Bread and Circuses

"Flowers produce seeds and there are millions of seeds from the flowers of the 1960s. Every aspect of American society is being run by the seeds of the flowers of the 1960s. We are the establishment and we are doing a good job."
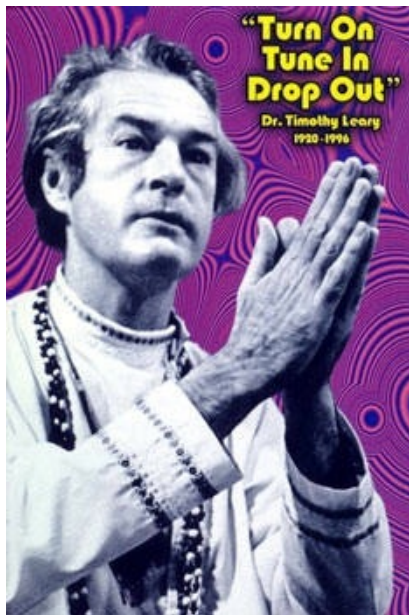
Timothy Leary

~~~~~~

In the 1960s, many soon-to-be famous musicians flooded into Laurel Canyon in the foothills above Santa Monica. A vibrant music scene emerged almost overnight on the nearby Sunset Strip. Record producer Terry Melcher recalled, "*kids came from everywhere. It just happened. One day you couldn't drive anymore. It was, like, overnight – you couldn't drive on the Strip.*" Clubs sprung up on the Sunset Strip and major record labels sprang into action.   So did the mainstream press.   Since that time, theories have emerged about what was happening there and why it began so quickly.

One popular theory points to many of the musicians and their military families, positing that economic interests behind the war in Vietnam could have collaborated to cultivate a vibrant counterculture, rooted in psychedelics, "muse-ick" and new age consciousness as a means of controlled opposition and absorbing some of the dissenting pressure coming from the radical left. Where did all the LSD come from? Who paid for it? Did The Brotherhood of Eternal Love, aka the "hippie mafia," who produced and distributed their own brand of LSD called "orange sunshine" really have CIA connections? Did Timothy

Leary's "Harvard Psilocybin Project" in the early 1960s have connections on high?   Was Owsley Stanley, the LSD supplier for the Merry Pranksters, Grateful Dead concerts, "acid tests" and events like the the human be-in of 1967 and Monterey Pop Festival and Altamont Free Festival just a man having some fun?
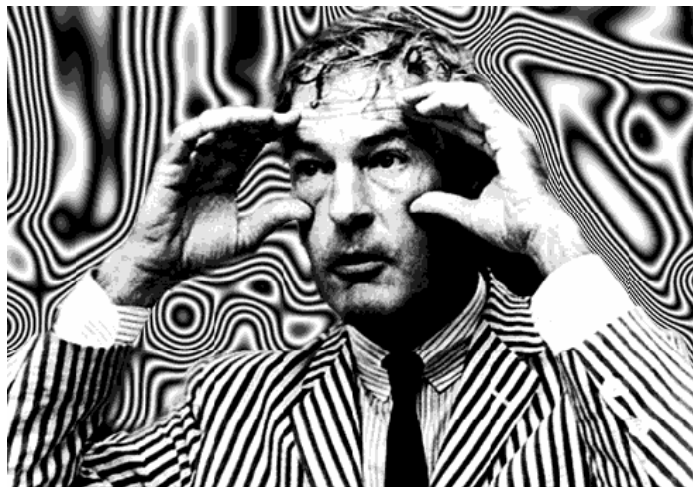
As popular as LSD was, not to mention illegal (in Ca.) after 1966, it could probably have fetched a pretty good price on the street. Yet LSD was often passed out free of charge, as if it grew on trees, begging the question of who was footing the bill. It was speculated, even by counterculture insiders, that the mass doping was part of a CIA plot to neutralize dissent, especially after it became known that the CIA was behind the MKULTRA program in which counterculture icon Ken Kesey was involved.   In the documentary, "Hippies," former Digger, Peter Coyote, said, *Some on the left even theorized that the hippies were the end result of a plot by the CIA to neutralize the anti-war movement with LSD, turning potential protestors into self-absorbed naval-gazers.*" Yippie founder, Abbie Hoffman, said *There were all these activists, you know, Berkeley radicals, White Panthers … all trying to stop the war and change things for the better. Then we got flooded with all these 'flower children' who were into drugs and sex. Where the hell did the hippies come from?!"*

Perhaps all this could accurately be characterized as a modern day manifestation of bread and circuses. But it wasn't the only one or even the most important, for several hundred miles north of the Laurel Canyon scene, the Silicon Valley was hosting a true revolution, internet technology. Or were both of these part of the same undertaking, as both had deep roots in the counterculture? Indeed, it was prominent counterculture intellectuals and their adamantly anti-technocratic core values that would play a major role in bringing this new technology to the mainstream. IT was looked upon by the counterculture as a way of

promoting their egalitarian worldview and power to the people. And LSD also played a prominent role in the advent of IT, as we shall see.

Much of the early computer research was done at the Stanford Research Institute (SRI). During this same period, Stanford was also one of the many universities around the country where the CIA was conducting covert and illegal mind control experiments using psychedelics, including LSD. One such experiment was the Harvard Psilocybin Project. During the fall of 1960, Aldous Huxley was appointed visiting professor at the nearby Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston. He also became involved with the Harvard Psilocybin Project which began that same year. Other participants included Timothy Leary, Richard Alpert (Ram Dass) and others. In 1954, Huxley had theorized in "The Doors of Perception" that there are metaphorical doors in the human brain that may be opened by properly administered psychedelics, greatly facilitating consciousness expansion and self-discovery. Huxley was recognized as a man of remarkable intelligence, described by author, Jay Stevens, as "*probably the brightest young literary man of his generation in any of the western countries*" **(1)** adding that; "*The fall of 1960 was an equivocal time for Aldous Huxley. His lectures on visionary experience were jammed. And not just by students. The public ones at night caused traffic problems more appropriate for the Harvard-Yale game.*" **(2)** So it's no wonder that Huxley was sought out by Leary to participate in the 1960 Harvard project. Huxley was also enthusiastic about working with Leary. As Stevens put it, "*For Huxley, Tim Leary was like a strong breeze in a sail that had started to sag. His enthusiasm, his theoretical orientation, and most of all his connection with Harvard, made him the perfect man to advance Aldous's psychedelic scenario.*"

The "most dangerous man in America," according to President Richard Nixon.

But concerns were raised about the safety and legitimacy of the project and it was shut down. Leary and Alpert, both rising academic stars, would be released from the university the following year. Leary and Alpert then began seeking a better place to

pursue the study of psychedelics. They would go on to continue their experiments in Millbrook, New York, but went their separate ways shortly thereafter. Each spent their own time traveling in India. Alpert returned from India with a new name, and would henceforth be known as "Ram Dass".   Leary went on to become involved with the Brotherhood Of Eternal Love in Laguna Beach, California, an organization that produced and distributed "orange sunshine", their own brand of LSD.   Huxley would become involved with the Vedanta Society of Southern California, a society that was devoted to spiritual activities. **(3)** Huxley, Leary and Alpert would all go on to become involved with the Esalen Institute in Big Sur, California. Founded in 1962, Esalen was intended to be a center for the study and development of human potential, and is still regarded by many as the geographical center of the human potential movement. Besides Huxley, Leary and Alpert, past teachers include Buckminster Fuller, B.F. Skinner, Deepak Chopra, Albert Hofmann, Stan Grof, Arnold Toynbee, Ken Kesey, Abraham Maslow, Jerry Rubin, Gary Snyder, Alan Watts, and many others. LSD was a tool often used at Esalen to promote consciousness expansion. As one participant put it;

> *"Esalen provided the philosophy for the Hippies, but before the Hippie thing could catch on, they needed to find a catalyst and a sacrament. Well, Ken Kesey turned out to be the catalyst and Timothy Leary and Stanley Owsley provided the sacrament, namely the LSD. Our country has never been the same since. It's kind of hard to believe that all of this came out of an obscure little camp out in the woods that only us starving artists and philosophers know about. The Esalen Experience, they call it, experience being the key word, for it's the experience that counts. For example, it's not good enough just to read The Doors of Perception. What you have to do is experience what's behind the doors of perception. In other words, you have to take the acid and have the experience."* **(4)**

A utopian social vision was emerging in the counterculture which was centered around a strange brew of forces, which in some cases seemed quite at odds with one another; human potentialism, a sort of back to the earth tribalism, modern technology, and mind expanding psychedelics, especially LSD. Nowhere was this vision better encapsulated than Stewart Brand's Whole Earth Catalog which launched in 1968. In the words of author Theodore Roszac, this strange brew of forces had a "*hybrid taste,"* elaborating that;

> *Alongside the rustic skills and tools, we discover high industrial techniques and instruments: stereo systems, cameras, cinematography, and, of course, computers. On one page the 'Manifesto of the Mad Farmer Liberation Front' (Wendell Berry's plea for family-scaled organic agriculture); on the next, Norbert Wiener's cybernetics.*" **(5)**

Author Fred Turner echoes these sentiments;

"In 1968 Brand founded the Whole Earth Catalog in order to help those heading back to the land find the tools they would need to build their new communities."

"These items included the fringed deerskin jackets and geodesic domes favored by the communards, but they also included the cybernetic musings of Norbert Wiener and the latest calculators from Hewlett-Packard. In later editions, alongside discussions of such supplies, Brand published letters from high-technology researchers next to firsthand reports from rural hippies. In the process, he offered commune-based subscribers a chance to see their own ambitions as commensurate with the technological achievements of mainstream America, and he gave technologists the opportunity to imagine their diodes and relays as tools, like those the commune dwellers favored, for the transformation of individual and collective consciousness. Together, the creators and readers of the Whole Earth Catalog helped to synthesize a vision of technology as a countercultural force that would shape public understandings of computing and other machines long after the social movements of the 1960s had faded from view."

"In theWhole Earth Catalog era, these networks spanned the worlds of scientific research, hippie homesteading, ecology, and mainstream consumer culture. By the 1990s they would include representatives of the Defense Department, the U.S. Congress, global corporations such as Shell Oil, and makers of all sorts of digital software and equipment." **(6)**

Brand credited Buckminster Fuller for the catalog's inspiration. Marshall McLuhan was also a key influence. He and Fuller both helped Brand to "*imagine a new synthesis of cybernetic theory and countercultural politics,*" as Turner put it.   And according to Turner, McLuhan had "*twin interests in cybernetic approaches to communication media and tribal forms of social organization,*" which

> "*linked both the new tribalism and its promise of a return to a prebureaucratic humanism to a more cybernetic rhetoric of human machine entanglement,*"

 adding that;

> "*In McLuhan's view, the individual human body and the species as a whole were linked by a single nervous system, an array of electronic signals fired across neurons in the human body and circulating from television set to television set, radio to radio, computer to computer, across the globe.*" **(7)**

Brand had other important influences. He first took LSD in December of 1962, and began hanging out with Ken Kesey and the Merry Pranksters at Kesey's home near Stanford. He later began collaborating with Kesey and the Pranksters for events like the Trips Festival in 1966, which catapulted Brand to the fore as entrepreneur. By this time,

about 8 years had passed since Kesey had volunteered as a test subject in the CIA's MKULTRA program, presumably unaware that it was a CIA program exploring mind control.   Theodore Roszak elaborates on the role of LSD in the counterculture social vision.

> "*The assumption underlying these mass distribution efforts was blunt and simple: dope saves your soul. Like the Catholic sacraments, it takes effect ex opere operato -- by its very ministration. Once this promise crossed wires with the growing interest in oriental mysticism, the psychedelics had been launched as a cultural force. It seemed clear that the research laboratories of the western world -- including those of the giant pharmaceutical corporations -- had presented the world with a substitute for the age-old spiritual disciplines of the East. Instead of a lifetime of structured contemplation, a few drops of home brewed acid on a vitamin pill would do the trick. It was the short cut to satori.*"

> "*Here, I suspect, is the reason why Buckminster Fuller, Marshall McLuhan, and the other technophiliac utopians struck such a responsive chord among the countercultural young. Acid and rock had prepared an audience for their message, and prepared it in an especially persuasive way that undercut the cerebral levels.*"

> "*Combined with the music and the lights in a total assault upon the senses, they can indeed make anything seem possible.*"

> "*This experience, purchased out of the laboratories of our industrial culture, somehow allies its disciples with the ancient, the primitive, the tribal. Its proper use is among huddled comrades, gathered in a sacramental hush in park or field, on the beach, in the wilderness, or the enfolding darkness of an urban den. Here, then, we find the same striking blend of the sophisticated-scientific and the natural-communal that Buckminster Fuller claimed for the geometry of the geodesic dome, and that the Silicon Valley hackers would eventually claim for the personal computer. 'This generation absolutely swallowed computers whole, just like dope,' Stewart Brand observed in a February 1985 interview in San Francisco Focus Magazine.*" **(8)**

In the late 1970s, the Reagan presidential campaign hired SRI (Stanford Research Institute) to help them design an effective strategy. This was well covered in the 2002 film, "*The Century of the Self,*" by Adam Curtis, who interviewed actual SRI researchers who had participated in this study. SRI had developed a method called "VALS" ("Values, Attitudes and Lifestyles") which could be used to help both corporate marketing and political campaigns through profiling. In this case, SRI profiled the motivational tendencies of so-called "inner directed" individuals of the counterculture (the film specifically names the Esalen Institute as a "countercultural nexus") thereby learning how to pander to them most effectively. This ended up making the difference in

the election and making Reagan the 40th President of the United States, a somewhat bitter irony which surprised even SRI researchers. **(9)** By the time Reagan was elected, SRI had already begun work for the Department of Defense on a project that would later become "Star Wars" program, proposed by President Reagan on March 23, 1983. How prominently might IT factor in to such exercises in social engineering today?

More recently (2005), in his Stanford University commencement speech, Steve Jobs would compare Stewart Brand's Whole Earth Catalog to the internet search engine, Google, echoing Timothy Leary the previous decade and his newly modified, slogan; "turn on, boot up, jack in."   "Digital be-ins" would carry the tradition forward into the new century, "*with a mission to carry forth the ethos and values expressed at the 1960's Human Be-In, and bring them into the world of multimedia and internet technology.*" It served a role through the 1990's as a venue for the San Francisco Bay Area's community of new media pioneers to socialize and exchange ideas. Cyberculture became the focal point of the gatherings. However, producer Michael Gosney also brought in key figures from the Human Be-In such as Allen Cohen, Chet Helms and Timothy Leary to maintain the 60s influence, as well as 60s icons Ken Kesey, Ram Dass and Wavy Gravy. In the early years, it drew major companies as sponsors, such as Apple, Microsoft, Adobe Systems and Kodak, while at the same time staying an underground party.

Isn't it strange to see such a powerful technology and access to information suddenly in the hands of so many people, when not all that long ago this would probably have been looked upon as threatening to established economic and political interests?   Any potential threats associated with this technology must be outweighed by some sort of benefit and probably several. One of the most important of these has to be a social transformation corresponding to the shift from the industrial age to the post industrial age of information where knowledge, the production of ideas and information sciences represent a new form of capital. Because access to this form of capital is indeed more broad in some ways, it is thought of as contributing to a more egalitarian society. But is this really the case?

Though IT today can be put to many good uses, it is the consummate slippery slope. This technology doesn't just make transgressions of good use of time more likely. It makes

them practically inevitable. You log on to order some new supplies for your business and the next thing you know you find yourself reading some obscure article in world news for no other reason than that it was easy. Our browsers mysteriously seem to know exactly what our interests are, placing perfectly tailored ads right at our finger tips. How much of this is, to borrow from Aldous Huxley and his "Brave New World Revisited;" " *for the purpose of preventing people from paying too much attention to the realities of the social and political situation*," or worse?

Suffice it to say that it might not be such a good idea to have a one stop shopping portal and bona fide oracle in the same place that we make important communications and transactions. But never mind for a moment that this technology represents the mother of all distractions, one that makes daytime television look good. Never mind that it provides the infrastructure for corporate marketers to surveil your keystrokes and create detailed individual profiles, or for the government to carry out newly adopted protocols to spy on citizenry. Those are already serious issues, but what about the insidious changes in our own values?   What of the ever growing disparity between what we ourselves believe is a sane amount of time to be engaged with this technology and the actual amount we spend? We communicate with social groups to a degree that is not even remotely commensurate with genuine need. Obscure global news that used to seem less relevant somehow seems more important. Broad access imbues a sense of relevance on numerous levels. How often do we find ourselves spending an amount of time engaged with internet technology that even we ourselves characterize as irrational? By repeating this behavior over and over again, what are incorporating into our belief system? Where might this sort of behavior be leading us?

Broad access greatly facilitates the dissemination of various forms of propaganda. The so-called "independent media" takes on a bigger role, assuming a very convenient air of legitimacy in being "indie," a sort of organic label of media. Its difficult to imagine a better tool for foisting misinformation, fashioning a false consensus or softening the target for what would otherwise be unpopular legislation and reform.

It's not just ideas that may be represented falsely. How easy it would be, with the apparatus of IT and social media in place, to falsely incriminate any person or group deemed a threat, at the behest of a single individual - the President, thanks to the recently broadened powers of the unitary executive. So while the technology in question may very well empower ordinary people to some degree, the egalitarian billing it received was either grossly misrepresented or woefully shortsighted.   It seems self evident then that Roszak is correct in calling IT a "mixed blessing," one in which there is little doubt which class of society benefits the most;

> "*Even when the Internet was nothing more than a restricted military messaging system, enthusiasts envisioned a day when politically restive millions would network their aspirations and talents via computer. All they had were funky little CPUs that scrolled sickly green letters and numbers at a snail's pace across a 6-inch screen, but that was enough, they said, to build the New Jerusalem.*"

> "*The computer has brought us convenience and amusement, but, like all technology, it's a mixed blessing. Far from smashing Big Brother, computers have given him more control over our lives.*"

> "*We have watched high tech become the next wave in big-bucks global industrialism, the property of the crass and the cunning, who are no more interested in empowering the people than General Motors was.*"   **(10)**

> "*Similarly, it now seems abundantly clear that long before the personal computer has the chance to restore democratic values, the major corporations and the security agencies of the world will have used the technology to usher in a new era of advanced surveillance and control.*"

> "*It was an attractive hope that the high technology of our society might be wrested from the grip of benighted forces and used to restore us to an idyllic natural state.*" **(11)**

How badly do we really need the information we are actively seeking out? Is our thinking on this matter artificially inflated by access to IT?   Since the arrival of the world wide web, how much time do we have to just relax and rest? Are we trying to assimilate too much, too fast?   Does a society plagued by a constant temptation to connect with the flood of information emanating from the press and the world wide web stand much chance of even successfully managing their own affairs and making ends meet, much less organizing to create social change? What good is all this information if the underpinnings of society, on multiple levels, are disintegrating, in large part because our collective level of infatuation has grown to be reminiscent of moths around a porch light?

How our peers see us is especially important during our adolescent years. While this may well be true, it is far less clear that technology is playing a truly supportive role here for our youth, as is often claimed by adherents of the technology in question. In fact, it is becoming clearer every day that this technology is doing far more harm than good. Professor of psychology, Jean Twenge, whose work on this subject has been featured in both The Atlantic and NPR's *All Things Considered,* suggests that youth today are spending less time with their friends in person and are experiencing unprecedented levels of anxiety, depression, and loneliness. She also asserts that; "*recent research suggests that screen time, in particular social-media use, does indeed cause unhappiness,*" and that iGen, or people born between 1995 and 2012, are "*on the brink of the worst mental health crisis in decades.*"

Is it any wonder? Can normal, healthy friendships be made and maintained across a computer screen? This is an important question because internet technology is catalyzing this new trend, away from face to face interactions and towards something that is less personal and perceived as more efficient. IT is changing the very nature of the bonds we make with one another and at a critical age. The results of such a trend will likely be more in keeping with the demands of globalization and the post industrial, information based economy and will likely bode very well for many of the prominent multinational corporations. But what effect will it likely have on human happiness and fulfillment?

I would suggest that what is happening is part of a broader trend, a trend of national and even global proportions that was well underway before computers. In many countries,

we have already seen and continue to see the breaking down of old values and traditions as well as the erosion of national sovereignty and personal freedoms, all of which are seen as obstacles to control for the prevailing economic and political interests. These trends have been anything but the will of the masses.

It is instructive here to recall that tradition and the family unit were both once looked upon by prominent utopian thinkers in the United States as the greatest obstacles to creating a perfect society. According to author, John Taylor Gatto, these were the same thinkers who "*saw to it that money was available to build these vast piles of brick and stone to drain children out of the community by the force of law …*" to "*sort people into occupational categories roughly consonant with what the current economy demands.*"

Likewise, the economy today has its own demands. But these demands are different. They reflect the shift from the industrial age to the post industrial age of information. Just as compulsory schooling played a vital role in creating a social milieu that would be in keeping with the demands of the industrial age, so too does IT play a vital role today in setting the stage for the post industrial age of information and the church of progress behind it.

But IT doesn't just set the stage for the modern day economy and its corporate high priests. It also represents the ultimate distraction and for many seems to give license to wasting time. Does this really empower our youth or does it tilt the tables against them? The scope of IT is global and all pervasive. Global events no longer feel like the distant events that they are. Local communications with friends and family are vastly more numerous and trivial. Suddenly we have a far greater responsibility, or so it would seem, to keep track of absurd levels of information. Our collective level of distraction has reached fever pitch. Because acceptance of the technology is the default setting, we now seem to have validation to devote large swaths of our time and mental resources to matters which are insignificant and diversionary. Their allure has increased by virtue of nothing more than the fact that they are more accessible, a direct result of technological "progress" and what Huxley called "*the development of a vast mass communications industry, concerned in the main neither with the true nor the false, but with the unreal, the more or less totally irrelevant.*" And this was before the world wide web. Even without the Web, according to Huxley, the level of distraction was immense;

> "*But even in Rome there was nothing like the non-stop distractions now provided by newspapers and magazines, by radio, television and the cinema.*"

Today, in the presence of the internet, all this is multiplied exponentially.   There is a sort of symbiotic relationship between information itself and the delivery system. Has McLuhan's catchphrase, "the medium is the message," ever been more true?   Along with the information being passed around, new behavioral demands are built in. Increasingly, there seems to be some sort of bizarre, ethical imperative associated with both computer use and the Web. More and more, one's self-worth is being measured or associated with

one's stature in social media networks. Being easily reached and available to respond at all times is being associated with being on the cutting edge. Our youth aren't cool if they're not texting with their peers on an ongoing basis, multitasking that with computer and cell phone use, often simultaneously. We are socially irresponsible if we do not track global news, if we do not stay abreast of what the mass media and popular culture deems important, most of which is negative. We appear out of touch if we do not boo and hiss whenever the media holds up the supposed enemy of the state, "grave threats to national security" and other fear-centered propaganda that runs rampant. This has become entrenched in our culture, doing the same thing newspaper, tv and radio use to do but on a logarithmically greater scope and scale.

Can this technology be used to our advantage? This is true in some respects, no doubt. But *is* the technology being used primarily in such a manner? Recently I went into an eating establishment to get lunch, and literally everyone, both standing in line and already seated, was staring into some sort of computer monitor. If the amount of information the human mind can process before reaching sensory overload has ever been in question, then the day of reckoning has certainly arrived. Is this a positive development? Will it make us more happy, satisfied and fulfilled? Just how much information, over any given time, is really healthy? At what point does it become unhealthy? How many people exceed their individual threshold by their own assessment? How many exceed it by an enormous margin?

How many of us are so awash in free time that, in our waking hours, we can afford to spend the kind of time people are spending, on average, staring into their palm? What has been displaced by what has been dubbed "screen addiction"? Is it good that a musician be encouraged to put away an instrument, or an artist their brush and canvas, in favor of the digital medium? Will a digital synthesizer ever sound as good as the real instruments that they emulate? And even if they could sound as good, can they even begin to match the experience of playing a real instrument? And how much gets put on the proverbial shelf today so that we can engage with some facet of technology that is only vaguely important, if that, even by our own admission? How can one hold a normal

conversation with someone who is constantly being distracted by another stream of consciousness? It would appear then that the definition of "normal" is changing, and it is doing so very quickly.

The disempowering effects of IT are fairly clear. But just as with other harmful and self sabotaging behaviors, the people can be brought to the bidding of the leaders with carefully crafted PR campaigns, as the Freud family, Ed Bernays in particular, demonstrated so well. War, junk food, debt, consumer fetishism, ad infinitum … the list is endless for a society that has been indoctrinated into the milieu of end user-hood and mall culture, much to the delight of the corporate overlords. I can only hope that the barrage of information emanating from the world wide web will be used with the judiciousness that it commands so that we don't go down in history as the epoch in which human behavior resembled that of lever-pressing lab rats. Insofar as we might like to maintain some semblance of control in our lives, it may serve us well to recall what Aldous Huxley said;

> *"A society, most of whose members spend a great part of their time, not on the spot, not here and now and in their calculable future, but somewhere else, in the irrelevant other worlds of sport and soap opera, of mythology and metaphysical fantasy, will find it hard to resist the encroachments of those who would manipulate and control it."* **(12)**

It's one thing that the counterculture, despite its anti-technocratic ethos, would play a pivotal role in ushering in the next big technology. It's another that this would be the full blown technological revolution that it has been. And it's still another that LSD would factor in at all, let alone as prominently as it has. Who knew? And what does it all mean? The use of consciousness expanding psychedelics has a rich history in human cultures which looked upon these substances as invaluable, though such substances tended to be simpler, more naturally occurring plants and fungi. Can something synthesized in a laboratory really simulate such things? Would it work in the same way? Why was LSD synthesized in the first place and why was it dumped onto the streets the way that it was?

The answers to such questions are not as clear as we might like them to be. However, a few things are certain, beginning with the fact that IT takes the efficacy of bread and circuses to a whole new level, and in a myriad of ways. Moreover, in the established tributaries of information flow, the idea that the downside cannot possibly outweigh the upside is promulgated, regardless of how glaring that downside is. So it goes for the modern day church of progress. You're living in the Dark Ages if you're not well connected. Acceptance of the technology is somehow the default setting, just as it was for the automobile. The populace may purchase automobiles at their whim and enjoy unfettered access to the roadways, consequences be damned. And so it goes for internet technology. These technologies are looked upon as entrenched and, to borrow a recent

expression, "too big to fail." This reminds us that, by default, we recently had to swallow the idea of handing over trillions in taxpayer monies to the nation's largest banks, private entities, mind you, because they were just "too big to fail." One need not look far and wide for analogues. The subtext holds true on most fronts; what's good for big business is good for everyone else.

It is interesting to note that the same Aldous Huxley who warned of "*the development of a vast mass communications industry*" had a brother, Julian Huxley, a lifelong internationalist and UNESCO's first Director General, who wrote;

> "*The task ... is to help the emergence of a single world culture with its own philosophy and background of ideas and with its own broad purpose. This is opportune, since this is the first time in history that the scaffolding and the mechanisms for world unification have become available ...*" **(13)**

So while Julian Huxley dreamed of a "world unification," his brother Aldous warned against the very technology which seemed tailor made for ushering in such a state of affairs. Were the brothers, both very influential in their own right, at ideological odds with one another? Or, to the contrary, were they erecting the scaffolding for conjunctio and dialectical synthesis, an old idea that weighed heavy on the minds of various German philosophers like Kant, Hegel, and Fichte, an idea aimed at creating the milieu for social change or "progress"? We did, after all, adopt the Prussian system of compulsory schooling, a system devised to promote nation building and creating a complacent, obedient workforce. It comes as little surprise then that the Prussian system for creating social change was also adopted. And isn't the very basis of our political system resting on on this same overarching theme, where the tension of opposites is used to produce a superior end result? Hegel summed it up with the following statement;

> "*Truth is found neither in the thesis nor the antithesis, but in an emergent synthesis which reconciles the two.*"

The few who control the mass media are clearly very interested in promoting partisanship, far beyond the mere salesmanship needed to push the products of the corporate sponsors. Though prominent corporations are very interested in peddling their wares, they are even more interested in maintaining the status quo, so that their success may continue for as long as possible. The purpose of the mass media is controlling the public mind. We are supposed to believe that two countervailing forces are working together to create change or progress. The presumed tension between the two prevailing parties creates the requisite air of legitimacy. But this end result was preconceived. Both sides are funded by the same interests, each side serving as a bulwark against the other.

So it goes for shaping the pretexts for wars. The big businesses supplying it and the merchant bankers underwriting it cannot lose, regardless of the outcome of the war. The

opposing agendas are held high for all to see, while the real agendas remain hidden until it is too late.

Once again, analogues are not hard to find. Take World War 2, for example, since it came at such a pivotal time in our history. Did ordinary people know, until it was too late, that Prescott Bush, Brown Brothers Harriman and their Union Banking Corporation were laundering Nazi money or that Royal Dutch Shell supplied the Nazis with crude oil? Did they know about Rockefeller's cozy business relations with IG Farben or that his Standard Oil supplied the Luftwaffe with tetraethyl gasoline? Did they know about the ties between Ford, GM and the German war machine, or that Hitler was groomed by allied multinationals before he became chancellor? Did ordinary people know about the merchant bankers making loans to countries who needed money for their part in the war effort? Because of the control of information and dissemination of misinformation, ordinary people could not possibly know, until it was too late, that Germany would be deliberately built back up again, after being torn to pieces at Versailles, to be a bulwark against Bolshevism so that the profiteering of the big business supplying the war effort and, most notably, the merchant bankers underwriting it, could continue in yet another war - World War 2.

And because of that same control of information, ordinary people would also have to endure the "reds under the bed" nonsense for decades to come before the new threat of "terrorism" took over. Such perceived evils are as necessary in our society as anything is. Though they may actually exist to some degree in many cases, that degree is very malleable, thanks to the corporate owned mass media. Such "evils" are easily exaggerated to such a degree that they overshadow the atrocities being committed by our own leadership. And in some cases, they cover them up completely.

Even today, we are taught in school and in the media that what happened in Germany under Hitler is to be blamed solely on Germany, on German leadership. We are taught that what happened in Germany was an aberration, even though a good look at the eugenics movement obliterates that notion, beginning with the fact that the first death camps belonged not to Hitler but to England during the second Boer wars in South Africa. In fact, the atrocities that occurred in Germany were a product of the geopolitical milieu of the time. These atrocities cannot be blamed on "a few bad apples" in one country. They have to be blamed on the prevailing global, economic interests that created that milieu.

But the church of progress cannot be encumbered by such inconvenient details. It's corporate high priests must be afforded some latitude, some creative license to record history as it sees fit, in order to keep the peace. It's for our own good. The lie is said to be a noble one, like the lie of Manifest Destiny, or the lie that the mass genocides of 19th century imperialism could be justified by the very convenient idea of Darwinian winnowing.

Clearly, not all social change may be responsibly characterized as progress. One only has to look at the results to discover that the social engineers of the modern day have co-opted an old, powerful idea, exploiting it to gain and maintain power and control. Today, as many are aware, well funded "change agents" and "facilitators," used in a wide variety of settings to shape the world we live in, are trained to cultivate conformity to group thinking and submission to a preconceived consensus. Such folks are, by and large, well intended, unwitting participants. They are merely administrators, trained to administer the noble lie. They are taught that, due to the irrational fears and desires of the masses, a certain amount of deception (and sometimes a lot) is necessary to avoid chaos in society, an idea Bernays capitalized on so very completely. These lies are "for the good of the whole," as is the idea of a "single world culture."

But again, one need only look in the results column, both domestically and globally, to see that it seems more likely for the good of the few. One need only look at what is going on in the world today and ask a few obvious questions. Is leadership, whether national or international, really just trying to "make the world safe for democracy," as is oft alluded to? Or, is the focus really to make the world safe for big business, most notably, big banking interests? Is the United Nations really focussed on keeping the peace, or are its goals more focussed on maintaining the balance of power through forced acquiescence and the manufacture of consent? If consensus is preconceived, just what sort of consensus is it, really? And which constituency will likely benefit the most from Julian Huxley's so-called "world unification?" Isn't it becoming clearer every day? ~

~~~~~~

notes;

1 - Jay Stevens - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mbI4f1WvN9w

2 - Jay Stevens, from "Storming Heaven: LSD and the American Dream" p. 141

3 -   http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vedanta_Society_of_Southern_California

4 -   http://wild-bohemian.com/esalen.htm

5 - Theodore Roszak, "From Satori to Silicon Valley"

6 - Fred Turner - http://www.edge.org/3rd_culture/turner06/turner06_index.html

7 -   Fred Turner - http://www.press.uchicago.edu/Misc/Chicago/817415.html

8 -   Theodore Roszak, "From Satori to Silicon Valley"

9 -   See BBC film, "The Century of the Self" - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eJ3RzGoQC4s; (scroll to 2:36:54. Strap yourself in.

10 -   LA Times (2004) - http://articles.latimes.com/2004/jan/28/opinion/oe-roszak28

11 -   Theodore Roszak - http://web.stanford.edu/dept/SUL/sites/mac/primary/docs/satori/light.html

12 - Aldous Huxley, from Brave New World Revisited (1958) - http://www.huxley.net/bnw-revisited/

13 - Julian Huxley, from "UNESCO - It's Purpose and it's Philosophy"