

Blurred lines... how the vicious internet is creating a vicious world

 By [Chemory Gunko](#)

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In our competitive, cut-throat, winner-takes-all society, it seems like everybody is out for themselves: look out for number one, make sure you get what you deserve, trample anyone who stands in your way and make sure you take wrathful vengeance against anyone who slights or even vaguely offends you.

So how much does our permissive internet culture contribute to perpetuating and growing this kind of behaviour... and are we on the brink of creating a society of psychopaths?

You only have to surf two or three web pages to see that the majority of online ads nowadays are focused on one of four topics:

- how to lose weight incredibly quickly without effort, diet, exercise or changing your eating habits;
- how to get stinking rich even more quickly - be worth millions within a week in fact - without effort, work or even getting off your couch;
- porn - sexual stimulation and release without any effort or the need to do anything to make yourself worthy of an intimate relationship or attractive to the opposite sex; and
- how to manipulate and seduce any girl against their will so that they will do anything you want and submit to you sexually - even if they aren't attracted to you, or you're not the kind of guy who usually gets female attention.

Most importantly though, you should do and enjoy all of these things without conscience, without guilt, without remorse.

Take what you want, take what you need, put yourself first and viciously annihilate anyone who disagrees with you, stands in your way or challenges your belief systems - after all you are number one, you are who matters and you deserve and are entitled to have everything fall into your lap, without the need for any real work or effort on your part. You just have to believe you deserve it and it will happen.

These are the defining characteristics of a psychopath - the overriding belief that no one else's needs could or would ever matter as much as the needs of the self, coupled with the ability to know right from wrong and yet still undertake the activity without conscience, guilt or remorse.

A permissive & bullying culture

Maybe it's because it has its origins in the States, where freedom of speech is lifted so high above other values...

Perhaps it's the chauvinistic undertones that permeate geek culture, which has traditionally been filled with nerdy, skinny and often unattractive white men (sic) who are inept at attracting women and so use attack as the best form of defence...

Whatever the reason, since the dawn of the internet, people have believed that they have the right to say or do anything they want on the internet, that social rules and standards don't apply, that basic humanity and kindness do not apply, that somehow they are different on the internet, and most importantly, that they can separate their behaviour on the Internet from the way they act in real life.

A case in point, the [Steubenville High School rape case](#), where a group of high school boys sexually abused and gang-raped a semi-conscious 16-year-old girl at a house party - and live tweeted the entire event.

Responses from the people participating on Twitter included thoughts like: 'Well she's unconscious, so you don't know if she consents or not, so it can't actually be rape.' In fact, in the video footage, some of the people watching this unfold right in front of them at the party, find the thought that it's not rape and that the girl does 'consent' to be, and I quote: '...the funniest \$#1% ever!'

You know what really blows my mind about this particular incident? There's video footage of people watching this happening - not to mention the audience on Twitter.

No one tried to help this girl.

Not one person got up to help this unconscious or semi-conscious girl. Not a single person tried to help, because they were too busy being entertained.

How degraded have our values become as a society that you see a rape as entertainment instead of a call to climb in and help a fellow human being? What has happened to our sense of humanity?

Or the University of Stirling's hockey team, who caused an uproar when [this video](#) was published online, showing the team singing a horribly misogynistic song about a women who walks into a department store asking for various items and instead is (ab)used sexually every time... until a woman comes into the store asking for an orgasm, to which the response is: 'Who the &^%\$ cares what she got!'

So sex is only enjoyable if it's taken by force? A woman should get no pleasure out of it?

So why is this a problem?

The first problem with giving people this permissiveness without allowing them to develop within themselves, is that they don't grow the self-censorship and other positive qualities they'd have if they had evolved into that place of their own accord.

So, there's no balance and no motivation to look for alternative sources of information.

The second problem is that the simple act of participating in these forums makes it easier for people to make the leap from fantasising about these concepts to making them a reality. Let me explain.

In NLP and coaching, often you'll find that the most powerful techniques are simple, easy-to-remember processes that have far reaching consequences.

Of these simple techniques, the single most powerful tool I've ever come across for dealing with fear or a limitation that's holding you back, is simply to acknowledge it out loud.

Try it for yourself right now.

Whatever you're scared of at the moment - not having enough money at the end of the month, finding out your partner is cheating on you - just say it out loud a few times repeatedly: "I am scared that I won't have enough money to pay my bills at the end of the month."

What you'll notice in most cases, after you've released that and said it out loud, is that the intensity of the emotion, the fear, begins to subside quite dramatically.

In fact, that's the very technique that makes the Catholic Church so powerful - there is true release that comes from confessing your sins and no longer carrying the burden on your own. So much so that it is also one of the most powerful forgiveness exercises I know - to simply admit to someone what you've done and have them say, 'I forgive you on behalf of humanity,' can release the most enormous burdens of pain and guilt.

Now apply that understanding of how simply saying something out loud can make it easier to do or face, and look at a case like [Elliot Rodger and Isla Vista killings](#).

With Rodger, the community that he belonged to reinforced his own beliefs and gave him the strength and encouragement to follow his very sick desires.

I'm talking about beliefs and desires like:

- women have no right to choose who they have sex with;
- women are subservient to men and should obey any man around them;
- women should accept being bred by any man who wants them pregnant; and
- women should be sexually available to any man who wants to take them - in fact they should just offer themselves sexually to total strangers.

And understand this... Rodger didn't go on a killing spree because he lacked or craved love in his life; he killed seven people and injured six others because a community had repeatedly reinforced the belief that he was entitled to have gorgeous women walk up to him and drop their drawers so that he could do whatever he wanted with them sexually.

He didn't want love... he wanted all the sexy girls to line up so that he could just use them sexually, one after the other.

When that didn't happen, the belief that he deserved to have it happen had created such a strong sense of entitlement that not having that reality caused him to take gun, walk into a shopping centre and just start shooting people... because an online community convinced him that he was entitled to have whatever he wanted, regardless of anyone else or their needs. He died a virgin.

Psychopath much?

We're creating a rape culture online and it bubbles over into real life with increasingly violent physical attacks on women.

But online NO ONE is safe or immune, regardless of your race, gender, colour, creed, how well you've done or what you've achieved.

Worse than that - we're encouraging psychopathic tendencies and behaviours online, and idolising and learning from business and media celebrities who have only achieved their celebrity because they have such high levels of psychopathic characteristics: charisma, coolness under pressure, intense focus and complete lack of conscience, guilt or remorse.

In fact, it's become so bad and pervasive that many of the authors on this subject all have the same revelation: they present a workshop or talk and have corporate leaders approach them to find out how they can hire people who specifically have these characteristics.

It seems the business and political world is hell-bent on populating our leadership with psychopaths... and yet we can't understand why Governments are in chaos and the economy collapsed?

Now go back to those ads we mentioned in the beginning, and you're teaching men who don't know how to be or behave in a relationship how to seduce girls against their will.

They don't have the knowledge to keep them, to win them legitimately; they don't take the time to get to know them, in fact they are open about not caring at all... it's only about manipulating these girls into doing what you want, giving you sex, because your needs matter and the other person's don't.

Never mind if the girl wants love, you want sex... so that makes it okay to manipulate and lie and create hurt when you abandon them.

Do that without a conscience, which is what you are working towards, and well, that makes you a psychopath, or at least puts you firmly on the path to becoming one.

Would you really let Ted Bundy have his own blog?

Would you really let Jeffrey Dahmer start a forum or community encouraging other would-be cannibals to follow their impulses... allowing them to speak and open up to each other repeatedly, until the internal checks and guards that stop them from committing those atrocities have been broken down?

Nature or nurture?

Within genetics, there's a study called epigenetics, which basically looks at how certain genes within our bodies are turned on or off by the environmental stimuli we're exposed to.

With the way the Internet currently stands, without censorship or control of any form, we are creating environments that are turning what could be dormant psychopathy genes on, in people who might otherwise have gone on to live full and productive lives.

We're creating a breeding ground for psychopathy on the Internet, and in South Africa all of this is hugely exacerbated by the unbelievable racism and racial tension that exists in this country.

Yes there is place for open, honest debate, and I love the way that social media and the Internet have created a platform through which people can participate in crucial conversations on a societal level.

As I've said in articles before, we paralyse ourselves into inadequacy by not allowing people to speak and say what's really going on.

Instead though, we're allowing people to group themselves into little communities of self-interest, where their current belief system is perpetually reinforced with no contradicting evidence to counter or balance it - giving the individual no chance to develop or evolve out of that stage or phase.

These clustered little groups, and the withdrawal from mainstream society, are creating even greater stereotyping, and making it easier for people to hate on anyone that is different from them.

A case in point? South Africa and whites.

In South Africa, if you're white, you're a colonialist. That's stereotyping.

How do I know this? I get called a colonialist when my family are actually WWII Holocaust refugees and my grandfather

was brought to this country as part of a group of 500 Jewish orphans smuggled out of Poland to save their lives.

His parents were dead and he was 13 or 14 years old... and he was brought here with no say, against his will, completely alone, while his only remaining family member was sent to a different continent.

I didn't create this country; my family was marooned in this country. But because I'm white, I'm viciously attacked as a colonialist if I dare say anything about the racial situation or what I am experiencing as a white person. And that's just on social media and in the more 'private' parts of the web.

God help you if you're brave enough to put stuff out there in mainstream media - you'll be ripped a new one with any piece you write.

I've had comments telling me that I'm &^%\$ing useless, that I have no idea what I'm doing, that I'm boring, that I'm self-serving and I've even been called a whore. On a marketing piece designed to educate entrepreneurs and small business owners? WTF?

You only have to talk to a few writers and editors to know how high our frustration levels are about the way we are attacked. We are the very people creating your infotainment and entertainment. We are the very people creating the internet you surf and the content you consume. Yes, we may have strong voices and we may be willing to contribute to society as a whole, but that does not make us any less human, or any less immune to bullying, nastiness and hurt.

The attacks that you undertake, the nasty comments that you make, cause real emotional and mental pain. How do I cope now? I hardly ever read the comments. And if I do see a positive comment, I'm usually utterly surprised that it has happened. How sad.

We live in a reality where the culture and behaviour of people leaves us expecting to hear, see and experience the bad. Surround yourself with that ugliness and meanness on the web and you cannot stop it flowing over into real life.

For myself, and many of the writers I know, we're reaching a point where we're self-censoring, scrapping four brilliant ideas for every article we do write, purely because we no longer have the strength or mental fortitude to take on and accept the hate that seems to go hand-in-hand with making any kind of contribution in the world today.

A great example of this is what happened to [Professor Mary Beard](#) when she appeared on a live TV forum called Question Time, where she says all her knowledge and studying was reduced to nothing more than attacks about her appearance and Twitter comments about the size of her vagina.

The haters took it so far in fact that they were Photoshopping vaginas onto pictures of her face and distributing them online. At the point where you have enough time to undertake a graphic design project whose sole purpose is to humiliate someone you don't know and have never met, you have no excuses left - it is purely an active and vicious attack that is meant to hurt. It is bullying, degrading, psychopathic behaviour.

As Professor Beard says in one interview, you feel so belittled, so angry and frustrated, that you just no longer see the value of participating in society.

On the worst end of that self-censorship scale, you have writers, contributors and thought leaders who are actively withdrawing from participating in society altogether - and there is way more of this happening than what you would think.

For every positive, strong voice that withdraws from participating on the web, the value of good is diluted and the power of the bad becomes so much stronger. Eventually you'll chase away all the opposing views and voices of reason, the Internet will lose its balance and become a vehicle for pure hatred and evil.

So what's the solution?

Possibly it's time to consider that we need censorship on the internet.

Maybe we need rules like you cannot comment on somebody else's writing until you've contributed a minimum of ten published pieces via a reputable media house. Once you can show ten legitimately published pieces, you can apply for the access that allows you to respond in comments on other people's writing.

Perhaps for blogs you'd need a license, which would only be awarded once you can show 100 pieces published in mainstream media. At 100 pieces published, you're obviously an expert in your field and have proved yourself able to consistently produce material that offers value and worth to the society in which you operate.

Personally I follow a rule similar to this, which is how I hold myself accountable: I will only publish on my blog pieces that have been submitted to, accepted and published in mainstream media. That way it's not just me deciding - there are at least two to three other people per media house who have also deemed the content as being appropriate, socially acceptable and offering value and worth.

It may be that we have to place the onus of responsibility on web hosting companies, making them accountable for the content that is published on their servers.

Probably the hosting companies would then need to employ, or be held accountable to, panels who approve the go-live of websites and website content, so that we can, for example, force guys who are teaching men how to seduce women to include the balance of the relationship skills information.

So, you are allowed to access the seduction content, but only if you've passed a test or consumed a certain value of content on relationships and the skills and knowledge you need in order to have healthy intimate interactions.

It may also be that the responsibility lies with the advertising, marketing and media communities, and we need to place more emphasis on teaching and encouraging strong values and ethics in those who participate in these fields.

We might even need to take that one step further and issue licenses to advertising agencies - if you don't have a license, you're not allowed to place advertising on the Internet, for yourself or on behalf of a client.

Or hold the agencies more accountable by fining them, because they hold the license or they actually placed the ad. If you know you can get a fine or lose your license, you're much more likely to exercise your discretion about which clients you take on and what you advertise.

Perhaps we need watchdogs where get-rich-and-thin-quick schemes are forced to display a portfolio of evidence proving that at least 1,000 people have made millions or lost all their weight in a week, before they are allowed to advertise online.

In fact, that's exactly what the Consumer Protection Act (CPA) in South Africa says regarding copywriting and marketing: you cannot advertise or make a claim that you cannot unequivocally prove; what you say has to be the whole truth and nothing but the truth. No embellishment allowed.

Maybe the very sad truth is that we will not fix the world, or any of the problems in it, unless we eradicate the Internet and return to a simpler life, like we had before the advent of globalisation and technology.

I am honestly scared for our collective future

I love the internet, don't get me wrong.

The internet has given us a connected global village where we can share thoughts and ideas and grow collectively and as individuals. Through the internet, we have unparalleled access to the food we need to feed and grow our minds, hearts and souls. And as an artist and creative, the internet is my absolute favourite medium.

Lately though, I find the internet a scarier and scarier place to be and participate in. The internet has changed our universe completely - but we have not kept up.

We do not do, or encourage in society, the spiritual, mental and emotional evolution that is required in order to have balance and understand the ramifications of what we're doing... and like all true psychopaths, we don't feel guilt about this, we just don't care.

It's just deemed okay to hurt, shame, humiliate, belittle and degrade other people and whole sections of society under the guise of democracy and free speech.

Running somebody down in media, or in the comments box, or on their social media profile does not make you a proponent of free speech - it makes you a bully... again a characteristic typical of psychopaths.

As someone who has had the misfortune of engaging with a psychopath as a role model in my life, I can tell you firsthand just how devastating, pervasive and all consuming the impact of striving towards psychopathic ideals is - and just how horribly it invades and damages every area of your life.

I'm a firm believer in people's ability to grow, develop and change, and I have dedicated my life to being on the forefront of pioneering that path so that others can follow - and in aiding those that require it.

But what I've learnt that really hits home for me with this, is that the default or instinctual behaviours exist so that people will have things happen for and to them until they can take control of those aspects of their lives with consciousness.

Basically, until people have developed the ability to think consciously and clearly make good decisions for themselves, they need rules to govern them.

Looking at the world right now, I can easily see how a self-aware machine would land up believing that we are the greatest danger to the earth and ourselves - and would see the need to exterminate us like the plague that we are becoming.

If I was that machine, I would do it.

We're at a tipping point people... the world is changing and people are coming down on the side of good or bad, life and true happiness or greed and entitlement.

Which side of the fence are you planning to land?

If you enjoyed reading this article...

I would recommend you watch the following two documentaries:

- [The Psychopath Next Door](#)
- [Blurred Lines: The New Battle of the Sexes](#)

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