

# Our

**social-media-ego-pyramid-scheme**



by

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According to the Washington Post, there are as many users on FACEBOOK as there are people populating some of the largest nations on earth (like India or China) - 1.35 billion, if one is to believe their Q3 (2014) reporting. It seems like everyone is on FACEBOOK. I'm not on FACEBOOK, but how can I really be sure I'm not? Somehow, some way, I'm sure FACEBOOK has a replicant version of me, out there, in cyberspace - but with a shinier attitude.

I was on TWITTER<sup>1</sup>, until last weekend - where in one fell swoop I deleted my account, and TWITTER says it will be deleted in approximately 30 days. The social-media cult cannot simply "let you go" on a whim, you must be made to wait, so that you are sure.

No - you cannot simply be allowed to remove yourself from any social medium without time to meditate on this digital suicide, "they" cannot simply be ignored. Like the film, "Fatal Attraction", the social-media-squids will wrap themselves around your face and find your pet rabbit and boil it ... that's what they intend to do.

I was never going to be on TWITTER, just as I never intended (nor do I intend) to be on FACEBOOK<sup>2</sup> - but in November 2012, a short time after my sister Nancy died of late-stage cancer, a "friend" suggested social-media as a

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1 Technically, I am back on TWITTER (again) as @SullyWisdom; I guess I intend to live tweet the apocalypse. Whatever - consistency is the bugbear of small minds.

2 I am still, technically, not on FACEBOOK. I think my ex-wife got FACEBOOK in the divorce, and I got TWITTER. But, I bet there is somebody pretending to be Uncle Dan - and people probably like that version better.

way to "deal with it". In hindsight, this might have been one of the worst decisions of my life and really shitty advice.

My decision to be on TWITTER was not an error because of my "fear of corporations seeing what I post" - I'm not afraid of this. I wore the uniform once, swore an oath to protect and defend the U.S. constitution - so I take my freedom of speech seriously, even if our republic is on life-support (or dead). No, I didn't leave TWITTER out of fear of being known for my beliefs - I am proud of what I believe, even if faith in human liberty and dignity makes me a throw-back these days, an anachronism.

I left TWITTER<sup>3</sup> because it revealed itself, as FACEBOOK does, and other social medial often do, as an echo-chamber of hate and thought control and the general howl of discontent which is our fallen epoch.

Let's go full circle and return to that 1.35 billion number on FACEBOOK ...

I am a software engineer, professionally. I've worked with artificial intelligence and I am sensitive to what is and is not possible. I've written programs that mimic human-like text generation, using [HMM \(Hidden Markov Models\)](#) and other related techniques. So, I can honestly say "I know a bot when I see one" (weird cliché aside) -

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<sup>3</sup> Again, I've had a few Twitter accounts BECAUSE I've gotten pissed off at Twitter (and tweeps) a few times since 2012 (the first time I was on Twitter).

but this is anecdotal, so take it with a bag of salt if you must. From my experience, a huge portion of the "users" on TWITTER (and likely FACEBOOK) are either 100% bots or swarms of managed bot-accounts. Some are honest enough to call themselves this - and so you get Friedrich Nietzsche vacillating between random quotes from Zarathustra and the promotion of Hong Kong soft-core porn or quickie-diet scams.

Many of the bots are so well done, and have such a nefarious purpose, that it takes a professional bot writer to notice them - and these are mostly propaganda/PR bots<sup>4</sup>. These bots have a horrible agenda - to sell war-porn, hate-porn, economic hopey thinking and other kinds of intellectual garbage. These bots represent a significant portion of FACEBOOK and TWITTER -[FACEBOOK says the number is roughly 11%, I think there estimate is quite low.](#)

I am attacking "bot politics" to argue a simple point: ***whatever you think you are getting from social-media personally, others are getting something from you as well.***

Sure, you may not feel like someone in the MATRIX, but you are. You are being manipulated, and even a website as "benign" as Linked-In is part of this charade of EGO dysfunction.

I've had a Linked-In account for a few months<sup>5</sup> now -

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<sup>4</sup> This is the election season (madness season) of American politics. Expect a lot of bots and bot armies to be pushing Hillary and Trump and other nonsense.

<sup>5</sup> I deleted my linked-in account months ago. I might open another account, but what is the point? (at this point)

but somehow I have almost 500 connections. I am categorized as an "All Star" by the Linked-In-EGO-Pump and this must be true, because otherwise it would seem like manipulation (hint).

I don't pay for the "premium" account - but that doesn't matter much. I am participating in this system, reinforcing it, and making it seem even more legit in the process (even this post is a kind of legitimation). Sure, not quite as legit as the account for **Viktorija Zantos-Rokus-Mueller**<sup>6</sup>, but then nothing could ever be that legit - she's too legit to quit. (for more info on her, and my relationship with her, go to: [letterstoviktorija.com](http://letterstoviktorija.com))

Yes - I'm on Linked-In [not since 2015], and yes - I rationalize this like all of you do, this is "career" related. If I am honest I am doing this because it seemed like I should - a kind of social pressure to be "seen" and to reinforce those who wish to be "seen".

I am not a crack-pot social theorist - I'm a fat, middle-aged, software engineer with a blog. I won't pretend to know the current thinking on "narcissistic personality disorder" and I won't do a half-ass reprise the fine work of Christopher Lasch on this subject ([if you've not read "The Culture of Narcissism", you should](#)). No, this is more of my own interpretation of reality - and you don't have to

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<sup>6</sup> I deleted Viktorija's account as well. It was fun while it lasted, but she's just too big for linked-in.

pay me a dime.

I believe there are reasons we want to be "seen" and to "see" others - good reasons, probably related to being social mammals. We social creatures learn from each other, and we have evolved reward mechanisms for this - chemicals (drugs) in the brain that get released in that moment. If some monkey figures out a better way to grope for insects in a tree-stump, we want to reward that monkey - "liking" that monkey, in pre-historic times, was a bit more rustic but equally real (and the monkey gets a dose of dopamine).

So, yeah - there are good reasons that explain our involvement in social media. But like most of our evolved characteristics, these can, in isolation from real-purpose, become problematic - even pathological.

[In its pathological form, social media deprives us of real community - authentic human contact and relationships.](#)

Social media often reinforces the worst perspectives or the most banal - and serves as a medium of propaganda and psychic-driving writ large. Social media, especially TWITTER, favours the sound-bite over the logical argument or reasoned dialogue. Social media promises "everyone can be famous for 15 minutes", per Andy Warhol's dictum - but that is not reality either, especially when you factor in all of the accounts that are bogus, bots.

So, yes - I am deleting my TWITTER account, but I still have a YOUTUBE channel ([craptopia.tv](http://craptopia.tv)) and I still

have a blog ([iamsully.com](http://iamsully.com)) and I am still on Linked-In.

And while you might want to place Linked-In in a special category, protected from the propagandists, flim-flam artists, war-pornographers, and bromide-salesman, don't judge too soon.

Linked-In, in very concrete ways, is a pure-form of the "see/seen" duopoly of ego-inflation. I say ego-inflation, because I really don't know how anyone can fact check or determine whether the "count of recognized skills" means anything at all.

Sure, I have a ton of people who have recognized me for having "skills". I am an honest person, so I am not sure that this is deserved. I'm not saying I don't have those skills, I probably do - I just don't know if those who are recognizing them are in a position to determine this, just as I don't know that I am when I do the same.

The "Skills and Endorsements" region of a Linked-In profile feels like an evolved Skinnerian experiment in self-esteem buggery. I endorse you, you endorse me - and we both get our food pellet (dopamine cascade). But I am disquieted by the nature of it, and perhaps this makes me a weirdo.

Any who - why worry?

It seems to me if the social media tool you are using makes you "feel better", then keep on using it!

No reason to stop now!

(you have over 1,000 followers)  
(and they all really care about you)