

Freedom Over

To whom it may concern:

This is a day and age where identities are formed not solely from racial make-up, ethnicity, region, tribe, etc. They are complicated by what in philosophical terms that Martin Heidegger called 'Dasein' (being) and Jean-Paul Sartre took on from the existentialists as 'nausea'. What happened to identity during the interim period of these two thinkers' reflections on our human world was shaped obviously by the upheavals in the Western world.

My assumption is that their outlooks varied in that group affiliations and personal freedoms are always at war, and that war is at war with capital, classes, the past and future (or utilizes it for imperial, colonial, expansionist, or what have you ends). To my best judgment, to make war is to lay the foundation for peace - and what peace entails is freedom. Isaiah Berlin's two-part description of freedom - freedom from and freedom to - while forces the hand that individuals, citizens, and community members are and ought to demonstrate, or at the very minimum try to perform their duties as fellow brothers and sisters of mankind, offers much to be desired in the way in which these self-evident rights manifest themselves in the broader context of developing a healthy sense of what it is and how to go about not forcing the other hand.

This other hand is the hand that quickly withdraws from the flame of a type of freedom which, in my humble opinion, is the freedom over. As much as I would like to give credit to Nietzsche for his account of the 'ubermensche' (over-man), the will which succumbs to or masters both inner and outer forces and threats, it does not encompass what was once considered the foundation of ideal civilized society - the polis, the city and state governed by rules and regulations as to how to negotiate between the many facets of living among a whole lot of other human beings. It was a rupture from it. Unlike somebody like Nathaniel Hawthorne, he was rejected by his lover, and must've taken it out on Christianity, where the affection of agape escaped him just as much.

Having entered this letter with some of the more immaterial and non-physical attributes in which our world and the minds hovering in it are assembled and arranged, I have to turn now to something much more pressing. It is simply points of contact. By contact, I not only mean with other people in person, but the environment both in the space inhabited and in the virtual domain. Not to bring up the fact that today's digital frequencies (information and data streams allowing for easy access to what is around, far away, or somewhere neither) has enabled many to become extremely wealthy from this interfacing, allowing communication to flourish as never before while it's dangers are something settled by a by now dogmatic view shared across most users of a cyber-infused frontier as 'harmless', but the work of science and technology may be reaching a point of no return.

What I mean by that, and I don't mean futurists hopes and fears about the upcoming dystopic vision of machines running our lives more and more to the point where human beings serve as mere tools for the reproduction of their control over us until the day when they no longer rely us. What I mean is that there is going to be, and I am going to put it as bluntly as I can in order to elicit some feedback (perhaps a new or different definition), an oncoming rush of unhealthy behavior, what I personally experience as an interpretation of sensorial hijacking through bad manners. If there's anything to call it, I would take from the Renaissance and call it 'human mannerisms', as it derives from a source which propels it into action, like a potentiation of a spring energized by a malignancy at points of contact. (Althusser gave it the name 'interpellation', but he murdered his wife and for all intents and purposes, the health of thought on health itself can present problems)

I don't know where this malignancy is coming from, nor do I really want to know. The web, dark web, etc is much too vast and the study into our human natures leaves a lot to still figure out. I don't even want to get in to the climate. Stories have been told and handed down, protests and revolutions break out, and a whole underground of networks of hackers chip away at 'freedom' as it once was and veering it towards the 'freedom over' side.

I'm sure I'm not alone and perhaps may have contributed to this state of freedom, but freedom over is by no marginal account how things disseminate or propagate based upon the myriad channels of media distribution, lines of telecommunications, and aims of big corporate honchos. Our daily lives are so intertwined that posthumanism (this age and time is undeniably unhuman - inhumane, that's another question altogether) seems to feature this belief in disbelief so much that every act at the points of contact become incredulous and absurd. I suppose it is this layer that either makes it malignant or drives it into a kind of mannerism which perpetuates itself towards automation. A type of collapse into the veritable link to a cat gif meme. This is where I find daily encounters and interactions to be lacking in anything worth attending to other than receiving an automated mannerism, a 'manneriasm', if you will grant me the use of the suffix to emphasize it's malignant nature, targeted directly towards a self which exists for the sake of receiving such manneriasms. My feeling regarding this is that it is unhealthy.

The perception of this conduct stems mostly out of albeit unsavory characters, but it's reach is broadening, and the reaching itself is noxious. It's as if there is a deliberate attempt to do something illicit with these manneriasms, something criminal which goes under the radar. I would depict it as taking a Turing Test with everyone to see if they are a human or a machine, but it's rigged because both are now machine (machine-like).

The atrocities that accompany war and strife and the resulting wounds and traumas inflicted on those that really have no other choice, other than performing their duties as part of their role in protecting what they believe in and facing the adversities of an enemy, are the building blocks of honor, pride, dignity, respect, and admiration. A hero is conveyed through badges and salutes are given, and now the way in which this feature of what was once reserved for warriors and fighters, I suppose out of our (the west, the US, the northern hemisphere, sports team supporters) grip to maintain dominance, instills a false sense of empathy and compassion. Instead of a salute, there's a slap. The balance of gentleness and fierceness of the human spirit, as the aforementioned philosophers must've been engaged with as at odds with one another, tips even further towards freedom over through manneriasms.

A joke is a joke once, but told over and over again, it's not funny any more. But a manneriasm doesn't have much to do with humor (although I think comedy does make one pay attention and remember the one articulating the joke) as it does with generating immediate response. Response in a good or bad way, it's all the same - it doesn't do anything other than create an unhealthy mental ritualization, on the part of the perpetrator and the victim. A link is made where blows are dealt, that's it. These are harder to downplay when they occur not occasionally but at close range, in quantities above normal, out of nowhere, and by low/high alike. By that token, and the banal situations it finds itself creeping in to, I would have to cite from psychological and psychoanalytic references, with William James' 'Moral Equivalent of War' as one defense. But what I mean to say by rituals in banal situations is the condition whereby an entire day or days could be spent untangling from unhealthy daily rituals.

This has, I think, enormous consequences for our health as a human family. If I could give a reason for mass shootings it would be this one. I understand that

personality, the way we look, our job(s), our upbringing, and bank accounts tell another story, but the most prominent thing - and by that I mean these objects wrapped inside manneriasms with metaphysical qualities edging towards freedom over - are hard to stop. The antonym of downplaying I would say is overthinking: just put it aside for now. Occupy yourself with something that uses all your mental and physical energies. Exercise. But this is not as easy of a task as it might be made out to be. There's something pulling all of this together, something pulling the strings. An attraction.

And I think that is where I would diagnose as the real 'unhealthy' aspect of this strange/crazy/baffling sort of uncontrollable freedom over. The rules of the wild have stayed with us since the dawn of life - the big fish eat the little ones, strength in numbers, camouflage, webs, stingers, claws, teeth, etc work. This is no different when it comes to both attracting the prey to the predator whether on an individual level or in bigger groups. Entire nations have been razed, slaughtered, pillaged, and new nations built in their place.

The closer I get to explaining this, the more it eludes me. It's like those finger traps. Once they are pulled in, it's not easy to pull out. I guess this isn't so much of a health issue as it is weighing risks and opportunities on a case by case basis. There are pros and cons to almost everything, and what might be negative at first might turn in to something positive - or there are ways to compensate for it from some other nurturing or caring source.

But, and this is also another opinion which I think is important, I think that it can be pushed too far, to an almost unhealthy level or limit. I do have to admit that doing things in excess (vices or fitness goals) can have their benefits, if done with proper and adequate determination or what have you. Guts and glory, etc. What I'm talking about here is not about people or human beings at all. Some science fiction novelists might picture it as a program or an alien taking over people's minds, but that is every day becoming less and less science fiction and more and more a hard reality.

What I'm talking about is the attraction of manneriasms and manneriasms attracting its like malignant objects to tip the scale towards freedom over. Again and again, as if there's an element of wearing down an opponent or war of accretion of nerves.

That can take it's toll if done over a long period and without remedy. But let me take a step back. I'm not dealing here with or through any organization, institution, business, or advocacy group. The first thing I would want freedom over to provide me, hypothetically as someone struggling with work or love or school, is an advantage. This extends to higher up (or down) the chain of family, city, county, state, etc - or anything like religion all the way to, I don't know, the spelling bee championship. Luck can be a large part of it but here it's a finite set of objects. Prediction of what will turn out is canceled by the certainty of freedom over events.

Comparatively speaking, most computers are like that. They build upon 0's and 1's up to what you see on the screen in front of you. The hierarchy, although I might've butchered the analogy because the amount of flexibility as far as an entity is cohesive through its smaller entities varies greatly, puts ranks in place, and that is to be obeyed. What I'm getting at here is that these entities are falling apart and new ones are being erected on top or inside of them - the jargon is 'nesting', but whether it is parasitical or not depends on its ability to find it's way in to what is seen, heard, read, etc. To produce something for consumption, even if it is unhealthy for you, could be why I chose freedom over as the term. It is an entity made for certain interactions that get repeated. It's not dissimilar to joining hate groups, just they are harder to trace and reside in some

noosphere or the metaverse or collective conscious memory. It's all over and meant to keep you hooked in or on rituals.

A masterful analysis of sports teams competing during a bet or how a new company stock would do would reveal the advantages and disadvantages, and obviously there are consultants up to their necks crunching algorithms. This is the game that is played out (the thing that in our narrative here starts manneriastic rituals), and even though I dipped my toes into only a small fraction of the literature on gambling and market instruments, there is no doubt in my mind that there is something running on top of freedom over to make it do what it does. To do what is probable or certain. Freedom over doesn't just denote it's claim as a source to pull from for superiority, it literally is over and above what is there - and in real time and there are macros for it.

Or it invents time that seems to stand still. It's probably at the heart (or heartlessness, as one tries not to raise their temperature/break a sweat/increase their fight/flight/freeze mechanisms) of this freedom over. Stagnation has never been a weapon so much as it is change trying to make itself yet known, crack out of it's shell. Now I'm pretty sure that it is a weapon. A dead end, an impenetrable wall of manneriasms. It's healthy to maintain distance from toxic people, places or events, but when that distance can't be avoided, like traveling from one place to another in a public or commercial transportation system or attending a social gathering, it's a hotbed for stagnation.

The trick here is that I guess there are no tricks, it's a certainty after all. A two-sided affair where there are no surprises. It's straight forward and oftentimes in-your-face freedom over. To be exposed to an unhealthy amount of this over-the-top freedom over outside your home is one thing, but in your home, in the same building or hotel is pushing manneriasms to where they emerge as something other, a cause of nuisance which detracts, pulls away from, and distorts what I think people are afraid of the most - not being liked, seen as weak, and/or out of total control.

As an artist, I know painting very well. One of the things that happened to painting was that what was being painted, how it was painted, and the very medium in which it was painted on (the canvas, stretcher bars) changed dramatically. But it still remained painting. It was a way to get a particular vision across for a number of artists practicing something new in order to gain their bearings and traction in the debate among stars in the field. I see this as what is happening with communication on a mass scale. There is a stubborn following of tried and true, the painting, but the content ever so clings to a set of expressions (manneriasms) as to break down what once was. You could take it one step further and say that the protocol and template for it precedes the content, and the drive for freedom over stacks the odds.

This is not by all means the only thing I see and hear, but if I went around recording with a hidden voice recorder or video camera, the entities which offer freedom over can easily make it's presence felt. I'm not saying it's paranormal activity or that an ungodly evil is commanding ritualistic manneriasms. I'm just saying that the wickedness of it pervades all I perceive in others, and this is not out of paranoia or some heightened state of excitation in my brain activity (it could be) - it is some other. It is an other that latches on to what we know as otherness, exploiting what I'm eager to ascribe to 'thymos', Greek for anger or rage. It is the 'Bother' and it is an impostor taking on many nice or ordinary guises, only it runs on a loop and skips from one person to the next, the person right next to you or even as far away as 50 yards or right in your social media feed. It's what 'gets ones' goat' and a greater majority relies on symbolic master-slave signs (egos get bruised, retaliations get policed, empowerment gets abused, dirt gets covered up, blame gets shifted). Too much of it - and it runs the gamut

from an unhealthy manneriasm used to trigger unhealthy rituals to shaming, denigrating, and doomsaying, all done without a care as to another's health - and the health of relationships, especially the circle of close acquaintances or who you think are close acquaintances, can spiral down from there.

I'm not telling this to get help or an answer. It was done out of necessity for me because I enjoy being the one giving the help and answers, but those days are numbered. All everyone does is help themselves to this form of rage-baiting, and for what it's worth, efforts to get back have been amusing just because human folly is something I've learned to pick at, even if it's my own, and let go.

However this is downright violence, a whole other use of human subjects, not beings. I'm not down for it, and neither should those responsible for the welfare of 'the people' (as if groups are stable, fixed, and never changing) intervene in such contests that pits one's mettle against another. This is something to address to a council that could sponsor something of the Running Man/Battle Royale/Hunger Games sort of competitions - but an alternative where those who don't know how to express aggression other than through manneriasms do so cathartically and sublimatingly (is that a word?) for free. These are downright contests. The fate of the free world shouldn't belong to these entities that take on their own identities and, pardon again the sci-fi reference, snatch our bodies and overturn it to the freedom under. 'I have more freedom than you' is the suggestion, if not the motive. 'Freedom over' somebody is nothing less than subjection, and sadly that's a stain not even guilty pleasures or monetary reparations can wash off.

Because ultimately, our freedom is at stake, and our right to repurpose or discard our selves (I know that sounds like an identity crisis more than a health crisis, but the promise of the internet made it all the more feasible) when it's no longer functionable or fashionable, like a snake shedding it's skin, will be a dream of the past. Equality is at stake if what is offensive and offending is offensive branded as inoffensive. There is an unmistakable allure to it that when broken down to it's component parts, one would take the sword and plowshare and take the sword-plow to one's grandma's head without hesitation. Maybe take the pickaxe to pick your teeth after you've eaten her eyeballs. The menacing and underlying actual health crisis is thus rooted ontologically, in the part of our soul carved out for being alive, and part of that is feeling free from insult and being free to deliver insults (or assaults). The trade is the contradiction that makes it all the more interesting because freedom over implies that having both together are genuinely constructive - revolutionary even - but for whom?

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