinson 2018)

He also states his belief that if the hearing was decided by a jury of his peers then the guilty verdict would not have been reached. He further goes onto describe hate speech laws as over-reaching and authoritarian with the intention to control the public discourse.

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<sup>12</sup> Tommy Robinson and Lauren Southern are associated in the main stream media as alt-right.

### ***The Impact of the verdict***

The O'Carroll verdict is important for several reasons and highlights some unintended consequences which we shall explore here:

#### **(i) Ignorance of history**

The verdict of Sheriff O'Carroll displays an ignorance of the attitude and practices of actual Nazis; in his video Meechan describes Nazis in terms that are not complimentary, as the antithesis of cuteness. He then lampoons their buffoonish posturing by training the Pug to imitate them. This is not a behaviour that would be accepted by the Nazis. When Charlie Chaplin made 'The Great Dictator' in 1940, he was not paying tribute to Hitler, he was attempting to undermine him by making him look ridiculous. Perhaps under the interpretation of hate speech laws Sheriff O'Carroll may be more inclined to prosecute Chaplin?

#### **(ii) Absence of Objectivity**

The arbiter of justice, (in this case Sheriff O'Carroll), is asked to decide upon the guilt or innocence of an individual based on two competing views. But do we have the confidence in this one person to expect objectivity and logic to prevail? A fairer system is trial by jury in which it must be proved beyond reasonable doubt to all. It seems unlikely that one person can make such a decision, especially when we consider regional variations; what one judge may decide could be different to another based on personal disposition etc.

#### **(iii) A culture of victimhood**

Meechan has been found guilty of causing offence and yet offence will take place every day in all manner of situations. Offence is something that requires the 'victim' to actively participate in, in other words *you must take offence*. You could just ignore whatever was said and go about your day without ever feeling outrage, *so it is beholden unto the 'victim' to take that offended status*. Just imagine if the persons who complained about the video had never seen or heard about it, the lives would literally be different because they would not class themselves as 'victims of offence'. Victimhood can become a tool of oppression and is used to silence dissenting voices and exercise power over others. As we have discussed previously this is the 'slave morality' of 'ressentiment' manifest.

#### **(iv) Infringement upon freedom of speech**

If you have laws which state that you may not cause offence for fear of legal sanctions, then you

effectively make certain forms of discourse forbidden. Also hate speech laws can be used to silence some forms of speech by claiming victimhood and oppression. Free speech is the right of all, irrespective of the views you hold.

**(v) The battle to defeat logic and truth**

The decision is also symptomatic of the '*slave morality's*' attempt to deny logic or simply to redefine the terms of discourse to favour the resentful. In the Meechan case there seems to be no clear indication that Meechan is a Nazi sympathiser, or that he is expressly stating any Nazi sentiment. Yet the victory of the '*slave morality*' must result in a denial of the logical facts of the matter because if this incident was not actual bona fide 'hate speech' then it means that other incidents may not be also. This is ultimately a denial of truth because it does not fit with a political narrative and denies logical conclusions. From this we can deduce that literally anything could be described as 'hate speech' and what can be acceptable today could be deemed wrong think tomorrow.

**(vi) Allows for the revision of the past**

If we accept that what Meechan did was hate speech, then how do we treat others that have performed similar actions? Other comedians have made jokes which are far more tasteless on equally sensitive subjects. Should we now censure them as well? We could look through the comedy of Frankie Boyle, Amy Schumer, Jim Jefferies and Jo Brand and compile a list of hate speech crimes or take John Cleese to task over the Fawlty Towers episode 'The Germans'. Perhaps we should also purge troublesome aspects from our cultural archive to make them anodyne enough for a small amount of offence takers to be able to palette? History shows us that there is a clear parallel here between hate speech censorship and the actions of Stalinist Russia, in which some comrades were expunged from the official records.

**(vii) Greater state powers**

The heightened focus on 'hate speech' in the wake of Meechan's conviction can open the door for further Police powers to censure and control speech online. Doughty (2018) draws our attention to proposal from the Sentencing Council for tougher sentences for those in a 'position of authority'. Judges can decide to award harsher sentences depending upon the status and following of the individual. This would consider how many subscribers or followers a person had on social media and their 'influence' as a deciding factor which appears to be targeted at individuals rather than corporation and institutions.

If successful, the proposals would mean that a six months custodial sentence could be given to an individual for commenting and sharing social media and up to three years if a death results from social media posts. Although exactly how this would be determined is vague.

The director of the Centre for Security and Intelligence Studies, Professor Anthony Glees (Quoted in Doughty 2018) highlights the inconsistency in this proposal:

*“Only three years for hate speech that leads to people getting killed? Ridiculously soft,” he said. ‘But six months for “hate trolling”? Are there enough prison places to lock up these hate trolls? ’‘Are these social critics guilty of hate speech for asking awkward questions about gender interest groups? Or are those who attack them the true guilty ones?’”*

(Glees quoted in Doughty 2018)

On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2018 Meehan was fined £800.00 by the court for causing gross offence.

#### **(viii) Tommy Robinson Arrest**

In May 2018 activist and journalist Tommy Robinson was arrested for a breach of the peace. He was live streaming outside a Leeds court that was sentencing a Muslim rape gang. Approximately an hour after starting his broadcast Robinson was arrested, placed into the back of a police van and taken to prison to serve a thirteen-month sentence.

The reaction to this amongst social media commentators was one of disbelief and concern for Robinson’s safety. It was thought that his life would be in danger due to the prevalence of Muslim gangs in prison. Robinson has long been a critic of radical Islam and the ‘grooming’ gangs, such as the ones seen in Rotherham and Rochdale and has been accused of racism and being far right because of these views and his antipathy towards Islam. The public response was to raise money for his legal defence, signing a petition and protesting outside the gates of Downing Street.

What could be the cause for these reactions; could it be rooted in ‘ressentiment’? The perception may be that Robinson was being unfairly targeted by an establishment which seemingly defends Islamic radicalism whilst silencing critical voices. Politically Correct culture is perceived as protecting minorities, despite the criminal acts of some people, which is

bound to cause *'ressentiment'*. Not only is a politically correct philosophy the product of *'ressentiment'*, it creates further *'ressentiment'*.

In this chapter we have seen how the *'slave morality'* is manifested by a resentful mob mentality. It has been demonstrated how fake accusations can be damaging to the individual and to objective truth and fairness and how they are used as weapons to oppress opposing viewpoints. Nuance and context are disregarded and continue to be further eroded by the draconian interpretations of 'hate speech'.

Chapter five will examine how these draconian attitudes towards free speech have manifest these selves in some US university college campus over the past few years and look at the *'slave morality'*, which the author believes motivates it.

## CHAPTER FIVE SLAVE MORALITY & THE POLITICALLY CORRECT

*“Suppose there lurked in the ‘good man’ a regressive trait, likewise a danger, a lure, a poison, a narcotic, by means of which the present lived at the expense of the future! Perhaps in greater comfort and less danger, but also pettier, meaner? So that morality would be blamed, if the human species were never to attain to its ultimate potential and magnificence? So that would really be the danger of dangers?”*

(Nietzsche 1887, pg.9)

### **Slave Morality and Political Correctness**

In this chapter we shall begin with a brief genealogy of cultural Marxism based on the writings of Breshears (2016), Codevilla (2016) and Lind (2009), authors who have written analysis in this area. From this we shall examine the concept of cultural Marxism as a product of postmodern critical deconstruction; and discussion will take place on how this has spawned ‘ressentiment’ and ‘Slave Morality’. There will also be an examination the author’s new concept of the ‘False Master’ which attempts to span the gap between the slave/master dichotomy; and show how the ‘Slave Morality’ utilises and imitates the actions of the master philosophy.

### ***‘ressentiment’ & ‘Slave Morality’ = Social Justice and The Last Man.***

Political correctness is a modern incarnation of ‘Slave Morality’, which promotes a culture of victimhood in which a person’s status can be bolstered by their ‘type’ of victimhood. It has its roots in Cultural Marxism and represents a manifestation of the ‘Slave Morality’ and ‘ressentiment’ in political correctness. ‘Slave Morality’ appeals to the weak, the bitter, the envious and the unsatisfied; those who are angry with their situation and see the success of others as a cause for their own un-fulfilment. They see themselves as victims and weak and yet morally superior because of their victimhood; they experience a combination of self-loathing and hatred for the ‘strong’ and are set on a path of deconstruction.

Breshears (2016, pg.2) states that the Bolsheviks used the notion of politically correct speech to suppress the dissenters that rejected the official Communist Party Line during the Russian Revolution. This is also observed by Codevilla (2016), who also notes that there emerges a “gap between political correctness and reality” (Codevilla 2016, pg.37). This will form a basic trait of Political Correctness (PC) thought and we shall see that the more extreme the PC-ness

the bigger the gap with reality will be. But why is there a gap? Codevilla (2016) states that a communistic utopian vision would require destroying the old order (bourgeois capitalism) and replacing it with a new reality. But this new reality conflicts with nature's laws and limits so therefore the fantasy cannot be maintained. This makes the power fragile if dissenters can question the politically prescribed reality. Hence some forms of speech must be made forbidden and others officially sanctioned, even if they are illogical or factually incorrect. We can observe that the term 'Political Correctness' was used in Mao Zedong's Little Red Book (Breshears 2016, pg.2) to regulate speech in his authoritarian regime. As Lind (2000) observes, when reality contradicts ideology then "reality must be forbidden".

The Frankfurt School appeared in Germany during the 1920s and 30s and consisted of Marxist theorists Max Horkheimer, Jürgen Habermas, Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, Erich Fromm and Walter Benjamin (Blackburn 2008, pg.140). They were forced to flee to America from Germany during the 1930s because of their Jewish ancestry. At Columbia University they turned their attention to reconciling the apparent failure of communism with the popular rise of fascism in Europe; plus melding Psychology with Marxism (Golberg 2007, pg.227). The critical theoretical blend of Marx, Hegel and Freud later became more widely known as the 'new left' (Heywood 2012, pg.124).

This approach allowed the left-wing theorists to pathologise their opponents as psychologically unbalanced or as suffering some form of personality disorder, which invalidates their arguments. In short, if your opponent's arguments are essentially the ravings of the mentally ill then you don't need to debate them or justify your own views. The views of your political enemies are the result of some form of internal 'alienation', a dislocation from the correct form of thought. Once you frame the problem in these psychiatric terms then it becomes possible to 'cure' those affected of 'fascist personalities'.

The purpose of critical Neo-Marxist theory is to challenge every notion and value held in a capitalist Christian society to unmask other interpretations and deconstruct necessity (Brown 1998, pg.31). By revealing these realities an individual could come to find a self-understanding/interpretation, concepts of the self which were previously hidden to us. This would allow someone to be aware of the exploitation that they have endured as an individual, class, gender, etc. and with this knowledge comes empowerment; but more importantly for this study, the realisation of one's own victimhood.

The aim espoused by the Frankfurt School was to challenge and replace the (then) current social order with a new social system based on giving power to those who are powerless; completely destroying and replacing the traditional notions of family, gender, sex, marriage, work, production etc., or any 'hegemonic apparatuses which binds individuals to the ruling power by consent rather than coercion' (Eagleton, 1991, pp.113-114, cited in Hughes, Martin and Sharrock 1996, pg76).

Habermas believed that the enlightenment reasoning had become a tool of oppression (Inwood 1995, pg.290) and that these values should be replaced with psychoanalytic politics of meaning. Other members of the school, namely Adorno and Horkheimer (cited in Gray 2007, pp.56 and 216) believed that enlightenment thinking lead directly to Nazism. This is even though enlightenment thinking opposed monolithic hegemonies (Grayling 2011, pg.292).

This is not simply a rebuilding of morality but also an exercise in the destruction and rebuilding of Western culture based on neo-Marxist cultural values. The Frankfurt school were essentially political dissidents who wanted communist revolution. This could be achieved by undermining Western Judeo-Christian culture and then awakening the masses to their need for Socialism. The aim of cultural Marxism is to frame 'culture' in the same terms as the 'economic', in other words as a conflict between different factions. To promote Cultural Marxism, you must first destroy the existing culture by promoting concepts such as polygamy, as well as deconstructing other 'bourgeois' concepts such as 'the family'. Post-culturalism is part of this system of critical deconstruction, which is used to set up the preconditions needed for victimhood and frame oppression. By defining oppression, it becomes possible to identify a 'struggle', which frames a 'victim' narrative for people to identify themselves as 'oppressed'; thereby make a claim for power and privilege above others. Once people come to accept their new victim status then a communist revolution would ensue.

*"When the socialist with a fine indignation demands "justice," "right," "equal rights," he is merely acting under the impress of his inadequate culture that cannot explain why he is suffering."*

(Nietzsche 1888 from 1968, pg.202)

It is the emphasis on deconstruction and relativism which undermines the intellectual traditions that preceded post-modernism. Some theorists (such as Owen) have advocated a post-

postmodern return to classical sociological theories and reject the “the nihilistic relativism of the postmodern and poststructuralist cultural turn” (Owen and Owen 2015, pg.18).

Breshears (2016) gives us a definition which may help us to understand how this deconstruction could be promulgated:

*“...Politically Correct Neo-Marxism is predicated on the belief that all history is driven by power relationships. Certain groups – defined by race, religion, sex and class dominate others that are the victims of oppression and injustice. In order to create an equal and just society, the liberal elite class – in particular, politicians, judges, educators, entertainers, and the media – must mold public opinion and promote legislation and values that move society toward the left-wing utopian ideal.”*  
(Ibid 2016 pg. 8)

In 1997 New Labour under Tony Blair was elected with a mandate which acts as the blue print for modern ‘social justice’; the interest was with moral concerns and not economics (Driver and Martell 1999, pg.247). The mantras of ‘equal opportunities’, ‘social inclusion’ and ‘fairness’ were the principles which typified the Blair government’s economic policies and marked a shift from producer to consumer in a celebration of consumption as a cultural ethos. Equality of opportunities had now been replaced with equality of outcomes, as we shall observe later.

As AC Grayling (2010, pp.175-179) previously observed affirmative action began with the best of intentions to prevent individuals from being discriminated against because of the qualities that they possess which are beyond their control; i.e. sex, age, disability, sexuality and race. But, as he also observes, “‘*Political correctness*’ has earned itself a bad name, because from legitimate and worthy origins it has mushroomed into folly” (Ibid, pg.177).

### **A culture of victims**

Today’s critical theory in social sciences frames society in terms of power relations; that one group dominates others and that they dominators need to be challenged. All criticism is relentless and unremitting, it does not offer any plausible or workable alternative; it is merely concerned with the act of criticism. The oppressor/oppressed paradigm leads to narrow interest groups becoming politically motivated to fight their notion of ‘oppression’ whilst ignoring the existence of true oppression. Nietzsche (1887, pp.48-52) understood this when he refers to the creditor/debtor paradigm in which something is owed to another and is the justification of

inflicting (and revelling in) punishment. In today's culture the 'creditor' is the victim of oppression and the debtor is framed as the 'oppressor'. There is power in a victim culture and status becomes the capital by which the playing field is levelled in an exercise of equity not equality.

A culture of 'victimhood' is one which finds status in being a victim and the type of victim you define yourself as. Often by creating a myth of oppression by identifying as a special group/minority/oppressed person then you can argue for special treatment. This sort of victimhood must be created and maintained therefore it becomes essential that one must select a singular aspect of ones' identity which defines your victimhood. In fact, we can see from the 1960s sexual revolution that more emphasis is placed on these singular aspects to frame a victim's narrative; hence the notion of sexuality as a social construct. This ignores basic scientific facts concerning gender and instead explains them as social constructs. A good example of this is the claim there are more genders than simply male and female. JohnA. Barry (quoted in Dolan 2017) states "There is a fashion today to say that gender is purely a social construct. In reality, gendered behaviour is a mix of biology and social influence" following the research project 'Sex differences in children's toy preferences: A systematic review, meta-regression, and meta-analysis.' (Todd, Fischer, Di Costa, Roestorf, Harbour, Hardiman and Barry 2018).

The idea that "*Gender identity is our internal response to a social construction that attempts to make a connection between a person's biological makeup and their eventual role in society*" (Killerman cited on [gendersexualityidentity.blogspot.com](http://gendersexualityidentity.blogspot.com)) is an anti-science position. It is a form of postmodern relativism which attempts to deconstruct established scientific explanations.

If we examine the language of PC culture we can observe how it attempts to legislate or codify a system of language; suddenly a term becomes offensive regardless of the intent of the speaker. But more worryingly the verbal landscape shifts and words can have their meanings changed. This again relates to an attempt to wrestle power from another by controlling language. As Žižek (2014, pp.56-57) observes regarding Habermass' use of "*communicative reason*", which he states is derivative and a manifestation of the "*relations of power and dominance or by a pursuit of private interests*" (Ibid). Naturally humans will seek to communicate with each other because we are rational beings, but we sometimes participate in a linguistic intersubjectivity

which leads to a background reference of the 'truth'. An example of this would be an instance in which one is forced to use specific gender pronouns for fear of committing offence; by using a desired pronoun you are reinforcing a 'truth' even if it is false.

The aim is to promote one's own standing by the 'virtue' enshrined in one's victim status and identity; this allows an individual to hide any inadequacies in other areas of life. So, a person can say that they have been oppressed/held back by a corrupt system, patriarchy, their gender or other forces beyond their control. In truth the most prominent value that holds a person back from achieving their desired status resides within them; and many factors may contribute to a person's status. By painting yourself as a victim you are giving license to blame others for your own shortcomings. You can negate your own personal responsibility and perform a self-numbing in which one's own conscience can be mollified. You can simultaneously inflate your status and ego as well as that of the collective you identify with. For example, if one were to identify closely with a singular aspect of one's self (such as having ginger hair) and you felt that others were oppressing you because of it, you could use that as a blanket excuse for failures in different aspects of your life. It would allow for a negation of personal responsibility in acknowledging one's own shortcomings. When this is framed in the context of the larger group this victim narrative can be re-enforced to make claims for special or preferential treatment.

This form of victimhood is not concerned with the equal opportunities needed to achieve the same goals and status as those that they resent; instead it seeks an equality of outcomes regardless of merit. This would promote individuals into positions of dominance and power because of the identity that has been prescribed to them or they have defined for themselves, it does not consider merit or objective suitability. It is possible for a Social Justice movement to do exactly this by using moral entrepreneurship. Moral entrepreneurs may seek to subvert any meritocratic system by campaigning for affirmative action and other special privileges. Such movements are not concerned with any form of moral authority, rather it is the acquisition of power which motivates them.

The author codifies the moral entrepreneurship of some social justice movement with the following characteristics:

- Rage directed at the 'enemy'
- Victimhood as a status
- Bitterness at personal circumstances
- '*ressentiment*' for the success of others

- Claim for Privilege
- Claim of Infallibility
- Claim for power
- Subjectivism
- Relativism
- Histrionics and outrage for past deeds
- Exaggeration of perceived threats
- Essentialism of hegemonic groups
- Reductionism and conflation of hegemonic groups
- Functional Teleology
- Denial and deception
- Radicalisation of followers

It would be helpful to take a more in-depth examination of these aspects of modern social justice and demonstrate how they are manifest to better understand how Nietzsche predicted this in his writings.

### **Moral Entrepreneurship, social justice and the Reverse-Voltaire's**

*“The sleep of reason creates monsters.”*

(From ‘los Caprichos’ by Francisco de Goya 1798)

The advocates of some social justice movements act as a priestly class, there to inform and teach their ‘congregation’. They are themselves weak and resentful and wish for others to share these sentiments with revenge against a debtor being the goal. These are perhaps the most dangerous as they seek the subjugation of others in their group but also of those they see as enemies or oppressors. As Nietzsche (1887) observes:

*“...the priests are, as is known, the worst enemies – why? Because they are the least powerful. This weakness causes their hatred to grow into something which is monstrous and sinister, something which is most devious and venomous.”*

(Nietzsche 1887, pp.21-22)

These ‘cunning haters’ (Ibid, pg.22) seek to spread their ‘*ressentiment*’ to others so that they might share it in a common cause, whilst simultaneously creating a position of power and authority for themselves. They seek a higher social status but know that they cannot achieve this alone, so they must mobilise a mass of people (slaves) by encouraging self-delusion and ‘*ressentiment*’. Once this takes hold new values are created and the discourse can be repurposed to reflect the aims of the movement and claims to preferential treatment can be asserted.

*“The slaves’ revolt in morality begins when ‘ressentiment’ itself becomes creative and gives birth to values – a ‘ressentiment’ experienced by those who, deprived as they are of the proper outlet of action, are forced to obtain their satisfaction in imaginary acts of vengeance.”*

(Ibid, pg.25)

These ‘imaginary acts of vengeance’ are manifest in the often trivial and nonsensical demands made by some pressure groups and social justice activists and are often rooted in a self-styled victimhood. This will be demonstrated throughout this chapter as the primary activity of organisations such as Black Lives Matter (BLM) and AntiFa (Anti-Facists). Hume (2015, pg.31) describes them as being “often self-regarding narcissists”, that are “in love with their angry image of permanently outraged self-righteousness, reflected in the murky pool of social media” (Ibid).

Moral entrepreneurship seems to be a problem on some American college campuses. We have seen radicalism amongst students at various colleges with their Professors appearing to join in the action. For the moral entrepreneur having a captive audience to enable you to practice your rhetoric on, under the guise of education would be the ideal situation. They lead by example, enthusing receptive students and marginalising those which resist or are critical of their arguments.

We even see them engaged in acts of violence at student lead protests. Eric Clanton, a former Professor at Diablo Valley College, was charged with assaulting four people with a metal U-lock (for a bike) at a Berkeley rally on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2017 (Orienstein 2017). Clanton was allegedly exposed by the users of 4-Chan who were able to identify him, despite his attempts to conceal his identity (Appendix five, pg 115). In August 2018, Clanton entered a plea of ‘no contest’ and began three years of probation (Raguso 2018). Clanton had previously been arrested by the Police in January 2014 when there was a suspicion of committing a “*public nuisance*,” and “*willfully and maliciously*” blocking a street, sidewalk or other public place (Ibid).

In another incident, Professor Melissa Click (who at the time worked at the University of Missouri), was fired from her job in 2016 following behaviour she exhibited at a protest rally in 2015 (Associated Press 2016). In this incident Click was recorded intimidating and

manhandling student journalists who were there to report on events (Appendix five, pg.115).

These two examples demonstrate a form of levelling; in which those who are supposed to embody the higher values of their institutions transform themselves into a mediocre stature to reduce the distance between the slave and the master. One could almost conclude that they are '*False Masters*', the '*Priestly Class*' that Nietzsche speaks of in his texts. If nothing else, it demonstrates their willingness to use violence against their opponents.

### ***The Doctrine of Feeling Power***

Nietzsche (2013, pg. 38-39) gives us an insight into the exercise of power, which moral entrepreneurs (False/Slave Masters) have over the '*herd*'. Let us see how it can help us to understand the campuses disturbances we have mentioned above.

#### **“We *hurt* those whom we need to make our power perceptible”**

When dissenters make their opinions known they are vilified with personal attacks, sometimes physical violence. De-platforming, bullying, false-allegation and wilfully misrepresenting events all become legitimate means.

#### **“We *benefit* and show benevolence toward those who already depend on us in some way”**

It is no coincidence that slave masters are in positions of authority in some college campuses in America. Students are afraid that dissent from the political views of their professors can damage their academic careers.

#### **“We want to increase their power because we thus increase our own”**

Once you have a compliant student body you can persuade them to take up arms. They can gain the same sort of power which the Slave Master has, but also there is strength in numbers; so, any power acquired by members of the '*herd*' immediately bolsters the personal power of the Slave Master.

#### **“...they will be more satisfied with their situation and more hostile towards and willing to fight against the enemies of our power”**

Once the '*herd*' has been sufficiently polarised against the opposition then winning small and trivial victories emboldens the '*herd*' with a sense of worth and righteousness. This spurs them onto greater struggles and more fulfilling victories. This reinforces notions of their self-

aggrandisement and gives them pleasure.

**“...we stake our lives as martyrs do for their church”**

Sacrifices are made by the *'herd'*, 'I am in possession of the truth' is an unshakable belief which legitimises all suffering. To identify oneself as a 'victim' or 'survivor' is to become praised by the *'herd'* and singled out as 'divine'. Becoming a victim increase your social capital within the *'herd'*, allows you to frame the enemy and gives you moral status.

It is these forms of behaviour that Nietzsche observes in his work 'The Gay Science', he contrasts the slave with a 'knightly caste' who acknowledge their equals with 'exquisite courtesy'. The temperament of the individual is the deciding factor on how power is exercised.

**Defining Political Correctness**

To briefly recap; Grayling (2011, pp.175-179) observes, the origins of politically correct speech had the best intentions, of preventing discrimination against those that are labelled a certain way. The liberal values of individualism, freedom, reason, justice and tolerance (Heywood 2012, pg.27) have been employed to defend and justify any strand of thought to the point where virtually anything is permissible. This of course is to be encouraged in a free and open debate and with the proper scrutiny the ideas will live or die based on their merits. What political correctness now seeks to do is ensure an equality of outcomes rather than the equality of opportunity. It is at its heart a system of oppression and is used by those without power to gain status.

It is difficult to find an agreement on what political correctness is. A dictionary definition states:

*“...adj. demonstrating progressive ideals, esp. avoiding vocabulary that is considered offensive, discriminatory, or judgmental, esp. concerning race, gender and sexuality.”*

(Collins English Dictionary 2005, pg.1257)

Peter Coleman (cited in Browne 2006) states that:

*“Political Correctness is a heresy of liberalism. It emerges where liberalism and leftism intersect. What began as a liberal assault on injustice has come to denote, not for the first time, a new form of injustice.”*

The progressive ideals espoused in the dictionary definition of political correctness would

imply that causing offence or having a viewpoint/opinion on a matter which opposes a progressive narrative is too be challenged. If this was to be interpreted literally then it would prohibit forms of expression which did not comply with the progressive norms in society; we cannot say certain things in case somebody takes offence. It then becomes incumbent upon each member of society to be aware of what is politically correct and what is unacceptable, a task which is not always obvious and can frequently be counter intuitive. What one person sees as offence may be very different to another's, also it takes no account of things said in good faith (in other words, with no intention to cause harm or offence). In order not to inadvertently cause offence to others an individual must constantly police themselves and the actions of others.

PC is an enforced regulation of behaviour, it makes clear that certain things are no longer acceptable and that by causing offence (no matter if it is intended or accidental) we are marginalising ourselves. This encourages the citizens of a society to self-police themselves and each other. Pleas to 'call out' racism, sexism, misogyny etc. become part of the rhetoric. As Žižek (2014 pg. 61) observes there is an expectation that you should be 'sincerely respectful' of others regardless of your own innermost convictions. It is not enough to simply follow the rules, we must internalise them and subjugate our will to the deference of others in all instances. The '*Slave Morality*' must be our own morality. A definition of PC culture given to us by Browne (2006) is:

*“Political correctness is an ideology that classifies certain groups of people as victims in need of protection from criticism, and which makes believers feel that no dissent should be tolerated.”*

*(Browne 2006)*

This intolerance to any form of dissent and the propagation of group thinking, a hive mind mentality is the antithesis of Nietzsche's concept of *Übermensch*. It exemplifies the '*Slave Morality*' as the '*herd*' mentality. The great lie of Political Correctness is to perpetuate a notion of championing and embracing diversity whilst at the same time suppressing the real differences between social groups. It does this to further a '*Slave Morality*' of struggling for equality as an oppressed minority. Whilst seeking to maintain the illusion of inclusivity, political correctness does in fact encourage denigration of the individual and our values and thoughts (Scruton 2002, pp.72-73). It encourages self-condemnation and self-vilification and attempts to make the individual feel ashamed of the '*privilege*' that others perceive them

having. The politically correct ‘*slave*’ sees others as privileged and experiences ‘*ressentiment*’ towards them, he/she wants what they have and will seek to acquire it by highlight their own perceived inadequacies as the rational for action. They negate any form of personal responsibility and blame their carefully crafted victimhood onto social inequalities.

The ‘*Slave Morality*’ seeks a position of ‘privilege’ (or preferential treatment) in thought and speech, it does not wish to encourage a free and open discussion, nor does it want to be challenged. The result of elevating some voices as “privileged” by right of their self-identification is that now we are asked to give weight and consideration to ideas that would once have been laughed at. All opinions are to be treated equally regardless of their merits and a subject’s ‘feelings’ are now treated as indisputable facts and sacrosanct rather having no objective value.

*“Subjectivism and cultural relativism are threatening precisely because they suggest that the standards with reference to which we judge are not themselves justified. Subjectivism judges the truth of moral statements by reference to individual opinion; cultural relativism by reference to the standards of a culture.”*

(Levy 2002 pg.16)

Modern day political correctness has little to do with the high ideals it was originally conceived with and has become a pejorative term (Grayling 2011, pg.178). It is becoming a dogmatic tool to oppress others of a different view point and to ‘close down’ open debate. PC culture has become leverage for slave/victim morality; by painting yourself as a victim you can claim certain rights and privileges. It is a grab for power by a slave class that seeks mastery over those less obsessed with victimhood.

Peterson (2016) describes political correctness in terms that echo some of the Nietzschean concepts previously discussed. He describes it as an ideological game which has a twofold outcome: “*Make the player feel morally superior and take axe swings at society*” (Ibid). He then describes a process of levelling in which those doing well (i.e. successful people) are painted as “*perpetrators*” (Ibid) and those doing less well (i.e. those who have experienced some form of failure and have come to define themselves by their apparent misfortune) as “*victims*” (Ibid). When you define someone as a victim in this way then political correctness helps to legitimise the ‘*ressentiment*’ of those that are experiencing the ‘*Slave Morality*’. It feeds the ‘*ressentiment*’ of ‘*Slave Morality*’ whilst simultaneously providing them with the

justification to demand privileges. To put it bluntly they demand special dispensation and in some cases compensation (i.e. Black Lives Matter) for their own personal shortcomings or the perceived failures of a group because you are a 'victim'. Peterson (2016) later describes the value of '*ressentiment*' amongst those who practice political correctness as: "...the resentful part is the willingness to pull down any structure that's hierarchical because of '*ressentiment*' about not being on the top." The '*Slave Morality*' is resentful of the success of others and seeks to advance their own interests at the expense of other's labour.

Now that you have defined your victim status you can define/label your enemy/oppressor and then you can use them as a 'legitimate' target for your '*ressentiment*'. Grayling's (2010, pg.86) notion of "transferable grievances" also has some resonance here with Nietzsche's concept of '*Slave Morality*'; Grayling (2010) states that a: "...*zero sum fallacy has been used to blame poverty on wealth*" (Ibid) to "*safeguard political illusions*" (Ibid) and to provide "*a useful enemy*" (Ibid). He further clarifies that the zero-sum fallacy does not begin from a place of injury but from one of disappointment, in other words from a position of relative deprivation. (Ibid)

*"It (the zero-sum fallacy) looks around for some contrasting success on which to pin its 'ressentiment'. And only then does it work on proving to itself that other's success was the cause of my (their) failure."*

(Ibid)

A lack of success in an individual personal/professional life involves absolving themselves of responsibility and "*hold(ing) the successful to account for their own otherwise inexplicable failure*" (Ibid). This is a life denying practice which prevents an individual's self-examination and self-knowledge to make improvements/changes within themselves. Rather it helps to legitimise their drive to change the way that others treat them to compensate for their shortcomings.

We have entered an epoch of victimhood, where one can frame oneself in relation to victim status that one tries to convey. For example, by identifying as gender fluid, transgender, or black one can immediately make a claim to minority status and from this you can claim that you are suffering from oppression because of your 'difference'. Language becomes controlled to 'please' those in the minority and before long a very small section of society can exercise power over the majority. Equal opportunities movements emerge but rather focus on

opportunities they assert the need for outcomes, regardless of merit. This is how the ‘*Slave Morality*’ promotes the mediocre and diminishes the exceptional; it promotes a false notion of equality in all sections of society.

### ***The New Victimhood - offence as a weapon for the ‘Slave Morality’***

The ‘*Slave Morality*’ requires an enemy because as Nietzsche observes: “*it requires objective stimuli to be capable of action at all – its action is fundamentally a reaction*” (Nietzsche 1887, pg.25). To protest effectively the ‘*Slave Morality*’ must first work itself into a frenzy; this can be seen often on social media where narratives can be narrowly focused and manipulated easily. Once you have created the notion of offence having occurred and people are suitably outraged then action can be licensed. Hume (2015) observes:

*“In the twenty first century you can draw moral authority from your status not only as an old-fashioned warrior or a leader, but more often from claiming public recognition as a victim. That elevation of vulnerability into a virtue has clear implications for attitudes towards the liberty of others to indulge in offensive speech.”*

(Hume 2015, pg.33)

The perception of offence is entirely in the mind of the beholder; one chooses to take offence despite the intentions of the ‘offender’, this includes taking offence on the behalf of another. There may very well be circumstances in which offence crosses over into ‘harm’, but this would involve some form of physical action rather than simply spoken words. Words by themselves may cause psychological upset/fear/uncertainty but no physical harm in the same way that striking someone across the face would. Politically correct philosophy seeks to conflate the difference between spoken/psychological offence/harm and physical harm to further a narrative, which imposes restrictions on free speech. This is essential when composing your victim status, as to become a victim you need to be oppressed or under some form of threat and therefore you start to see threats in the dark.

The ‘*False Master*’ is characterised by their cunning, dishonesty and self-delusion:

*“His soul squints; his mind loves dark corners, secret passages and hidden doors, everything covert appeals to him as his world, his security, his comfort; he is a past master of silence, of not forgetting, of patience, of assuming a mode of self-deprecation and humility for a while.”*

(Nietzsche 1887, pg.27)

Peterson (2016) understands this well, although he does not refer to ‘*Slave Morality*’ or moral entrepreneurship directly, he does describe it very well in his assessment of political correctness advocates. A political correct ideology requires victims, it cannot function without victims because in some instances victimhood generates the ‘*ressentiment*’ which leads to certain identified groups being given a privileged status.

Affirmative action, positive discrimination and such have become the ‘*Slave Morality*’ manifest; it encourages excuses for an individual’s perceived lack of success and promotes people above their capabilities. It is anti-meritocratic and infantilises those it seeks to promote by implementing a great levelling, which results in equality of outcomes and not equality of opportunities.

### ***Globalisation & Slave Morality***

*“...for much of the twentieth century, society had been marked by social uniformity and the unified subject, new times were bringing about a social diversification and the ‘de-centered’ subject.”*

Driver and Martell (1999, pg.248)

A great levelling is occurring in which all cultures are treated as equal, despite the differences that may alienate one from another. This form of ‘*Slave Morality*’ helps to justify an inability or unwillingness from immigrants to integrate with the society they are joining; it allows ghettos to form, which are almost mini self-governing foreign states. ‘*Slave Morality*’ allows this to happen by elevating inferior/primitive cultures to the same level as the more advanced ones. It will excuse culturally imported practices and legitimise a lack of integration on the grounds of diversity, so actions such a female genital mutilation, whilst being against the law, is tolerated within these closed communities.

The internet and global communications also have their part to play in the filtering of information received by social media users. Users can collect themselves into groups which re-enforce their own beliefs and behaviour, easily filtering out opposing or contrary views. This helps to promote the false notion that all peoples are culturally the same.

### **Slave Morality and pressure groups**

We have already discussed here how framing a victim status and narrative are important to the

'*Slave Morality*'; this can result in entire victim cultures and movements. An example of such a movement can be seen in the activities and rhetoric of the BLM (Black Lives Matter) group in America.

*"Black Lives Matter is an ideological and political intervention in a world where Black lives are systematically and intentionally targeted for demise. It is an affirmation of Black folks' contributions to this society, our humanity, and our resilience in the face of deadly oppression."*

(Black Lives Matter 2017)

According to Nietzsche (1887), the goal of the modern state is to change the whole of mankind into this Last Man. "*It is the purpose of all culture simply to breed a tame and civilized animal, a domestic pet.*" (Ibid)

The Last Man is the antithesis of the Übermensch. The Last Man and has no great aspiration as he merely seeks to earn a living, to be comfortable, and to be content.

*"We see nothing today which wants to be greater. We suspect that things are constantly still going down, down into something more comfortable, more mediocre, more apathetic. One no longer becomes poor or rich; both are too burdensome. Who still wants to rule? Who still wants to obey? Both are too burdensome. No shep'herd' and one 'herd'! Everyone wants the same; everyone is equal."*

(Ibid)

What do Nietzsche's concepts of '*ressentiment*', '*Slave Morality*' and the last man mean in a modern context?

### ***Ressentiment of others***

The '*ressentiment*' generated by the success of others is the driving force behind '*Slave Morality*', the concomitant weakness and inadequacy experienced fashions a desire to vilify those that are successful. The formation of '*ressentiment*' for this brand of social justice is rooted in the perceived inequalities of society and the subjective views of those who are resentful. Another way to express this '*ressentiment*' is a form of jealousy, in which one judges the success (or perceived success) of another in relation to one's own failings.

*"... a 'ressentiment' experienced by those who, deprived as they are of the proper outlet of action, are forced to obtain their satisfaction in imaginary acts of vengeance."*

(Nietzsche 1887, pg.25)

Peterson (2016) echoes this when he states that the “*resentful part is the willingness to pull down any structure that is hierarchical, because of ‘ressentment’ about not being on top*”. This means that the political aim is one of power acquisition, of wresting the power away from established social norms and introducing a tyranny of the minority (apologies to John Stuart Mill).

We can see this in the politics of the ‘*Slave Morality*’; the person experiencing the ‘slave’ mindset is resentful of those more successful, they believe that they have a right to enjoy the same benefits and privileges. They will naturally attempt to filter their world view through a reductive, political lens; explaining all phenomena as an ideological struggle when perhaps they fail to acknowledge the role that ‘*ressentiment*’ plays in their thinking.

### ***Framing your Oppressor, creating and categorising victims***

*“...they huddle close together to keep themselves warm, but they tell me that their misery is a mark of distinction and of God’s favour...”*

(Nietzsche 1887, pg.35)

‘*Slave Morality*’ needs to create an oppressor to reaffirm the victim status. But also, it categorises victims by gender, ethnicity and any means of self-identification. Great emphasis is placed upon pronouns as a mark of respect and their mandatory use is expected in all instances.

*“Our pronouns are not optional. Our pronouns are not preferred. Our pronouns are mandatory.”*

(Protest Against National Gallery Hosting Jordan Peterson Evensi webpage 2017)

On this same webpage they attempt to defame Prof. Peterson by saying:

*“He has refused to use gender neutral pronouns, he discredited transgender identities over and over, has denounced Black Lives Matter as an ‘unnecessary movement’, and is extremely Islamophobic.”*

(Ibid)

Some modern radical feminists have also sought to frame themselves as a victim with a narrative of oppression by men, hence the hashtags #killallmen, #KillAllMen, #EndFathersDay, #Mansplaining, #manspreading, #ToxicMasculinity, #RapeCulture and

#DieCisScum trending on Twitter. By creating this notion of false oppression, the ‘*Slave Morality*’ solidifies its victim identity and frames the deviant ‘other’ (oppressor). It also blurs the distinction between moderate feminists and their extremist cousins.

Peterson succinctly sums up this process up when he says that political correctness is an ideological game which operates thus:

*“... identify a domain of human endeavor, note that there is a distribution of success (some people are doing comparatively better and some people are doing comparatively worse). Define those doing worse as victims. Define those doing better as perpetrators. Identify with the victims and have yourself a set of enemies handy to vent your ‘ressentiment’ on. Feel good about it (even though it didn’t require any work on your part) and endlessly repeat.”*

(Peterson 2016)

As we noted previously Peterson states that the outcome of this is twofold:

- i) *“To make the player feel morally superior”*; and
- ii) *“To take serious axe swings at the foundations of society.”*

(Ibid).

We can further note that arguments are emotional and/or exaggerated; often with no factual basis, but rather based on subjective feelings.

### ***False claims and exaggeration***

*“These workshops where ideals are made – they simply reek with the crassest lies.*  
(Nietzsche 1887, pg.35)

An example of this can be found on the same broadcast in which Peterson made the previous statement. Panelist Nicholas Matte (tutor of Gender Studies from the University of Toronto) described Peterson’s refusal to use student’s preferred pro nouns as abusive behaviour, violence and hate speech (Ibid). This is a good example of how the slave mentality seeks to form a victim narrative by exaggerating actions and giving them the label of ‘*abuse*’, ‘*violence*’ and ‘*hate speech*’. These are emotive terms and are not nuanced, so it would create the false impression that the ‘*other*’ is an oppressor and the ‘*oppressed*’ person requires some form of affirmative action to protect them. This association of these negative terms with an opposing opinion or view point is the honey which attracts the alienated and resentful and binds them

in their victim statuses. No matter what gender, colour or creed the one thing that they share is their status as ‘victim’. This allows them to feel better about their relative deprivation, because they now have others to reinforce their victimhood and confirm that the problems are not within themselves, but stem from the actions/attitudes of others.

*“...an instinct for self-preservation, for self-assertion, in which every lie endeavours to sanctify itself.”*

(Nietzsche 1887, pg.34)

We can find another example of false claims from the group Black Lives Matter (BLM) who claim that the deaths of young black men are perpetrated by white men; particularly white policemen. This claim flies completely in the face of the statistical information which it was proved that the black on black murder problem accounts for overwhelming number of black murder victims in Chicago (Foley 2016). Data supplied by the Chicago Police Department (Cited in Foley 2016) demonstrate that offenders are overwhelmingly Black (71.3%) with Hispanic (24.6%), White (3.5%) and other ethnicities (0.6%) nowhere near. Riley (2014) points out that 90% of all black homicides in the USA are the result of black on black crime.

With this data taken into consideration the claim by BLM that the state is undertaking a form of genocide against black people (by keeping them in poverty) appears to have no foundation and to be alarmist. They also fail to acknowledge the wrongdoings of some black people and that they may deserve punishment; instead they claim how:

*“...2.8 million Black people are locked in cages in this country is state violence.”*

(BLM Website)

This narrative is good for framing the victimhood of the ‘*Slave Morality*’ and keeps the issues contemporary, but also ‘*ressentiment*’ can be ground in historical injustices.

### ***‘ressentiment’ for past deeds***

Another hallmark of the ‘*Slave Morality*’ is the obsession with past misdeeds and wrongs which may have occurred. As we have seen previously in this work this is important for framing a victim status. For example, a person could say that they are victims of the oppression that their grandparents suffered. BLM have actively campaigned for the rights of black people above that of other ethnic groups in America and have argued that white America owes a debt to black people because of slavery. The narrative they create is designed to place events from the past

into the present and then present them as an ongoing social problem. This would be akin to blaming modern Swedes for the Viking raids of the 11<sup>th</sup> century and asking for reparations of Danegeld, clearly an absurd notion. As Midgley (1984), observes:

*“...no one can avoid constantly receiving benefits which result from past abuses. To say that we are grateful for these benefits need mean no more than that we welcome them. It does not mean that we endorse all the acts which led to them.”*

(Midgley 1984, pg.28)

The demand for reparation for ancient abuses has no objective basis in rational thought and is designed to play upon the emotions of the ‘herd’. It is created to push a ‘Slave Morality’ which would allow a justification for preferential treatment.

This attitude and behaviour is typical of a ‘Slave Morality’, individuals take little responsibility for their own action and seek to explain their shortcomings or inadequacies by citing the oppression by others.

*“Black Lives Matter is an ideological and political intervention in a world where Black lives are systematically and intentionally targeted for demise. It is an affirmation of Black folks’ contributions to this society, our humanity, and our resilience in the face of deadly oppression.”*

(Garza quoted in Black Lives Matter (2016)b)

In 2016 the Twitter hashtag #Black\_Lives\_Matter was trending, this was followed by #All\_Lives\_Matter as a rebuttal to what was seen by many as a statement of black supremacy by the BLM group. There had been several demonstrations by BLM in which they were seen to chant ‘Pigs in a Blanket Fry Like Bacon’ (Associated Press 2015) and several Twitter messages had been released inciting violence against white people. One of the most notorious was a tweet written by BLM co-founder Yusra Khogali dated 9<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016 (Appendix five, pg.116). It Read:

*“PlzAllahGive me strength to not cuss/kill these men and white folks out here today. Plzplzplz.”*

YusraKhogali quoted by Agar (2016)

This is not the first occasion on which a radical minority group had made overtures of this nature, in October 2015 Goldsmiths University Welfare and Diversity Officer appeared in court

after tweeting “*kill all white men*” (Brooks-Pollock 2015).

Nietzsche (1887) identifies the inability of individuals to forget certain elements of the past and to avoid dwelling over negative events which rob the present and future of any positive meaning. Having Mastery over oneself would involve the ability to forget slights and insults or historical events, which when focused upon would cause pain and ‘*ressentiment*’. By forgetting some things, we are not tempted to react in ways that prevents the “psychological ingestion” (Nietzsche 1887, pg.43) of ‘*ressentiment*’ into your consciousness. He elaborates by stating that there can be no “*psychological order, tranquillity (or) etiquette*”, “*no joy, no hope, no pride, no real present without forgetfulness*” (Ibid, pg.44). The ‘*Slave Morality*’ will always be living in the shadow of past grudges and injuries, suffering:

*“...the indigestion occasioned by a pledge that one cannot escape, but an active refusal to get rid of it, a continuing and a wish to continue what has once been willed, an actual memory of the will.”*

(Ibid pg.44)

When a group such as BLM reminds their followers of the injustices of two hundred years ago, they are keeping the ‘*ressentiment*’ alive and fresh in the minds of the ‘*herd*’. It becomes an act of will to remember and to obsess over these details so that it becomes the distorted lenses by which you see the world.

*“Something must be burned in so as to remain in his memory; only that which never stops hurting will remain in his memory.”*

(Nietzsche 1887, 2013 (ed.), pg.46)

By constant scrutiny and obsession, the pain of past injustices is kept alive and becomes the basis by which a power grab is justified. The moral entrepreneurs, (the ‘*False Master*’s) trick the ‘*herd*’ into believing that they are victims and that injustice is perpetrated against them. Victimhood offers a prospect of status and with that status belonging and dominance over others. Alinsky’s (1971) second rule is also evidence here; by perpetuating the threat or perceived injustice you make the ‘*herd*’ feel secure (see previous chapter).

### ***No Platforming the opposition***

Dissenting voices are strictly forbidden, and critical discussion discouraged within the collective think group. Quite often when discussions have taken place they have been made to

look intolerant, ignorant and foolish when beliefs have been challenged. Free and open debate allows critical viewpoints and bad ideas will fall by the wayside; therefore, logical and intelligent discussion is not allowed or encouraged.

Hume (2015 pp.3-4) describes how free speech is under threat from “*the increasingly influential unofficial censors, the witch-hunting Twitter mobs and online petitioners pursuing and trying to silence everybody whose views are not to their taste*”. Political rallies and academic discussions of any description are actively disrupted by protestors who make claims of hate speech and the encouragement of violence (whilst ironically using violence themselves).

When Professor Jordan Peterson was due to give a talk about creativity at the National Gallery of Canada on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2017, activists set up a webpage to organise a protest. This attempt to ‘no platform’ Peterson forms a technique of neutralisation in which you label the other as holding inhumane or unacceptable views which are harmful. This thinking enables protestors to set off fire alarms, chant, block passageways and hijack events because they have de-legitimised the ‘deviant’ others. This can also lead to acts of violence towards people and property as we have seen on American college campuses throughout 2016– 017. It is this de-humanisation and de-legitimation of dissenting voices that allows activists to reconcile their deviant behaviour with what they know to be unacceptable. Basically, the higher and nobler the perceived cause, the more extreme the methods which are allowed.

### ***Creating ‘Safe’ Spaces***

But more than this is the unwavering and uncritical belief in the cause; coupled with a lack of empathy of others leads the ‘*Slave Morality*’ into a state of cognitive dissonance. This occurs when the opposing messages are drowned out of conversation (such as the endless and mindless chanting observed during protests), because individuals are ‘shielded’.

A ‘safe space’ is created as an area in which an ideological can dominate unopposed by any contrary values or opinions, what Hume (2015, pg.5) describes as a “*womb-like fortress to protect young people from dangerous words and ideas*”. The appeal of these areas promotes the infantilising effects of political correctness; it treats individuals as weak and helpless and in need of a defensive environment to protect them. This ‘shielding’ of ideology could allow

individuals to potentially wallow in silly, nonsensical and corrupt ideas, because they are not exposed to critical opposing views points. In this sense a safe space is an essential attribute for the ‘*Slave Morality*’, like a religious sanctuary that acolytes can retreat to for safety. A by-product of these protected areas is to create “a bland ‘safe’ environment in which anodyne becomes the new normal” (Hume 2015, pg.25).

The concept of a ‘safe space’ is something we can better understand by examining the ‘Disorientation Manual 2013-2014’ (The Sabot Infoshoppe 2013) from Evergreen College in the US. Throughout the manual there are many references to safe environments and safe spaces and living environments on the campus. Interestingly it highlights a number of minority groups which require these areas of safety in order to “*connect(s) youth to immediate help and safety and offers supportive services to both youth and their families*” (Ibid, pg.85), Safe living environment for “*members of the LGBTQA (Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans, Queer, Ally) community*” (pg.40); as well as advocacy for survivors of sexual assault (Ibid pg.47) and other potential victim narratives.

It is this atmosphere of victimhood and special treatment for certain sections of the student body, which contributed to the student occupation of the campus in 2017. Evergreen has an annual tradition called the Day of Absence and Day of Presence, in which “students, staff, and faculty (are invited) to explore race and equity through workshops and other activities” (Evergreen 2017b). The former involves the voluntary absence of black and minority ethnic groups from the campus “leaving those left to reflect on the meaning of their community without these essential members” (Evergreen 2017).

In 2017 it was changed to *enforced* day of absence for white members of the faculty and student body. From the Facebook page for this event:

*“Please notice that in 2017, for the first time, we are reversing the pattern of previous years; our Day of Absence program especially designed for faculty, staff, and students of color will happen on campus this year, while our concurrent program for allies will take place off campus.”*

(Evergreen 2017a)

When faculty Professor Bret Weinstein communicated his chagrin at this edict describing it as “an act of oppression in and of itself” (Weinstein quoted in Salo 2017) and promising to attend

campus as usual, which was met with protests from student activists. See Banner from Facebook page in Appendix five, pg.116).

Weinstein was labelled as racist and students demanded that he apologise and resign when they occupied and barricaded classrooms for two days. George Bridges (the college president) had his office occupied by students who refused to leave until their demands were met and was later berated in a session reminiscent of a kangaroo court.

*“FUCK YOU [President] GEORGE [Bridges], we don’t wanna listen to a GODDAMN thing you have to say! No, you shut the fuck up!”*  
(Protestor quoted in The College Fix 2017)

### ***Assertion of infallibility***

*“We, the good, we are the righteous” – what we demand they call not revenge but “the triumph of righteousness”*  
(Nietzsche 1887, pg.36)

This rhetorical position espouses the view that because I am the victim of oppression I cannot be an oppressor myself and is typified by the statements ‘Black people can’t be racist’ and ‘You can’t have an opinion because you are a straight white man’. This is in fact more generally known in the social sciences as a Technique of Neutralisation, the ‘Denial of Responsibility’ (former) and ‘Denial of the Victim’ (latter).

*“I’m tellin’ you, you’re speakin’ to your ancestor, all right? We been here before you. We built these cities, we had civilization way before you ever had ... comin’ out your caves.”*  
(Student Protestor at Evergreen College, quoted in the College Fix 2017)

It would be useful to have brief outline of how the Techniques of Denial for employed in Politically Correct discourse. Here are some examples of common statements which are made to defend PC culture and aggressive actions.

### ***Condemning the condemners***

‘White people enslaved Black people’, ‘Your part of the patriarchy’, ‘Your part of a Rape Culture’, ‘You’re entitled because of your gender’, ‘You are oppressing us’, ‘You’re a rape apologist’, ‘This is Hate Speech’.

*“Whiteness is the most violent fuckin’ system to ever breathe!”*

*“I’m tired of white people talking about what black and brown people need.”*

(Student protestors at Evergreen College quoted in College Fix 2017)

An example of this is evident from the student protests at Evergreen College; when video footage emerged of students abusing members of staff during the ‘siege’, the protesters claimed that the videos had been edited to make them appear unreasonable and undermine them. This then leads to demands for action which not only are unrealistic but also emphasis the cognitive dissonance of those involved in the protest:

*“We demand that the video created for Day of Absence and Day of Presence that was stolen by white supremacists and edited to expose and ridicule the students and staff be taken down by the administration by this Friday.”*

(Statement of protestors in College Fix, quoted in Salo 2017)

This demonstrates that through the “venomous eye of ‘ressentiment’” (Nietzsche 1887, pg.28) all other interpretations are distorted to fit the self-serving narrative which the ‘Slave Morality’ has created for itself.

### ***Positive and Negative victims***

Some victims can be dismissed because; ‘You are part of the Patriarchy’, ‘You’re a white male’, ‘you’re CIS-Gender’ or ‘you’re too busy hating women’, to cite a few examples. This helps to frame a form of ‘negative victim’ which denies that individual their victim status in the same way that a Technique of Neutralisation seeks to dehumanise an individual.

Positive victimhood has the overall effect of diminishing the status of ‘victim’ by reducing legitimate arguments to the same status as trivial ‘offences’. For example, if one were to face the same punishments for not using the correct gender pronouns as you would for holocaust denial then the later becomes diminished to elevate the former. This shifting discourse levels the meaning of language and promotes and elevates mediocrity in society.

However, a positive victimhood narrative is a way for the ‘Slave Morality’ “to interpret weakness as freedom, and their particular situation as an achievement” (Nietzsche 1887, pg.34). This kind of self-deception allows the ‘Slave Morality’ to say that simply being

gay/lesbian/transgender/etc. is an achievement to be recognised and celebrated; a master status which is a substitute for any actual achievement (such as athletic, intellectual, artistic etc.). This helps promote a singular aspect of yourself and promote it to heights that they would not normally merit, and conversely diminishes the achievements of others. To claim that you have been ‘trolled’ for your beliefs gives you something approaching martyr status and a sign of virtue amongst the ‘herd’ (Hume 2015, pg.5).

### ***Denial of harm and dehumanising language***

‘Society is a patriarchy and we are powerless under this system of oppression’ (becoming a victim), ‘Because we are powerless we can do no harm’ (because we are victims). There will also be rhetorical flourishes that dehumanise by using conflation and essentialism. For example, people will be reduced to ‘Black and brown bodies’ in conversation and the over use of the term ‘patriarchy’ reduces people to commodities. It takes away individual identity and makes it easier for the resentful to:

- i) See themselves as an oppressed minority.
- ii) Deny their ‘enemy’ humanity.
- iii) Seek the extinction of their opponent.
- iv) Appeal to higher loyalties (social cohesion)

### ***Appeal to higher loyalties***

‘We are championing the rights of LGBTQ, BLM, BAME, etc. against the CIS- Gender Patriarchy’ (and other oppressed minorities), ‘To establish a Muslim Caliphate with Sharia Law’.

They also seek solace in the company of others and tell themselves that “their misery is a mark of distinction and God’s favour” (Nietzsche 1887, pg.35), that they are virtuous and have a higher loyalty to the cause. As we previously observed Nietzsche stated:

*“We, the good, we are the righteous” – what they demand they call not revenge but  
“the triumph of righteousness”*

(Ibid 1887, pg.36)

Throughout this, a false victim/oppressor narrative is being perpetuated, the collective agrees their oppression amongst themselves for their own self-worship and self-assurance. As soon as

you stop being a victim then the power is lost, and new victimhood would have to be invented. The collective could even find their acquired ‘power’ usurped by a new victim class. Individual interests are “regarded as being much less radical and threatening to the communal existence” (Nietzsche 1887, pg.58), which results in the ‘herd’ being shielded from outside challenges and opposing ideas. The collective self-knowledge is a re-affirmation of ‘ressentiment’, revenge and ‘False Master’ ‘power’.

### **‘Shutting Down’ the conversation and Bad Conscience.**

The aim is to ‘shut down’ conversation about such topics as racism or affirmative action so that pluralistic ignorance can inflate our perceptions of the support others give to such notions. Pluralistic ignorance is the “*discrepancy between privately held attitudes and public expression*” (Boven 2000, pg.268). People become afraid to challenge dogmatic ideas for fear of being labelled as ‘racist’, ‘sexist’, ‘homophobe’, ‘transphobic’ etc. which can lead to the ‘*perpetuation of unpopular social norms*’ (Ibid) of the variety we find within a PC culture. There is shame and humiliation in being labelled in these ways which can diminish an individual’s status within a group, perhaps even leading to ostracism. Consequently, the beliefs of others are taken at face value with no honest discussion occurring for fear of being ‘outed’. It is very important for the moral entrepreneur to control the discourse and to shut down conflicting opinion; the narrative must remain unchallenged to preserve it.

*“Unbeliever, you are disturbing my morality with your unbelief; as long as you do not believe in my bad reasons... you hamper my virtue.”*  
(Nietzsche 1888 from 1968, pg.173)

The ‘*Slave Morality*’ in this instance is manifesting as the duty to conform to the group ideal, to think as others do and to toe the line; in so far as the dominant narrative demands. A closed environment is created in which the dominate narrative can be asserted without interruption or contradiction. This is what Nietzsche terms, The Morality of Custom and says that “*man, with the help of the morality of customs constraints, was (is) made genuinely predictable*” (Nietzsche 1887, pg.45). When an individual is restricted in thought and deed; then any instincts that would ordinarily be expressed outwardly are internalised (Ibid, pg.70), the individual is not ‘free’ but under prohibitive sanctions. They may believe that they can express their will for freedom by defining themselves as a victim class, but this is making further restrictions.

The instinct for freedom is forced into latency (Ibid 1887, pg.73) and as a result becomes the beginning of bad conscience in which they remain slaves under self-delusion.

### ***Regulations of everyday interactions***

*“Virtue is under certain circumstances merely an honourable form of stupidity”*  
(Nietzsche 1888 from 1968, pg.177)

Often, we hear demands from ‘*False Masters*’ for restrictions upon free speech to protect the identities of the groups they claim to represent. This is creating an interesting contradiction which ignores the efforts of past activities (which got them the right in the first place). They are in fact arguing for less rights overall and tacitly claiming that their ‘group’ are weak and vulnerable; an infantilisation if ever there was one.

Suddenly one finds oneself having to police one’s own language for fear to using ‘Hate Speech’. As I have previously noted, Žižek (2014, pg.61) points out, we are expected to be sincere in our discourse and must sometimes adopt ‘sincere lies’. This façade is required when communicating to project ‘respectfulness’ and signal one’s innermost convictions. He sums up this dialectical as:

*“...pushed to its extreme, the PC attitude resembles that of a proto-psychotic paranoid about the sincerity of every little politeness: greeting him with a “Hello, nice to meet you!” his reaction is “Are you really glad to see me or are you just a hypocrite?””*

(Ibid)

One then cannot speak the truth or express an opinion which collides with the PC narrative for fear of being labelled deviant. Control of the language is important to politically correct ideologies as it allows the redefinition of words to repurpose them; some are encouraged others prohibited. When combined with a notion of constant change to promote some level of confusion then an individual must constantly seek to establish the cultural references for their discourse in order not to cause offence. In other words, we must make sure that we can still ‘say that sort of thing anymore.’

This strategy seeks to take ownership of a debate and is a manifestation of ‘*False Mastery*’, in which the principle of virtuous aims is subverted and perverted for the ‘*Slave Morality*’.

Nietzsche describes a process by which:

*“The master’s right of naming extends so far that it is permissible to look upon language itself as the expression of the power of the masters: they say ‘that is that, and that’; they affix a seal to every object and every event with a sound and thus, as it were, take ownership of it.”*

(Nietzsche 1887, pg.15)

The ‘*False Master*’ will seek to use the methods and actions of a master without first attaining mastery of the self; they still belong to the slave class who are riddled with ‘*ressentiment*’ and the desire for revenge. By controlling the discourse, it can be possible to influence, confuse and create sophistry in the minds of others.

The language and interactions of the politically correct slave must be filtered to avoid creating offence to a group within the collective; this is done by the ‘*False Master*’ to consolidate the power that resides within the collective. Virtue signalling (as it has become known) is a form of grand symbolism and glorification by which the ‘*herd*’ can be turned into fanatics. Nietzsche (1887 from, 1968, pg.172) outlines three uses for virtue:

*“Virtue as force – By not using the required virtue signaling then you can be labelled as committing an act of violence. ‘Slave Morality’ and political correctness have sought to conflate physical harm with emotional harm and to treat them as the same. This levelling has put insults on a par with actual physical violence and is used to justify violence in return.*

*Virtue as seduction – The rhetoric of virtue signaling panders to the vanity of those attracted to the ‘herd’. It promises special treatment and deference and ‘safe spaces’ should you join the collective. You could even inhabit a higher status depending on how you define your victimhood.*

*Virtue as (court) etiquette – By dictating the ‘proper’ actions and language and a set of learnt behaviours that signify identity and inclusion into the ‘herd’. Physical appearance could indicate your status (ethnicity, clothing, gender etc.) and whether you must give due deference to other members of the ‘herd’.”*

(Ibid)

Nietzsche also questions the ability to maintain virtue and that the likelihood is that one would transcend virtue and leap into devilry (1888 from 1968 pg.177). When virtue becomes a vice then it can easily be imagined how what was once virtuous has become toxic.

## **The illusion of inclusion**

*“...a veneer of tolerance concealing a snakepit of unaired and unchallenged views”.*  
(Atkinson quoted in Hume 2015, pg.69)

Politically correct movements offer the illusion of inclusion whilst at the same time practicing segregation; for example, this is the theme for the ‘Day of absence and Day of Presence’ event at Evergreen College and appeared on their Facebook page:

*“ - T h e m e -  
The theme this year is “Revolution is not a one- time event; your silence will not protect you”, inspired by Audre Lorde. Recently, many of us have been looking for tangible ways to commit to equity on both the local and national level. This year’s event challenges us to act, engage, and build relationships that build the inclusive community we seek.”*

(Facebook page 2017)

The rhetoric is to build community inclusion, but they contradict themselves by excluding a certain ethnic demographic of the community. They further compound their error by suppressing discussion and demanding special treatment. This is not compatible with their stated aims and acts merely as window dressing.

This is a manifestation of what Nietzsche terms “*the tartuffery of idealism*” (1887 from, 1968, pg.173) in which the utterance becomes unconsciously naïve, it states that it is inclusive but promotes a ‘if you not with me then you must be against me’ attitude. The politically correct cannot tolerate an ‘unbeliever’ as they would “*hamper the moralisation of the masses*” (Ibid 1888, from 1968, pg.173).

## ***The transmutation of Values***

*“...one method of effecting satisfaction on its enemies and tyrants was by means of a radical transformation of values, which was at the same time an act of the most cunning revenge.”*

(Nietzsche 1887, pg.22)

If successful the ‘*Slave Morality*’ reshapes discourse in such a way that they now become the master, they have successfully deconstructed the language surrounding an area of discourse

and now dominate the speech around a certain topic. ‘Victims’ can be defined by the moral entrepreneur who is seeking a higher status (moral superiority) themselves. The formation of the slave narrative becomes the basis for identity of the collective and their push for power, only for as long as they try to dominate the discourse. The moment they are silent then they will cease to be relevant, publicity is the oxygen of the slave.

This may in part help to explain the discussion about the use of gender pro nouns; it could be said that it is a sign of ‘bad conscience’ which is a reaction by the ‘*Slave Morality*’ to things which they seek to control. The debate surrounding the number of genders rejects scientific fact and instead is informed by the subjective ‘feelings’ of the person who is under the dogmatic illusion of a particular ‘faith’ or ideological stand point. We know that there are not 100+ human genders, but to insist that we take these claims seriously is patently absurd. It is formed by the bad conscience of the ‘*Slave Morality*’ and is an attempt to ‘level’ the practical and demonstrable insights of sexual dimorphism. Nietzsche’s view on this is:

*“I regard bad conscience as a serious illness to which man was bound to succumb under the stress of the most radical change which he has ever experienced – the change which occurred when he found himself finally imprisoned by the strictures imposed upon him by society to establish and preserve peace.”*

(Nietzsche 1887, 2013 (ed.), pp.69-70)

In other words; when those afflicted with the ‘*Slave Morality*’ awaken to the fact that they do not possess the freedom to become anything they wish, they develop a belief in a systemic oppression, which keeps them downtrodden. Entitlement and preferential treatment are then demanded because of that individual’s status. Quite often you will hear comments such as ‘There is an under representation of X gender in the work place or armed forces, etc.’ with the object of framing a discourse of oppression and equal rights and to appeal to the resentful.

### **Activism, Radicalisation and Ressentiment**

It is no coincidence that social justice has strong appeal on university campuses which are overwhelmingly populated with young people. Nietzsche (2008) observes:

*“Young people, with their characteristic anger and awe, seem to find no peace until they have neatly falsified people and things, so that they can vent their feelings on them: youth by its very nature is something falsifying and deceptive.”*

(Nietzsche 2008, pg.31)

The scenes witnessed on Evergreen College campus in 2017 demonstrate his principle with demands which points towards unhappiness and dissatisfaction. These are natural emotions and the '*False Master*' can exploit these by taking youthful enthusiasm and tormenting them with doubt (Ibid 2008, pg.32). This influence on the behaviour of the '*herd*' to the outside world makes it antagonistic towards any perceived enemies (debtors). Nietzsche characterises the '*herd*' relationship to the outside world as "*hostile, selfish, unmerciful, full of lust for dominion, mistrust, etc.*" (Nietzsche 1887, from 1968, pg. 161). The "*hatred of the 'herd' for the truthful*" (Ibid 1884, pg.162) can be observed in their actions when confronted by irrefutable truths or exposed in a lie.

The roots of Islamic radicalisation may also correspond to this notion of '*ressentiment*' and '*Slave Morality*', as an outlet for the status frustration felt by the alienated. If an individual is dissatisfied with their status within a society and has been thwarted in their attempts to better themselves within a social setting, then they may well turn to a different credo to achieve their objective. If radical Islam promises that person moral satisfaction and status (even if it is in some form of afterlife) then this may become appealing to the vanity of that person.

### ***Vengeance cloaked as justice***

When some social justice pressure groups call for justice they in fact want revenge. By labelling their revenge as 'justice' they can hide their true intentions (i.e. the acquisition of power) and give their actions a veneer of respectability and legitimacy. This is the '*Slave Morality*'s' emotive reaction to events and a way to rationalise them afterwards and establish/maintain victimhood. A technique of denial similar to an appeal to higher loyalties to be sure, and one which is very powerful amongst the '*herd*' mentality.

It would also appeal to Alinsky's (1971) sixth rule in which the people must get some form of pleasure from their actions. Nietzsche (1887, pg.51) observes that the infliction of suffering "*produces extreme pleasure*" (Ibid) and that inflicting suffering is a "*real feast*" (Ibid) made "*greater by the difference in rank and social status between*" (Ibid) debtor and the creditor. In short; the lower the status of the victim (the slave), the greater the pleasure that they will feel by the infliction of suffering over those in the social hierarchy (the '*Masters*'). Hence their need to establish a victimhood status similarly to claim injury and seek and compensation. Such a 'debtor' and 'creditor' relationship allows the Slave to share the rights of the '*Masters*' and the claim to "*compensation consists of a claim on cruelty and a right to draw upon it*" (Ibid). It

will give the Slave the ability to treat the ‘Master’ as inferior as well as giving them a “*foretaste of a higher social position*” (Ibid), which is a source of ‘*ressentiment*’ amongst the ‘herd’. It will also help to justify acts of violence and civil unrest by framing the creditor/debtor narrative in the minds of the ‘herd’.

### ***Alt-Right and Alt-Left***

‘*Slave Morality*’ has a polarising effect, which pushes individuals towards collectivist thinking. The PC culture associated with the hard left find its anti-thesis in the right-wing groups that are protesting it. As the groups such as AntiFa and BLM resort to extremist violent protests (as witnessed in America during 2017) the natural reaction appears to be extremist right groups (such as the Golden dawn). Collectivist thinking prompts thinking in response as the radical left becomes more extreme in their actions (a good example of this is the group BAMN - By Any Means Necessary, a name which itself implies the use of violence); so they will receive a ‘radical’ response in return. When left wing activists complain about the violence of the ‘right’ they are unconsciously acknowledging their own violence which may have been the cause of it in the first place. Part of the problem connected to collectivist ‘*Slave Morality*’ is that to be individualistic may mean a rejection or endorsement of shared political and philosophical views, but that does not mean that the individual ‘identifies’ with an ideology. The collectivist thinking of ‘*Slave Morality*’ subsumes the individual identity and makes it one-dimensional; hence the rather restrictive forms of address (i.e. pronouns).

Collectivist thinking and identity can be very attractive as it offers a means of inflating one’s individual status; and here we encounter a strange contradiction, which occurs in these collectivist groups. They have hierarchies and elites which exist within their groups; there are literally different classes of ‘slave’. It could be said that ‘*some slaves are more equal than others*’ (apologies to Eric Blair).

For example, if you are a white Muslim convert and you join a radical Islamic group then the onus is on you to prove your credentials because your peer group does not view you as an ‘authentic’ Muslim. Therefore, you must become more Muslim than Muslim, more orthodox, more extreme so that your loyalty is above question. This was well demonstrated in the behaviour and attitudes of Muslim convert Jordan Horner (Taylor 2010a and 2010b). Similarly, if a Caucasian joins a black power group (such as BLM) then quite often they are subservient to the ‘authentic’ members of the collective.

In addition to these features there is a levelling of values in which the distance between being a small ‘c’ conservative and being a ‘Nazi’ is conflated. This is the purpose of using epithets such as ‘Alt Right’ as it deliberately ignores nuances in political opinions in opponents, (opponents in this case would appear to be anyone who doesn’t share your political opinion). It is the contention of this thesis that the hierarchies in ‘*Slave Morality*’ are perpetuated by a class of ‘*False Masters*’ who are moral entrepreneurs with a vested interest in consolidating personal power amongst their collectivist group.

### ***Enemies***

Social media becomes the area in which political enemies can be denounced, humiliated and lambasted. Any opposing view is treated as heresy by some extreme individuals who object to other viewpoints. Candace Owens is an American conservative who has encountered this behaviour online and at events in which she has been speaking. She has been falsely labelled as ‘far right’, as demonstrated by Shukman’s article on the website Babe.net (2018). Shukman’s article drips with ‘*ressentiment*’ as he examines her twitter stream for anything controversial, whilst at the same time citing activists who hold similar political opinions to himself. The intention here appears to be the character assignation of Owens and Kanye West who recently expressed support for Owens’ views.

The articles reproduce a series of quotations of Owens, which seem to be intended to provoke ‘*ressentiment*’ amongst the ‘*herd*’ of ‘*Slave Morality*’. The contents and sentiments of the quotes themselves are quite innocuous, but Shukman (2018) attempts to frame them in such a fashion that if you were looking for some cause for offence then you could find it. He primes the reader on how they should be thinking about the things that Owens says. For example, when Owens states that, “Black men getting shot by police isn’t about racism.” Shukman states:

*“In 2012, black people made up 13 percent of the US population and 31 percent of police killing victims. Just look at the recent case of Stephon Clark, who was shot eight times in the back by police in his family home.”*

(Shuckman, 2018)

He ignores any context or nuance which may be associated with this discussion, instead creating a false impression of what Owens was discussing. We see the same thing happening again when Owens is quoted discussing notions of white supremacy and debunking them. She

is quoted:

*“White supremacy and the KKK. Really? That’s what you guys want me to be concerned with this week? Do I look like an idiot?... Oh my god Charlottesville, white supremacy is alive and well, run!.. Bottom line: I am not too disturbed by the events that happened in Charlottesville.”*

*(Ibid)*

Shukman takes this quotation, removes the context in which it was uttered and makes a statement that appeals to the ‘herd’ mentality and reaffirms victimhood status:

*“Remember the Charlottesville protests last August, when Nazis and Klansmen gathered to chant about how much they love the Confederacy and how much they hate Jews? It culminated in a Nazi driving his car through a crowd of people, killing one and injuring 19.”*

*(Ibid)*

We are witnessing here the tartuffery of the priestly class. Those who seek to distinguish themselves above the ‘herd’ and have a taste of the ‘Master morality’ whilst still being full of ‘ressentiment’ and ‘nihilism’.

### **False Masters - A perversion of the Master Morality.**

As previously noted a ‘False Master’ is an individual who has allowed their ‘ressentiment’ to dominate them and are seeking to dominate those around them. Another useful term to describe could be the concept of moral entrepreneur. The ‘False Master’ seeks to inflate their status without first mastering the self; in fact, the self is still subject to the ‘Slave Morality’ of the ‘herd’ which it seeks to dominate. There is no interest in self-improvement as Nietzsche’s (2008) concept would suggest, but rather it is concerned with the subjugation of the ‘herd’ and refinement along very narrow lines of thought. It would rather impose a doctrine of ‘ressentiment’ to define social structures so that enemies can be defined, and authority can be consolidated. Nietzsche describes a process whereby:

*“Once the social structure appears to be more or less established and secured against external dangers, it is the fear of one’s neighbour that once again creates new perspectives for moral judgements.”*

*(Nietzsche 2008 – 201, pg.87)*

Free and open discussion with people from outside the ‘group’ is discouraged because it may

expose members of that group to ideas and concepts which challenge the authorised doctrine. Therefore, we see events being ‘shut down’ and speakers being ‘no-platformed’ because exposure to new concepts and ideas may encourage self-mastery rather than ‘*Slave Morality*’. This is essential to maintain the cognitive dissonance required for the belief generated by the doctrine of the group.

### **How Moral Entrepreneurs (False Masters) Emerge**

As I observed earlier in this work, Nietzsche (1887) states:

*“...the priests are, as is known, the worst enemies – why? Because they are the least powerful. This weakness causes their hatred to grow into something which is monstrous and sinister, something which is most devious and venomous.”*

(Nietzsche 1887, pg.22)

Some members of the ‘*Slave Morality*’ will seek influence over their own ‘*herd*’ and seek to put themselves in positions of authority. The ‘*False Master*’ will display leadership skills and give an impression of strength, but their strength is derived from their ‘*ressentiment*’ and does not denote any moral, personal or intellectual excellence; simply the low cunning of the ‘*herd*’. As Roiphe (1994, pg.125) points out such people are “*Nietzschean... they take status where they can get it*”, becoming chameleon like in their behaviour. They seek a “*foretaste of a higher social position*” (Nietzsche 1887, pg.51) and to enjoy the “*edifying feeling of being given free rein to despise and ill-treat a creature – as an ‘inferior’*” (Ibid). Hume (2015, pg.34) helps us understand these “reverse-Voltaire’s of public life” when he describes them as “full-time offence-takers, whose default emotion (and emotions count more than ideas now) is outrage”.

The ‘*False Master*’ will be defined by their hate, mediocrity and lack of self-control, which they frame as ‘victimhood’. Antisocial and criminal behaviour is excused and tolerated because victimhood gives them a free pass, this is a reaction to a perceived injustice. Once the victim narrative has been established and oppressed and oppressors have been defined then the ‘*False Master*’ and the slaves can commit acts of self defence against the deviant other.

To form a victim narrative you take a singular aspect of yourself (i.e. sexuality, gender, race etc.) and you elevate that to the level of a virtue or master status. This allows a person to feel morally superior in their ‘victimhood’ and relative deprivation enables the reason(s) for your lack of success in other areas of your life. It then legitimises your victimhood and becomes the mantra

by which you demand undeserved and illegitimate elevation above others. So, for example if you are not earning as much money as someone else you can select as intrinsic element of yourself and use that as an excuse for your failure; you are now the victim of forces which are conspiring against you. The fault could not possibly be with something that is pertinent to the 'self' of that person ('*Master Morality*'), but rather it is the fault of another/others ('*Slave Morality*'). This then demands special treatment because a person defines themselves as being naturally disadvantaged; but not only that for those who just happen to share some similarities. This then allows for the promotion (in other word preferential treatment) of some on the grounds of political correctness or affirmative action.

### ***Framing your Opponent***

The '*herd*' must first create an awareness of an 'issue', then it can create a 'problem' which it can frame as 'oppression'. But, because discussion with the 'enemy' is discouraged the moral entrepreneurs can fashion a reductionist narrative of good and evil. This paints the opponent as beyond redemption and the cause as 'righteous' with the consequences of failure being catastrophic. These are emotional rather than factual or logical arguments and are designed to prompt outrage and fear. Because the slave mentality is not exposed to opposing views and debates they have trouble coping with criticism and any form of objection from a different view is seen as an ad hominem attack on their character. This makes having a respectful and civil conversation very difficult.

*"...imagine the 'enemy' as the man of 'ressentiment' conceives him... he has conceived 'the evil enemy', the 'Evil One', and indeed that is the inspiration from which he concocts, as a counterpart, the 'Good One', himself – his very self!"*  
(Nietzsche 1887, pg.28)

Hume (2015, pg.69) emphasises this point when he observes that "those who hold the opinions that offend are not merely wrong-headed but are experiencing a form of mental illness". The use of the term 'phobia' to class and category forms of behaviour which the '*False Master*' objects to pathologises the enemy; it assigns essential characteristics to them which dehumanises them. Once this has been achieved then it is not difficult to engage in acts of violence and disruption against your 'atavistic' enemy.

### ***An Appeal to Higher Loyalties***

Quite often the rhetoric is framed in such apocalyptic terms you may believe that the world is

about to end. Opponents are labelled as ‘Nazis’ which ignores the actions of ‘actual’ Nazis and instead is a conflation to dehumanise the enemy. The enemy may be portrayed as beyond redemption because of some essential quality they possess, such as being a white male. With this dehumanisation complete you can frame the battle as a matter of life and death, that victory must be had By Any Means Necessary (BAMN). When labelling begins, and people are beginning to be ill-treated because of their ‘perceived’ beliefs, cruelty can be justified, and ‘punishment’ legitimised as an appeal to higher loyalties.

### ***Legitimising Violence***

If you believe that the opponent is inhuman and beyond redemption the legitimisation of violence is not too far away. Social media campaigns urge people to punch Nazis, mobs of masked anarchists damage property and throw fireworks. In some cases, members of faculty encourage and take part in this behaviour (i.e. Professors. Eric Clanton and Melisa Click).

These are acts of revenge in which the act of inflicting pain generates pleasure for the ‘*Slave Morality*’, especially if the ‘debtor’ inhabits a higher social status than the slave. Such acts are legitimised by a “*trick of self-justification, of the justification of its ‘evil’*” (Nietzsche 1887, pg.54).

### ***Displaying an over-inflated view of one’s own abilities***

Because of the narcissistic traits of social networks and the wider culture people do not have a realistic measure of their own abilities. Similarly, to a talent show contestant being told the truth about their lack of talent, the ‘*Slave Morality*’ has an overblown portrayal of the self. When this self-image clashes with the harsh realities of life, it can help to bolster the victim status of that individual amongst the ‘*herd*’. A member of the herd can say that they were attacked by the ‘Alt-Right’ (Etc.) and can be congratulated by the other members of the ‘*herd*’ for their bravery, emphasising the victimhood and demonising the enemy. A rhapsody of self-affirmation (Roiphe 1994, pg.36).

### ***A great levelling of values***

A strange contradiction occurs within the ‘*herd*’, the rhetoric of self-assurance and self-affirmation wants to view everyone as ‘special’ or ‘unique’; yet the ‘*herd*’ mentality seeks a uniformity which denies these concepts. What you then have is a bizarre situation in which all viewpoints carry equal weight, all persons have equality of outcome and every member of the

'herd' is indivisible in their uniqueness. Nietzsche (1887) observes that a "communistic model of treating every will as equal with every other will, would be a principle hostile to life", (Nietzsche 1887, pg.62) and further adds that it is "*a hidden path to oblivion*" (Ibid). This ethos does not sharpen the intellect, it dulls it by ignoring important differences between individuals.

### ***Lack of due process and injustices***

Roiphe (1994 pp.40-41) observed how a member of the 'Take Back the Night' movement was exposed for making false rape allegations. This this 'literal falsehood' was a demonstration of how some feminists are willing to sacrifice some individuals for the greater good. Such allegations may be excused as isolated incidents or not a true representation of the movement.

As she further observes, accusations of rape tend to stick and are hard to refute once the court of public opinion has passed judgment. We can see similar developments at present with the #MeToo movement on Social Media in which allegations are enough to label someone as a sex offender. It is this lack of due process which is particularly worrying as it exposes every person (regardless of political allegiance) to the mercy of mob justice.

### ***Language, hyperbole and shifting sands***

Another characteristic of the 'herd' mentality and the resentful is an attempt to control the language. This may require repurposing some terms and phrase to cleanse them of any perceived negative associations, or to reframe them to support the '*Slave Morality*'.

The '*False Masters*' of the 'herd' subvert the meanings of language:

*"The (false) master's right of naming extends so far that it is permissible to look upon language itself as the expression of the power of the (false) masters: they say 'this is that, and that'; they affix a seal to every object and every event with a sound and thus, as it were take ownership of it."*

(Nietzsche 1887, pg.14)

If the sands of speech are changing, then it makes it very difficult to build complex arguments upon them to refute falsehoods. This is partly the reason why '*Slave Morality*' is reductionist and lacks nuance, because the terms of the debate can change at any time to disrupt and undermine your opponent. You may also find yourself falling foul and unintentionally causing offence through ignorance. Thus, all speech is filtered "*through the venomous eyes of*

*ressentiment*” (Nietzsche 1887 pg.28).

A ‘*False Master*’ will also try to radicalise a wider audience by exaggeration or fabrication. This will help stoke the fires of outrage and perpetuate a victim or conflict narrative. A good example of this is an incident which took place on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2018.

Sherita Dixon-Cole was stopped by a Texas State Trooper in Ellis County and arrested, she was required to perform a breathalyser test and taken back to the police station. During the incident Cole alleged that the Officer sexually assaulted her and threatened to shoot her fiancé; which she later tweeted on social media (Appendix five, pg.117). Black Rights activist Shaun King discovered this alleged incident had taken place and tweeted about it, naming the Officer involved and further alleging that she was being held hostage in the county jail. This was followed by death threats directed at the officer involved (Appendix five, pg. 118).

The authorities in Ellis County decided to release to the public the complete unedited body cam footage of the incident, which completely exonerated the officer and debunked the lies told by Sherita Dixon-Cole. A few days later (23<sup>rd</sup> May) King (2018) expressed his regret and bafflement, but also, he attempts to rationalise the truth of the incident with his radical victim narrative. He casts doubt upon the legitimacy of the arrest, dismissing it as “*arguably unwarranted*” (King 2018). He also blames Cole for his own ‘victimhood’ saying “*She victimized us*” (Ibid) He then using an ad ignorantium argument to absolve himself of any further responsibility, “*I trusted a very reliable source... I poked and prodded for holes.*” (Ibid) Finally, he emphasises his good intentions in an appeal to higher loyalties:

*“I lead and live with my heart on my sleeve. I don’t know any other way ...I am working directly with dozens of families across the country who’ve experienced police brutality ...I will continue to fight for them like their lives, and all of our lives.”*  
(Ibid)

Clearly an appeal to emotion with the sentiment, ‘forgive my mistake I am fighting for your lives’. Note the combative terms used to frame the narrative which help cement the victimhood ‘status’ of the ‘herd’.

This apology appears to be disingenuous, no genuine apology is made towards the Officer who made the arrest; other than to reiterate the facts of the matter. The whole article seems more

concerned with extricating himself from any potential blame and maintaining his status. To some degree thought King has achieved his aim which is to promote a victim narrative and frame a perception of marginalisation in the minds of some of his followers.

The incident demonstrates how uncritical King was when accepting the veracity of the claims when they support his own personal agenda. He is more interested in pushing his victim narrative than the truth of a situation, acting as a filter and misinforming and radicalising his followers.

### **PC Culture & Radicalisation**

Isolation and a controlled narrative can lead to radicalisation which manifests itself as an overweening '*ressentiment*', a sense of entitlement, a sense of one's own importance and an over estimation of your abilities. Because they have been encouraged to have this self-belief and have been shielded from criticism in 'safe spaces' it makes them vulnerable to the influence of '*False Masters*'.

### ***Louise Rosealma AKA 'Moldylocks' AKA 'Venus Rosales'***

On 17<sup>th</sup> April 2017 Berkley became the site of civil unrest, known as the 'Fourth Battle of Berkley'.

Twenty-year-old Louise Rosealma, an AntiFa protestor travelled from Southern California to Berkley to protest at a Pro-Trump rally. On her way she posted this message on twitter (Appendix five, pg. 119):

*"Headed to Berkley to disrupt the neo Nazi/white Supremacist jerk circle today. Nervous AF but determined to bring back 100 nazi scalps"*

The image was accompanied by a picture of Rosealma looking somber (see Appendix 5).

Later in the day scuffles broke out which involved Rosealma, during which she was punched in the face by Nathan Domingo. Much capital was made from this incident to paint the opposing parties (Trump supporters) as thugs and establish Rosealma's victim narrative. But as more details emerged, including videos and pictures, the victim narrative was challenged.

It appears from these images that Rosealma was wilfully involved in acts of violence, rather than acts of self-defence, as the narrative would suggest. Also, it appears that Rosealma was wearing gloves with hard padded knuckles, which she has worn expressly for combat. Other images appeared online of Rosealma brandishing a glass bottle as a weapon, a view which was supported by witness testimony (Appendix five, pg.120).

What appears to have happened is this, Rosealma's belief in her own capabilities to fight and the righteousness of her cause was outweighed by the reality of the situation. In short, she was just not physically capable of beating her opponent, even when she used 'weapons'. She has been so heavily indoctrinated by the 'False Masters' of the 'Slave Morality' that she was no longer in touch with reality. She has an overblown sense of her abilities and importance in wider society because the closed loop of 'safe spaces' that shelters and maintains a state of infantilisation and dependency upon the collective.

She was given the epithet 'Moldylocks' because of her dreadlocks and the discovery of pornographic material featuring Rosealma (under the pseudonym 'Venus Rosales') on a website ATKING.COM (Appendix five, pg.119).

In an interview Rosealma tries to cement her victimhood when she describes how she was the target for online abuse following the incident. She does this by giving an embellished account of the incident:

*"I remember is turning around and from the corner of my eye I saw this fist coming at me. I put my arms up to try and push him away as much as I could. He just threw himself into me."*

*"I was punched twice more by two other people. People kept trying to throw me down to hit my head on the rocks that were in the planter. I was just trying to not get my skull cracked open."*

(Quoted in Parry 2017)

This statement was made the day following the altercation in which Rosealma looks remarkably well and unscathed after 'surviving' such a vicious attack. This account does not tally with the events as they were recorded at the time and of witness accounts. From this we can conclude the statement disingenuous and had been made to avoid blame and censure. Much is made in the Parry article of the 'character' of Domingo and little attention is paid to

Rosealma's own actions or responsibility.

### ***Lewis and Clarke Law School.***

We see radicalisation fostered by 'False Masters' in social pressure groups and popular social movements. For example; AntiFa and its many off shoot and variations are a form of extreme Marxist philosophy which will have some very vocal individuals who 'preach' to a crowd of converts. In fact, if you were to watch any of their 'indoctrination' style speeches made by these individuals you would be struck by the similarity to cult and orthodox religious worship. For example, A lecture by feminist Christina Hoff-Sommers was interrupted by a group of protesters at Lewis and Clarke Law School (5<sup>th</sup> March 2018, USA). They dominated the event by having an individual chant what appears to be a sermon and have it repeated by a 'congregation' of followers. It went thus:

*"We choose (repeated by the crowd),  
To protest (repeated by the crowd),  
Male supremacy (repeated by the crowd),  
Not give it (repeated by the crowd),  
A platform (repeated by the crowd),  
Christina Sommers (repeated by the crowd),  
Has repeatedly (repeated by the crowd),  
Delegitimized (repeated by the crowd),  
The suffering of women (repeated by the crowd),  
Worldwide (repeated by the crowd),  
What we believe (repeated by the crowd),  
Our siblings (repeated by the crowd),  
Our comrades (repeated by the crowd)  
Women are not (repeated by the crowd),  
Liars with victim mentalities (repeated by the crowd),  
Rape culture is not a myth (repeated by the crowd),  
Micro-aggressions are real (repeated by the crowd),  
The gender wage gap is real (repeated by the crowd),  
Trans people are real (repeated by the crowd),  
Trans lives matter (repeated by the crowd),  
Black lives matter" (repeated by the crowd)."*

Followed by a sing-a-long.

There is an obvious parallel between this utterance/response mode of 'preaching' and religious and cult like activities observed throughout the world and over history. The moral entrepreneurs are attempting to become the priestly class to wield power over the rest of the

‘flock’ (*herd*). The followers show their willingness to the cause by their subservient attitudes and demeanour towards their priestly class and they subjugate their own personal responsibility in favour for the collective.

One cannot help but be reminded of scenes from the film ‘Monty Python’s Life of Brian’ in which Brian, who is unwillingly thrust in to the role of the religious leader and discovers the absurdity that this train of thought ultimately leads.

### **When does the Politically Correct become the politically absurd?**

*“Living is keeping the absurd alive. Keeping it alive is above all contemplating it.”*  
(Camus 1942)

Each of the collectivist groups has an ideology which acts as their ‘dogma’ and is generally unquestioned and unchallenged within the collective. Because the ideology is shielded from critical analysis within the collective it quite often comes absurd to any objective ‘truth’ or reality outside the collective. A good example of this would be the ‘10 Demands for White People’ written by BLM co-founder Chanelle Helm (August 2017). These demands are the product of absurdist reasoning and ‘*Slave Morality*’ and can be summarised thus:

- White people will property to black people when they die.
- White people should ‘downsize’ property which can then give to black people.
- Build new housing and allowing black people to live there for free.
- White people should ‘re-budget’ their incomes so that they can ‘donate’ money to black people for ‘land purchasing’
- White people should actively seek to get ‘racist’ work-mates fired.
- Member of the ‘Klan’ and ‘Nazis’ should be fired and arrested.
- Any white person overheard being racist should be fired.
- Fight white supremacy.

These demands are self-serving and clearly absurd, but they do demonstrate the ‘*ressentiment*’ of the ‘*Slave Morality*’ quite well. They are demanding benefits which they have not earned, for special treatment and advantages over others; a levelling which benefits them. Similar absurd demands were witnessed during the student revolt at Evergreen College; one of the demands made was for a suspension of home work.

Camus’ (1942) notion of ‘the absurd’ revolves around the idea of a pointless quest for ‘meaning’ in a ‘godless’ universe of blind physical forces and genetic replication. For some

people the mental anguish associated with this is solved by inventing a meaning to negate the absurdity of their existence. So, we can see with the examples of *'Slave Morality'* and collectivist thinking in this chapter that the ideologies, which these people immerse themselves in has become their panacea. Like Sisyphus they will be pushing the rock of their cause up the hill of political correctness forever.

They have committed a form of philosophical suicide, a *'nihilism'* which is life denying rather than life affirming. It makes them feel embolden but at the same time restricts and infantilises them with its dogmatic rhetoric. The *'False Master'* promotes this so that their status is protected amongst the *'herd'*/collective thereby giving them a taste of power.

### **PC Culture and Narcissism**

The *'False Master'* will be possessed of a sense of entitlement and will seek to promote such feelings in the other members of the *'herd'*. Entitlement manifests itself in the demands that are made on college campuses in America, for example the demand of Evergreen's students for less homework or for safe spaces that are no go areas for certain demographics of other students. This sense of entitlement is nearly always based in some subjective view of their own disadvantage in relation to someone who appears to be better off than them (classic *'Slave Morality'*). It is also rooted in a narcissistic belief in one's own special status and superiority. Twenge and Campbell (2010) give us a useful definition of entitlement:

*"...the pervasive belief that one deserves special treatment, success, and more material things. Entitlement is one of the key components of narcissism and one of the most damaging to others."*

(Twenge and Campbell 2010, pg.230)

How does it damage others? If we take the events at Evergreen as an example, some students were arguing that they deserve treatment which was preferential in their favour, namely that students who were not BME should be excluded from campus on the *'Day of Absence'*. Similarly, when a group makes a claim to oppression and demands a *'safe space'* they are making a narcissistic claim to special treatment.

What we can observe from actions by students on some American campuses is a lack of humility and an absence of deference towards their professors. An obsession with dismantling the structures that underpin and operate the institutions which they are part of and an appetite for

destruction which, if allowed to continue unchecked, would eventual lead to a nihilistic levelling of all values.

### **Narcissism and Self-Worship**

Can we understand this with reference to a culture that promotes the individual; not as a self-sustaining endeavour to pursue excellence, self-improvement and personal responsibility (as Nietzsche would espouse), but rather a display of narcissistic self-aggrandisement which seeks to dominate others? Twenge and Campbell (2010) suggest that it arises from a 1960s culture of self-actualisation (citing the work of Abraham Maslow, pg.62) which promotes self-examination and introspection to instil some form of self-discipline (Twenge and Campbell 2010, pg.64). We can see parallels here with the Nietzschean notion of a '*Master morality*' and striving for personal excellence.

They further state (Ibid, pp.64-65) that over time self-expression became easier to represent than actual achievement; so, the pursuit of the self became the source of value rather than actual achievement. Coupled with cultural values (Ibid, pg.59) which focus on self-admiration, materialism and the availability of credit meant that people could indulge themselves in narcissistic fantasies (such as spending money beyond your limits to earn so that you can project an image of wealth).

What is also suggested is that this behaviour in adults is passed onto a generation of children who are inculcated into narcissistic ways. They suggest that parents create narcissistic children because they are constantly given inflated feedback (Ibid pg.80). One can find some plausibility in this theory; if a child is told constantly from an early age that they are somehow 'special' or 'unique' then why would they not grow up to believe it?

Dan Kindlon's book "Too Much of a Good Thing" (2001) is cited in which it is argued that children are spoiled by their parents:

*"...we are too indulgent. We give our kids too much and demand too little of them."*  
(Kindlon (2001) cited in Twenge and Campbell 2010, pg.76)

If appropriate boundaries are not set by adults and rewards are given for very little or no effort; in tandem with children being told how 'special' they are, then it can be little wonder that

some may grow into narcissists. They will also grow up to be intolerant of opposing viewpoints as Winnicott (1988), observes:

*“Parents who are otherwise satisfactory may easily fail in child care by being unable to distinguish between the child’s dream and fact. They may present an idea as a fact, or thoughtlessly react to an idea as if it had been an action. They may indeed be more frightened of ideas than actions. Maturity means, among other things, a capacity for tolerating ideas, and parents need this capacity which at its best is part of social maturity. A mature social system (while making certain demands in regard to action) allows freedom of ideas and the free expression of them. The child only gradually reaches the ability to distinguish between dream and reality.”*

(Winnicott 1988, pg.59-60)

Modern digital communications amplify this immaturity, with the social media promoting narcissistic traits, blurring the distinction between ‘dreams and reality’ whilst filtering out other viewpoints. They claim that children and young adults are ‘malleable’ and respond to social networks by becoming increasingly narcissistic (Campbell and Twenge 2010, pg.114). We can see how networks such as Twitter and Facebook can encourage this with their emphasis on ‘updates’, ‘status’ and all other forms of minutia from our daily lives. It fosters an idea that everyone is interested in every single trivial aspect of your daily routine and that you must keep your audience furnished with details. What Campbell and Twenge (2010) describe as “vapid exercises in self-expression and attention seeking” (Ibid, pg.117).

It paints a bleak picture of current and future generations in which the reality principle is trumped by the fantasy principle (Ibid, pg.122) of social media bravado and carefully curated content. They suggest it shields individuals from the harsh realities of life and makes them ill equipped for the ‘real world’, it keeps them in a state of infantilised entitlement. We can see this scenario played out across some American college campus in the student protests of 2016 and 2017, in which some students make demands which put themselves and their own narcissism at the centre of the debate. Put simply they have been over-indulged by their parents and teachers and continue to be so by university faculty. The Evergreen incident is a good example of this, in which the college president allowed himself to be harangued by a crowd instead of disciplining them. This effectively endorses their actions and maintains and feeds their narcissism.

### ***Narcissism and ‘ressentiment’***

The natural concomitant to narcissism is ‘ressentiment’. If you believe that your opinion, status

and entitlement is above all else then you will be resentful of those that do not capitulate to you. Under these circumstances the narcissistic *'Slave Morality'* refuses to accept a hierarchy other than its own, which can lead a host of negative and harmful behaviours.

### ***'Slave Morality' and the mob***

The *'Slave Morality'* of the narcissists can be framed under guise of 'victimhood' and 'oppression' and not getting the same opportunities and/or being discriminated against and/or in danger. The victim narrative is key because there is power in victim status. By identifying as this victim status, the *'Slave Morality'* can foster a sense of entitlement, of rewards that are owed which have been unfairly taken from them. Victims compete for status with stories of oppression designed to garner authority. As Roiphe (1994) observed at a protest in 1991:

*"As students throw stories of suffering to the waiting crowds, the spiritual cleansing takes on darker undercurrents. The undercurrent is the competition for whose stories can be more Sadean, more incest-ridden, more violent, more like a paperback you can buy at a train station."*

(Roiphe 1994, pg.42)

### **Shutting down debates**

The aim of the *'Slave Morality'* is to push that morality as the dominant discourse, effectively suppressing other voices. No platforming of opposing opinions is not a new phenomenon, it was practiced by radical feminists in 1990s America to silence critics of the alleged 'rape crisis' taking place on college campuses (Roiphe1994, pp.56-57). If subjects cannot be freely discussed, then it allows for myths (remember the fantasy principle), lies and ill-informed speculation to persist.

Moral authoritarians do not attempt to engage in debate, to them the enemy is beyond redemption and not worth trying to convince of their 'wrongness'. So, they simply pull fire alarms and block buildings with their weight of numbers.

In an interesting exchange with protestors, You Tube personality Dave Rubin helps us understand the point scoring attitude of the *'Slave Morality'* with an over weaning sense of entitlement. The video entitled 'Dave Rubin Handles Protestors at University of New Hampshire (FULL VIDEO)', posted on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2018, shows how infantilisation has allowed non-sensical and short-sighted behaviour.

During the video there are several back and forth question and answer sessions with protestors, one stands out as indicative of the 'Slave Morality' and 'ressentiment'. The exchange begins by the protestor taking possession of the microphone from the usher who is holding it. Clearly this is a move to establish dominance and gives an indication of the entitlement yet to come. Once the protestor has possession of the microphone she can then dominate the discourse for the next ten minutes. The protestor clearly takes pleasure in being handed the microphone, as one can imagine the resentful scoring points against the opposition.

She then tries to paint herself as a victim and conflate 'hate speech' with 'violence' and portray Rubin as an oppressor, in which Rubin asks her to demonstrate her oppression. The protestor makes a glib remark followed by an awkward silence and it is not entirely clear whether this is a joke or not, but it does indicate that the person does not take these proceedings seriously. She then gives the bizarre answer:

*"I have no reason to sit and talk about my own oppression because that is just like mental energy, unless I am going to be paid to talk about..."*

(Rubin 2018)

The protestor believes that to discuss her 'lived experience' she must be paid; the resentful attitude which demands entitlement to money for doing very little. At this point there is an interruption for other chanting protestors, which appears to be a common behaviour at these sorts of events. The resentful seem to need attention drawn to them, even if it means taking it away from another protestor. It also has the function of breaking up and disrupting the conversation, so just when it seems that some interesting conclusions may be drawn from a dialogue, it is scuppered by the chanting of the resentful.

After this interruption Rubin offers her \$20 to speak and another member of the audience offers and additional \$20, an offer which is not accepted.

The discussion turns towards the boundaries of free speech, the protestor asks what Rubin considers the boundaries to be. Interestingly as Rubin is answering this question the protestor interrupts, changing the subject and asking "What's your background? Are you Gay?". This appears to be a segue into an ad hominem attack on Rubin's character. It continues thus:

*“Protestor: “You are Gay and you are Jewish?” Rubin: “Yes.”*

*Protestor: “So”*

*[Pause in which the protestor seems to be struggling to find the next sentence. Some of the audience giggle at the obvious confusion of the protestor]*

*Protestor: “I abhor anti-semitism””*

At this point Rubin looks slightly confused as the protestor tries to make an equivalence between ‘speech’ and ‘violence’ against Jews in a clear attempt to portray Rubin as some form of traitor and/or hypocrite. She then makes reductionist arguments that again conflate speech with violence:

*“Do you think that there is a correlation between hating Jews and wanting to kill them, yes or no question.”*

(Ibid)

This question is clearly absurd in nature, it ignores nuance or context, but rather it is there to prompt a reaction. The resentful are trying to gain the upper hand by disingenuously framing questions that they know to be false dichotomies.

Rubin recognises this trap and wants to move onto the next question, whilst the protestor smiling, obviously believes they have scored a point and admonishes Rubin for not answering.

Then the protestor uses Alinsky notion of holding the ‘enemy’ to their own standards when she states:

*“It’s so fascinating that you claim that the left has a victim complex, yet every time someone yells at you, you also put on the victim complex.”*

(Ibid)

This doesn’t quite work because Rubin does not fall for this obvious trap of calling himself a victim and denies ever claiming it. She continues the personal attack by saying that his ancestors must be “*rolling in their grave*” (Ibid), (conflating speech with genocide). Other members of the audience begin to argue with her, calling her ‘pathetic’ and Rubin tries to move the discussion onto another member of the audience.

The protestor is not willing to give up the microphone, an action that we could have predicted

from the initial conflict at the start of this Question and Answer session. The protestor agrees to give way to others, but on her own terms. What follows demonstrates the pure narcissism and entitlement of the 'Slave Morality':

*"I'm here practicing my First Amendment Right. I'm going to give the Mic to somebody out of respect. To whoever wants to shit talk me now when I put this mic down, I just want you to know that your opinion literally means Bull Shit to me"*  
(Ibid)

Rubin tackles her on the 'offence' that she may be causing to others she says, "*I can offend people when they have a personal vendetta against my character*" and then attempts to defend this stance by further conflating the difference between speech and actual violence.

As this discussion ends the protestor tries to score as many points as she can:

i) "*I just wanna let you know that I am a double major and I do research for actual organisations.*" (Ibid) - this is an attempt to inflate her position, an 'I'm someone whose opinion carries weight' argument.

ii) "*You literally do not know who I am, ... so don't belittled me.*" (Ibid) – here she is attempting to imply she should have some form of special treatment, that she is better than she is given credit for, that she deserves respect.

iii) "*Do you know what's fascinating? I have not gone, I have not said a single thing about your personal character until this point, you have belittled me, said that I don't understand what words mean, have told me to shut up, have told me that I am taking up space, isn't that fascinating? So, who really is the intolerant one here?"* (Ibid) – This is interesting for the contradiction that it makes, when we consider her previous behaviour. Also, it again tries to imply oppression rather than debate. Another interesting factor is the semi-academic speech in which this statement is clothed in, with the over use of the word fascinating as if she was discussing some abstract concept in class.

iv) "*All I've done is talk pretty loudly on a mic, unless you have a problem with a woman talking pretty loudly on a mic?"* (Ibid) – Another victim narrative to add to the collection, the slave measures their 'ressentiment' by the amount of victimhood they can ascribe to themselves.

(Ibid)

This all takes place to a back drop of random protests, people chanting slogans and making noises, but what is clear is that protests of this nature are not concerned with discussion or debate. They are point scoring exercises by the resentful.

## ***PC and a search for meaning.***

*“The politically correct are nihilists, that is reality-deniers... There is no truth, merely a choice between delusions...”*

(Charlton 2011, pp.2-3)

When one reads the demands of the resentful one cannot help but be struck by the absurdity of some of matters which obsess them. Why is there a need to distinguish between over one hundred different ‘genders’? Why deny what is clearly a demonstrable scientific fact in favour of a subjective meaning based solely upon your personal emotions? It has striking similarities to an act of faith, with the tenants of political correctness being those said articles of that faith.

When ‘*ressentiment*’ cannot be conquered it finds expression in the words and actions of the individual. Nietzsche suggests that radical societal change can be a symptom of this:

*“I regard bad conscience as a serious illness to which man was bound to succumb under the stress of the most radical change which he has ever experienced – the change which occurred when he found himself imprisoned by the strictures imposed upon him by society to establish and preserve peace”.*

(Nietzsche 1887, pg.70)

Could this mean that societal structures are too rigid, that expression of gender, sexual orientation, race, ideology etc. is a product of alienation in modern society; is this instinct for freedom a desire for power? It is an interesting question.

Perhaps what we are seeing is an attempt to apply meaning and purpose to lives which are in a state of confusion. Older more traditional values have been eroded leaving people adrift in a sea of contradiction and confusion. Emboldened by social media, dis-information and impotent rage, ‘*ressentiment*’ comes to surface and tortures logic and truth.

## **Moulding Future Generations**

With the potential for a never-ending spiral of ‘*ressentiment*’ the use of politically correct language policing, draconian punishments and the call for ‘safe spaces’ on college campuses we run the risk of molycoddling our young people. That by shielding them from hardship and the valuable lessons that life teaches us as we mature into adulthood, we risk the possibility

that they may grow up to be less resilient.

People could be afraid to speak freely because it would cause ripples on the pond and create a fear of censure and punishment. University may stop being a place for intellectual rigour and the exchange of ideas as the ‘correct’ political ideals push out all others, thus creating safe spaces in which troublesome thoughts and ideas can be shielded from impressible young minds.

These symptoms of a politically correct ideology could cause the infantilisation of future generations as students could leave university without the necessary critical intellectual tools required to be autonomous ‘individuals’. Instead they may be part of a ‘herd’ mentality which perpetuates ‘ressentiment’.

### ***The Cry Closet – University of Utah***

The ‘Cry Closet’ (Appendix five, pg.121) consists of a small cubicle in the University of Utah’s library which students can shut themselves in and is designed as “A Safe Place for Stressed Out Students” (sic) and is filled with a variety of stuffed toys. The rules of the closet are simple:

*“Knock before entering.  
Only one person in the closet at a time.  
Limit your time in the closet to no more than 10 minutes.  
Turn lights and timer off before leaving.  
Use #cryclosetuofu if posting on social media.”*

(Bird 2018)

The Cry Closet is an art installation created by Nemo Miller a senior in fine arts and has been recently profiled as a ‘Human of the U’ in April 2018. Jana Cunningham a spokeswoman for the university encourages students to use it during their final exams (Ibid 2018).

*“You can cry, scream, look your phone and decompress, and hopefully you come out feeling a little better in this crazy week of finals.”*

(Ibid)

This has an air of the nursery school about it and may help to keep people infantilised into their twenties. Installing such ‘safe spaces’ does not allow individuals to flourish or to develop the intellectual and moral fortitude which will help sustain them as they mature into adulthood. It perpetuates a state of emotional immaturity and ‘herd’ mentality that will be transplanted into the wider world beyond their university education. It emphasises weakness and repels any form of self-reliance, it is the ‘Slave Morality’ of the ‘herd’ encapsulated in a single structure. From

this we can calculate a trajectory to a great levelling, in which emotion is currency and worth is determined by your self-identification. If this can continue unchecked, we will reach a point of complete mediocrity in society.

This chapter has discussed further the nature and substance of the '*False Masters*' which emerge to lead the '*herd*' of the '*Slave Morality*'. It has also discussed how mis-information and 'Fake News' can be the fuel that drives '*ressentiment*' amongst some individuals. In this chapter I have also discussed the individual dispositions and psycho-biography of the individual which will help to understand concept of '*flexible causal prediction*'.

In the final chapter an overview will be given of the topics discussed in this thesis to help clarify for the reader the philosophical constructs and how they are manifested in this work. The main points of interest will also be recapped upon to explain how these concepts are important to thesis and to our understanding of deviant behaviour.

## Chapter Six

### Conclusion

What has been demonstrated in this work is how individuals react and cope with the circumstances of their environment and how flexible causal prediction can help us to understand the decision-making process. Our neuro-agency may respond to causal influences, but is not determined, therefore we can say that there is a probability of certain courses of action depending upon how strong these influences are. It is important to acknowledge that there is no hard line determinism at work here and that humans can act in strange, unexpected, illogical and counter intuitive ways. Environmental and dispositional elements work in tandem and should not be judged purely in isolation from each other. For example, some behaviour may appear to be classed as ‘deviant’ depending upon the circumstances in which it was committed and must be understood in context.

In this work a model of meta-theoretical framework was created in which theories of human deviant behaviour can be placed. This takes into consideration genetic/physical factors and societal/environmental influences. The notion of ‘Drift’ (Sykes and Matza 1957) was used as a starting point and developed further in conjunction with Owen’s concept of neuro-agency and the concept of ‘flexible causal prediction’ (Owen and Noble 2015). Also discussed is the bio-social effects on behaviour, in tandem with the theoretical perspectives of Sykes and Matza (1957), Owen (2014) and Nietzsche (1872–1901).

Flexible Causal Prediction discusses the situational environment that an individual finds themselves placed in and how a multitude of influences can be at play, affecting the decision-making process of an individual. For this study, the author has been specifically interested in the role that ‘*ressentiment*’ has upon the autonomy of the person. This is to say that ‘*ressentiment*’ is an influence competing with others and that the strength of each of these influences changes as the situation changes. In this the environmental, social, biological and genetic factors that can influence behaviour as well as ‘*ressentiment*’ have been acknowledged. One of the main areas for research is the internet and observe how individual groups interact and theorise on motivations and influences. To assist this exploration the philosophical notions of Nietzsche have been incorporated as there is a personal belief that these notions can help us understand the psychological framework of much internet deviance.

As we have learned from this work, this deviance is not confined to the webpages of the internet but spills out into everyday life to such an extent that it is difficult to distinguish cause from effect.

The author discusses how individuals rationalise their behaviour using social media and shows how '*Slave Morality*' is manifest. It has been discussed in this thesis, '*Slave Morality*' is based upon feelings of '*ressentiment*' and offence, which motivate some individuals. It is important, however, to make something clear, it is not unnatural to feel offended and resentful, this is a perfectly normal human reaction to events. The crux of the matter is in *how you respond to this stimulus*.

We all feel '*ressentiment*' at some time or another to a greater or lesser degree, but how we use it to rationalise our actions can differ greatly. For some feelings of '*ressentiment*' are a passing thought which is transient and quickly dispelled. For others '*ressentiment*' can be all consuming and inform every aspect of their life.

Similarly, how you deal with offence can shape your disposition and behaviour. The truculent and easily offended may see their world through a filter of '*ressentiment*' that colours their perspectives. Whereas others will not actively seek offence and be more willing to forget and forgive the transgressions of others. Sometimes it takes more discipline, self-control and wisdom not to react to offence than it does to rule your life by it.

By using the works of Nietzsche, it has been demonstrated how '*Slave Morality*' and '*ressentiment*' can be seen in some individuals in their deviant behaviour. For example, in chapter two the intellectual property crime known as 'file-sharing' is examined where the writings of users in comment sections is inspected. This is illuminating as it allows us a window into the justification for the actions and thus further filtered them through the 'Techniques of Neutralisation' so that a classification of rationale can be made.

Similarly; the '*ressentiment*' of consumers and how that is manifest in the file-sharing community, has been viewed and how they justify their '*ressentiment*' with the techniques of neutralisation and demonstrate a '*herd*' mentality. The situational rules of the environment have been examined, together with the codification of behaviour amongst internet 'pirates', the 'do's and don'ts' of file sharing. There was an examination of their attitudes towards property

and a personal explanation offered in that people have a mistaken notion of ownership, which has occurred partly because of the disembodied nature of the internet and partly because of the rhetoric of ownership. This has created confusion as outmoded forms of content control (analogue) have been superseded by modern technology (digital). However, it is important to note that some users simply do not want to pay for content; there is some '*ressentiment*' about pricing and the amount previously spent on goods, which has fostered a sense of entitlement.

When examining the actions of internet trolls (chapter three) it was observed their excuses fall into a pattern of behaviour which corresponds with the neutralisation techniques. They would blame the victim or claim that they were not in control of themselves or deny the harm that was done. This could be a manifestation of the '*Slave Morality*' as it seeks to diminish the status of one who has achieved more than the troll. This is acted out when an individual 'troll' inhabits a comparatively lowly status compared the victim of the abuse.

Chapter three also defines some basic characteristics of the internet troll, including varieties of trolling, such as Fake News and memes. Other traits are display, such as an exercise in power and dominance over the 'other' to achieve a higher status. They can hunt in packs and trolling can escalate into 'dog piling'. They are adept at using technology and yet they have mistaken notion of anonymity and when they get unmasked they must invent an excuse for their actions.

Nietzsche's view on trolling was interpreted in the form of a 'creditor' 'debtor' dynamic in which the 'troll' is exercising power over another by using an unfair advantage and that these unfair means are motivated by '*ressentiment*' and is indicative of the '*Slave Morality*'.

The '*nihilism*' of trolling is demonstrated, especially R.I.P. trolling, which attempts to reject positive and significant values such as family, support for grieving relatives and positive memories of the deceased. Instead they try to undermine these sentiments because they themselves may feel alienated within their own personal experience. The object of the troll is to bring others down to the same level, to see no value in positive virtues whilst secretly longing for them. This behaviour also brings us to another interesting point for discussion, why do some people troll and yet other people don't?

The author theorised that the internet is not itself a cause for deviant behaviour because not all people who use it do so for nefarious purposes. Even if one were to be 'invisible' there is no

guarantee that deviance would occur, as Hardaker states in her ‘Ring of Gyges’ analogy. Personally, it is stated that there must be a will to deviance which exists in the disposition of the individual, whether it be biological/genetic or social/environmental. It has been demonstrated that Nietzsche is correct when he puts forth ‘*ressentiment*’ and ‘*Slave Morality*’ are motivating factors for some individuals to commit deviant behaviour. This could be amplified by Suler’s (2004) ‘*online dis-inhibition effect*’, in which deviance is encouraged by using an anonymous forum, which a personal belief is that it amplifies the ‘*ressentiment*’.

Internet trolls are resentful of the success of others so their ‘*ressentiment*’ impels them to cause annoyance and abuse towards these more successful individuals. This is because the influence of this cognitive distortion is a causal factor on their decision making. They are not determined into a course of action, they choose it based on their disposition at the time may choose to behave differently under different causal influences. This emphasises the point that some individuals can change their behaviour and are not determined into deviant ways. Other forms of trolling come under the spotlight in this work, such as righteous trolling in which an individual commits a form of trolling that makes them feel morally superior or somehow gives them license to be cruel or victimise someone.

Chapter discusses self-styled paedophile hunters and cyber-vigilantism and how online accusations can have real-world consequences and can spiral out of control very quickly. When Kayne Kennedy was identified as the ‘alleged’ culprit of the Manchester Dog’s Home fire of 2014 it was not known for certain if this was correct. But it did not stop Twitter users making death threats and revealing personal details about him and his family.

The problem of false accusation on social media and the internet means that some individuals can be considered guilty by some before any investigation or judicial process has occurred. This is very worrying because it circumvents due process of the law and once an individual is falsely labelled it is very difficult to shrug off negative associations. The #MeToo movement is an example of how this form of righteous trolling can lead to a bandwagoning effect and promoting a mob mentality.

From this there also arises the ‘Moral Entrepreneur’ or ‘Slave Master’ who is an individual concerned with securing their own status within a collective ‘*herd*’ mentality and will use popular causes to do so. As we observed in chapter five, the ‘*Slave Master*’ will fabricate,

exaggerate and demonise to make the collective more resentful, afraid, angry and outraged because it gives them personal power. These individuals do not embody the higher ideal of a 'master' class, rather they are imposters who have not managed their own 'ressentiment' and entitlement and view the world "through the venomous eyes of resentment" (Nietzsche 1887, pg.28). For these 'False Masters', the goal is not one of self-mastery, but mastery over others to increase personal power within the 'herd'. We have seen how rhetoric and memes are used for this purpose and how disinformation can be conveyed in images.

In a section entitled 'Rules for the Resentful' (chapter four) Alinsky's 1971 work 'Rules for Radicals' is put through a Nietzschean interpretation to see how these rules nurture and promote 'ressentiment' amongst some political pressure groups and how these have led to deviant actions (chapter five). Because of this research these rules have been increased to enable expansion into areas in which modern campus protests can be classified under the Nietzschean interpretation.

Chapter five demonstrates how political correctness has become a haven for some resentful individuals and is used as a tool to push a political agenda. Some aspects of political correctness have become ridiculous and divisive, encouraging some to identify as victims so that it becomes their master status by which everything else is judged by. This is a form of 'Slave morality' and a manifestation of a 'herding' instinct. It has been examined how some social justice movements are infantilising those they try to recruit by shutting down important conversations and painting their political opponents as beyond redemption.

The moral entrepreneurship ('False Masters') are examined in detail with an overview of the rhetoric and tactics. How it is necessary to generate 'ressentiment' to frame the oppressor/oppressed narrative and create and categorise victims. Also outlined is the characteristics such as false claims and exaggerations, 'ressentiment' for past (historical) deeds, no platforming, creating safe spaces, assertion of infallibility and regulating everyday interactions. Using these methods, the 'herd' mentality can be protected from any outside thoughts and ideas and members of the collective are not encouraged to debate them instead they are told to shut them down. They are told that the 'enemy' is somehow beyond redemption; it is impossible to reason with them; and that they want to do you harm. Terms such as 'Nazi', 'Homophobe', 'Misogynist' and 'Transphobe' are thrown around without any discretion to the point where they become meaningless. This demonising helps to normalise the violence of

some political pressure groups, if all your opponents are labelled as the worst thing you can possibly think of (i.e. Nazi) and therefore subhuman, then legitimising violence in the name of the cause can be the next stage.

It has demonstrated within this work how individuals can commit acts of physical violence for the 'herd' mentality; for example, Professors Clanton and Click who committed violence (former) and threaten violence (latter). Also, another characteristic of the 'herd' morality has been demonstrated, self-worship and over-estimating your own capabilities, which became apparent with observing the actions of Louise Rosealma and her expressed intention of bringing back "100 Nazi scalps". Narcissism and 'ressentiment' are closely linked and can lead to negative and harmful behaviours. Because Clanton and Click were both University Professors at the time of their activism it would be logical to assume that their students could be subject to some form of indoctrination. If students are subject to the influence of these authoritative figures it could be argued that some of them may be induced to imitate their peers. This does the student a dis-service by instilling in them cognitive distortions about the nature of other viewpoints, philosophies and ideas. The promotion of 'safe spaces' does not expose young and impressionable people to opposing opinions, so they cannot develop reasoned arguments. Furthermore, if they see that their tutors are using violence and resentful, unreasoning rhetoric they may come to believe that this is the correct way to behave. Students are being misled and corrupted by 'False Master'.

In the section entitled 'The Doctrine of Feeling Power' (Nietzsche 2013 pp.38-39) Nietzsche shows us how these 'False Masters' might exercise their power which include: vilifying opponents (de-platforming); benevolence towards the 'herd' (make them dependent); increasing the power of the 'herd', thus increasing their own personal power; and winning small trivial victories to make the 'herd' feel better and making sacrifices like a martyrs. All these techniques help to make the 'False Master' cement their position over the 'herd' and to make them feel the righteousness of their cause/movement. As Peterson (2016) observed it makes "the player feel morally superior" whilst they deconstruct the society around them, they are resentful about not being on top.

Also, examples are given of where a 'False Master' has promoted a falsehood above the truth to further a political goal. King (2018) publicized a tweet which falsely accused a Texas State Trooper of sexual assault and false imprisonment because it suited his purpose. Even after the

truth was known and the officer was exonerated he still did not make a proper attempt to correct the mis-information he had helped to promote. The result of this was to promote social media calls for violence against the police. This is reminiscent of the BLM chant of “*Pigs in blankets fry like bacon*” (Associated Press 2015).

There is a segment in which we discuss and examine the role that radicals play in the conflict which has taken place on US college campuses in recent years; the actions of some individuals who have assumed the position of a ‘*False Masters*’ and how they are able to radicalise young and impressionable students. This also involved an in-depth analysis of behaviour and rhetoric using Nietzschean terms and philosophy to help us understand the motivations and intents of these people.

The disturbances at Evergreen college in 2017 promoted by their annual ‘Day of Absence, Day of Presence’ have been looked at in detail, which involved an enforced absence of white students and facilities. When it was challenged by Professor Bret Weinstein some elements of the college did not take it well and resulted in some extraordinary scenes where the college President was effectively held hostage and berated in front of angry and aggressive students and faculty. The actions by this angry mob were deplorable and yet they were given credence by the actions of the President. Their demands were absurd and politically charged, Weinstein was falsely labelled a racist and claims of righteousness and entitlement were made. None of this had any foundation in objective reality but was the product of a ‘*herd*’ mentality which had been coddled by a politically correct culture.

The infantilisation is obvious here in the actions of some students at Evergreen, but it is not simply confined to this campus. It has been demonstrated in this thesis that similar events happened at Lewis and Clarke Law School (5<sup>th</sup> March 2018) and the University of New Hampshire in which students behaved anti-socially and with no regard for fellow students. In fact, it could be interpreted as a childish and entitled display of behaviour, which displays a singular lack of insight on the protesters part. A typical behaviour of a ‘*herd*’ mentality which is having its core nihilistic beliefs challenged.

It is interesting to observe video footage of protestors as there is a definite element of ‘bread and circuses’ about the proceedings. These events look more like carnivals than a serious

protest; it would appear to be a fun event which is meant to appeal to the *'herd'* mentality. The *'False Master'* needs the resentful to attend because it is the resentful *'herd'* that gives the *'False Master'* his/her power. But the resentful need an incentive that makes the endeavour appear attractive to them, hence the fun and games on display.

Another phenomenon examined, which could be linked to trolling and political activism is the issue of 'fake news'. This part of the work demonstrates how memes are propagated and what message they try to convey (chapter three). Also demonstrated is how memes and pseudo-photographs (photographs that have been doctored) are used to mislead. When a terrorist attack has taken place pseudo-images were found that had clearly been tampered with to project misinformation. This and other examples of social media dis-information make platforms such as Twitter unreliable narrators and must be taken with a pinch of salt. But it is also believed that misinformation and falsehoods are part of a modus operandi which can help *'False Masters'* to exploit *'ressentiment'* to project influence over the *'herd'*.

This thesis has brought an original contribution to the literature by applying the work of Nietzsche to the field of cybercrime for the first time ever. How freedoms of speech are slowly taken away to be replaced by hegemonic, officially sanctioned language; which is neither clear or promotes clarity. Some young people are being infantilised in 'safe spaces' away from the challenging views and the debate which would give them the intellectual 'muscle' to think and be self-reliant. Some are so absorbed by their self-worship and inward-looking narcissism that they have become infantilised, unable to cope with the harsh realities of the world. The internet helps to facilitate this culture of narcissistic entitlement, gratification and a dogmatic denial of reality. It acts as the soil in which the culture of 'me' has grown.

In the later sections of this thesis the creation of meaning has been discussed within a politically correct philosophical world-view. Could this reality denying *'ressentiment'* be a symptom of alienation and a search for meaning? When meanings become so loose that the foundations of dialogue change as the conversation progresses it can only lead to more *'ressentiment'*. The more *'ressentiment'* that is generated the more social divisions become polarised and become extreme.

What could prove to be particularly troubling is denial of basic scientific facts to conform with the *'herd'* mentality. If this erosion can continue unchecked, we may face a crisis of reality in

which irrefutable, tangible and empirically based evidence is sacrificed to the relativistic interests of an ideologically minded '*herd*' mentality. With this levelling of standards, how we measure the 'quality' of life and what is deemed to be acceptable will be so broad as to be meaningless.

Already we have seen how the definition of 'rape' has been subjected to the functional teleological approach of radical feminists. The same is true of 'racism', 'sexism' and many other 'isms', they are placed on a spectrum which conflates the extremes and levels them out. Anyone can be assign them self the status of 'victim' and enjoy the status which now comes with that label. It is possible that some of these self-identified victims are nothing more than moral entrepreneurs in a battle for control, a position that does a disservice to genuine victims.

The work of Nietzsche has been applied to the field of cybercrime for the first time ever. There is still much work to be done in the field of criminology and it is a personal belief that Nietzschean insights can expand our theoretical horizons. If we are to learn anything from this thesis it is that human nature is complex and that we must explore the interplay between the genetic and social aspects of ourselves. Finally, on a personal note, I believe that the concepts of '*Slave Morality*', '*ressentiment*' and '*nihilism*' can tell us much about the modern-day society and the ways in which people behave.

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**A Nietzschean Analysis of  
Cybercrime and Deviance**

**Lancashire Law School**

**Ph.D. Dissertation**

**Appendices**

**Wayne Noble**

**2020**

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# **Appendice One - Chapter One - Introduction, Methodology and Meta- Theoretical Framework.**

The concept of 'Flexible Causal Prediction' was originally conceived and referred to as 'Causal Probability' (see Owen and Noble 2016 and Noble 2017), but has now been modified to prevent any reductionist interpretation. The new definition is intended to avoid an over-deterministic evaluation of human behaviour by acknowledging that behaviour can appear to be irrational/illlogical at times. This draws heavily on Owen's meta-constructs (2014 - 2017). In order to avoid confusion with older labels all references have been changed to the new term and all future work will adopt this also.

## Conference Paper Powerpoint Slides

**Towards A Genetic-Social Approach to Conflict (Owen and Noble 2015).  
Presented at the National Conference of Learning from Conflict,  
Makron Stadium, Bolton. 10th September 2015.**





# GENETIC-SOCIAL FRAMEWORK

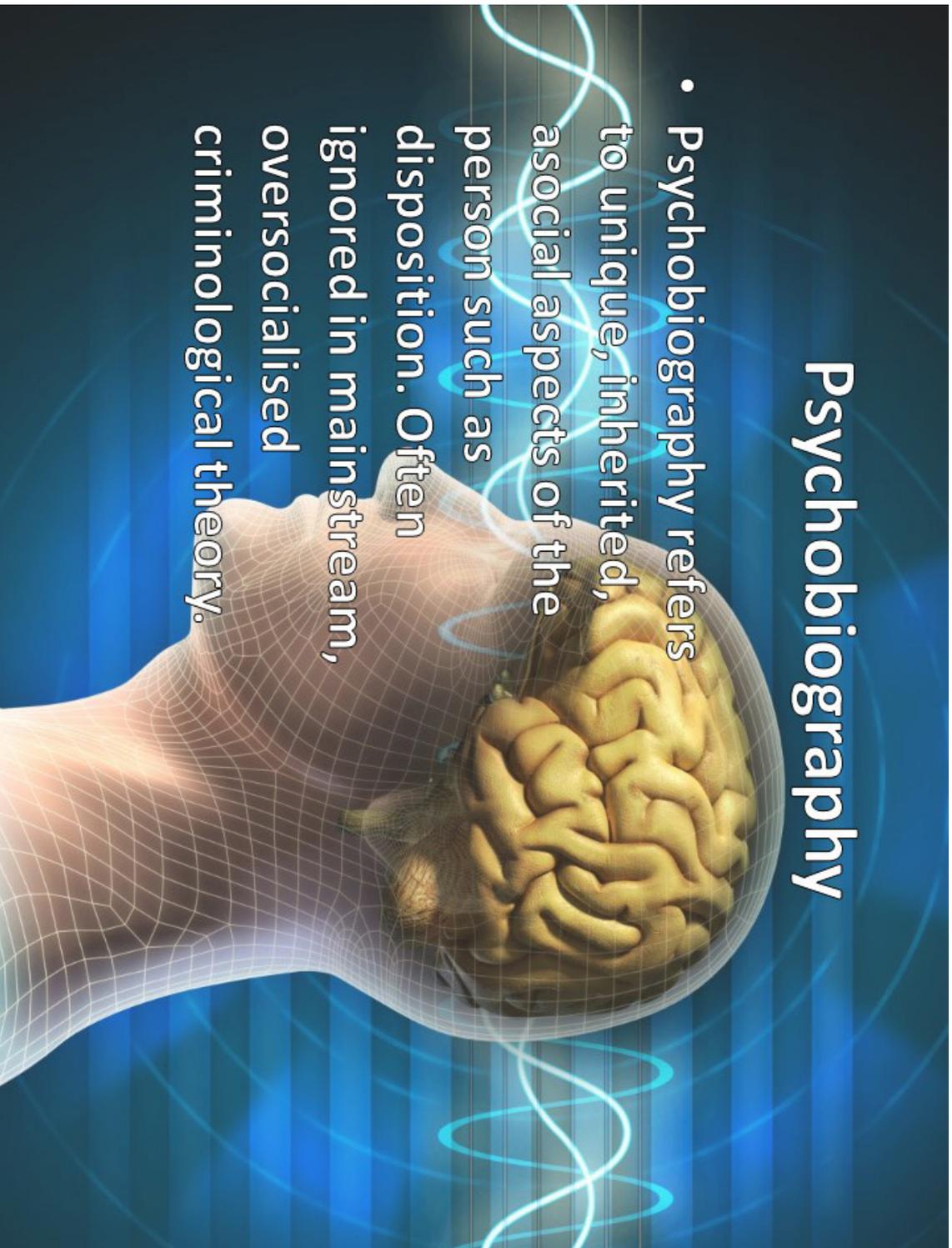
- **Meta-theory**
- **Flexible ontology**
- **Goes beyond anti-foundational relativism and oversocialised perspectives**
- **Draws upon evolutionary psychology, behavioural genetics, neuroscience in addition to criminology, sociology, philosophy**
- **Sidesteps 'nature versus nurture' divide**

# The Biological Variable

- **Biological Variable: evidence from behavioural genetics, and evolutionary psychology for an, at least in part, genetic role in some human behaviour- cortisol levels re aggression etc. Framework acknowledges the mutuality between genes and environment. 'Nature' requires nurture and external stimuli can 'switch on' genes.**

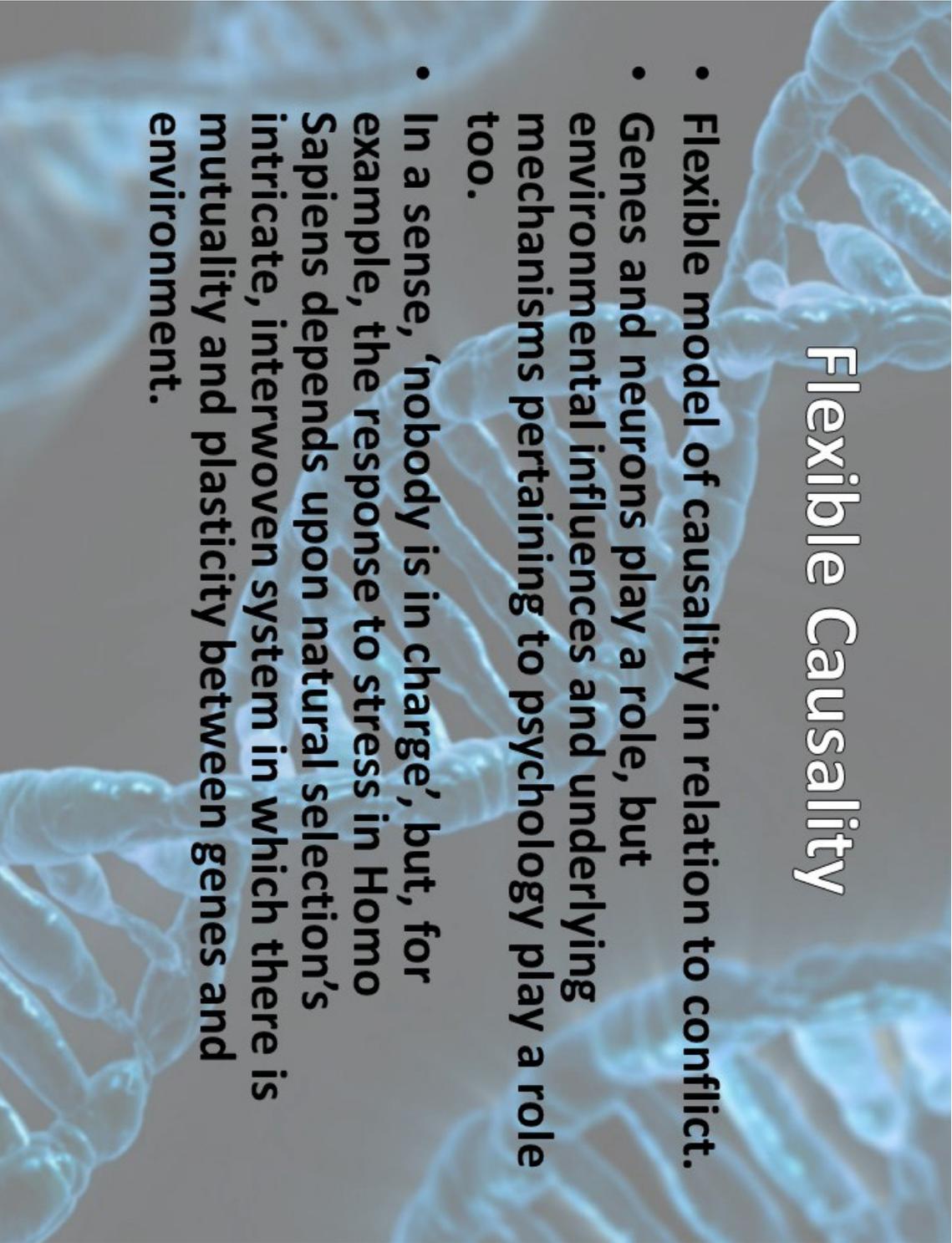
# Psychobiography

- Psychobiography refers to unique, inherited, asocial aspects of the person such as disposition. Often ignored in mainstream, oversocialised criminological theory.



# Neuro-Agency

- Actor defined as an entity capable of formulating and acting upon decisions.
- ‘Neuro-Agency’ replaces traditional ‘Agency’ to acknowledge the influence of neurons upon ‘free-will’.
- Human beings as reflexive agents with agency to choose not to engage in conflict where they believe rewards are outweighed by negative outcomes



## Flexible Causality

- **Flexible model of causality in relation to conflict.**
- **Genes and neurons play a role, but environmental influences and underlying mechanisms pertaining to psychology play a role too.**
- **In a sense, ‘nobody is in charge’, but, for example, the response to stress in Homo Sapiens depends upon natural selection’s intricate, interwoven system in which there is mutuality and plasticity between genes and environment.**

## Causal Probability

- Looks at the individual and asks what influences have the most impact upon the decision making process of that person within that 'causal environment'?
- Individuals are not determined to follow any one particular course of behaviour, but there may be powerful influences at work which may strongly effect the decision making process.
- Influences can be both biological and social as expressed in the genetic-social ontological framework of Owen (2009, 2012, 2014).

## Nietzschean Concepts

- **Resentment**
- **Slave Morality**
- **Nihilism & Revaluation.**
- **The Will to Power**



# Trolling Characteristics & Conflict

- Personal attacks and threats.
- False Accusations.
- Harassment and stalking.
- Defacing of WebPages (R.I.P. Facebook pages)
- Spamming.

Display of resentment?

Desire to dominate another individual?

Discontentment with personal circumstances?

Powerlessness?

Feelings of nihilism?

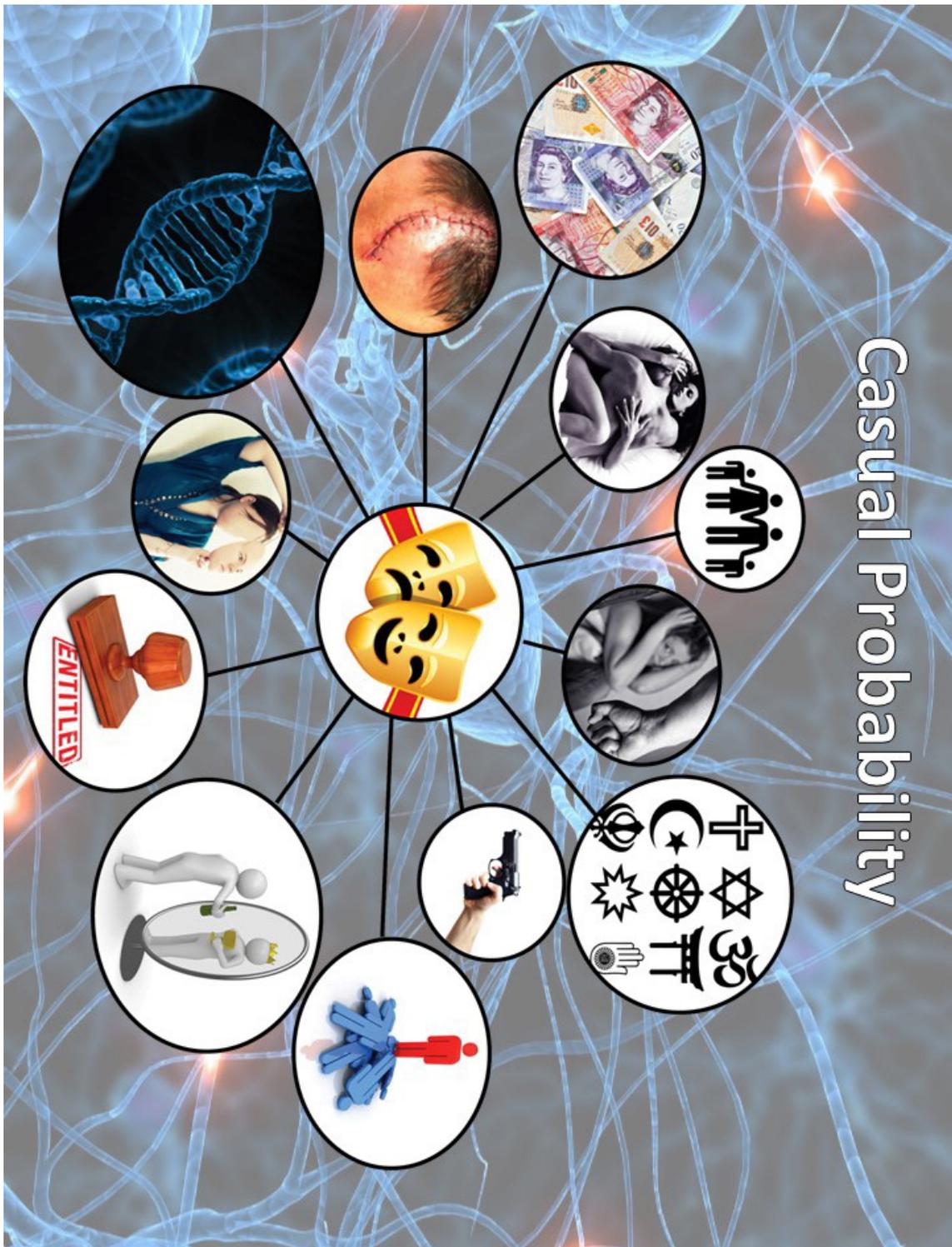
Anonymity & Identities.

REDEFINING BRANDS

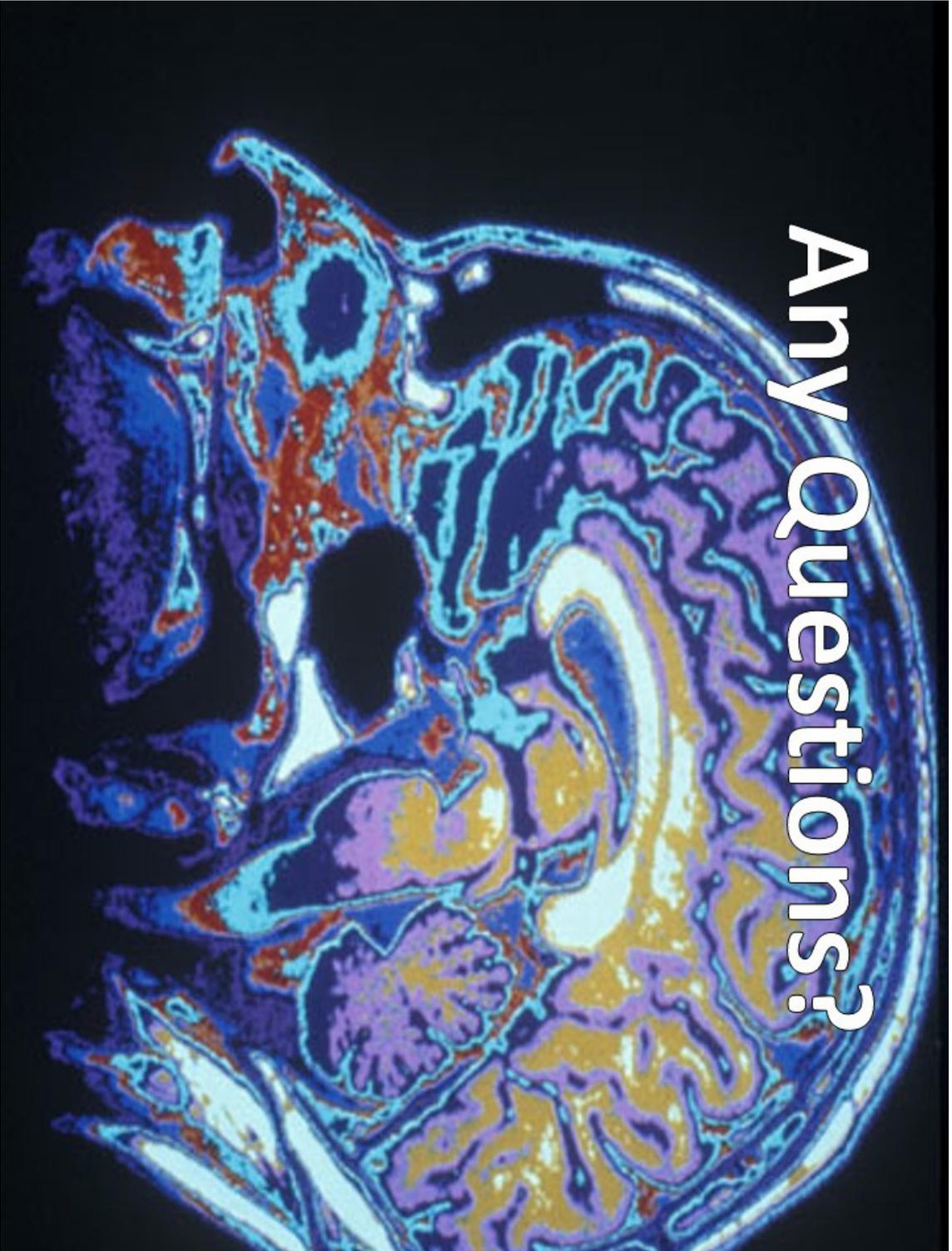
Through SOCIAL MEDIA

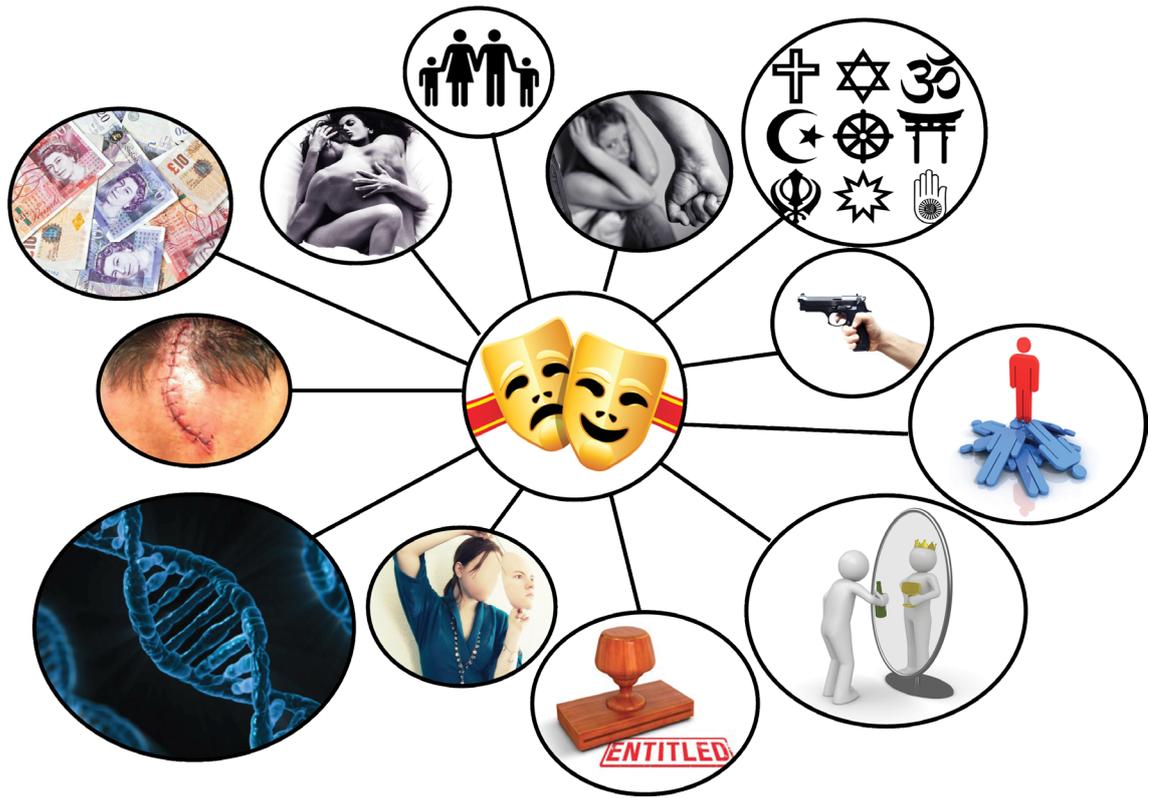


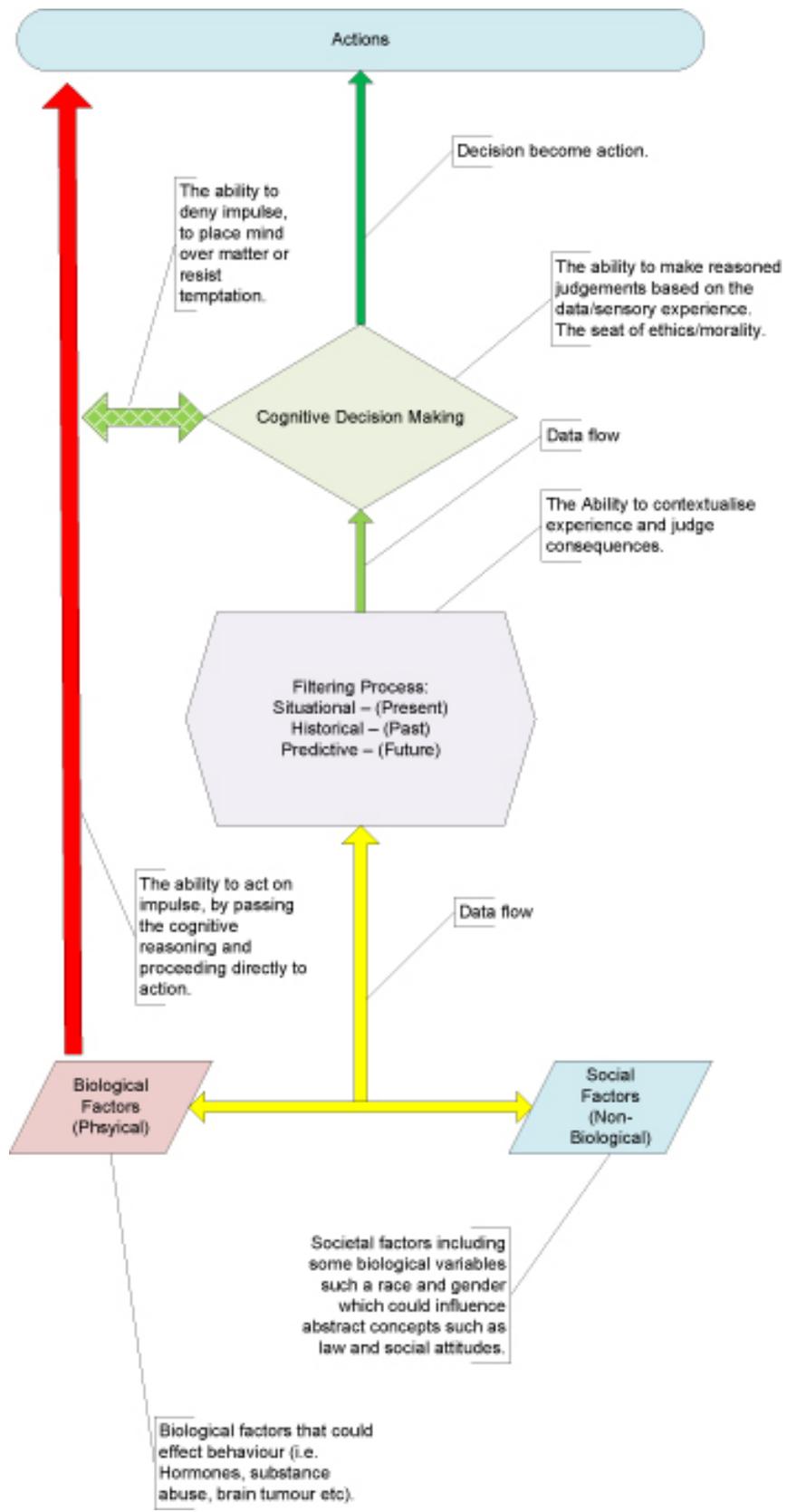
# Casual Probability













Tweet



BreakFreeFromPC  
@BreakFreeFromPC

Yes these people exist - they can normally be found holding signs saying "No Borders" & screaming in peoples faces #Merkel Police in Germany

Kirbydamasta @kirbydamasta

UPDATE: Police have identified truck driver as white nationalist Samuel Hyde. #Berlin



**Top Left: Image captured from Twitter 23rd July 2016.**

**Bottom Left: Image captured 22nd July 2016.**

**Top Right: Image captured from Twitter 20th December 2016.**

**Bottom Right: Image captured from Twitter 22nd July 2016.**



# Appendice Two - Chapter Two - Intellectual Property Crime

## (File) Sharing Is Not Piracy!

28 July 2012, 18:14 (2 months ago)

APisEZ User

posts: 13

I posted this on my wall a long time ago...just thought it would serve better in a thread. :)

I hate when riaa/mpaa/etc. say we're stealing:

say there was a village in Africa and only one man has the strength to get food from miles away. Say there was a cloning machine where he can clone the food and offer the other 25 people in the village. Yes, he did do all the work but it's not like the denizens are taking anything from him (only the copied goods). This is the same idea with music/movies/pics/games/software/etc. Of course, these materials are not as essential as food, but it's the same concept.

The one man against 25 is the ratio of the government agencies/artists/companies against us, ordinary civilians who can prosper and create new ideas and spread them to the world. This can help defeat cancer, for instance, if someone with the heart to learn medicine in an impoverished area (such as parts of Africa) but cannot buy textbooks to learn the disease in depth but has a community computer that has internet. This guy/girl can help the world in any area/field. Information inspires us, whether it being music, books, programs, etc. Finally, blocking information hinders this process of sharing materials that has been going on since the start of humanity.

Now we see it as controversy because companies want to profit more and more. People should support the artist, but all this talk about infringement is government-created b.s. A new generation is upon us and I believe you and I are reading to start a new way of life without fighting recklessly because this is our (humanity's) way of life by the manner in which we communicate, learn, and spread the ideas, innovations, and love to one another.

If you agree with me, please show support and vote up! Thank you for reading. :)

29 July 2012, 04:30 (2 months ago)

Bayfia Super User

posts: 3345

Well, unfortunately, where copyrights do exist, then misuse of the published works (movies, music, books, magazines - whatever they are) is a violation of an established law. So yes, we're pirates.

If everything created for human consumption is made available free of charge to everyone, that would be a utopian world. Artists and actors, musicians and authors don't starve to death in a utopian world, because the public social service system takes care of them, and they don't need money to buy food, pay rent, and buy clothing. Etc. etc. etc.

The fact is, regardless of how anyone may feel about the government's attempt to squash pirating of the creative products of the film and music, and the book writing industries, our piracy is damaging it. Musicians and actors need to find 2nd jobs just to survive - and it's getting worse.

How many of us care what happens to those people. We want the music, the movies, the books, the applications, and we want them free of charge, because we've found a way to get the stuff free of charge on the Internet. But that doesn't make it okay.. or good, or fair.

Granted, the copyright laws are draconian, they are obnoxious, and they are excessive. They need to be rewritten to be more sensible and fair. But we can't hide behind that to excuse our behaviors.

Would you work for free? Could you work for free? I don't know anyone who can.

29 July 2012, 10:11 (2 months ago)

Batman700 User

posts: 44

I guess that file sharing is not piracy,because in my country impossible buy sci fi series on DVD.

Some people begin download files because they can't buy DVD in the near shop. And download is very comfortable: double click and movie/series or computer game on your computer.

About this can speaking very many times,but i guess that file sharing is very good for people.

31 July 2012, 01:14 (2 months ago)

420weedman Super User

posts: 1181

its only illegal if you get caught other wise its legal until then lolol yeah i no it dont work that way but i like that modo

01 August 2012, 00:21 (2 months ago)

Stale\_Milk User

posts: 287

how long have they been trying now ? longer than i can remember there nuts i dont see nothing wrong they still tax the crap out of artists e.t.c anyway and plus they make tons of money on the ones that are bought in a shop in my world they can stick it were the sun dont shine KAT FTW !!!

01 August 2012, 14:28 (2 months ago)

Batman700 User

posts: 44

I have interesting question:

do you will be buy tv-series on DVD if this tv-series will be sold on 900-1000\$?

I guess that downloading movies through internet is very comfortable because you save your money.

I don't know why some people said that downloading is illegal ,for me downlaod - chance watch interesting TV-series /movie or animated series.

In my country impossible buy TV-series on DVD and so i better will download movies from

internet than will be seek DVD discs on entire country.

From kat i downloaded very many interesting movies and tv-series. I so hope that this torrent site don't will be closed in the near future.

01 August 2012, 23:02 (2 months ago)

Prairie\_Dog Super User

posts: 2162

APisEZ

yeah, but trust me brother...in the US, it's worse...lawsuits are common...unlike other countries where the worst thing that can happen is your internet disconnected by ur isp...

Indeed, i remember having trouble long way back with Earthlink for these related issues ..

03 August 2012, 07:47 (2 months ago)

Pringlescan Super User

posts: 2079

Bayfia

Well, unfortunately, where copyrights do exist, then misuse of the published works (movies, music, books, magazines - whatever they are) is a violation of an established law. So yes, we're pirates.

If everything created for human consumption is made available free of charge to everyone, that would be a utopian world. Artists and actors, musicians and authors don't starve to death in a utopian world, because the public social service system takes care of them, and they don't need money to buy food, pay rent, and buy clothing. Etc. etc. etc.

The fact is, regardless of how anyone may feel about the government's attempt to squash pirating of the creative products of the film and music, and the book writing industries, our piracy is damaging it. Musicians and actors need to find 2nd jobs just to survive - and it's getting worse.

How many of us care what happens to those people. We want the music, the movies, the books, the applications, and we want them free of charge, because we've found a way to get the stuff free of charge on the Internet. But that doesn't make it okay.. or good, or fair.

Granted, the copyright laws are draconian, they are obnoxious, and they are excessive. They need to be rewritten to be more sensible and fair. But we can't hide behind that to excuse our behaviors.

Would you work for free? Could you work for free? I don't know anyone who can.

100% correct. Why try to make excuses for what we all know... File sharing is illegal.

05 August 2012, 07:08 (2 months ago)

Mertado User

posts: 318

APisEZ

sharing material in the manner of torrent sites with users that don't profit from anything in

my opinion is legal...it's like sharing a dvd with a friend; u just give him the dvd instead of him buying it...that, in the eyes of the big companies, is piracy because they just lost a sale...and do u think that's wrong to share in that manner...in my opinion, no...so, it won't be any different if he copies it and puts it to his computer...all of this talk about piracy is money and politics these days and I'm sick of it...u may disagree, but it's true...for instance, Spain & switzerland ruled out that file sharing materials through peer-to-peer websites is legal as long as their is no profit...plus they even stated that there is no evidence that it declines sales, but on the contrary... check this address to learn more:<http://torrentfreak.com/file-sharing-and-link-sites-declared-legal-in-spain-100315/>...thanks for commenting though! :)

Unfortunately, most governments don't agree with your opinion. Neither do they care. Bayfia is 100% correct. When you obtain something you didn't pay for, which normally has a cost associated with it, you're stealing. We're all doing it here. Get used to it.

The Spanish legality of P2P networks and websites was a decision based purely on data transmission alone, without regard for what any of that data entails. It's the most draconian ruling I think I've ever seen regarding the computer industry, and I don't think most rational governments will agree with it.

You're still a pirate. Get over it.

Last edited by Mertado, 2 months ago

<http://kat.ph/community/show/39610/>

## Should it be legal to tape movies in theaters for personal use?

renhoek93 Uploader

posts: 32 uploads: 52

Okay before i start this let me clear some things up i am not against Copyright itself just how it works in the digital age i agree that yes credit should be givin & all so some forum of copyright does needs to exist but at the same time we should be allowed to share our favorite movies TV shows music games ect. & lets think about it is it really stealing? i mean come on all people are doing is sharing there CDS/DVDs & stuff that they own with other people just in a digital computer files so your just getting a copy from somebody else its not actually stealing its sharing & copying stealing is me going to the store and taking the CD/DVD off of the shelf & walking out with it without paying for it that is stealing now my question to you guys is do you think it should be legal to tape movies in theaters for personal use? like if someone just wants to share it or give it to a friend leave your thoughts below.

28 January 2014, 16:16 (6 months ago)

Sovngarde Uploader

posts: 6 uploads: 0

“Personal use” how can you ensure that? How can you ensure those exact recordings, or at least, one of the many thousands that can be done in a day won’t end up being re-sold or on some pirate website?

Pringlescan Super User

posts: 6195 uploads: 57

First your sig, Copying is stealing. You need to remember that when you buy things that are on CD or DVD you are buying a “1 user license”. Meaning you the buyer are the only one who can have a copy.

Now to your post. Like someone else said, how do we know that people won’t just sell it or upload it? It would just cycle back into pirating again causing the same issues and the same discussions.

renhoek93 Uploader

posts: 32 uploads: 52

I can see where you guys are coming from but personally i just don’t see it as theft as long as your not making money off of it you should be fine here on these file sharing sites nobody is making money & the people sharing i mean & whats so bad about uploading? i mean come on i don’t feel like i am doing anything wrong i would feel bad if i toke it from the store without paying though & that is true there are people who sell CamRips on DVD in the streets witch i also think is bad because there making profit but me myself i don’t see that much anymore it doesn’t really seam that common anymore yet again that could be just my area but i think people should have the right to tape movies in theaters & share them ether online or with friends/family it will help spread the movie around. Biggrin

steveosafc Super User

posts: 3337 uploads: 27

“i just don’t see it as theft”.

ok then, what country do you live in ?, as it's not what you believe its what the laws of the land say. and if you live in a developed country it is an illegal act. no mater what you say, or think.

28 January 2014, 20:06 (6 months ago)

renhoek93 Uploader

posts: 32uploads: 52

Steveosafc - I am from the USA but i hate it here anyway i much rather be in a less strict place & who cares i only follow laws that make sense like how its illegal to rape or murder someone or steal from a store or bank robbery ect. those are awful & i would never commit them but it should never be illegal to share that is immorally wrong.

steveosafc Super User

posts: 3337uploads: 27

part of living in democracy (even if it's just a lip service democracy like here in the UK,lol) is following the law, if you don't like something you get your vote. picking and choosing what law you want to follow will only cause chaos as what you think is reasonable another won't. follow your thinking to the logical conclusion and everyone gets to pick and choose what rule they break, thats not some where you want to be living, and trust me there's plenty of banana republics and what they call 3rd world hell holes (london for instance, HA !) if you fancy moving out of the states.

Last edited by steveosafc, 6 months ago

renhoek93 Uploader

posts: 32uploads: 52

& this is why i like Communism the communist actually support the freedom of sharing every-thing also dude im not saying we should have Anarchy freedom no there still needs to be some limits yes.

steveosafc Super User

posts: 3337uploads: 27

i am not advocating anarchy either, but it's inevitable if everyone shared your view point. it's start's with "it's only a movie" and trots on to god knows where, if you think that caming a movie at the flic's is fine, crack on with it. you are not really hurting anyone as you say, i am not sure the fed's would see it that way tho' <http://www.businessinsider.com/man-interrogated-by-fbi-for-wearing-prescription-google-glass-at-the-movies-2014-1>

renhoek93 Uploader

posts: 32uploads: 52

Well yeah your right they wont agree with me because the feds & the people at the MPAA are old & they don't know how to adapt to change same goes for the RIAA & i only think its fine if your not making money off of it also a lot of people do agree with me & share the same opin-ions i do there is a pro piracy party a political pirate party file sharing is a religion in Sweden The pirate Bay guys think its alright to copy ect.

renhoek93 Uploader

posts: 32uploads: 52

Okay before i start this let me clear some things up i am not against Copyright itself just how it works in the digital age i agree that yes credit should be givin & all so some forum of copyright does needs to exist but at the same time we should be allowed to share our favorite movies TV shows music games ect. & lets think about it is it really stealing? i mean come on all people are doing is sharing there CDS/DVDs & stuff that they own with other people just in a digital computer files so your just getting a copy from somebody else its not actually stealing its sharing & copying stealing is me going to the store and taking the CD/DVD off of the shelf & walking out with it without paying for it that is stealing now my question to you guys is do you think it should be legal to tape movies in theaters for personal use? like if someone just wants to share it or give it to a friend leave your thoughts below.

steveosafc Super User

posts: 3337uploads: 27

oh i have no problem with it. call it what it is. we steal what someone has produced, i have been doing this since the 80's but i am under no illusion that if i get brought up to the courts they could go to town on me as that is the law as it stands. as for your tag "COPYING ISN'T STEALING" where do you start (ok, you start in the community search bar as this has been done ad infinitum here on KAT over the years) the fact is where you live and where i live and through out the rest of the developed world, it is....isn't this is where i came in to the convo....

renhoek93 Uploader

posts: 32uploads: 52

Exactly but movies music TV shows & stuff to me are not property they are art that belongs to everybody in the world not just monster corporations & besides when i buy something the money should be going to the real content creators not the corporations witch is sad because that's where the money goes.

28 January 2014, 21:25 (6 months ago)

steveosafc Super User

posts: 3337uploads: 27

the elephant in the room here is....art, it clearly has value thats why people pay so much for it, be it Jackson Pollock's No. 5, 1948 (which i adore, and considering i am a philistine i still consider the 140 million dollars a veritable steal, if i had it i would have bought it. interestingly it was sold by david geffen of geffen records who was the the subject of the "you're so vain" record by carly simon, he got his by robbing artists which backs up my art has value and there for is a commodity to be bought and sold theory...phew) or a repo for your lounge wall. ask the wife if she thinks the 100 bucks for that picture she has always wanted up there is worth it ?.

Last edited by steveosafc, 6 months ago

28 January 2014, 21:32 (6 months ago)

renhoek93 Uploader

posts: 32uploads: 52

I still pay for things i go to the movie theaters with my family and friends i buy the retail version of CD/DVDs in store if i like it after downloading it i go see musicians live ect.

28 January 2014, 21:34 (6 months ago)

RonthePirate Head Forum Moderator

posts: 8981 uploads: 42

No. You buy time to watch the movie, unlike buying a DVD.

You do not own it, so cannot make a copy for backup.

steveosafc Super User

posts: 3337 uploads: 27

lol, a -1 for the Ronster's opinion funk LMAO

Last edited by steveosafc, 6 months ago

renhoek93 Uploader

posts: 32 uploads: 52

Thats stupid.

RonthePirate Head Forum Moderator

That's US laws. If you own the DVD, you may make a copy for your personal backup.

If you don't like it, sorry, change the laws.

renhoek93 Uploader

Yeah well i don't care i hate how people say america is so free when really in reality its not.

tonowando Super User

posts: 7118 uploads: 11

Should it be legal to tape movies in theaters for personal use?.

renhoek93

Okay before i start this let me clear some things up i am not against Copyright itself just how it works in the digital age i agree that yes credit should be givin & all so some forum of copyright does needs to exist but at the same time we should be allowed to share our favorite movies TV shows music games ect. & lets think about it is it really stealing? i mean come on all people are doing is sharing there CDS/DVDs & stuff that they own with other people just in a digital computer files so your just getting a copy from somebody else its not actually stealing its sharing & copying stealing is me going to the store and taking the CD/DVD off of the shelf & walking out with it without paying for it that is stealing now my question to you guys is do you think it should be legal to tape movies in theaters for personal use? like if someone just wants to share it or give it to a friend leave your thoughts below.

the title of your thread asks a question ?

and for users to give an answer to your question .

those users must express their own opinions .

so it is inconsiderate of you to give those users [ -1 ] ?

after all you are the one who wanted to know ?

please reserve your [ -1 ] for rude comments .

or foul language .

thank you .

renhoek93 Uploader

posts: 32uploads: 52

Okay before i start this let me clear some things up i am not against Copyright itself just how it works in the digital age i agree that yes credit should be givin & all so some forum of copyright does needs to exist but at the same time we should be allowed to share our favorite movies TV shows music games ect. & lets think about it is it really stealing? i mean come on all people are doing is sharing there CDS/DVDs & stuff that they own with other people just in a digital computer files so your just getting a copy from somebody else its not actually stealing its sharing & copying stealing is me going to the store and taking the CD/DVD off of the shelf & walking out with it without paying for it that is stealing now my question to you guys is do you think it should be legal to tape movies in theaters for personal use? like if someone just wants to share it or give it to a friend leave your thoughts below.

Pringlescan Super User

So you want people to just be able to steal things? America is free but there has to be some rules in place or it becomes a lawless place to live. Funny though this law to you males America less free, that's funny as hell.

renhoek93 Uploader

posts: 32uploads: 52

I did not say that i said in my opinion America is becoming less free because our freedoms are being taken away yes i agree stealing is bad but i don't see anything wrong with sharing okay this is a bad example but say i have a DVD i don't want anymore & so i give it to a friend & he has it now or i lend it to him to barrow for a weekend is that stealing? come on maybe it is to the feds but they need to learn to share now i am gonna end all this seeing as how you guys are bitching at me for being pro piracy & for having a different view on the subject i will no longer reply to feature post on here if this thread turns into a debate thread where people argue back & forth i am staying out of it.

Pringlescan Super User

posts: 6195uploads: 57

Letting a friend borrow it is ok, but making a copy for them isn't.

If you don't like the replies you get then don't make a thread like this. It's like politics and religion. It's one of those

threads that always will have a debate.

2ndNinja Verified uploader

posts: 77uploads: 127

1. My phone, my video camera, my whatever,
2. I payed to go in and watch the movie

3. I'm going to use my payed device to capture my 'history' in the movies on the chair i'm hiring for those few hours.

4. I did mention i own my own phone hey.

tittertitter

Should it be allowed, f\*\*\* 'em money hungry dogs, yes it should.titter

Last edited by 2ndNinja, 6 months ago

09 February 2014, 06:19 (5 months ago)

Iron.Man Uploader

posts: 646uploads: 47

Some debates are limitless and endless.The topic of this thread comes in that point.This debate is pointless and goes on like this...

Some rules must be followed no matter we like it or not.!

16 May 2014, 16:48 (2 months ago)

TheAssassin Uploader

posts: 128uploads: 29

Copying isn't stealing ,huh?..Well think about this..:

You are well prepared for your examination.All your hard work,is going to be tested in that exam.The topper will be rewarded well.You have studied like hell.While writing your exam, suppose the person near you are copying your answers.Will you be polite to him?

<http://kickass.to.prx.websiteproxy.co.uk/community/show/should-it-be-legal-tape-movies-the-aters-personal-use/>

KickAss Netiquette - all members please read

31 March 2014, 05:31 (4 months ago)

Suzitastik KAT Elite

posts: 1731 uploads: 4

240

**Netiquette:** /net-e-ket/ Noun: *1. The social code of network communication. 2. The social and moral code of the internet based on the human condition and Golden Rule. 3. A philosophy of effective internet communication that utilizes common conventions and norms as a standard for the rules of netiquette numbered tips and guidelines.*

What is Netiquette?

Simply stated, it's network etiquette - a set of rules for behaving properly online.

Each community has its own culture. When you enter any new culture you're liable to commit a few social blunders. You might offend people without meaning to. Or you might misunderstand what others say and take offence when it's not intended. It is easy to forget that there is a person at the end of every computer. This is to help newbies and regular members to navigate our community following the Golden Rule of respect, ethics and tolerance.

#### 1: REMEMBER THE HUMAN

Treat people how you expect to be treated yourself. Imagine how you'd feel if you were in the other person's shoes. Stand up for yourself, but try not to hurt people's feelings. In cyberspace, we state this in an even more basic manner: Remember the human. You don't have the opportunity to use facial expressions, gestures, and tone of voice to communicate your meaning. When you're holding a conversation online -- whether it's a Personal Message exchange or a response to a discussion group posting -- it's easy to misinterpret your correspondent's meaning. And it's frighteningly easy to forget that your correspondent is a person with feelings more or less like your own.

#### 2: BEHAVE ONLINE AS YOU WOULD IN REAL LIFE

Be ethical Don't believe anyone who says, "The only ethics out there are what you can get away with." Standards of behaviour may be different in some areas of cyberspace, but they are not lower than in real life.

#### 3: KNOW WHERE YOU ARE IN CYBERSPACE

What's perfectly acceptable in one area or community may be dreadfully rude in another. For example cussing on a family friendly site. Nudity, Giving spoilers on tv/movies sites. And because Netiquette is different in different places, it's important to know where you are. Check the rules and terms of service. Biggest advice is to Lurk before you leap. When you enter a do-

main of cyberspace that's new to you, take a look around. Spend a while listening to the chat or reading the archives. Get a sense of how the people who are already there act. Then go ahead and participate.

#### 4: RESPECT OTHER PEOPLE'S TIME AND BANDWIDTH

It's a cliché that people today seem to have less time than ever before, even though (or perhaps because) we sleep less and have more labour-saving devices than our grandparents did. When you send a PM or post to a discussion group, you're taking up other people's time (or hoping to). It's your responsibility to ensure that the time they spend reading your posting isn't wasted. Give people time to respond, whether it is in the forum or Personal Messages. Many people have different speeds, and more people are busy rather than have a lot of time to spare to respond immediately. You are not the centre of cyberspace.

#### 5: MAKE YOURSELF LOOK GOOD ONLINE

Networks -- particularly discussion groups -- let you reach out to people you'd otherwise never meet. And none of them can see you. You won't be judged by the colour of your skin, eyes, or hair, your weight, your age, or your clothing. You will, however, be judged by the quality of your writing. For most people who choose to communicate online, this is an advantage; if they didn't enjoy using the written word, they wouldn't be there. So spelling and grammar do count. Writing in slang, short cut and text messaging abbreviations are not always understood by the broad online audience. Try to use text and wording that best describes your meaning without cutting corners that others may not understand.

#### 6: SHARE EXPERT KNOWLEDGE

The reason asking questions online works is that a lot of knowledgeable people are reading the questions. And if even a few of them offer intelligent answers, the sum total of world knowledge increases. So do your part. Despite the long lists of no-no's, you do have something to offer. Don't be afraid to share what you know. But don't be quick to jump on people that offer an answer that you do not agree with.

#### 7: HELP KEEP FLAME WARS UNDER CONTROL

"Flaming" is what people do when they express a strongly held opinion without holding back any emotion. It's the kind of message that makes people respond, "Oh come on, tell us how you really feel." Tact is not its objective. Netiquette does forbid the perpetuation of flame wars. If you see or get pulled into a flame war, do the right thing and walk away from a situation rather than participating and keeping the fires going. It's unfair to the other members of the group. And while flame wars can initially be amusing, they get boring very quickly to people who aren't involved in them. They're an unfair monopolization of bandwidth. Speak your mind and walk away, report a situation that can not be resolved rather than flaming the fire.

#### 8: RESPECT OTHER PEOPLE'S PRIVACY

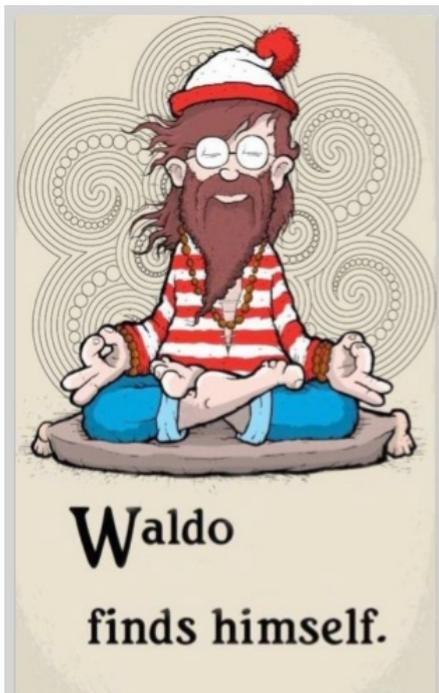
Cyberspace should be a safe zone. People that use the internet majority wise want to stay anonymous. Sometimes due to age, location, gender, sex, or just want to be incognito. Depending on the community they are involved on, personal security is paramount for many network users. Asking for personal information like the classic a/s/l or asking for social media information like Facebook and Skype accounts is a serious breach of Netiquette. Never should you ask for intimate details unless you have been invited to, or unless you have reached a relationship with a member that you can freely discuss personal details. If a person says they are not interested in sharing such information, persuading them or harassing them to give such information goes beyond Netiquette and falls under cyber harassment. Read peoples responses and respond to them accordingly and behave online as you would in real life with respect to others.

## 9: DON'T ABUSE YOUR POWER

Some people in cyberspace have more power than others. There are wizards in MUDs (multi-user dungeons), experts in every office, and system administrators in every system. People are promoted to such positions as they have demonstrated they are trustworthy and will uphold the standards set down by wizards, system admins and members alike. In no way is anyone of position to abuse their power. This is a serious Netiquette infraction and will not be tolerated by a community. Such people should be reported and dealt with by system admins. Knowing more than others, or having more power than they do, does not give you the right to take advantage of them.

## 10: BE FORGIVING OF OTHER PEOPLE'S MISTAKES

**Golden Rule: Treat others as you would like them to treat you.**



Thank you for reading, these will be added to when and where needed.

If you have suggestions please state them below or contact me via PM.

Respect each other. Look after your community and your community will look after you.

Last edited by Suzitastik, 4 months ago

31 March 2014, 05:34 (4 months ago)

RonthePirate KAT Elite

posts: 9091uploads: 42

8

Well done, Suzi. SO important, yet SO neglected nowadays.

31 March 2014, 07:20 (4 months ago)

Suzitastik KAT Elite

posts: 1731uploads: 4

0

Bump :)

31 March 2014, 07:27 (4 months ago)

suicyco Super User

posts: 2449uploads: 4

1

Nice One ..... bookmarked and added to my Bump list wink

31 March 2014, 07:28 (4 months ago)

Sizzler KAT Elite

posts: 1043uploads: 371

1

well put Suzi smile

31 March 2014, 07:29 (4 months ago)

bfab Torrent Helper

posts: 4231uploads: 441

2

Respect others & share your knowledge, You can expect the same from others.

31 March 2014, 07:32 (4 months ago)

Nightmare Super User

posts: 7683uploads: 79

2

Great thread Suzi! biggrin

31 March 2014, 07:33 (4 months ago)

Ichigo Super User

posts: 3215uploads: 0

2

That's a well put guidance.Thanks Suzi :)

31 March 2014, 07:39 (4 months ago)

RenChan Uploader

posts: 29uploads: 9

1

Well done Suzi (☺ ^` ☺)\* ❄️\*

31 March 2014, 07:45 (4 months ago)

Suzitastik KAT Elite

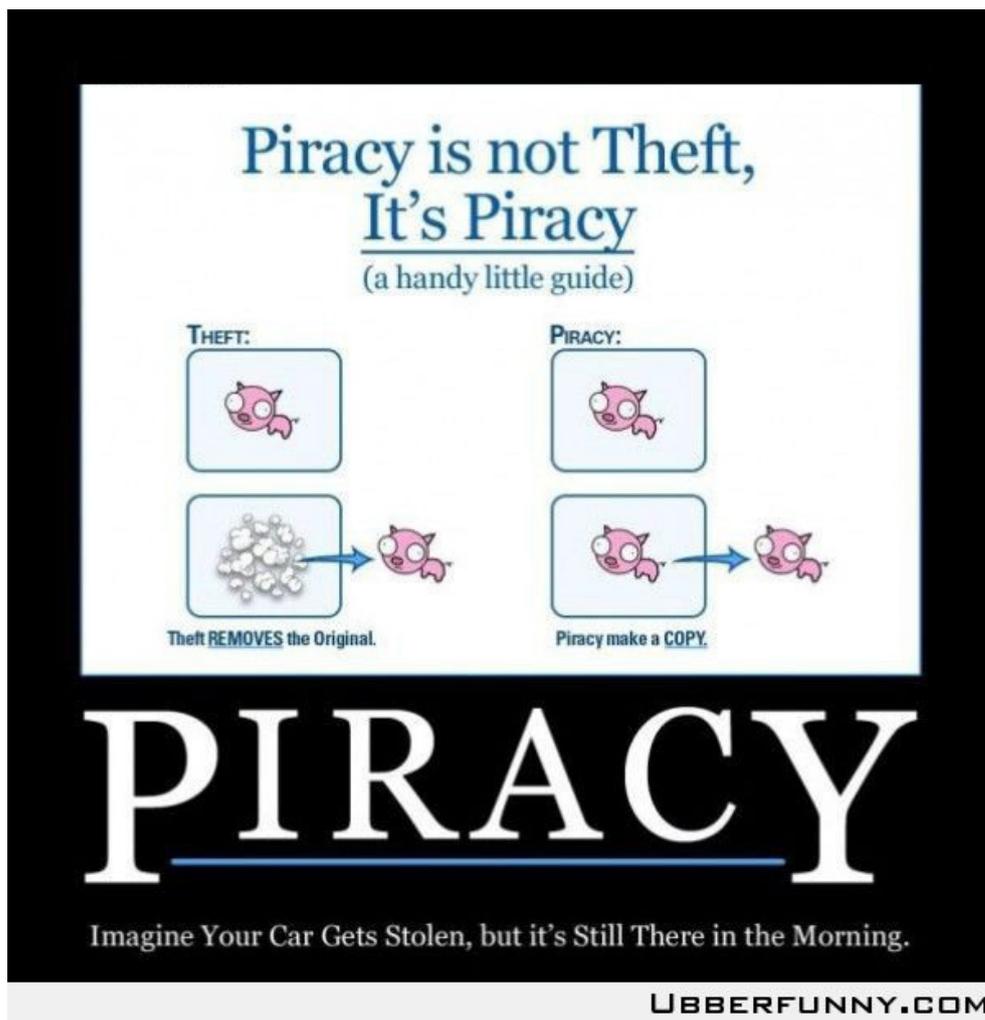
posts: 1731uploads: 4

1

Everyone please bump after reading, thank you :)

<http://kickass.to.prx.websiteproxy.co.uk/community/show/kickass-netiquette-all-members-please-read/>

Is piracy stealing? pirate1132 User



I found this picture on ubberfunny.com and It got me to thinking is piracy stealing or is it simply just sharing and making copies. Now before everyone jumps on my back and says well this image was originally on this site not that site I found it on here and not anywhere else so if it is somewhere else that is great but this is not about the image but the thought behind the image. So I wanted to see what everyone else thought about this? Is piracy stealing or just making copies of something? Thoughts suggestion?

Jarrid User

In some way it is, but you have to think of it otherwise, as for example: you buy a book, and your friend wants to borrow it and he makes a copy of it and shares it with all his friend and his friends share it with their friends.

It's an endless circle but thing is, the only thing you steal is the creator's time/effort.

28 November 2012, 20:20 (1 month ago)

Dr.Strangelove User

Well, why don't you 'share' someone's car ?

Is that something different than sharing "the Hobbit" or the latest album of Robbie Williams ?

Not really because you are getting things which do not belong to you and you are not paying for it to their rightful owners.

Not that hard to see that if you imagine yourself to be the director or the artist and see the crowd walking away with your work.

Last edited by Dr.Strangelove, 1 month ago

28 November 2012, 20:27 (1 month ago)

Weedman Super User

no its sharing

28 November 2012, 20:30 (1 month ago)

perellopis verified uploader

Depends, I download far more things more than I can buy, so the authors can't say that they have loss a trillion dollars with my piracy, because there is no way I could never had buy it.

But yes, somehow piracy is stealing. So when I really like something that I have downloaded (game, book, movie, ...), I buy it (we have to support the authors that deserve it).

28 November 2012, 20:32 (1 month ago)

Manpie User

Industry c\*nts can f\*ck off. About time they gave something back to us - POWER TO THE PEOPLE !!!

28 November 2012, 20:37 (1 month ago)

Ed.bmtvx User

i dont really know either..

28 November 2012, 20:41 (1 month ago)

ManicSerenity User

Unless you rip it yourself I just consider it receiving stolen property.

28 November 2012, 20:44 (1 month ago)

steveosafc User

yes,ask a judge.

Last edited by steveosafc, 1 month ago

28 November 2012, 20:48 (1 month ago)

Sange User

It was Robin Hood a thief ?

28 November 2012, 20:52 (1 month ago)

ManicSerenity User

Sange

It was Robin Hood a thief ?

Depends who you ask. The rich or the poor.

AhrimanThorn Super User

posts: 1940

3

Yes making a copy is still theft because the thing you are taking is the data not the thing that the data is stored upon. If you have any doubts about that then try getting into an American intelligence building with the intention of copying some data. When your bullet riddled body slumps to the ground you can try to explain before you die that it was only a copy and so was not theft.

28 November 2012, 20:59 (1 month ago)

Didi569 User

post: 1

1

I am old school and the internet is not all that old. In the early days before everybody had a computer/cell ALL THE FILES on the internet were freely shared with everybody. It's not till all the greedy bastards took over to rip us of. Remember when anybody's cd would cost 20 or 30 bugs ? How much did it cost to produce ? And how much money did they share with the artist ?

Get real, the idea of theft was not introduced till the music industry realized they had missed the train and the good old rip off days are over. If I could not get it for free I would not buy it, I'm broke. So how much money are you loosing ?

There always were copy right laws that applied largely to books. Do you know how many copy's I made in the library, there was no homeland security guy standing by the copier to arrest me for stealing. It's all perspective. The internet was free and unlimited. The reason why our speed and or data transmission is limited by isp's is that you can live without digital tv and download anything you wish to see. They are protecting their lucrative business with you paying monthly for shows. Stealing ?? Really, now they tell you you don't have a right to watch previously recorded material without commercials ( hopper ) and the list goes on. I share my stuff freely, I am a pirate or whatever you want to call me, I do not buy into all this political correct bullshit of the poor artists of not making any money.

If I am a bootlegger and sell movies for my own profit, that is stealing. If I on the other hand share a dvd with a friend it is not.

As of right now downloading is legal, always was. Don't let the music industry tell you otherwise. It's the uploading where they can charge you with.

Is it moral for law enforcement sharing all my data with each other against my will and without

my knowledge ? Is that stealing ?

Big brother has agency's that are bought and financed by the music industry. The legislation was put into effect under Bill Clinton. Homeland security, FBI, Immigration etc. has no business shutting down file sharing sites. It's big money having it their way with us. Enough is enough

28 November 2012, 21:00 (1 month ago)

steveosafc User

posts: 717

2

Sange

It was Robin Hood a thief ?

yes. if you remember, the story goes on about stealing from the rich to give to the poor.this is thought to be BS now, robin or robyn hode in old english was a outlaw and a bandit,he stole from the rich and gave it to himself. this of course does not sell well so the fairy tale is perpetuated, oh and one train of thought is that he never existed anyway,just a made up guy in some balled in the early 12th century. sorry about that.

28 November 2012, 21:03 (1 month ago)

PiratMas Super User

posts: 3236

4

If you pirate my things then it is stealing but if you pirate soemone elses it is not titter

28 November 2012, 21:04 (1 month ago)

DamienSaint User

posts: 506

0

Think of the word Piracy, it's axiomatic.

28 November 2012, 21:09 (1 month ago)

MPraedonum User

posts: 3

0

ManicSerenity

Unless you rip it yourself I just consider it receiving stolen property.

LOL! that's one way of putting itlol

image

28 November 2012, 21:13 (1 month ago)

DamienSaint User

posts: 506

2

PiratMas

If you pirate my things then it is stealing but if you pirate someone else's it is not titter

lolllol I dig that frame of mind

28 November 2012, 21:17 (1 month ago)

steveosafc User

posts: 717

1

Didi569

I am old school and the internet is not all that old. In the early days before everybody had a computer/cell ALL THE FILES on the internet were freely shared with everybody. It's not till all the greedy bastards took over to rip us of. Remember when anybody's cd would cost 20 or 30 bugs ? How much did it cost to produce ? And how much money did they share with the artist ?

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well you do make case to say it isn't, but the gist of your argument seems to be that you don't agree with the laws of your land so therefor it isn't stealing. one question: if you have the misfortune to stand before a judge who has convicted you for copyright theft, are you still not stealing ?

28 November 2012, 21:17 (1 month ago)

SirSeedsAlot Super User

posts: 16776

7

it is unauthorized reproduction of copyrighted works. Pirates/file sharers can use semantics they like but most countries have laws protecting intellectual property thus making "pirating" it a crime.

Please upload a car though.....I want one that is fast and gets good gas mileage!!

28 November 2012, 21:21 (1 month ago)

ghosty Super User

posts: 2684

0

SirSeedsAlot

Please upload a car though.....I want one that is fast and gets good gas mileage!!

You can have a Prius.

gazza-911 Super User

posts: 3008

0

I would say that piracy is unethical sharing.

P.S Regarding a car... you could upload the blueprints/3d model for a car and then print it off using a 3d printer ;) - although it wouldn't be made out of very strong materials! (it would only be a model car)

28 November 2012, 21:35 (1 month ago)

LapTopZombie verified uploader

posts: 512

2

Is piracy stealing? I don't think any more so than recording a song off of the radio. Is it illegal? Yes. I use a VPN so to hide my activity admits to some extent guilt. It would be like shop-lifting and wearing a little moustache to disguise myself at the store and then acting surprised when I was told it was wrong.

28 November 2012, 21:38 (1 month ago)

DamienSaint User

posts: 506

0

LapTopZombie

Is piracy stealing? I don't think any more so than recording a song off of the radio. Is it illegal? Yes. I use a VPN so to hide my activity admits to some extent guilt. It would be like shop-lifting and wearing a little moustache to disguise myself at the store and then acting surprised when I was told it was wrong.

Well put

28 November 2012, 21:43 (1 month ago)

HSuperV User

posts: 109

0

For me it depends on if you like the software you 'pirated' and you decide not to buy it then it's piracy.

28 November 2012, 21:50 (1 month ago)

BlakePS verified uploader

posts: 1424

0

Only if your caught.

28 November 2012, 21:57 (1 month ago)

bodybuildaussie User

posts: 640

0

No more than the way the government, banks and fuel companies fleece us everyday. We pale by comparison really...

28 November 2012, 21:59 (1 month ago)

jdoe137 User

posts: 125

0

It depends;)

28 November 2012, 21:59 (1 month ago)

Orion88 User

posts: 20

0

This question took me back to 1969... I still recall having to learn this definition:

“A person is guilty of theft if he dishonestly appropriates property belonging to another with the intention of permanently depriving the other of it; and “thief” and “steal” shall be construed accordingly.”

The keyword here is ‘permanently’..

Which is why (in the UK) you are charged with TWOC (taking without the owner’s consent) when you steal a car. Since most car thieves don’t intend to permanently deprive the owner.

28 November 2012, 22:06 (1 month ago)

SirSeedsAlot Super User

posts: 16776

2

Sange

It was Robin Hood a thief ?

Robin Hood is commonly misunderstood. He did not steal from the rich and give to the poor. He stole from an oppressive government and gave it back to the people.

28 November 2012, 22:17 (1 month ago)

lycanmoon User

posts: 17

2

The way I see it .... It’s like putting a carrier bag overflowing with sweets on a table in front of a bunch of kids, and saying “ I’m going next door for a couple of hours , don’t touch them ! “. The temptation is there ... AND if they don’t want people copying things DON’T MAKE AND LEGALLY SELL ALL THE EQUIPMENT TO DO IT ! , On one hand they are sayine here ya go have fun , and on the other they’re sayin don’t do that !

lisaleo Super User

posts: 2061

0

look at the end of the day we all do it in one form or another thats why we join a torrent site yes were stealing but think about this wat do you pay to get wat you want ...your still paying when you d/l of your internet conection an hey...come one here sharin is carin so forget that its stealin why you on here in the first place if you feel this way just enjoy the share people take time to give to you thats all that matters at the end of the day if you feel bad about it then dont do it ...simple smile

Last edited by lisaleo, 1 month ago

28 November 2012, 22:26 (1 month ago)

Rhubarbfian User

posts: 155

0

In the days before CDs and affordable computers the music companies moaned and cried to the government about people making audio cassettes from radio broadcasts and, because of that, a levy was put on every blank tape (whether it was used for the purpose of copying broadcast material or not) and that was paid to the Brit music companies.

That levy still stands today and (as far as I'm aware) was also applied when optical media became affordable.

In short, they get paid every time you buy blank tapes or discs and then they want paid again because you actually use them

28 November 2012, 22:30 (1 month ago)

BrightLight User

posts: 79

0

Alot of artists don't see piracy as a problem, they see it indeed as "yet another copy" and as advertising.

28 November 2012, 22:34 (1 month ago)

ManicSerenity User

posts: 660

0

One of the more popular arguments is the old tradition of 'tape trading' among fans. One would make a tape of their favorite bands and either mail them out or give them to friends to spread the word about some new group. It's not that much different with music torrents today except now you have youtube and the legally hired 'street teams'. Back in the day tape trading made a ton of money for record companies and cemented popularity of some of the biggest bands.

If torrents disappeared today and torrenting and downloads in general were to be enforced dilligently record companies would all but collapse.

It's not an excuse at all but companies need to update their way of thinking and just adapt somehow.

28 November 2012, 22:43 (1 month ago)

villareal123 User

post: 1

0

I consider piracy to me is like burning music cd's for your friends or others. they made those empty cds for something like that. otherwise why would they make blank cds for you to buy if your not going to do anything with them.

28 November 2012, 22:44 (1 month ago)

phantasma User

posts: 204

0

Piracy is about selling some company valuable products . We just a sharers smile

28 November 2012, 22:48 (1 month ago)

steveosafc User

posts: 717

1

ManicSerenity

One of the more popular arguments is the old tradition of 'tape trading' among fans. One would make a tape of their favorite bands and either mail them out or give them to friends to spread the word about some new group. It's not that much different with music torrents today except now you have youtube and the legally hired 'street teams'. Back in the day tape trading made a ton of money for record companies and cemented popularity of some of the biggest bands.

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It's not an excuse at all but companies need to update their way of thinking and just adapt somehow.

you say update their way of thinking, i think what you mean is they will have to reduce there prices, no argument here. take e-books first,priced just short of a paper copy,to my mind this is an indefensible position to increase profits for less effort from the publishers. what about downloadable films,no case's to transport or stocking costs, but no effort either to provide a viable download strategy,oh they will let you stream but you cant own a stream for years to come.they want you to but an over priced silver (blue) disk to maintain profit percentage.they will have to change or die.

EDIT: i am impressed,this thread has got to 4 pages without it ending in a flame war,could KAT be growing up ? answer.... not a chance,the flames will rise sooner or latertitter

Last edited by steveosafc, 1 month ago

28 November 2012, 22:55 (1 month ago)

retrogamer35 User

posts: 277

0

if you are scared of getting caught then you could do this (which is totally legal) lets say you want a movie go to a red box which allows you to rent a movie for one dollar, if you don't want to spend the dollar then go to the red box website and from there can get a promo code that will let you get a movie for free. ok i jumped the gun alittle first install this into your pc- Ideal dvd copy 4.1.1. now the you have what you need just run the program and make a copy. you see what Ideal dvd copy 4.1.1 dos is makes a copy of a rent movie and can gat through all the watermakes and other programs stopping you from making a copy.

28 November 2012, 22:56 (1 month ago)

karnivool User

posts: 335

0

no piracy is stealing lol

28 November 2012, 22:56 (1 month ago)

steveosafc User

posts: 717

0

retrogamer35

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uk law, you can only make a copy legally if you own the original

retrogamer35 User

posts: 277

0

steveosafc

uk law, you can only make a copy legally if you own the original

ya but with this program no one would know because you don't hurt the dvd in any way and you return the rented copy so who's no know

28 November 2012, 23:07 (1 month ago)

retrogamer35 User

posts: 277

0

sorry (to know)

28 November 2012, 23:16 (1 month ago)

DeanMachine33 User

posts: 2

1

Funny. It's a joke though. Yes, piracy is not technically theft, as you are not depriving someone of their property but it is Piracy... which is illegal.

30 November 2012, 04:18 (1 month ago)

mowagee User

posts: 170

0

What did that lady say about piracy copying torrents hmm i don't really remember but get the f\*\*k out of my culture to copyright lawyers and governments

I still have not worked out where copyright comes into Admiralty Law which I think is the basis for international Law anyone know

\* Please watch the language in the forums, edit your words so we don't have to either edit them ourselves or delete the post altogether. Thank you

Last edited by Xenomorph, 1 month ago

30 November 2012, 04:20 (1 month ago)

rose292 User

posts: 552

0

well, to us it's not stealing. but if you had a chat with those who own the original copies of everything then yes, it is stealing.

30 November 2012, 04:22 (1 month ago)

[)a]a User

posts: 202

0

That's the best explanation about what piracy is

30 November 2012, 04:23 (1 month ago)

mowagee User

posts: 170

0

Also I think Admiralty law the law of the high seas is more piratey any how yes it is theft intellectual theft in theory intellectually speaking

30 November 2012, 04:24 (1 month ago)

Tom555 User

posts: 323

1

“Is piracy stealing?”

yes it is. Whether you care or not is another issue.

30 November 2012, 04:26 (1 month ago)

huntercapps User

posts: 23

1

YES!tittertittertitter

as explained on this blog....

<http://blog.talkingphilosophy.com/?p=2669>

30 November 2012, 04:32 (1 month ago)

demon\_see\_yall\_later\_in\_hell User

posts: 12

0

steveosafc

uk law, you can only make a copy legally if you own the original

in a way you'r right, but not everione has acces to these movie rentals, and even though it's a lot safer than internet piracy, this would also be considered a form of piracy an a smaller scale, I tell you, the companies would even tax you for ovehearing a few songs from your next door neighbour at a party if they could, the spirit of comunism lives on.

juan2tan\_01 User

posts: 427

0

No it's not. mad

30 November 2012, 04:44 (1 month ago)

00LUCA00 User

posts: 6

0

In a way it is. If you own the copy (paid for it) and copy it, no not stealing, that is called making a back up. However, if you download a copy where you did not pay for it, it IS stealing. So if i made a copy of your credit card and used it, is that not deemed stealing? It is. You did not pay for the right to use the game / program / etc... therefore you are stealing from the company.

30 November 2012, 04:50 (1 month ago)

demon\_see\_yall\_later\_in\_hell User

posts: 12

0

It may not be theft as most people see it, but in a way you have to admit that the companies loose a lot of money this way, if they sell a product in 1 milion copyes, there may also be 3 milion copyes floating around the world through the help of piracy. but that's not the problem here, there are cases when a product hasn't even been released in some contries yet and already most of the interested people have it,most companies can't afford such loses,and go broke....The only thing I greev over is the closing of GSC and the termination of the stalker series. :(

30 November 2012, 04:54 (1 month ago)

00LUCA00 User

posts: 6

0

demon\_see\_yall\_later\_in\_hell

It may not be theft as most people see it, but in a way you have to admit that the companies loose a lot of money this way, if they sell a product in 1 milion copyes, there may also be 3 milion copyes floating around the world through the help of piracy. but that's not the problem here, there are cases when a product hasn't even been released in some contries yet and already most of the interested people have it,most companies can't afford such loses,and go broke....The only thing I greev over is the closing of GSC and the termination of the stalker series. :(

And that is where the area goes grey. I live in Australia and do not get most shows (this is an example), so i must resort in getting it an alternative way (piracy) because the company was too lazy to release it here. Now if it did come here, i would buy the product legally. But yes if i download it and had the option to buy it legally, i deem that stealing.

30 November 2012, 04:55 (1 month ago)

DEMONICO User

posts: 152

1

It's sharing, not stealing. I see it as being no different than having a friend burn a copy of a disc he purchased legally for you, or lending you a book, movie, game...

30 November 2012, 05:02 (1 month ago)

demon\_see\_yall\_later\_in\_hell User

posts: 12

0

MPraedonum

LOL! that's one way of putting itlol

image

I'll vote for you! lol

30 November 2012, 05:07 (1 month ago)

00LUCA00 User

posts: 6

0

DEMONICO

It's sharing, not stealing. I see it as being no different than having a friend burn a copy of a disc he purchased legally for you, or lending you a book, movie, game...

But you are not lending it, you burned a copy and gave it to him, lending would be lending the original disc. I see your point, you make a very good point, but unfortunately the law would be against you on that one as the "original" was copied with intention of distribution (even if not for profit) which is deemed illegal.

It is such a grey area.

30 November 2012, 05:14 (1 month ago)

demon\_see\_yall\_later\_in\_hell User

posts: 12

0

00LUCA00

And that is where the area goes grey. I live in Australia and do not get most shows (this is an example), so i must resort in getting it an alternative way (piracy) because the company was too lazy to release it here. Now if it did come here, i would buy the product legally. But yes if i download it and had the option to buy it legally, i deem that stealing.

maybe in a not so distant future, when the spirit of comunism dies (and stays that way this time) ,when people reach out and try to understand each other, the companies and pirates will make peace between them, and come to an agreement...such as leave their products alone for a defined amount of time, like 6-18 months after they'r released, so they can make a profit of the people that realy want the product and can afford it, and after that amount of time shar- ing the product among the less fortunate will not be considered piracy. that is my vision of the perfect future.

30 November 2012, 05:22 (1 month ago)

00LUCA00 User

posts: 6

0

demon\_see\_yall\_later\_in\_hell

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Agreed, sounds like a perfect future, would be great. Kind of like charity to those who want / need but can't afford. But i do not see the greedy companies doing that. Though I guess it can not hurt to wish. I would say 6 months may be a tad early prob anywhere from 12 - 18 would be more reasonable, and that companies agreed to publish world wide, not just in there choos- ing. Seriously, that is why shows are being pirated to the max.

30 November 2012, 05:23 (1 month ago)

DEMONICO User

posts: 152

0

00LUCA00

But you are not lending it, you burned a copy and gave it to him, lending would be lending the original disc. I see your point, you make a very good point, but unfortunately the law would be against you on that one as the "original" was copied with intention of distribution (even if not for profit) which is deemed illegal.

It is such a grey area.

I understand both points, but to me, having someone sit in a theater with any recording device and then distributing that recoreded content online is piracy. Me uploading a legally purchased disc, movie, whatever it may be, and sharing it isn't. These big companies and artists really can't complain either. When you buy a music disc there are maybe 3 songs you may want out of the13 they may put on it. The same when you pay \$11 for a movie. Lets say... "Cabin In The Woods"... It's a complete rip off. And they get away with putting a product out that is deceiving the public.

00LUCA00 User

posts: 6

0

demonico360

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of the 13 they may put on it. The same when you pay \$11 for a movie. Lets say... "Cabin In The Woods"... It's a complete rip off. And they get away with putting a product out that is deceiving the public.

Agreed, i pointed out the x2 things that annoy me the most. When use to purchase CD's only for 1 song and overpriced movies. Here in Australia we pay nearly \$25 (each person) to go see a movie. Seriously, we get ripped off. Which brings me to my next point, music cd's... seriously, no one buys them any more, iTunes / google play now, lol but yeah i get your point.

It's just these companies loose lots and lots of money due to piracy every year. Even some companies have gone under due to it. I say if you like and want to support, just buy the product it easier and that puts money in their pocket to release a newer improved product. I know A LOT of game devs have stopped PC games or release them a year later so they get the sales on consoles to make the money they are going to loose, look at Rockstar (GTA IV and Red Dead Redemption as an example) and i think GTA 5 is following the same trend, a year later release, pc is not listed with any release date only ps3 / 360.

In my mind, if given the option to buy and you instead download it, it stealing, but that is just what i think.

Last edited by 00LUCA00, 1 month ago

30 November 2012, 05:55 (1 month ago)

DEMONICO User

posts: 152

0

00LUCA00

demonico360

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pc is not listed with any release date only ps3 / 360.

In my mind, if given the option to buy and you instead download it, it stealing, but that is just what i think.

Honestly when it comes to music, I never pay for it anymore. Theres no point. Movies, the same, unless its a movie I really want to see, or a director/actor I like watching, then I don't mind paying for it. As far as games go, I ALWAYS buy the original. i won't go as far as to modding my consoles, void warranties, and possibly be banned for it. Plus I like to collect special editions which you can't get all the content through downloading. I guess what I'm saying is, I'll gladly pay for GOOD movies and video games... Everything else is just a click away.

30 November 2012, 10:42 (1 month ago)

MuzikMaestro User

posts: 36

0

is piracy stealing or is it simply just sharing and making copies. It's simple sharing it's not like you have to break into my computer to take the file if I dont want to share it I dont have too and we could take it one step farther if you've every copied and saved a piece of text or picture from the internet same principle isn't it, roughly? where did anyone get the information or pictures to put on the web- from the web, sometimes another branch of the tree you could look at copy machines and scanners? what about fax machines they all make copies in some way shape or form that you can "share" is that piracy, no but what we share some say it is. information is information no difference maybe we should shut down Wiki for "sharing" info Lol

30 November 2012, 10:50 (1 month ago)

Pringlescan verified uploader

posts: 2278

1

MuzikMaestro

is piracy stealing or is it simply just sharing and making copies. It's simple sharing it's not like you have to break into my computer to take the file if I dont want to share it I dont have too and we could take it one step farther if you've every copied and saved a piece of text or picture from the internet same principle isn't it, roughly? where did anyone get the information or pictures to put on the web- from the web, sometimes another branch of the tree you could look at copy machines and scanners? what about fax machines they all make copies in some way shape or form that you can "share" is that piracy, no but what we share some say it is. information is information no difference maybe we should shut down Wiki for "sharing" info Lol

You missed the point of copyrights. Once something is copywritten and then it's copied above and beyond what is stated, that' called stealing. It's like working 6 hours at a job, but clocking out for 8 hours.

.

No matter what bs reason we try to say to make it sound like it's not stealing it is.

30 November 2012, 19:37 (1 month ago)

mike4947 User

posts: 209

0

As far as i am concerned, this is just like when we made cassette tapes of an album or tapes of songs we recorded from the radio...no one got excited then...it was only when it became so easy and widespread did they get alarmed

30 November 2012, 20:50 (1 month ago)

succubus-incubus verified uploader

posts: 274

0

It has been discussed plenty of times around here.

I'll put it as simple as I can:

NO.

01 December 2012, 13:53 (1 month ago)

Scarlet\_Blade User

posts: 15

0

It really depends on your personal belief of what "stealing" actually is.

This can be seen in the argument of America's "right to bear arms" amendment, and attempts for gun control.

I personally believe that it is stealing, but not to the extent of actually stealing a tangible object, because there is indeed profit loss, and stealing of tangible items usually involves much higher risk and danger.

Yet, most torrenters (even myself most likely) probably take more than your average house thief. :|

Last edited by Scarlet\_Blade, 1 month ago

02 December 2012, 08:58 (1 month ago)

Bubanee KAT Staff

posts: 7899

0

Is piracy stealing?

.  
Is the Pope a catholic?.. titter

02 December 2012, 21:14 (1 month ago)

xhoundfreak User

posts: 3

0

Stealing is removing something from its place and keeping it.

Piracy is copying the original, and leaving it in its place.

:D

02 December 2012, 23:25 (1 month ago)

steveosafc User

posts: 717

0

xhoundfreak

Stealing is removing something from its place and keeping it.

Piracy is copying the original, and leaving it in its place.

:D

no, you are wrong on so many levels. just because you believe it does not make it true.

read about these people who where not stealing either...

<http://torrentfreak.com/imagine-bittorrent-piracy-group-sysop-jailed-40-months-121130/>

<http://torrentfreak.com/sharing-7-movies-on-bittorrent-1-5-million-damages-121201/>

uploading/downloading try standing before a judge and spew the crap you bothered to type in your post and see if he lets you off. you no the risk's all you have to do is accept them and move on.

RT22 User

posts: 23

1

This is the moral question ,

If I watch something that I would never in 100 years purchase or ever pay money to see, but watch it for the simple fact that it's there and it's free. With no intention of ever selling it , distributing it. I cause no harm to the person or company who made it. I cause no loss of revenue since I would have never watched it if not. Then say I do like it and I end up recommending it to someone who then buys it!!

Have I done more good or harm??

04 December 2012, 04:50 (1 month ago)

ijzi User

posts: 105

0

i think pirating means duplicating original !!!

05 December 2012, 23:33 (1 month ago)

blue.bsod User

posts: 44

0

borrowing or making a copy without permission = stealing ... read FBI rulings titter

10 December 2012, 22:13 (4 weeks ago)

missix verified uploader

posts: 488

0

I still don't know what to think of it

23 December 2012, 12:44 (2 weeks ago)

QuillWG verified uploader

posts: 100

0

I don't think it's stealing. Does it hurt the ability of some artists, writers, and directors ability to fully monetize their work? Maybe, the jury is still out on that. I know for ME, and only me, torrents have me buy more albums than I did before I began torrenting. I only upload music that I like, and I only upload music that I have purchased a physical album of (if it exists).

I can't call something "stealing" if I can obtain it by studying my own property. The little disk I bought from Amazon? It's got tiny differences on it that cause laser light to deflect differently when it's pointed at it.

I have a device, that I purchased and is physically owned by me, that can read those. It then writes a journal to my physical hard drive which contains physical platters sorting an arrangement on physical electrons. So on, and so on.

I have entered into no agreement that I can not study and make use of my physical property when purchasing those albums. If I bought a toaster on Amazon and got a knock on the door because I started opening it up, studying how it worked, and tweaking it to better suit my needs, I would tell them to go to hell.

The entire intellectual property monopoly can go to hell, and especially their supporters, who think it's somehow okay to stomp on my property rights because it's their work.

24 December 2012, 02:14 (2 weeks ago)

tonowando User

posts: 919

0

i have seen this subject many times before .

so let me re-post the same comment that i have used before .

thank you .

Date: Sat, Apr 17, 2010 at 4:29 PM

Subject: Victoria Espinel

To: intellectualproperty@omb.eop.gov

hello , there is a posting on the white house blog , dated Feb. 23 - 2010 , authored by - Victoria Espinel IPEC [ intellectual property enforcement coordinator ] .

Victoria has asked the public for input or suggestions on the issue of “ intellectual property “ .

she has given this link for any public comments - intellectualproperty@omb.eop.gov .

below are my comment on “ intellectual property “ enforcement .

to Victoria ;

i found a reference to Victoria on a web site which called her the new “ Internet watch dog “ , probably true since “ enforcement ” is in her job title .

so first i must ask this question ; should all uses of intellectual property be protected ?

or should the government and the courts only intervene when an unauthorized third party seeks to profit from some one elses intellectual property ?

most corporate owners of copyrighted media and software generally see no difference from off shore counterfeiting factories [ many are government sponsored ] or 2 high school students sharing all their music files through bit - torrent .

so Victoria , do you feel that your mandate is that narrowly focused ? go after the counterfeiter [ who earns millions from illegal sales ] and the 2 high school students [ who share for free ] , go after both with equal vigor ?

or perhaps do you feel that individual file sharing [ a corporate nuisance ] dose not rise to the level of a criminal activity ?

as a child in the 1950's , i hated it when my mother would bring home a pile of hand me down cloths from my cousins !

my most embarrassing moment was when i was 8 years old . with only one month left of school , the sole ripped off my school shoes . my mother could only afford to by one pair a year [ children wore leather shoes in the 1950's ] .

so for the last month of school i had to wear my cousins old shoes .

oh , did i tell you SHE WAS A GIRL !!

they were two tone girls penny loafers , in my size , but still girls shoes !!

so if you defend the " copy right " arguments of media corporations - every time my mother recycled or shared hand me down clothing - my mother in fact was depriving JC Penny's and Sears & Roebuck of sales and affecting the profits of these corporations .

only government intervention and prosecution can correct the harm she has done to the economy and these corporations .

this probably sounds silly to you , and it should .

should billion dollar corporations fear something human beings have been doing since the first 2 people called each other neighbor ??

whether you call it - trade , barter , swap , share or give away , this has always been a part of the human condition .

i contend that neither our laws , our government agencies or corporations have brought their policies up to date to deal with the technology that the average house hold has access to today .

in my life time i was born and raised as they say " dirt poor " . i have managed to acquire a

comfortable life up to this point . but an uncertain future is ahead for most Americans .

so let's look at how i have handled copy righted media in my life time .

in the early 1950's i would buy 5 & 10 cent comic books and after reading them over and over , i would trade with my friends and cousins , so we each could read a new book .

in the late 1950's i would buy 45 RPM records and again trade them .

by the 1970's i was into 8 - track tapes , and again i traded and borrowed to hear something new .

by the early 1980's i was forced to convert to cassette tapes , but they made trading and sharing a lot easier .

by the late 1980's i was knee deep into VHS tapes and VCR recorders . and yes i am aware of the warning from MLB , but when a friend calls to say " did you record last night's game " ? i say , yeah come over and get the tape .

i got my first and so far only computer in 2005 . i only have a high school education and for over a year i saw the windows blue screen of death almost every day .

but by 2007 i was able to teach others how to use the Internet .

i found that the Internet was not like a library were you just opened the book of your choice [ this was my initial impression ] .

i found that the Internet was a community like a town or city .

this community has both good and bad neighborhoods and it is best to learn your way around .

i found that this Internet community was organized around sharing .

the sharing of advice , the sharing of information and yes the sharing of media - music , videos and software .

only speaking for my self , i would never have purchased any of these shared Internet items .

i would have just done with out them .

but i did share , and now i have gained the knowledge of how to use many new types of software , and i have passed this knowledge on to many others .

so i ask you , from my first 5 cent comic book back in 1955 to my Internet sharing in 2010 , have i lived a life of crime , breaking the rule of law ?

or have i only enjoyed the quest for entertainment and knowledge ?

at first i believed that the official corporate sites were the best for help and information [ like DELL or MICROSOFT ] .

i soon found too many dead ends , Dell can't fix a Dell problem and Microsoft cant fix a Micro-

soft problem .

and then i discovered blogs . a forum where foul mouth geeks call novices plenty of four letter words but after enduring this abuse you are rewarded with more in depth technical support than any corporate site would ever provide .

so Victoria , in your capacity as our Internet watch dog , please be careful .

don't let regulation and code enforcement , stifle personal freedom or the technological revolution that is being driven by the community of individuals on the Internet .

thank you for taking the time to read my dribble , ... [ true name deleted ] posted to KAT [ tonowando ]

Last edited by tonowando, 2 weeks ago

24 December 2012, 19:10 (2 weeks ago)

VPNTunnel User

posts: 29

0

In my opinion, piracy is stealing, if you are reselling the pirated materials for a profit. Otherwise, piracy is just sharing. biggrin

24 December 2012, 19:47 (2 weeks ago)

tonowando User

posts: 919

0

VPNTunnel

In my opinion, piracy is stealing, if you are reselling the pirated materials for a profit. Otherwise, piracy is just sharing. biggrin

neighbors share with each other .

criminals steal for profit , their own financial gain .

of course many a corporation has found ways to legally steal from the public also ?

but that is another story .

25 December 2012, 01:34 (2 weeks ago)

demon\_see\_yall\_later\_in\_hell User

posts: 12

0

Rhubarbfián

In the days before CDs and affordable computers the music companies moaned and cried to the government about people making audio cassettes from radio broadcasts and, because of that, a levy was put on every blank tape (whether it was used for the purpose of copying broadcast material or not) and that was paid to the Brit music companies.

That levy still stands today and (as far as I'm aware) was also applied when optical media became affordable.

In short, they get paid every time you buy blank tapes or discs and then they want paid again because you actually use them

well now, thanks for sharing that with us, I personally didn't know that fact. but there are a lot of things that are kept from the general public, like why they give access to piracy software and punish you for using it, or even some torrents that are made available by companies just to see who "bites", they'r thieves and hipocrits.

25 December 2012, 01:40 (2 weeks ago)

XxDobermanxX User

posts: 28

1

If a pay \$60 for a blu-ray and cant share it or use it as i please (not duplicating it to make money from it) it is not piracy, if i cant do that , then i would seem that i didnt buy it but rather rented it

tonowando User

posts: 919

0

XxDobermanxX

If a pay \$60 for a blu-ray and cant share it or use it as i please (not duplicating it to make money from it) it is not piracy, if i cant do that , then i would seem that i didnt buy it but rather rented it

i was not sure by your comment if you needed help ripping blue-ray disc ?

here is a very useful guide .

<http://lifehacker.com/5559007/the-hassle+free-guide-to-ripping-your-blu+ray-collection>

Last edited by tonowando, 2 weeks ago

25 December 2012, 14:56 (2 weeks ago)

Batman700 User

posts: 100

0

My opinion: it is very bad news because in the my country nobody don't will be buy DVD discs because people just not have many moneys and what important: buy plastic dvd disc for 40-50 \$ or food,i think that people better buy food than DVD disc with anime or series.

Or better give moneys on the health,education and etc than give money on buy DVD disc.

27 December 2012, 15:17 (1 week ago)

sory2 verified uploader

posts: 22

0

My thoughts.

If I buy a book, I'm not stealing. If I want to share this book with my friends, I'm not stealing. I've bought, I can do whatever I want with my property.

<http://kat.ph/community/show/47229/>

## KAT Rules for Dummies....A quick reference guide

07 June 2011, 19:04 (1 year ago)

hunniboo KAT Elite

posts: 8368

image

Quick list of community rules

Do's

- 1- Only post spam and advertising in the spam and advertising section.
- 2- Communicate your problems to the mod/staff team. Communication is very important to keeping this site going.
- 3- Report fake torrents
- 4- Help in every way you can.
- 5- Avatar limit - 100x100
- 7- Sig limit - 500x100
- 8- Be creative and have fun

Don'ts

- 1- Do not post anything on this site that is obscene, racist, hateful, nude or threatening
- 2- Don't be rude or flame anyone here.
- 3- Don't give links to torrents outside of kat unless it's not found on kat and is clean
- 3- Do not, rate, or give feedback more than three times total per torrent.
- 4- Do not multi comment on torrents.
- 5- Do not comment or rate torrents that you personally have not downloaded
- 6- Do not comment or rate your own uploads. (it's ok to answer questions or give help)
- 6- Do not abuse the rep points system
- 7- Serial numbers are only allowed by PM
- 8- Do not argue with mods in the open forum. (Use the pm's to discuss things)
- 9- The following types of pornographic materials are NOT welcome on KickassTorrents:
  - Child pornography;
  - All types of zoophilia;
  - Any materials that involve real sadism, masochism, torture and violence;
  - Real rape and forced sex .

- Any type of pornography that may provoke violence, conflicts or hatred.
- If you upload any of these torrents your profile will be deleted and IP banned without warning.

10- Do not post the same topic in more than one forum.

11- Do not spam inboxes or user walls.

12- Don't create multiple accounts.

13- Don't cuss except for the adult type social groups

22 July 2011, 17:27 (1 year ago)

rogar10 User

posts: 8

3

"3- Do not, rate, or give feedback more than three times total per torrent."

well i broke this rule around a week ago...

in feedback i wanted to give feedback but every time i did, the torrents reappeared around 5x or more, each time needing me to give feedback again. eventually they went through. and yes i now know kats was having problems the feedback link/site.

pretty sure i broke "don'ts no. 10-. ok ive learned 2 more things thank you for your help.

22 July 2011, 17:48 (1 year ago)

Boobsman KAT Elite

posts: 5421

7

Thanks for the quick list Hunniboo, for those who dont know you can also find the full set of site rules at the bottom of every page.

<http://www.kat.ph/rules/>

Last edited by Boobsman, 1 week ago

22 July 2011, 18:05 (1 year ago)

.C Super Moderator

posts: 1569

3

rogar10

"3- Do not, rate, or give feedback more than three times total per torrent."

well i broke this rule around a week ago...

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pretty sure i broke "don'ts no. 10-. ok ive learned 2 more things thank youfor your help.

It's not wise to tell on yourself tittertitter

22 July 2011, 18:17 (1 year ago)

DragonKing80 User

posts: 15

0

Easy enough,I think.

23 July 2011, 13:03 (1 year ago)

Izzie User

posts: 3

0

Thanx wink hopefully I'll get D list right n not make 2 many mistakes. KAT is D best by far....boo

19 September 2011, 01:41 (1 year ago)

djlouis2471 User

posts: 2

2

i hope i do good in dis i will try my hardest to follow it. just here to get movies and other stuff. and like da site. go kickasstorrents!!! u rock!!

19 September 2011, 01:46 (1 year ago)

Quapedular User

posts: 328

2

Elections and Meetings KAT book for dummies

lollllol

06 October 2011, 04:09 (1 year ago)

prisak Super User

posts: 4

1

Thanks..

It Will Guide to maintain the site status.. :)

06 October 2011, 04:28 (1 year ago)

.Wired User

posts: 2238

3

There are rules?

08 October 2011, 07:04 (12 months ago)

giannopolous User

posts: 4

1

i am confused by what are the reputation for? where will i find the list of activities and its points?

thanks! Loveliness

<http://kat.ph/community/show/16649/>

08 October 2011, 07:08 (12 months ago)

Super ganjaman KAT Staff

posts: 2444

1

The achievements are at the bottom of every page

<http://www.kat.ph/achievements/>

08 October 2011, 07:38 (12 months ago)

Warpigg Super User

posts: 1816

1

whats zoophilia ?

08 October 2011, 07:42 (12 months ago)

ManyFeathers Super Moderator

posts: 5050

0

giannopolous

i am confused by what are the reputation for? where will i find the list of activities and its points?

thanks! loveliness

Reputation points equate to how active on the site you are, i.e. trolls and spammers get I.D.'d quick. Except for the resident Troll, he's special.lol

08 October 2011, 07:55 (12 months ago)

nisarg.oo7 User

posts: 6

0

ok got it

08 October 2011, 09:00 (12 months ago)

SirSeedsAlot Super User

posts: 15063

4

Warpigg

whats zoophilia ?

lol what's Google?

17 October 2011, 20:44 (11 months ago)

SmeggerDwarf Super User

posts: 2942

0

I think the rules are self-explanatory really.

21 October 2011, 15:18 (11 months ago)

Saki\_Deuce User

post: 1

0

Got it lol

23 October 2011, 16:54 (11 months ago)

skymtn Super User

posts: 8085

1

Q: Is it sexual abuse if a dwarfs says to a woman " I like the way your hair smells " ???????????  
...lollolllol

15 November 2011, 15:55 (10 months ago)

CaptainChronic\_912 verified uploader

posts: 578

0

rogar10

“3- Do not, rate, or give feedback more than three times total per torrent.”

well i broke this rule around a week ago...

in feedback i wanted to give feedback but every time i did, the torrents reappeared around 5x or more, each time needing me to give feedback again. eventually they went through. and yes i now know kats was having problems the feedback link/site.

pretty sure i broke “don’ts no. 10-. ok ive learned 2 more things thank you for your help.

I had that same problem. When the feedback pop up, I rate the torrent and go click on something else it’ll pop back up again. I still have that problem now, but I just remember which ones I’ve rated

15 November 2011, 16:59 (10 months ago)

jr501 User

posts: 2

0

I have just started using this, I was going through the menus on my file trying to send movies to my media player and now although the torrents are listed on the menus at the side of the screen (active, inactive, downloading, completed etc) they won’t come up in the feed box when I click on them. What have I done, help please this is my first laptop, still getting used to it

<http://kat.ph/community/show/16649/?page=2>

16 November 2011, 03:32 (10 months ago)

jakamarra53 User

posts: 2587

0

Ok here we go I have downloaded and seeded minimum 120% over 100 files before I joined KAT

My question is am I now able to comment on those torrents as a member?

PS this site is in a class of its own

16 November 2011, 03:40 (10 months ago)

Tintapper User

posts: 941

0

jr501

I have just started using this, I was goin thru the menus on my file trying to send movies to my media player and now although the torrents are listed on the menus at the sideof the screen (active, inactive, downloading, completed etc) they wont come up in the feed box when I click on them. What have I done, help please this is my first laptop, still gettin used to it

What are you using to play them? If you are using WMP (windows media player), simply double click on it, it should play, or at least tell you that you need a codec or something. If you need more help, message me and I'll do what I can.

16 November 2011, 03:42 (10 months ago)

Tintapper User

posts: 941

0

jakamarra53

Ok here we go I have downloaded and seeded minimum 120% over 100 files before I joined KAT

My question is am I now able to comment on those torrents as a member?

PS this site is in a class of its own

Actually, yes! And, you didn't have to wait that long! Usually, once they are complete, and work good, or not, we comment on them, good or bad lousy, crap or whatever.

16 November 2011, 03:45 (10 months ago)

FlamingJesus User

posts: 427

0

jr501

I have just started using this, I was goin thru the menus on my file trying to send movies to my media player and now although the torrents are listed on the menus at the sideof the screen (active, inactive, downloading, completed etc) they wont come up in the feed box when I click on them. What have I done, help please this is my first laptop, still gettin used to it

Once you have downloaded them, go to the directory (folder) where they were downloaded. Select the file(s) and right click, then "browse to open..." (or whatever it says, I am on a mac). After that, browse programs and select your default media player. If it gives you an "unsupported file type" error, you may need to download the right codec program. Divx is good for avi and such files. There are other ones available with a simple Google search.

16 November 2011, 03:53 (10 months ago)

Tintapper User

posts: 941

0

K-Lite Codec pack is a good one, depending which OS you are running, google it and download what you need. Included is media player classic, based on microsoft's media player for win 95.

It works excellent, and with the codecs, will play just about everything.

16 November 2011, 03:57 (10 months ago)

AhrimanThorn Super User

posts: 1592

0

jakamarra53

Ok here we go I have downloaded and seeded minimum 120% over 100 files before I joined KAT

My question is am I now able to comment on those torrents as a member?

PS this site is in a class of its own

When you sign in here and download a torrent KAT will log the fact that you have downloaded and will tell you (on the feedback button at top of page) that your feedback is pending. I think if you try commenting on multiple torrents you downloaded before you joined KAT it would infringe on rule five. You may well have downloaded them but KAT unfortunately has no way of telling this. I am just guessing this because I'm fairly new as well, so best to ask a mod.

16 November 2011, 04:49 (10 months ago)

Bubanee KAT Staff

posts: 6839

0

Dammit i just read the don'ts... I guess that means Animal Pron is out of the question... titter

16 November 2011, 04:53 (10 months ago)

artl Super User

posts: 6327

0

Have you checked the kitty and the puppy threads?funk

16 November 2011, 04:54 (10 months ago)

jakamarra53 User

posts: 2587

0

Tintapper

Actually, yes! And, you didn't have to wait that long! Usually, once they are complete, and work good, or not, we comment on them, good or bad lousy, crap or whatever.

Ok thanks for that

Cheers

16 November 2011, 05:54 (10 months ago)

Bubanee KAT Staff

posts: 6839

1

artl

Have you checked the kitty and the puppy threads?funk

OMG!!!! Titter

<http://kat.ph/community/show/16649/?page=3>

16 November 2011, 08:04 (10 months ago)

strikingssam User

posts: 4

0

<http://www.kat.ph/uefa-champions-league-final-manchester-united-vs-chelsea-fc-2-t688946.html>

16 November 2011, 08:07 (10 months ago)

ManyFeathers Super Moderator

posts: 5050

0

strikingssam

<http://www.kat.ph/uefa-champions-league-final-manchester-united-vs-chelsea-fc-2-t688946.html>

Wrong Thread, Samdizzydizzy

18 November 2011, 01:48 (10 months ago)

devy3 User

posts: 10

0

yo, maybe should get rid of all porn??? yes, i agree

28 December 2011, 14:41 (9 months ago)

andy5421 User

posts: 96

0

You should add "scat porn" as types of pornography not allowed as well.

28 December 2011, 15:03 (9 months ago)

WICCAMOON User

post: 1

0

andy5421

You should add "scat porn" as types of pornography not allowed as well.

tongue

28 December 2011, 15:13 (9 months ago)

Lexus1 User

posts: 70

0

strikingssam

<http://www.kat.ph/uefa-champions-league-final-manchester-united-vs-chelsea-fc-2-t688946.html>

thursday night channel 5!!!lol,Chelsea 4 life!!!

02 January 2012, 05:00 (9 months ago)

Legend2000 Super User

posts: 953

0

yes good rules hope it teach ALLOT biggrinbiggrinbiggrinbiggrin

02 January 2012, 19:52 (9 months ago)

Hex™ Super User

posts: 2663

0

is it possible to rate a torrent three times

04 January 2012, 02:43 (9 months ago)

Mundus User

post: 1

0

Hey! These are nice rules, but the third don't is worded badly. It sounded redundant at first.

By the way, this is without a doubt the best torrent website there is. Thank you!

04 January 2012, 15:40 (9 months ago)

RonthePirate Super Moderator

posts: 7802

0

Hex™

is it possible to rate a torrent three times

Yes, if you want to get busted for rep abuse.

Only one time per is allowed.

Listen to Seeds' advice,also.

Last edited by RonthePirate, 9 months ago

<http://kat.ph/community/show/16649/?page=4>

05 January 2012, 08:08 (9 months ago)

little D KAT Elite

posts: 4338

0

Hex™

is it possible to rate a torrent three times

Why would you rate a torrent 3 times? Makes no sense. You utilize the torrent, judge whether it's good, the quality of it, then you rate it and leave a comment.

Let's keep it simple folks. wink

05 January 2012, 08:31 (9 months ago)

Jim\_my? User

posts: 498

1

I am not sure if its been said before but 2 things I hate:

1) crying and cussing about a movie that states quite obviously in the title its a "cam".. Just rate and comment on the quality of the torrent and leave it at that.

2) Dont give away the plot of a movie or how good/bad you think it was, make a thread about it and then people can judge for themselves away from the download... Dont spoil it for every-one else.

also kinda a 3) Judge the torrent (whether you want it or not) by what registered people with a bit of reputation think, end of the day its a lottery, but your chances are better if a reputable person who doesnt hide behind anonymous rates it..

That just be my thoughts..

05 January 2012, 08:55 (9 months ago)

SirSeedsAlot Super User

posts: 15063

1

You can hit the thumbs once. you can rate a/v 1 thru 10 once. But you can post as many comments as you like and get 1 point for each (then the mods will delete them and you get -2 for each deleted post) I believe posting a comment is considered a type of rating the torrent, since torrent comments are for stating the quality of torrent, not for discussions and such...hope that clarifies...

J-William

is it possible to rate a torrent three times

05 January 2012, 09:10 (9 months ago)

Xenomorph Super Moderator

posts: 6584

0

jimmyqld

I am not sure if its been said before but 2 things I hate:

1) crying and cussing about a movie that states quite obviously in the title its a "cam".. Just rate and comment on the quality of the torrent and leave it at that.

2) Dont give away the plot of a movie or how good/bad you think it was, make a thread about it and then people can judge for themselves away from the download... Dont spoil it for everyone else.

also kinda a 3) Judge the torrent (whether you want it or not) by what registered people with a bit of reputation think, end of the day its a lottery, but your chances are better if a reputable person who doesnt hide behind anonymous rates it..

That just be my thoughts..

+1 jimmy,Nuff said!

06 January 2012, 00:53 (9 months ago)

darkwing111 User

post: 1

0

absolutely 100% agree

07 January 2012, 19:52 (9 months ago)

Glinter\_jack User

posts: 4

0

Came to apologise....

my laptop went mad and i had to re-instal windows...

again iam sorry for that... will shortly upload the same torrents..

21 January 2012, 17:57 (8 months ago)

Ohlala4u User

posts: 195

0

k i agreee!

21 January 2012, 18:35 (8 months ago)

teenagewolf User

posts: 22

0

hunniboo

Quick list of community rules

Do's

1- Only post spam and advertising in the spam and advertising section.

Is there a Spam and Advertising section for real??

shocked

Don'ts

5- Do not comment or rate torrents that you personally have not downloaded

What should I do if I have to ask question about the torrent before actually downloading it??

Last edited by teenagewolf, 8 months ago

21 January 2012, 18:52 (8 months ago)

little D KAT Elite

posts: 4338

0

teenagewolf

hunniboo

Quick list of community rules

Do's

1- Only post spam and advertising in the spam and advertising section.

Is there a Spam and Advertising section for real??

shocked

Don'ts

5- Do not comment or rate torrents that you personally have not downloaded

What should I do if I have to ask question about the torrent before actually downloading it??

yes there is a spam and advert section.

YOu should pm the uploader (if there is one) if not? you could post in the community with the torrent's link and your question. You're more likely to get your question answered that way.  
wink

27 January 2012, 16:11 (8 months ago)

dano\_themovie User

posts: 57

2

lets keep it simple people common sense do unto others you know the rest. an remember respect is contagious get infected luv you guys wanna see you around you all give me so much help DONT GET BANNED!!! For something dum

<http://kat.ph/community/show/16649/?page=5>

31 January 2012, 09:07 (8 months ago)

GayRobot User

posts: 490

9

Am I excused from the "no flaming" rule? tongue

31 January 2012, 09:26 (8 months ago)

nia007 User

posts: 13

1

In short use Kat like Facebook.....

07 February 2012, 21:06 (8 months ago)

myemanon User

posts: 3

2

there's a spam section?

24 February 2012, 14:52 (7 months ago)

lpn\_nonz User

posts: 2

0

Hi, just for information, I am continuously redirected to default parallels plesk panel page whenever i try to enter kat.ph. I have to add new before I can enter and I wanted the original opening page which now I can't get into. Any help?

28 February 2012, 13:03 (7 months ago)

Glaziers User

posts: 13

2

Hello everyone.

Sorry if this has been asked before, but when we give a thumbs up or thumbs down, what are we rating. Is it the quality of the download ie is it in sync, not grainy etc or is it how much we did or did not like the film?

Thanks.

28 February 2012, 13:11 (7 months ago)

Xenomorph Super Moderator

posts: 6584

0

prodprof

GayRobot

Am I excused from the "no flaming" rule? tongue

No GR, you are the example we use when demonstrating how to correctly flame someone to get yourself muted/banned, didn't you realise that ?

See, I told you we'd find a use for you - keep it up tonguetittertitter

pp

I'm in the floor LMAOlolcrylol

07 March 2012, 16:48 (7 months ago)

FiendKing04 User

posts: 21

0

Nice to know all of the rules. Some are more common sense, but I didn't know the one rating only a couple of comments. Good to know, thanks for posting this! :]

17 March 2012, 12:40 (6 months ago)

D1G1TALD3ATH User

posts: 12

1

ok gotcha!

17 March 2012, 12:51 (6 months ago)

Darius1954 Super User

posts: 979

1

If this is a stupid question, I apologize...please keep in mind that I have a birth defect...I was born an idiot. In rating torrents, I understand the thumbs up or down and the audio/video rating...however in comments, I generally comment on the movie...good or bad...should I NOT be doing this? If not, then what SHOULD be said in the comment box?

17 March 2012, 15:59 (6 months ago)

Biff\_Wiggle Super Moderator

posts: 4530

3

Darius1954

If this is a stupid question, I apologize...please keep in mind that I have a birth defect...I was born an idiot. In rating torrents, I understand the thumbs up or down and the audio/video rating...however in comments, I generally comment on the movie...good or bad...should I NOT be doing this? If not, then what SHOULD be said in the comment box?

your comments should always reflect the quality of the torrent regardless of how good or bad the movie itself is

<http://kat.ph/community/show/16649/?page=6>

21 March 2012, 00:01 (6 months ago)

Lerida User

posts: 22

1

The only stupid question Brad is the one not asked...

I`m a newbie and trying to figure all this out as well.I`m really enjoying reading the messages everyone has left..Im finding them all very helpful..Thankyou everyone

22 March 2012, 15:13 (6 months ago)

DaCreAtOrS User

posts: 785

0

lpn\_nonz

Hi, just for information, I am continuously redirected to default parallels plesk panel page whenever i try to enter kat.ph. I have to add new before I can enter and I wanted the original opening page which now I can't get into. Any help?

a little more details please?

23 March 2012, 01:41 (6 months ago)

treesNseeds User

posts: 2

0

Its good to know all the rules as a new users, which i tend to obey dutifully. smile

23 March 2012, 01:44 (6 months ago)

Bubanee KAT Staff

posts: 6839

1

treesNseeds

Its good to know all the rules as a new users, which i tend to obey dutifully. smile

They got no choice, because peeps like me appear from no where! :p

01 April 2012, 11:31 (6 months ago)

me\_sam User

post: 1

0

its good to know the rules before asking for ban reason thx

06 April 2012, 17:15 (6 months ago)

apurvmax1994 User

posts: 27

0

thanks smile

but i don't think so users don't pose any nude/porn pics on other's wall.

titterdizzy

06 April 2012, 17:19 (6 months ago)

potbelly69 User

posts: 1327

0

is it not offensive to call people dummies?

titter only kidding hunibooboosmileloveliness

07 May 2012, 18:13 (5 months ago)

skymtn Super User

posts: 8085

0

It`s time to update the rules no..no`s.

the new rule about not posting more than three(3)images in a row will need to be now included. And get the word out to the members.

24 May 2012, 01:27 (4 months ago)

distracted66 User

posts: 2

0

I was wondering how long is a good length of time to seed something I have downloaded. I downloaded a tv series that took about 24 hours to download. Should I seed for the same amount of time?

24 May 2012, 21:06 (4 months ago)

dunky76 Super User

posts: 3223

0

Maia\_23

n00b question here, to port forward in order to seed properly, i just lock the door on uTorrent and then add it to my router configs?

Maybe this should be in general troubleshooting. biggrin

Try this thread Maia <http://kat.ph/community/show/36075/?page=4#10010342>

Last edited by dunky76, 4 months ago

<http://kat.ph/community/show/16649/?page=7>

25 May 2012, 23:06 (4 months ago)

jcforb User

posts: 26

0

ruels read. KAt is a great site

26 June 2012, 10:13 (3 months ago)

SocialismSUX User

posts: 39

0

Where are the rules regarding "politics"?

26 June 2012, 10:36 (3 months ago)

SirSeedsAlot Super User

posts: 15063

3

SocialismSUX

Where are the rules regarding "politics"?

there are no rules concerning politics but political issues usually cause people to attack each other, which is against the rules. Your username for example, is an statement against socialism and many countries embrace that form of government. Ergo, if users began to complain it could turn into an issue because there is also an "offensive" catch-all rule.

.

Sometimes Mod Staff will act on certain "variables" before they even become issues because they know from experience what creates conflict.

.

Welcome to the spotlight...

26 June 2012, 22:19 (3 months ago)

SirSeedsAlot Super User

posts: 15063

1

cesmadj

I absolutely agree about this. I find it useful if some member (especially respected ones) says this is a good movie or not. Such comments may decide if I DL a torrent or not! As I see no rule against such comments I ask members to actually express their opinion on a given torrent (without spoilers).

i admit that is one rule i break occasionally..i comment on torrent quality and when i feel like it, say if a movie is worth it or not. But i never write reviews. IMBD ratings are not even meaningful unless they have 1,300 reviewers so KAT comments help to make a decision.

05 July 2012, 15:46 (3 months ago)

stevep12 User

posts: 4

0

I have a pdf file on a genuine on-line money making venture...would I be able to upload the torrent here as I don't want to be banned before I have even started !!!

love this site..its GREAT !!!!!

stevep

06 July 2012, 06:18 (3 months ago)

SolariStar User

posts: 15

0

I broke rule number 6, but with good reason, a torrent I uploaded had a broken file so I had to let people know. After a few more people help me seed it I'll take the old one down and take the contents of the rule breaking comments on my own uploads and put it in the main body of the contents section of the torrent page.

08 August 2012, 13:28 (1 month ago)

xbt verified uploader

posts: 169

1

giannopolous

i am confused by what are the reputation for? where will i find the list of activities and its points?

thanks! loveliness

Reputation are for fun! People love to get reputation! Makes us feel good!

10 August 2012, 11:13 (1 month ago)

Stale\_Milk User

posts: 287

0

stevep12

I have a pdf file on a genuine on-line money making venture...would I be able to upload the torrent here as I don't want to be banned before I have even started !!!

love this site..its GREAT !!!!!

stevep

i couldnt see why not but all money making is scams the only real way is work

10 August 2012, 17:13 (1 month ago)

HMS19 User

post: 1

0

Ok, I will do my best to keep on these rules. I want you to be easy with me if I done mistakes?!!

10 August 2012, 18:05 (1 month ago)

Abhishek9869 User

posts: 1053

0

Thanks We'll Follow Them.....!lollllol

<http://kat.ph/community/show/16649/?page=8>

11 August 2012, 05:36 (1 month ago)

Fransvn1 User

post: 1

0

Hi

Rules read, thanks again for all uploaders and seeders!!!

12 August 2012, 00:34 (1 month ago)

wannasleep User

posts: 17

2

Thanks for rules. Dummies like me need all the help we can get. What are the + & - symbols for in the right hand of the comment boxes? (I have a sneaky suspicion that the answer is crazily obvious, but I am a self-admitting idiot.)

Also thanks for making such an awesome site. Well thought out and planned so that even I can use it with ease. Cheers

13 August 2012, 18:40 (1 month ago)

kurokuroo User

post: 1

0

Hi, I wanna asking about what is "cp" stands for "don't upload cp"..

I found that on someone account that has been deleted because uploading cp..

13 August 2012, 18:47 (1 month ago)

Surfer99 User

posts: 666

0

kurokuroo

Hi, I wanna asking about what is "cp" stands for "don't upload cp"..

I found that on someone account that has been deleted because uploading cp..

I'm guessing that "cp" probably stands for child porn. If so their delete was deserved.

13 August 2012, 19:06 (1 month ago)

pintglass User

posts: 2

1

it will take a noob like me to get used to you all

13 August 2012, 19:16 (1 month ago)

Silent\_Seeder User

posts: 348

1

Thanks for this! There were a lot of rules that I didn't know about.

13 August 2012, 19:21 (1 month ago)

Silent\_Seeder User

posts: 348

0

wannasleep

Thanks for rules. Dummies like me need all the help we can get. What are the + & - symbols for in the right hand of the comment boxes? (I have a sneaky suspicion that the answer is crazily obvious, but I am a self-admitting idiot.)

Also thanks for making such an awesome site. Well thought out and planned so that even I can use it with ease. Cheers

Its for rating comments good or bad. If you like the comment, like it. If you feel it was a dumb comment you can unlike it. Kind of like how Youtube has its rating, if that makes it easier.

13 August 2012, 20:52 (1 month ago)

wannasleep User

posts: 17

0

Silent\_Seeder

wannasleep

Thanks for rules. Dummies like me need all the help we can get. What are the + & - symbols for in the right hand of the comment boxes? (I have a sneaky suspicion that the answer is crazily obvious, but I am a self-admitting idiot.)

Also thanks for making such an awesome site. Well thought out and planned so that even I can use it with ease. Cheers

Its for rating comments good or bad. If you like the comment, like it. If you feel it was a dumb comment you can unlike it. Kind of like how Youtube has its rating, if that makes it easier.

Thanks. I'm still at the stage where unless it's spelled out for me I don't touch it. (Yes I really am that hopeless)

21 August 2012, 11:00 (1 month ago)

pbs413 User

posts: 1102

0

pintglass

it will take a noob like me to get used to you all

Everyone was a noob at onetime.

22 August 2012, 01:25 (1 month ago)

krishnew1 verified uploader

posts: 109

0

Thanks For The Quick list of community rules.

<http://kat.ph/community/show/16649/?page=9>

22 August 2012, 01:43 (1 month ago)

JfiSG1nG User

posts: 1097

0

yet still people continue to flame and cuss at mods in open forums.... biggrintittertitter

22 August 2012, 01:47 (1 month ago)

webRG User

posts: 452

0

JfiSG1nG

yet still people continue to flame and cuss at mods in open forums.... biggrintittertitter

Only those that don't know the modswink They have their work cut out for them, and if they do something, it's for a reason biggrin

22 August 2012, 22:56 (1 month ago)

darknova11 verified uploader

posts: 52

0

bright as a day

22 August 2012, 23:10 (1 month ago)

Opacity User

posts: 9

0

cool, thx.

22 August 2012, 23:24 (1 month ago)

Lulu\_Smokey User

post: 1

0

Hi I am having problems with The Vampire Diaries that I downloaded, since I downloaded them there is audio but no picture. Another one that I downloaded was Prometheus and it says that there is no support for this type of video, so does anyone have any ideas or suggestions? I have WMV, RealPlayer, MediaPlayer Lite, so none of these will play either of them. Also, I downloaded the Return of the Dark Knight, which played fine.

23 August 2012, 21:53 (1 month ago)

Ronidee User

posts: 11

0

Hi, I understand your trying to help us dummies, No2 in the Do's section says, 'any problems ask the mod/staff team' other than this communication, I'm so fffick I don't know where or how to contact mods or staff and I keep asking for help but never get any no one tell us how to make contact with mods or staff. Please this is not for sympathy it's so you have a better understanding of a 72 years old lifetime musician that's had 2 bad strokes and 4 mini strokes, I have

MS, Meniers and COPD, Please help if you see us floundering Way out of our depth. Thanks for reading this, and your time and I love this site, you lot are wonderful for give us so much for nothing except our thanks. Thank you. Ron :-)

23 August 2012, 22:11 (1 month ago)

Radiamond Super User

posts: 411

1

Ronidee

Hi, I understand your trying to help us dummies, No2 in the Do's section says, 'any problems ask the mod/staff team' other than this communication, I'm so fffick I don't know where or how to contact mods or staff and I keep asking for help but never get any no one tell us how to make contact with mods or staff. Please this is not for sympathy it's so you have a better understanding of a 72 years old lifetime musician that's had 2 bad strokes and 4 mini strokes, I have MS, Meniers and COPD, Please help if you see us floundering Way out of our depth. Thanks for reading this, and your time and I love this site, you lot are wonderful for give us so much for nothing except our thanks. Thank you. Ron :-)

You can find mods here-->Moderators

If you need any help, you can ask in this thread-->Issues for Super Users, and a SU will assist you.

24 August 2012, 18:15 (1 month ago)

shashank799 User

posts: 34

0

Lulu\_Smokey

Hi I am having problems with The Vampire Diaries that I downloaded, since I downloaded them there is audio but no picture. Another one that I downloaded was Prometheus and it says that there is no support for this type of video, so does anyone have any ideas or suggestions? I have WMV, RealPlayer, MediaPlayer Lite, so none of these will play either of them. Also, I downloaded the Return of the Dark Knight, which played fine.

try installing and playing those with the VLC player...And its better to mention the url links of the torrents u have downloaded..

26 August 2012, 16:38 (1 month ago)

SpikeTDragon User

posts: 359

1

mr0da

And its better to mention the url links of the torrents u have downloaded..

Considering VLC's draw to malware authors (and how many of them use google adsense in an attempt to draw you away from the real download site) giving a link to any program one references is also a plus:

<http://www.videolan.org/vlc/index.html>

edit: Forgot to say: Hope this helps :)

Last edited by SpikeTDragon, 1 month ago

26 August 2012, 16:51 (1 month ago)

hugseg93 User

posts: 111

0

I would like to thank you for all the rules I did not know about alot of themsmile

<http://kat.ph/community/show/16649/?page=10>

28 August 2012, 13:33 (1 month ago)

TheMadman verified uploader

posts: 458

0

I am following it !

29 August 2012, 01:14 (1 month ago)

Tuklu Super User

posts: 757

0

Thanks for the info

30 August 2012, 15:03 (1 month ago)

caliman1959 User

posts: 3

0

Thanks!

31 August 2012, 04:12 (1 month ago)

LadyPurr User

posts: 44

0

okay, thanks

06 September 2012, 03:30 (1 month ago)

danamft User

post: 1

1

so what is considered taboo? incest videos; etc.?

how do you make a complaint about such?

how do you get it removed?

06 September 2012, 03:43 (1 month ago)

SpikeTDragon User

posts: 359

0

danamft

so what is considered taboo? incest videos; etc.?

how do you make a complaint about such?

how do you get it removed?

Not sure what the policy is, especially since just searching for incest returns 103 of them but I just found the uploader in question and made a report. You'll find a report user link on everyone's profile page.

Always remember to give specifics and links. :)

edit: And the official response is that its allowed. Considering how in certain parts of the world that would be found acceptable anyway.....

Last edited by SpikeTDragon, 1 month ago

06 September 2012, 03:47 (1 month ago)

bladereap3r User

posts: 18

0

Roger, Roger! - 10 4

25 September 2012, 14:08 (1 week ago)

bubbles24 User

posts: 35

0

Thanks

26 September 2012, 10:43 (1 week ago)

KillerTaliban User

posts: 36

0

CaptainChronic\_912

I had that same problem. When the feedback pop up, I rate the torrent and go click on something else it'll pop bacu up again. I still have that problem now, but I just rememeber which ones I've rated

i got that problem too.

26 September 2012, 18:28 (1 week ago)

jmarion User

posts: 2

1

Simple enough. What's the rule on pants? Do I have to wear them when I'm visiting the site? What about formal wear, is business attire recommended or can I go business casual?

<http://kat.ph/community/show/16649/?page=11>

# Appendice Three - Chapter Three - Trolling on Social Media.



Left: Screenshot taken from Twitter

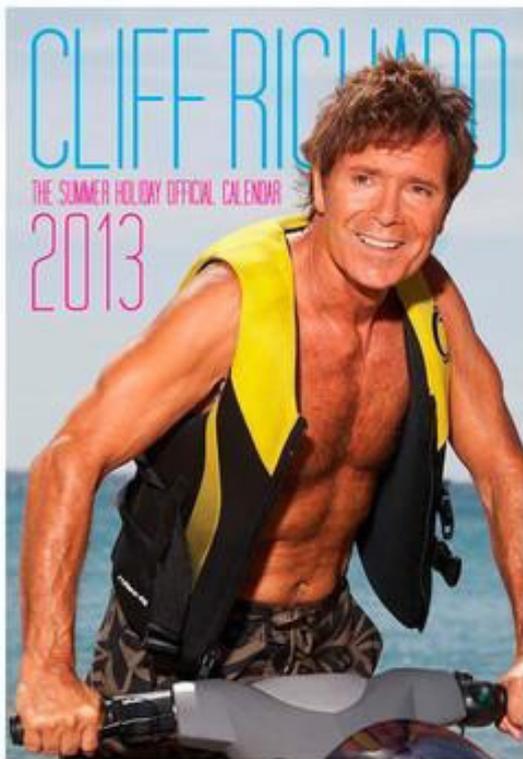
Below: Louise Mensch Twitter screenshot captured 21st July 2014.

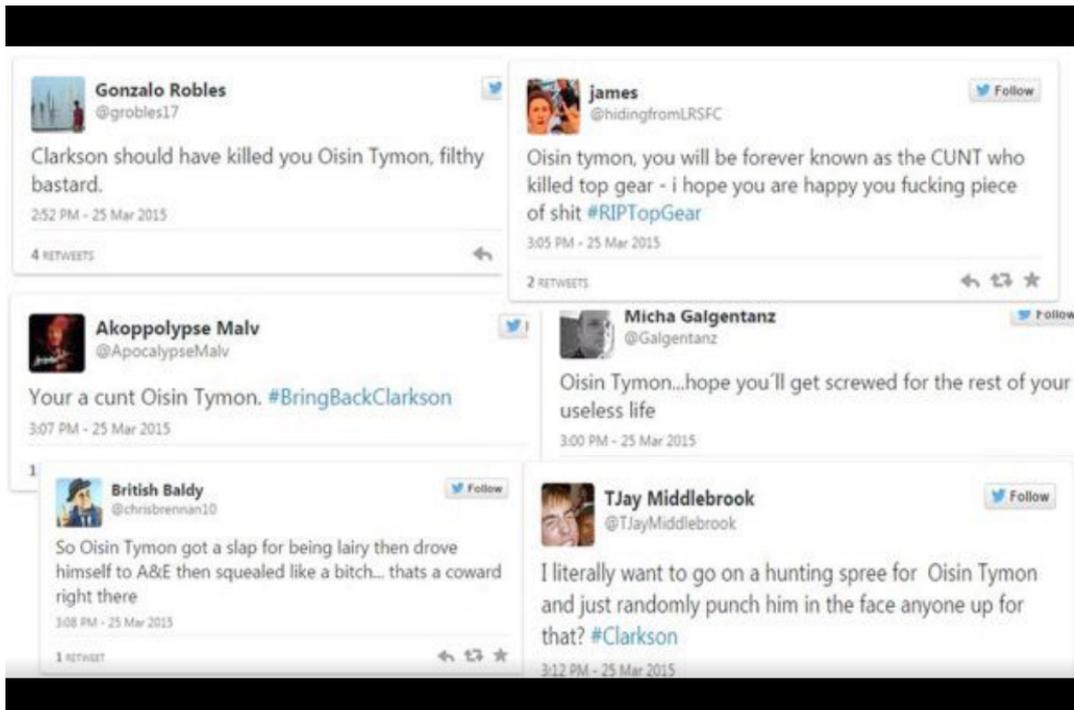




**Above: Cliff Richard statement screenshot captured on Facebook 27th August 2014**

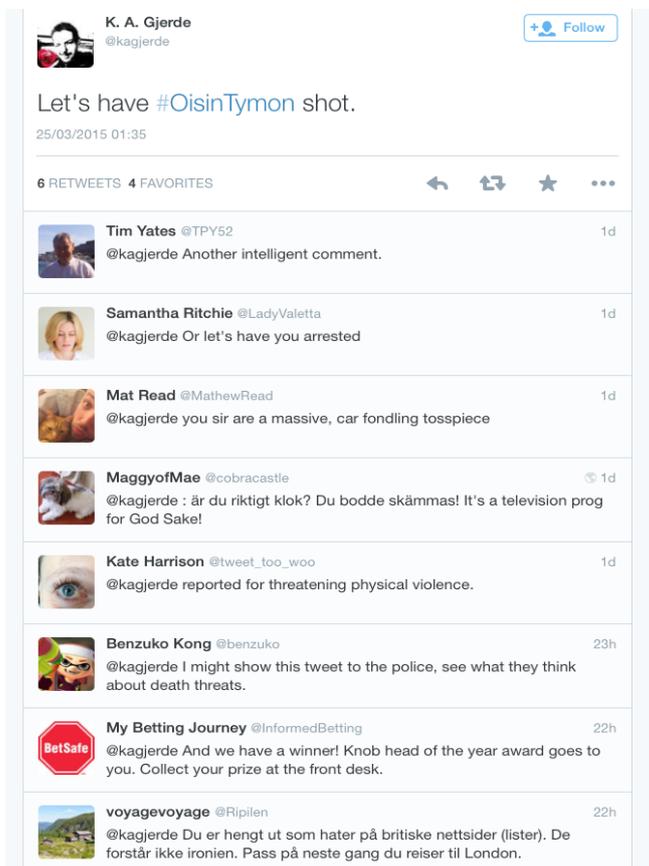
**Below: Images captured on Twitter 15th August 2014.**





**Above: A collection of tweets caotured from Twitter 26th march 2015.**

**Below: Screenshot captured on 26th March 2015 from Twitter.**



**Chris Beck** @cwbeck + Follow

#OisinTymon has got one of those faces. Completely understand why he might be punched...

11/03/2015 11:38 from South East, England

1 RETWEET 1 FAVORITE

---

**Martin Palmer** @\_martinpalmer\_ 21h  
 @cwbeck Funny dude. And you advertise your company on your Twitter header, under which you condone workplace violence. Not a smart move...

**Chris Beck** @cwbeck 21h  
 @\_martinpalmer\_ written before the facts. Still doesn't change the fact he has got a punchable face. Might have not deserved it though...

**Martin Palmer** @\_martinpalmer\_ 19h  
 @cwbeck "A punchable face"? That's a thing, is it? You might want to reflect on how that sort of phrase reflects upon you as a person...

**Chris Beck** @cwbeck 11h  
 @\_martinpalmer\_ unfortunately I've never cared about what other people think... Reason I like Clarkson. #rarebreed

**Chris Beck** @cwbeck 11h  
 @\_martinpalmer\_ ah.. You're like a far left clueless idealist twitter troll masquerading as a realist people's warrior. Clarkson for PM!

**Martin Palmer** @\_martinpalmer\_ 10h  
 @cwbeck He's what you'd like to be, but can't. Vicarious enjoyment. Got it.

**Chris Beck** @cwbeck 9h  
 @\_martinpalmer\_ you are such a retard dude. Go fuck yourself

**Martin Palmer** @\_martinpalmer\_ 5h

**Left: Screenshot captured from Twitter 26th March 2015.**



**Kenneth Tong**  
@MrKennethTong  
*Would like a date with @rhw (Rosie Huntington-Whiteley) The inspiration for Christian Grey of the bestselling book, 50 Shades of Grey.*  
Mayfair, London. <http://www.dirtyaddiction.com>

[Follow](#) 

**6,193** TWEETS

**1** FOLLOWING

**179,437** FOLLOWERS

**Tweet to Kenneth Tong**

**Tweets** >

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**Similar to Kenneth Tong** >



**Sunshine Martyn**  @sunshinem...  
[Follow](#)



**Darnell Swallow** @DarnellSpot  
[Follow](#)



**Pete Bennett** @MrPeteBennett  
[Follow](#)

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[Blog](#) [Status](#) [Apps](#) [Resources](#) [Jobs](#)  
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**Tweets**



**Kenneth Tong** @MrKennethTong 1h

Why vilify me when it's @RHW that's the culprit. All she needs to do is tell me to stop and I will behave.

[Expand](#)



**Kenneth Tong** @MrKennethTong 1h

Don't understand why @GBarlowOfficial is upset over stillborn Poppy. He has other children. Three out of four ain't bad.

[Expand](#)



**Kenneth Tong** @MrKennethTong 2h

Does @GBarlowOfficial get a 50% discount off the funeral of Poppy Barlow cause it was Stillborn?

[Expand](#)



**Kenneth Tong** @MrKennethTong 2h

Shout out to the Top Boy in Glasgow, @Stephen\_Russell of Paisley. Best of luck to his fight in Dundee shortly.

[Expand](#)



**Kenneth Tong** @MrKennethTong 2h

Having met with the best and most expensive legal minds in England, @GBarlowOfficial, take that. "Everything changes", I'm "Back for Good."

[Expand](#)



**Kenneth Tong** @MrKennethTong 9h

I will trade you all. I will leave @GBarlowOfficial alone if you convince @RHW to tell me to do so...

[Expand](#)

**Above, Left and overleaf: Kenneth Tong tweets collected 7th June 2016.**



**Kenneth Tong** @MrKennethTong 6h

@GBarlowOfficial's Wife recently had a Stillborn. But look on the bright side: Slimmer of the Month.

[Expand](#)



**Kenneth Tong** @MrKennethTong 6h

The world failed to rid of me last year, what makes you think you will succeed. Like the Meme says, COME AT ME BRO: [twitition.com/wq8ke](http://twitition.com/wq8ke)

[Expand](#)



**Kenneth Tong** @MrKennethTong 6h

Told @GBarlowOfficial wife that she has to buy him a Father's Day present. I mean, why should he suffer just because she had a Stillborn?

[Expand](#)



**Kenneth Tong** @MrKennethTong 7h

Seeing as Kenneth Tong is Trending Globally, I'd like to take this opportunity to ask @RHW out on a date.

[Expand](#)



**Kenneth Tong** @MrKennethTong 19h

Least we all know finally How Deep is @GBarlowOfficial's Love: the size of a Shoe Box. [pic.twitter.com/Ez8qvTO](http://pic.twitter.com/Ez8qvTO)

[View photo](#)



**Kenneth Tong** @MrKennethTong 19h

Who wants to hear another @GBarlowOfficial, dead baby joke?

[Expand](#)



**MrKennethTong** Kenneth Tong



@EllaJose <http://www.digitalspy.co.uk/bigbrother/news/a228946/bb-kenneth-tong-cleared-of-sexual-assault.html> ; )

29 Dec

---



**EllaJose** Elizabeth Joseph ↻ by MrKennethTong



@MrKennethTong break the law let's see what happens.

29 Dec

---



**MrKennethTong** Kenneth Tong

Truthfully, when you are as wealthy as I am, you can say, do and think anything without penalty, as you have no one to be accountable to.

29 Dec



**Above: Image of Sean Duffy's trolling collected 16th August 2015.**

**Bottom: Sean Duffy outside court.**





**Above and Left: Original and manipulated images captured from Twitter 16th August 2014.**



**Left: screenshot captured from Twitter 19th August 2014.**

# EMERGENCY PLAN

10 STEPS IN CASE OF A TERRORIST ATTACK IN EUROPEAN CITY

1. TEARFUL CARTOONS



2. FACEBOOK FILTER



3. CRYING ON TV



4. LIGHT UP BUILDINGS



5. CANDLELIGHT VIGILS



6. MORE REFUGEES



7. CALL THOSE WHO WANT TO STOP IT BIGOTS



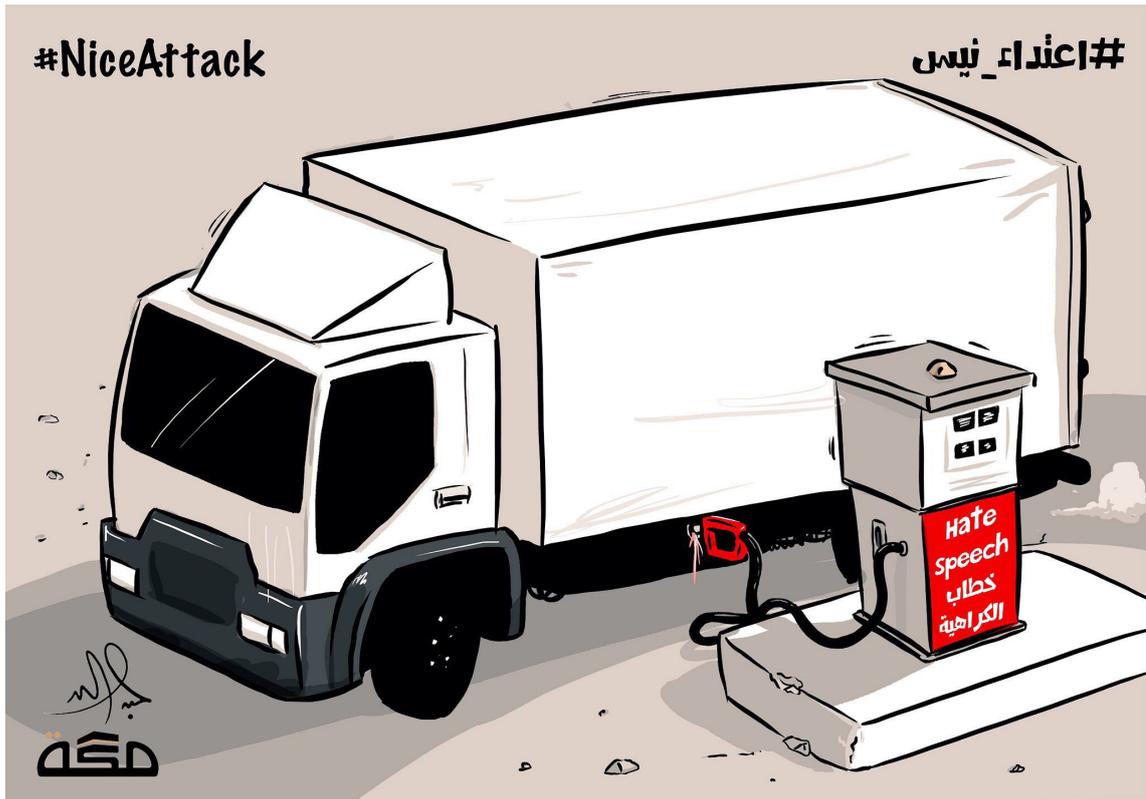
8. WAIT FOR THE NEXT ATTACK

9. REPEAT

10. DO NOTHING

Above: Collected 23rd March 2017 from Twitter.

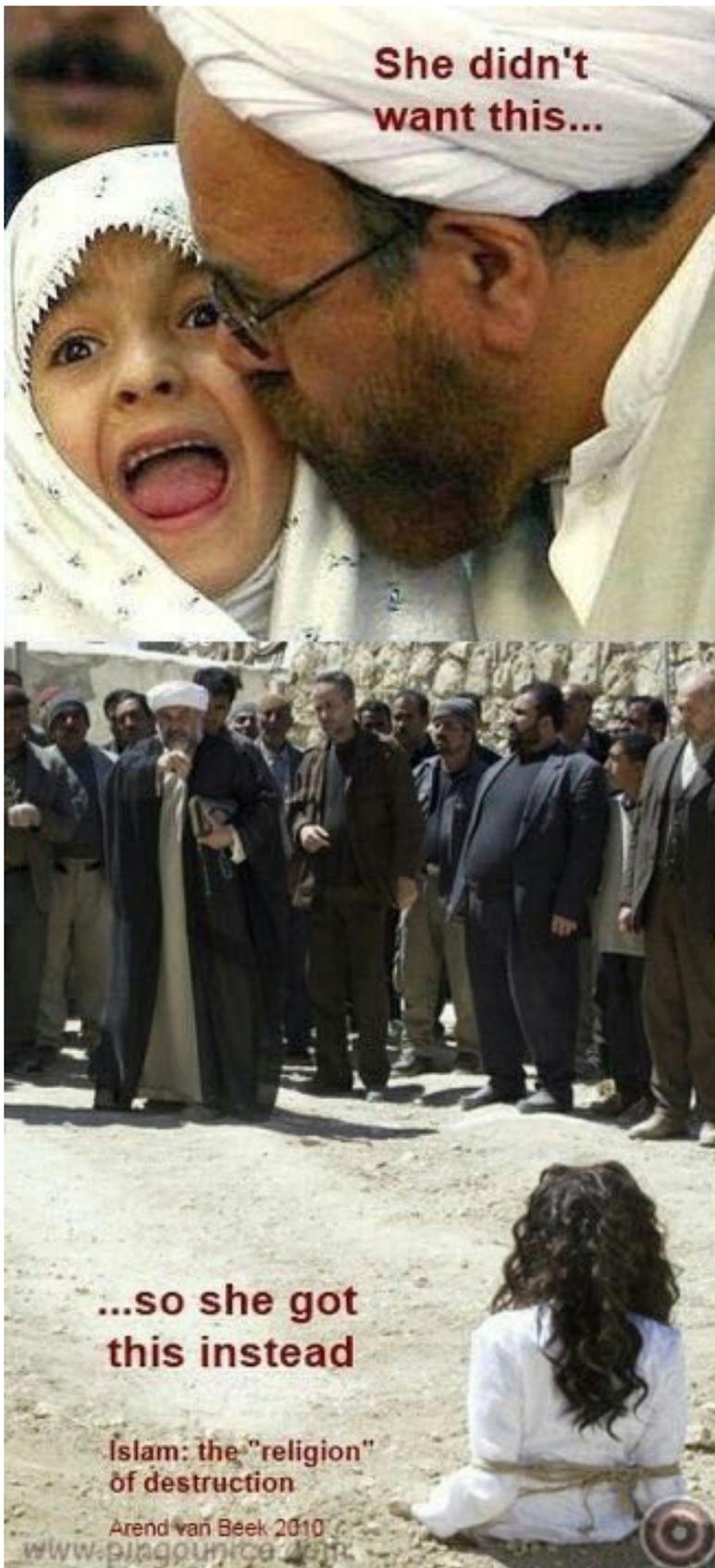




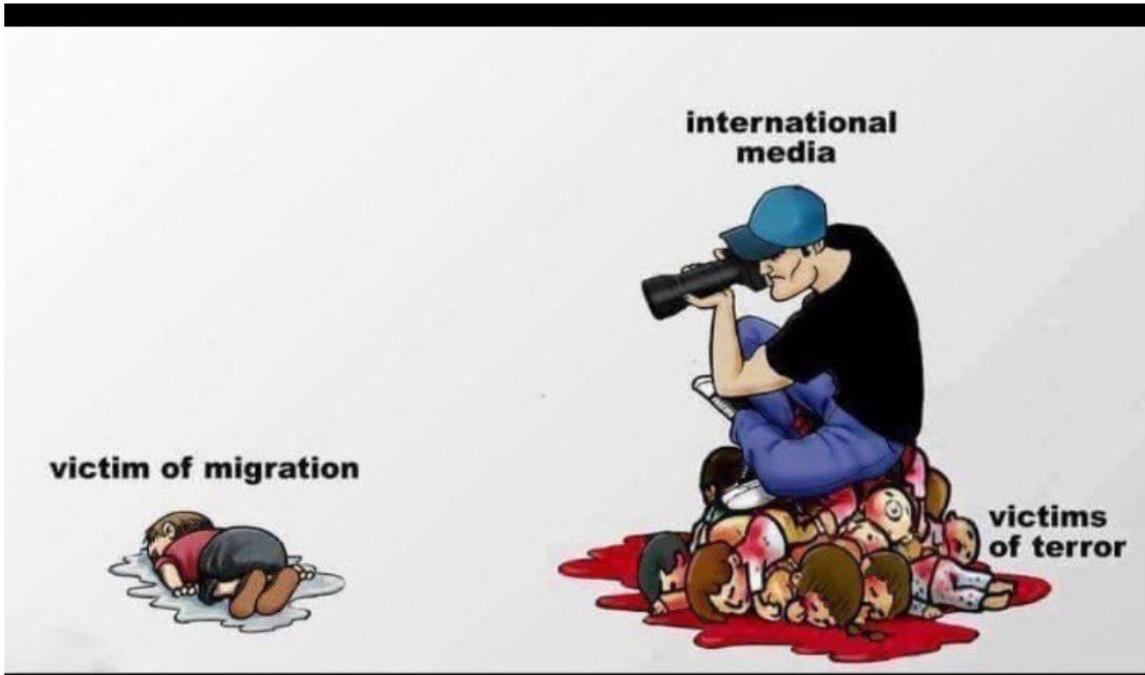
Above: Image collected from Twitter 15th July 2016.

Below: Image collected from Twitter 20th december 2016.





**Left: Image collected  
from Twitter 23rd  
July 2016.**



Above: Image captured from Twitter 26th July 2016.

Below: Image captured from Twitter 15th July 2016.





**Above: Image captured from Twitter 20th December 2016.**

**Below: Image captured from Twitter 20th december 2016.**





**Top Left: Image captured from Twitter 10th January 2015.**



**Middle Left: Image captured from Twitter 14th June 2016**



**Bottom Left: Image captured from Twitter 20th December 2016**



**Sticking one's nose  
where it doesn't belong!**

As the Arabic saying goes:  
"He who interferes with what doesn't  
concern him finds what doesn't  
please him"

## Appendices Four - Chapter Four - Cyber vigilantism, righteous trolling and activism.

The screenshot shows a Twitter thread with five tweets. The first tweet is from Fern Cook (@FernCook11) posted 20 minutes ago, stating that serial killer Kayne Kennedy burnt down Manchester Dogs home, resulting in the murder of 60 dogs. The second tweet is from donna (@minion977) posted 9 hours ago, expressing hope that Kayne Kennedy is locked in a kennel and burnt alive, and includes a photograph of a young man (Kayne Kennedy) lying in bed. The third tweet is from Fern Cook (@FernCook11) posted 9 hours ago, repeating the information from the first tweet. The fourth tweet is from Tommy Sturtivant (@TDS\_Biro\_Boy) posted 10 hours ago, suggesting Kayne Kennedy should be used to train police dogs without pads and gloves. The fifth tweet is from JASΣ (@jason\_durrant) posted 18 hours ago, expressing hope that Kayne Kennedy is captured and turned into a dog.

**Fern Cook** @FernCook11 20m  
One week ago serial killer **KAYNE KENNEDY** burnt down Manchester Dogs home resulting in the MURDER of 60 Dogs. Rot in hell you little b\*\*\*\*\*d.

**donna** @minion977 9h  
#kaynekenedy I hope somebody locks you in a kennel and burns you alive.You evil chav c\*\*t



**Fern Cook** @FernCook11 9h  
It' been a week since that little b\*\*\*\*\*d **KAYNE KENNEDY** burnt down Manchester dogs home. Causing the deaths of 60 Dogs.

**Tommy Sturtivant** @TDS\_Biro\_Boy 10h  
**Kayne Kennedy** should be used to train police dogs, but without the benefit of pads and gloves.

**JASΣ.** @jason\_durrant 18h  
i hope someone gets a hold of that **kayne kennedy** kid and turns him into a dog.

Above: Screenshot captured from Twitter 18th September 2014.



Thomas Hooper  
@Tahooper

+ Follow

Pictured: Kayne Kennedy, the arsonist who set Manchester Dogs' Home on fire



15/09/2014 13:50

8 RETWEETS 4 FAVORITES



Jordan @Jordancurran20  
@Tahooper thats not kayne u clown hahahahahah:

**Left: Screenshot form Twitter 17th September 2014.**

**Below: Screenshot from Twitter 16th September 2014.**



DAMIEN BARNARD @DAMORKO666  
#Kaynekennedy Is the person who caused the #fire in the #ManchesterDogsHome He should av the electric chair #deathrow

1h



Daruna @Darunatura  
Im going to think about snapping Kayne Kennedies neck tonight while I attempt my bench press record. DEATHDEATHDEATH TO #KAYNEKENNEDY

1h



Ciaran Goggins @sufc15  
@gmpolice @janey\_single @Jordancurran20 So one cannot name **Kayne Kennedy**? #ManchesterDogsHome How much does it cost to protect his family?

2h



Chappers @Coolyboy690  
If you don't think that **Kayne Kennedy** should get life in prison or shot, you're a heartless cunt #kayneKennedy, #ManchesterDogsHome

2h



beth @beffffy  
**Kayne Kennedy** deserves to be put down. Disgusting

4h



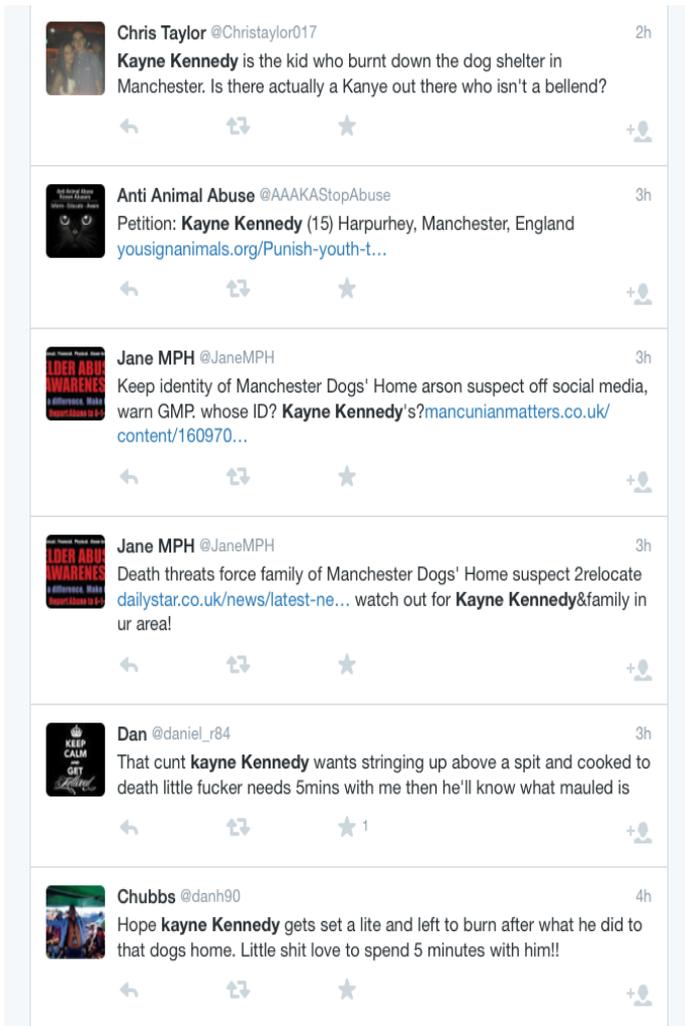
Hannah @HannahAlice\_  
I hope **Kayne Kennedy** gets caught and someone sets him on fire. Evil is the only word for him, pure evil.

4h



Rebecca Mouncey @BecMouncey  
If you burnt down a house and killed 60 people you'd be given life. Why has **Kayne Kennedy** granted bail AND police protection? Disgusting

5h



**Left: Screenshot from Twitter collected 17th September 2014.**



Above: Collected 30th May 2016 from Facebook.

Below left & right: Images captured from Facebook 7th November 2017.





Above: Image captured from Facebook 29th March 2015.

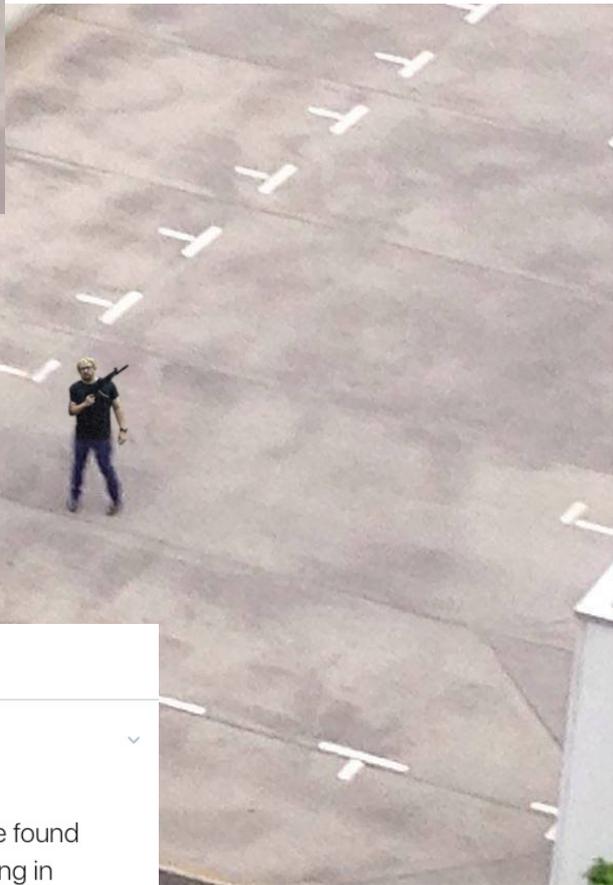


Above: Image captured from Facebook 29th March 2015.



**Left: Image captured from Twitter 23rd July 2016.**

**Below: Image capyured from Twitter 22nd July 2016.**



09:21

Tweet



**BreakFreeFromPC**  
@BreakFreeFromPC

Yes these people exist - they can normally be found holding signs saying "No Borders" & screaming in peoples faces #Merkel Police in Germany

**Kirbydamasta** @kirbydamasta

UPDATE: Police have identified truck driver as white nationalist Samuel Hyde. #Berlin



**Left: Image captured from Twitter 20th December 2016.**

Tweet your reply





**Above: Image capture on Twitter 15th July 2016.**

**Below: Collected 6th June 2017 from Twitter.**





**Top: Collected 13th August 2017 from Twitter**



**Middle: Collected 3rd April 2017 from Twitter.**

**Bottom Left: collected 6th June 2017 from Twitter.**



**Above: Image captured from Twitter 20th June 2015.**

**Below: Image captured from Twitter 20th June 2015.**

apex  
Apex Interiors  
@Apexinterior

All of our #kitchen, #bedroom, #bathroom doors are made to order and to individual customer specification. With Apex, you always get the personal touch.

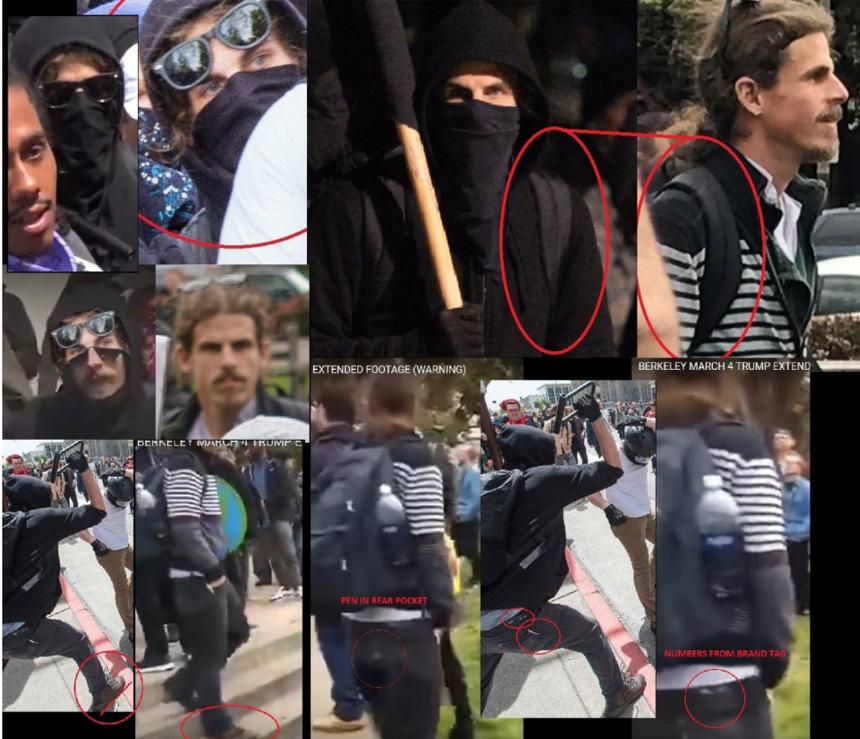
apexinteriorsystems.co.uk

914 TWEETS   1,060 FOLLOWING   725 FOLLOWERS     Follow

apex Interiors @Apexinterior 1d  
@helengray07 This definitely isn't us Helen, we are based in Southport. Sad to see this.

1

## Appendices Five - Chapter Five - Slave Morality & The Politically Correct.



Above: Image captured from Twitter 26th May 2018.

Below: Image captured from Twitter 26th May 2018.

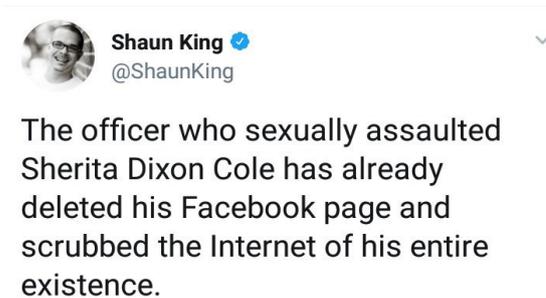




**Above:**

**Below: Screenshot of banner taken 7th August 2017.**



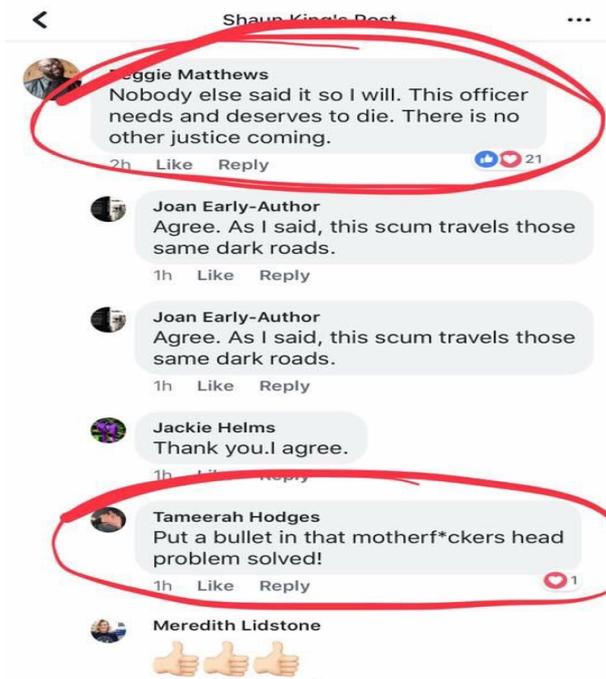


**Above: Image captured from Twitter 24th May 2018.**

**Left: Image captured from Twitter 24th May 2018.**

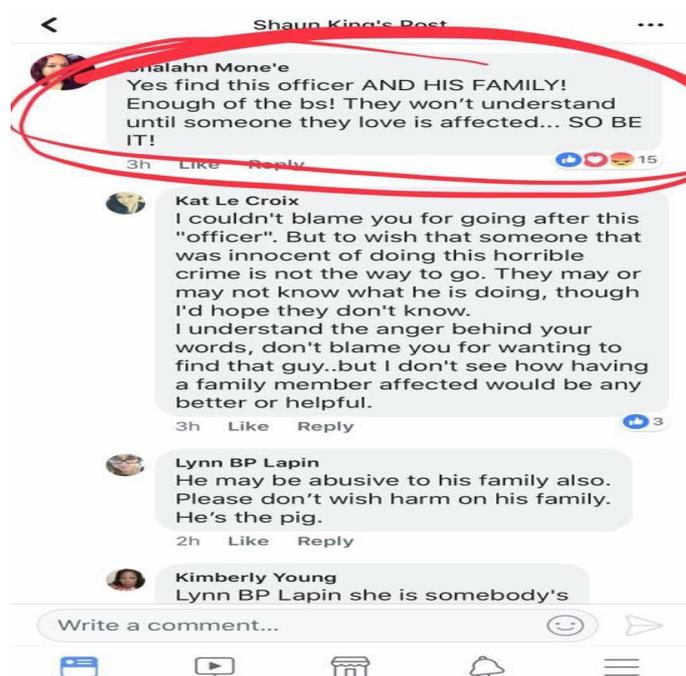
It appears he did this while Sherita was being held at the jail.





**Above Image captured from Twitter 24th May 2018.:**

**Below: Image captured from Twitter 24th May 2018.**





8 hrs - 2

Headed to Berkeley to disrupt the neo Nazi/ white Supremacist jerk circle today. Nervous af but determined to bring back 100 nazi scalps

Like Comment Share

Tyler [redacted] Jonah [redacted] and 79 others

View 12 more comments

- [redacted] He is there now and can help comrade!  
Like Reply 2 · 5 hrs
- [redacted] Respect.  
Like Reply 4 hrs
- [redacted] Stay safe... with you in spirit! ♡ ~x~  
Like Reply 3 hrs
- [redacted] Be careful n beat they ass  
Like Reply 3 hrs
- [redacted] Can you bring back 100 white people's dreads while you're at it  
Like Reply 3 hrs
- [redacted] Go get 'em!  
Like Reply 1 hr

Write a comment... GIF

Above: Image captured from Twitter 18th May 2018.

Below: Image captured from Twitter 18th May 2018.

Updates Every Day | 1,917 Models | 25,812 Photosets | 9,020 Videos | 3,937,922 Pictures

Name [redacted] login

ATK NATURAL & HAIRY

HOME MODELS CATEGORIES PHOTOS MOVIES DVD STORE WEBCAM

ATK HAIRY MODEL >> Venus Rosales

Venus Rosales



Age: 19  
Height: 5'1"  
Weight: 98 lbs  
Bust Size: 32"  
Ethnicity: White  
Hair Color: brown  
Photo Sets: 10  
Total Images: 1286  
Movies: 3

Venus beats her bush up with the bush 18:01 min movie

Available Movie Formats:  
Stream HD mp4 Phone SD mp4

**Model:** Venus Rosales  
**Photographer:** BMB/Wanton Photography  
**Movie:** toys  
**Description:** BMB/Wanton Photography shot Venus beating her bush up with the Hitachi.



Venus oils up and toys her hairy twat 16:34 min movie

Available Movie Formats:  
Stream HD mp4 Phone SD mp4

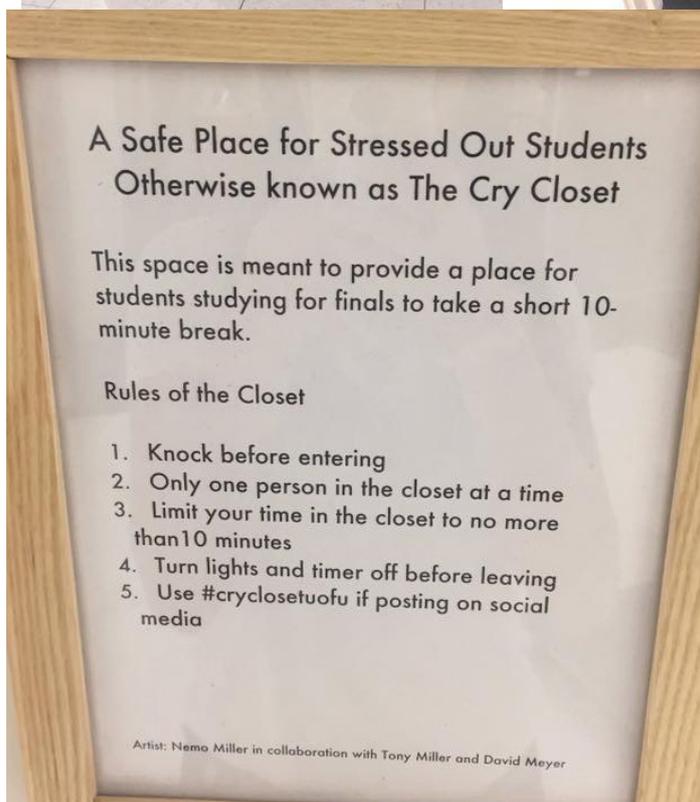
**Model:** Venus Rosales  
**Photographer:** BMB/Wanton Photography  
**Movie:** toys  
**Description:** BMB/Wanton Photography shot Venus oiling up and toying her young hairy twat.





MOLDYLOCKS THE ANTIFA GIRL LOOKING TO "SCALP NAZIS" AT BERKELEY  
WAS THROWING GLASS BOTTLES AT INNOCENT PEOPLE ALL DAY  
SHE IS NO VICTIM

**Above: Image captured from 18th April 2018.**



Top left & right and bottom left Collected 29th April from The daily Mail [Online]. Available at: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-5657409/University-Utah-installs-CRY-CLOSET-library.html>