

Why Facebook is the most socially destructive company in history!

Tue, 08 Dec 2015 16:00:00, newstips66, [category: brotopia, category: energy-dept-slush-fund, post_tag: facebook, post_tag: facebook-is-white, category: facebook-meta, post_tag: hot-crime-topics, post_tag: racism, post_tag: why-facebook-is-the-most-socially-destructive-company-in-history, category: worldnews]

Why Facebook is the most socially destructive company in history!

Racist, misogynistic, cyber-bullying, child suicide causing Facebook has no point in the world aside from making Zuckerberg rich from NSA spy contracts.

[The Opinion Pages](#) | Turning Points THE NEW YORK TIMES

Bret Easton Ellis on Living in the Cult of Likability

By BRET EASTON ELLIS

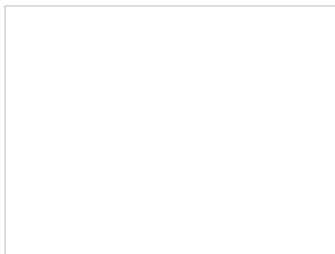
Photo

Credit Luisa Vera

This is an article from [Turning Points](#), a magazine that explores what critical moments from this year might mean for the year ahead.

Turning Point: *Uber becomes one of the world's most valuable start-ups.*

On a recent episode of the television series "South Park," the character Cartman and other townspeople who are enthralled with Yelp, the app that lets customers rate and review restaurants, remind maître d's and waiters that they will be posting reviews of their meals. These "Yelpers" threaten to give the eateries only one star out of five if they don't please them and do exactly as they say. The restaurants feel that they have no choice but to comply with the Yelpers, who take advantage of their power by asking for free dishes and making suggestions on improving the lighting. The restaurant employees tolerate all this with increasing frustration and anger — at one point Yelp reviewers are even compared to the Islamic State group — before both parties finally arrive at a truce. Yet unknown to the Yelpers, the restaurants decide to get their revenge by contaminating the Yelpers' plates with every bodily fluid imaginable.



Bret Easton Ellis Credit Jeff Burton

The point of the episode is that today everyone thinks that they're a professional critic ("Everyone relies on my Yelp reviews!"), even if they have no idea what they're talking about. But it's also a bleak commentary on what has become known as the "reputation economy." In depicting the restaurants' getting their revenge on the Yelpers, the episode touches on the fact that services today are also rating us, which raises a question: How will we deal with the way we present ourselves online and in social media, and how do individuals brand themselves in what is a widening corporate culture?

The idea that everybody thinks they're specialists with voices that deserve to be heard has actually made everyone's voice less meaningful. All we're doing is setting ourselves up to be sold to — to be branded, targeted and data-mined. But this is the logical endgame of the democratization of culture and the dreaded cult of inclusivity, which insists that all of us must exist under the same umbrella of corporate regulation — a mandate that dictates how we should express ourselves and behave.

Most people of a certain age probably noticed this when they joined their first corporation, Facebook, which has its own rules regarding expressions of opinion and sexuality. Facebook encouraged users to "like" things, and because it was a platform where many people branded themselves on the social Web for the first time, the impulse was to follow the Facebook dictum and present an idealized portrait of their lives — a nicer, friendlier, duller self. And it was this burgeoning of the likability cult and the dreaded notion of "relatability" that ultimately reduced everyone to a kind of neutered clockwork orange, enslaved to the corporate status quo. To be accepted we have to follow an upbeat morality code where everything must be liked and everybody's voice respected, and any person who has a negative opinion — a dislike — will be shut out of the conversation. Anyone who resists such groupthink is ruthlessly shamed. Absurd doses of invective are hurled at the supposed troll to the point that the original "offense" often seems negligible by comparison.

I've been rated and reviewed since I became a published author at the age of 21, so this environment only seems natural to me. A reputation emerged based on how many reviewers liked or didn't like my book. That's the way it goes — cool, I guess. I was liked as often as I was disliked, and that was OK because I didn't get emotionally involved. Being reviewed negatively never changed the way I wrote or the topics I wanted to explore, no matter how offended some readers were by my descriptions of violence and sexuality. As a member of Generation X, rejecting, or more likely ignoring, the status quo came easily to me. One of my generation's loudest anthems was Joan Jett's "Bad Reputation," whose chorus rang out: "I don't give a damn about my reputation! I've never been afraid of any deviation." I was a target of corporate-think myself when the company that owned my publishing house decided it didn't like the contents of a particular novel I had been contracted to write and refused to publish it on the grounds of "taste." (I could have sued but another publisher who liked the book published it instead.) It was a scary moment for the arts — a conglomerate was deciding what should and should not be published and there were loud arguments and protests on both sides of the divide. But this was what the culture was about: People could have differing opinions and discuss them rationally. You could disagree and this was considered not only the norm but interesting as well. It was a debate. This was a time when you could be opinionated — and, yes, a questioning, reasonable critic — and not be considered a troll.

Now all of us are used to rating movies, restaurants, books, even doctors, and we give out mostly positive reviews because, really, who wants to look like a hater? But increasingly, services are also rating us. Companies in the sharing economy, like Uber and Airbnb, rate their customers and shun those who don't make the grade. Opinions and criticisms flow in both directions, causing many people to worry about how they're measuring up. Will the reputation economy put an end to the culture of shaming or will the bland corporate culture of protecting yourself by "liking" everything — of being falsely polite just to be accepted by the herd — grow stronger than ever? Giving more positive reviews to get one back? Instead of embracing the true contradictory nature of human beings, with all of their biases and imperfections, we continue to transform ourselves into virtuous robots. This in turn has led to the awful idea — and booming business — of reputation management, where a firm is hired to help shape a more likable, relatable You. Reputation management is about gaming the system. It's a form of

deception, an attempt to erase subjectivity and evaluation through intuition, for a price.

Ultimately, the reputation economy is about making money. It urges us to conform to the blandness of corporate culture and makes us react defensively by varnishing our imperfect self so we can sell and be sold things. Who wants to share a ride or a house or a doctor with someone who doesn't have a good online reputation? The reputation economy depends on everyone maintaining a reverentially conservative, imminently practical attitude: Keep your mouth shut and your skirt long, be modest and don't have an opinion. The reputation economy is yet another example of the blanding of culture, and yet the enforcing of groupthink has only increased anxiety and paranoia, because the people who embrace the reputation economy are, of course, the most scared. What happens if they lose what has become their most valuable asset? The embrace of the reputation economy is an ominous reminder of how economically desperate people are and that the only tools they have to raise themselves up the economic ladder are their sparkingly upbeat reputations — which only adds to their ceaseless worry over their need to be liked.

Empowerment doesn't come from liking this or that thing, but from being true to our messy contradictory selves. There are limits to showcasing our most flattering assets because no matter how genuine and authentic we think we are, we're still just manufacturing a construct, no matter how accurate it may be. What is being erased in the reputation economy are the contradictions inherent in all of us. Those of us who reveal flaws and inconsistencies become terrifying to others, the ones to avoid. An "Invasion of the Body Snatchers"-like world of conformity and censorship emerges, erasing the opinionated and the contrarian, corralling people into an ideal. Forget the negative or the difficult. Who wants solely that? But what if the negative and the difficult were attached to the genuinely interesting, the compelling, the unusual? That's the real crime being perpetrated by the reputation culture: stamping out passion; stamping out the individual.

Bret Easton Ellis is the author of six novels, including "Less Than Zero," "The Rules of Attraction," "American Psycho," "Glamorama," "Lunar Park" and "Imperial Bedrooms" and a collection of stories, "The Informers." He is also the host of The Bret Easton Ellis Podcast.

How Facebook addiction is damaging your child's brain: A leading neuroscientist's chilling warning

By [Baroness Susan Greenfield](#) for THE DAILY MAIL

Can you imagine a world without long-term relationships, where people are unable to understand the consequences of their actions or empathise with one another?

Such conditions would not only hamper our happiness and prosperity - they could threaten our very survival.

Yet this imagined existence isn't as far away as it seems. It is a plausible future. For we are developing an ever deeper dependence on websites such as Facebook, Twitter and Second Life - and these technologies can alter the way our minds work.

We must take this issue of computers seriously because what could be more important than the brains of the next generation?

As a neuroscientist, I am aware of how susceptible our brains are to change - and our environment has changed drastically over the past decade. Most people spend at least two hours each day in front of a computer, and living this way will result in minds very different from those of past generations.

Our brains are changing in unprecedented ways. We know the human brain is exquisitely sensitive to the outside world - this so-called 'plasticity' is famously illustrated by London taxi drivers who need to remember all the streets of the city, and whose part of the brain related to memory is generally bigger than in the rest of us as a result.

Indeed, one of the most exciting concepts in neuroscience is that *all* experience leaves its mark on your brain.

But while adults' brains *can* change, it is children who are most at risk, for their brains are still growing - and may not have yet had a full range of experiences in three dimensions.

Yet 99 per cent of children and young people use the internet, according to an Ofcom study. In 2005, the average time children spent online was 7.1 hours per week. By 2007, it had almost doubled to 13.8 hours. As an expert on the human brain, I am speaking out as I feel we need to protect the young.

Of course, this idea may not be welcomed - when someone first linked smoking and lung cancer, people didn't like that idea; some derided them because they enjoyed smoking. But parallels could well be drawn with this, and I believe similar precautionary thinking should be set in train, as in turn was needed for sunbathing and carbon emissions.

Millions of individuals are signing up for friendship through a screen

We must take this issue of computers seriously because what could be more important than the brains of the next generation?

Three areas of computing are likely to have the most marked effect - social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter, imagined online societies such as Second Life, and computer games.

Facebook turned five years old in February. Arguably, it marks a milestone and a highly significant change in our culture - millions of individuals worldwide are signing up for friendship through a screen.

Half of young people aged eight to 17 have their own profile on a social networking site. But two basic, brain-based questions still need to be addressed. First, why are social networking sites growing? Secondly, what features of the young mind, if any, are threatened by them?

In modern life, the appeal of social networking sites to children is easy to understand. As many parents now consider playing outside too dangerous, a child confined to the home can find at the keyboard the kind of freedom of interaction that earlier generations took for granted in the three-dimensional world of the street.

Though to many children screen life is even more appealing. Philip Hodson, a fellow of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy, suggests that: 'Building a Facebook profile is one way that individuals can identify themselves, making them feel important and accepted.'

Social networking sites satisfy that basic human need to belong, as well as the ability to experience instant feedback and recognition from someone, somewhere, 24 hours a day.

At the same time, this constant reassurance is coupled with a distancing from the stress of face-to-face, real-life conversation.

Real-life chatting is, after all, far more perilous than in the cyber world as it occurs in real time, with no opportunity to think up clever responses, and it requires a sensitivity to voice tone, body language and even to physical chemicals such as pheromones.

None of these skills is required when chatting on a networking site. In fact, one user told me: 'You become less conscious of the individuals involved (including yourself), less inhibited, less embarrassed and less concerned about how you will be evaluated.'

In other words, Facebook does not require the subtleties of social skill we need in the real world. Not only will this impair individuals' ability to communicate - and build relationships - it could completely change how conversation happens.

Maybe real conversation will give way to sanitised screen dialogues, in much the same way as killing, skinning and butchering an animal to eat has been replaced by the convenience of packages of meat on the supermarket shelf.

Social networking sites such as Facebook satisfy that basic human need to belong

Perhaps future generations will recoil with similar horror at the messiness, unpredictability and personal involvement of real-time interaction.

Other aspects of brain development may also be in line for a makeover. One is attention span. If the young brain is exposed to a world of action and reaction, of instant screen images, such rapid interchange-might accustom the brain to operate over such timescales.

It might be helpful to investigate whether the near total submersion of our culture in screen technologies over the past decade might in some way be linked to the threefold increase over this period in prescriptions for Methylphenidate, the drug prescribed for ADHD.

A second difference in the young 21st-century mind might be a marked preference for the here-and-now, where the immediacy of an experience trumps any regard for the consequences. After all, when you play a computer game, everything you do is reversible. You can switch it off or start again. But the idea that actions don't have consequences is a very bad lesson to learn, when in life they always do.

And in games the emphasis is on the thrill of the moment. This type of activity can be compared with the thrill of compulsive gambling.

The third possible change is in empathy. This cannot develop through social networking because we are not aware of how other people are really feeling - we cannot pick up on body language when we are communicating through a screen.

As a result, people could become almost autistic. One teacher wrote to me that she had witnessed a change over the 30 years she had been teaching in the ability of her pupils to understand other people and their emotions.

She pointed out that previously, reading novels had been a good way of learning about how others feel and think.

We should therefore not be surprised that those within the autism spectrum are comfortable in the cyber world. We do not know whether the current increase in autism is simply due to improved diagnosis of autism, but we must consider whether it can be linked to an increase among people of spending time in screen relationships.

Finally, there is a fourth issue at stake: identity. One 16-year-old summed it up as follows: 'Facebook makes you think about yourself differently when all your private thoughts and feelings can be posted on the internet for all to see. Are we perhaps losing a sense of where we ourselves finish and the outside world begins?'

Perhaps the next generation will define themselves by the responses of others; hence the baffling preoccupation with Twitter, where users post an almost moment-by-moment, flood-of-consciousness account of their thoughts and activities, however banal.

It would be easy to test for physiological proof of the impact of computer games - for example, to see in scans if the frontal area is less active in players. This is the most sophisticated part of the brain which develops latest, so it is less active in children and becomes maximally operational only in our 20s.

Though its functions are many and far from clear, it seems an important feature in humans, whose frontal area is far larger than chimpanzees.

My view is that it works in conjunction with the rest of the brain to enable you to escape from the immediate moment.

Are we losing a sense of where we finish and the outside world begins?

People with an underactive pre-frontal cortex (hypofrontal), perhaps because of brain damage, are reckless, easily distracted and have short attention spans.

I am not against computers *per se*. I use them and appreciate the benefits the internet has brought. Ultimately, I believe that much like traditional sources of instant gratification - sex, drugs, drink - social networking sites tap into the basic brain systems for delivering pleasurable experience.

But these experiences are devoid of long-term significance. I find it incredibly sad that people choose to spend their time and money sitting alone playing games with no consequence and no meaning.

But beyond any frustration I feel is concern about the future our screen culture might create. One extreme situation could be a rise in psychiatric problems and fewer babies born because people can't form three-dimensional relationships.

By the middle of this century, our minds might have become infantilised - characterised by short attention spans, an inability to empathise and a shaky sense of identity.

One effect, the fragmentation of our culture, is already occurring: the violent videos posted on YouTube.

Steps must be taken to stop this - to safeguard the mindset of the next generation so that they may realise their potential as adults.

We cannot turn back the clock, but the threat is growing because technology is becoming more seductive and powerful. We must start facing up not only to the impact that computers are having on ourselves and our children - but also to the wider implications their use will have for our society in the future.

• Baroness Susan Greenfield was key guest speaker at the Women of the Year lecture at the Royal Institute of Great Britain. Visit www.womenoftheyear.co.uk

Facebook use 'makes people feel worse about themselves'

•

Using Facebook can reduce young adults' sense of well-being and satisfaction with life, a study has found.

Checking Facebook made people feel worse about both issues, and the more they browsed, the worse they felt, the University of Michigan research said.

[The study](#), which tracked participants for two weeks, adds to a growing body of research saying Facebook can have negative psychological consequences.

Facebook has more than a billion members and half log in daily.

"On the surface, Facebook provides an invaluable resource for fulfilling the basic human need for social connection. Rather than enhancing well-being, however, these findings suggest that Facebook may undermine it," said the researchers.

Internet psychologist Graham Jones, a member of the British Psychological Society who was not involved with the study, said: "It confirms what some other studies have found - there is a growing depth of research that suggests Facebook has negative consequences."

But he added there was plenty of research showing Facebook had positive effects on its users.

Loneliness link

In the survey, participants answered questions about how they felt, how worried they were, how lonely they felt at that moment, and how much they had used Facebook since the last survey.

They received five text messages each day at random times between 10:00 and midnight, containing links to the surveys.

Researchers also wanted to know about how much direct interaction participants had with people - either face-to-face or by phone - between questionnaires.

Results showed that the more people used Facebook, the worse they felt afterwards. But it did not show whether people used Facebook more or less depending on how they felt, researchers said.

The team also found that the more the participants used the site, the more their life satisfaction levels declined.

The pattern appeared to contrast with interacting "directly" with people, which seemed to have no effect on well-being.

But researchers did find people spent more time on Facebook when they were feeling lonely - and not simply because they were alone at that precise moment.

"Would engaging in any solitary activity similarly predict declines in well-being? We suspect that they would not because people often derive pleasure from engaging in some solitary activities (e.g., exercising, reading)," the report said.

"Supporting this view, a number of recent studies indicate that people's perceptions of social isolation (i.e. how lonely they feel) are a more powerful determinant of well-being than objective social isolation."

Colloquially, this theory is known as FOMO - Fear Of Missing Out - a side effect of seeing friends and family sitting on beaches or having fun at parties while you are on a computer.

Learning the rules

According to the study, almost all the participants said they used Facebook to stay in touch with friends, but only 23% said they used the social networking site to meet new people.

More than three-quarters said they shared good things with their communities on the site, while 36% said they would share bad things on Facebook as well.

Mr Jones warned that the study's findings were probably most relevant to people who spent too much time on Facebook, and the study did not offer a full comparison with "direct" social contact.

He also said that since Facebook was such a recent phenomenon, society was still learning to use the platform.

"As a society as a whole we haven't really learnt the rules that make us work well with Facebook," he said, adding some people became unable to control their experience with it.

The researchers said their study was the first to examine the effect Facebook has on its users' well-being over time.

The Negative Effect of Facebook on Society and Individuals

by Brian Jung, Demand Media

Social networking allows users to easily meet and communicate.

Social networking sites like Facebook and MySpace allow you to find and connect with just about anyone, from a coworker in a neighboring cube to the girl who played Emily in your high school production of "Our Town" thirty years ago. Browsing these sites can make you feel connected to a larger community, but such easy, casual connection in an electronic environment can also have its downside.

A False Sense of Connection

According to Cornell University's Steven Strogatz, social media sites can make it more difficult for us to distinguish between the meaningful relationships we foster in the real world, and the numerous casual relationships formed through social media. By focusing so much of our time and psychic energy on these less meaningful relationships, our most important connections, he fears, will weaken.

Cyber-bullying

The immediacy provided by social media is available to predators as well as friends. Kids especially are vulnerable to the practice of cyber-bullying in which the perpetrators, anonymously or even posing as people their victims trust, terrorize individuals in front of their peers. The devastation of these online attacks can leave deep mental scars. In several well-publicized cases, victims have even been driven to suicide. The anonymity afforded online can bring out dark impulses that might otherwise be suppressed. Cyber-bullying has spread widely among youth, with 42% reporting that they have been victims, according to a 2010 CBS News report.

Decreased Productivity

While many businesses use social networking sites to find and communicate with clients, the sites can also prove a great distraction to employees who may show more interest in what their friends are posting than in their work tasks. Wired.com posted two studies which demonstrated damage to productivity caused by social networking: Nucleus Research reported that Facebook shaves 1.5% off office productivity while Morse claimed that British companies lost 2.2 billion a year to the social phenomenon. New technology products have become available that allow social networks to be blocked, but their effectiveness remains spotty.

Privacy

Social networking sites encourage people to be more public about their personal lives. Because intimate details of our lives can be posted so easily, users are prone to bypass the filters they might normally employ when talking about their private lives. What's more, the things they post remain available indefinitely. While at one moment a photo of friends doing shots at a party may seem harmless, the image may appear less attractive in the context of an employer doing a background check. While most sites allow their users to control who sees the things they've posted, such limitations are often forgotten, can be difficult to control or don't work as well as advertised.

[References \(4\)](#)

About the Author

Brian Jung has been writing professionally since 1991. Currently he works as a software developer for University Hospitals in Cleveland, Ohio, where he also contributes reviews and commentary on children's and young adult literature to his own blog, Critique de Mr Chompchomp, and to Guys Lit Wire. Brian holds a Doctor of Philosophy in English from the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee.

Facebook, financier of the First Black U.S. President, only hired 7 Black People, despite giving a diversity pledge. Frat-House Valley loves the Whiteness.

- Facebook only hired seven black people in 2013, latest diversity report says
- Company's annual diversity report shows majority of staff are still white
- All white, all male, Silicon Valley Cartel seems to hate the blacks and the women
- Facebook and Silicon Valley lied about embracing diversity & womens rights
- Silicon Valley VCs all white males with white superiority, elitist, ivy league attitudes, say employees
- No blacks live in Silicon Valley VC towns of Atherton, Woodside!
- Sixty-eight percent of employees are male - a 1% decrease from last year

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg ponders the meaning of diversity.

@RupertNeate FOR THE GUARDIAN

Facebook is dominated by virtually as many white men as it was last year despite Mark Zuckerberg's repeated promise to get serious about building a workforce that better reflects the diversity of its 1.4 billion global users.

In its diversity report released on Thursday the social network company revealed that more than half of its US staff are white, with the proportion dropping slightly from 57% to 55%. The proportion of Asian employees increased by 2% to 36%, but the share of hispanics, black people and those of "two or more races" remained flat at 4%, 2% and 3% respectively.

Facebook's senior leadership is even more homogenous, with 73% of the most important positions filled by white people.

The company did not provide a breakdown of the exact numbers of people of different ethnicities in different ranks at the firm. It is required to do so by US law, but a spokeswoman said there is a lag in filling the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) report.

The most recent EEO filing available shows Facebook hired an additional seven black people out of an overall headcount increase of 1,231 in 2013. At that time Facebook employed just 45 black staff out of a total US workforce of 4,263. Facebook's black female headcount increased by just one person over 2013 to 11, and the number of black men increased by six to 34. There were no black people in any executive or senior management positions.

Over the same period the company's white employee headcount increased by 695. There were 125 white people holding executive and senior management positions at the firm.

The spokeswoman was unable to say when it would file its 2014 EEO report.

Facebook also made little progress increasing the proportion of female employees, 68% of its global employees are male - a decrease of 1% on last year. Among its employees working on its core technology 84% are male, down from 85% last year.

The slow progress on improving diversity comes despite Zuckerberg repeatedly promising to make the company's employees better reflect the identities of its users. When Facebook released its first diversity report last year, Maxine Williams, its global head of diversity, said: "At Facebook, diversity is essential to achieving our mission."

"We need a team that understands and reflects many different communities, backgrounds and cultures. Research also shows that diverse teams are better at solving complex problems and enjoy more dynamic workplaces. So at Facebook we're (HA, HA) serious about building a workplace that reflects a broad range of experience, thought, geography, age, background, gender, sexual orientation, language, culture and many other characteristics."

In this year's diversity report, Williams admitted that "it's clear to all of us that we still aren't where we want to be".

"There's more work to do."

Last month Zuckerberg said: "We have the same talent bar for everyone. But we want to find a disproportionate number of candidates who are women and minorities."

He has also said that there is "just so much research that shows that diverse teams perform better at anything you're trying to do".

Facebook was founded, and funded, by Fraternity House white elitist males who treat women like crap and only consider dark skinned people for gardening chores.