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Humanity Hyper-Externalized

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Introduction

"Now man is beginning to wear his brain outside his skull and his nerves outside his skin; new technology breeds new man."

Marshall McLuhan

The nature of humanity is hyper-externalizing with the increased usage of the Internet. This is true because humans are connected informational organisms (inforgs) merging into the same metaphysical realm of the infosphere (Floridi, 2010), because the Internet serves increasingly as an external mind, and because our self-identities are more constantly influenced by everyone and everything within this non-local infosphere. For the purpose of this analysis, hyper-externalization is defined as the displacement of humanity's nature from classically localized, physical sources into the constantly connected, external, metaphysical realm of the Internet, made up of an amalgamation of all its countless users and vast information. There are countless daily examples of our increasingly externalized society. We save and recall memories in the form of messages, photos, bookmarking apps, and Google searches. A teen can be bullied to the point of suicide while sitting alone in her room because she is no longer a local organism, but extended into the limitless beyond the Internet provides. Children are growing up in the online world. The natural environment surrounding them is an increasingly digital one, filled with outside influences. The pop artist Lorde sings the line, "Maybe the Internet raised us," in her song *A World Alone*. That line alone is a striking eye-opener into a very

real circumstance for modern youth. The impacts of hyper-externalization of course aren't limited only to the younger digital natives, but transform adult lives as well. Commuters pack into buses and trains, but while physically present, they send their minds anywhere they want in the infosphere through their smartphones and tablets. They are all there, but many are truly elsewhere. This can be observed just about anywhere in public, from people waiting to people walking or working. These are just a few examples, with many more to follow, and the three categories supporting hyper-externalization that this paper analyzes are just a few of many that will continue to change how humanity operates. To begin, it will be necessary to define some key terms on which to base later sections of this paper. We start by exploring in more depth our nature as connected inforgs within the infosphere.

Hyper-externalization is true firstly from an informational perspective, as defined by Luciano Floridi (explained in the People As Inforgs section), because people as inforgs (connected informational organisms) are moving more of themselves into the infosphere (the informational environment), merging with it and changing their ontology. Hyper-externalization is also evident through the Internet's increasing role as an external brain, discussed in the External Minds section. Thirdly, because people externalize themselves into the social infosphere, they are more exposed to and influenced by non-local sources, as seen in the Online Self-Identity section. Much of this paper is meant to provide insightful analyses of the changing human condition in the online realm and to encourage further research into these topics, as there is not extensive research available regarding some of these propositions. We are still in the infancy of the Internet era, so many of

these thoughts are meant to provide a backdrop for further research and considerations as humanity continues to hyper-externalize.

People As Inforgs

Luciano Floridi has been a leader in the conceptual development of the philosophy of information. He describes certain phenomena and terms that this paper will frequently use. Floridi defines reality from an informational perspective. The entirety of existence is made up of information, from the atoms that compile us to the communication between each other (Floridi, *Information: A Very Short Introduction*, 2010). He extensively discusses the infosphere, which consists of the entire informational environment. The inhabitants of the infosphere, he says, are called inforgs, which are connected informational organisms. A key word when considering modern online inforgs is *connected*. Inforgs are now almost constantly connected to sources of information (including other inforgs), external links that are not reliant on physical location, through technologies and innovations such as the Internet. In the future, we will spend more time in the online informational world than our natural physical environment, says Floridi (*A Look Into The Future Impact Of ICT On Our Lives*, 2007). Inforgs, then, are the inhabitants of the infosphere. We are informational organisms, constantly connected to a sort of global brain in the Internet through our devices, our windows into this metaphysical world. A main component of Floridi's thoughts lies in the merger of the online and our offline, analog world. This helps support the idea that it will be extremely difficult to spend much of our time in the disconnected, offline world that we have been used to for the vast majority of history. Online and offline are becoming increasingly connected,

to the point that eventually everyone and everything may constantly be online, ever-connected to an extraordinarily vast amount of other inforgs and information.

In "Entering The Infosphere", author Michael Vlahos describes the infosphere environment to which we are migrating and poses several important questions regarding human behavior within it (1998, 497). Vlahos describes the infosphere in an even more digital manner than Floridi does. Floridi often speaks of the infosphere as consisting of the entire informational environment, online or offline, while Vlahos takes a more technological approach. He describes this big change made possible by technology as a synthesis of both migration (to a "new world" that is the infosphere) and revolution (changing the very workings of how humanity behaves). What Vlahos summarizes well is the essence of the infosphere itself, and the realization that it is a much more sweeping migration than the general public realizes. The media are often viewed as a collection of communication devices. However, what they make up, as Vlahos explains, is a "global network ecology" called the infosphere. It is very easy to overlook the networked, global infosphere that is developing more and more every day and only see our devices and media as useful tools or sources of information. In actuality, all of these many technologies are building a new metaphysical world into which we are migrating.

Now that we have a layout of the infosphere and humanity's nature as connected informational organisms, we can use Floridi's definitions and concepts to explore how the Internet and modern technology is externalizing these inforgs more drastically into the infosphere. In a world with no electronic technology or Internet, information could only be passed from person to person in the analog world. With

more technological advancement, information could travel farther and more quickly. With the Internet, inforgs can instantly extend informational pieces of themselves almost anywhere in the infosphere that they want, and to other inforgs connected to the Internet. This information is then consumed by others and embedded within them. Inforgs use the information they receive from the infosphere to shape their view of the world, make decisions, socialize, and function on almost every level. Thus, with a greater ability to extend themselves further into the infosphere through the Internet, inforgs are externalizing parts of themselves into each other and the infosphere in which they all live. This increases the *connected* component of inforgs, and thus changes the nature of their being. Now that we have defined the infosphere and discussed our nature as inforgs within it, we can consider the philosophy of externalization and merge the two bodies of literature.

External Minds

It is important at this point to examine some philosophies of externalization as a basis for this updated and more extreme hyper-externalization. This will then bring us into modern examples of the Internet's role as our external minds, as pieces of ourselves stored in the infosphere. As a starting point, the philosopher Charles Peirce (1839-1914) was one of the first to mention an externalization of the mind. He claimed his inkstand was as much a part of his brain as anything within the physical confines of his skull, because with it, he could record thoughts more permanently than his mind alone could do (Skagestad, 551). Indeed, he even thought *through* his inkstand, as the physical act of writing actually produced more

thoughts for him. Others have expressed this as well, including Nobel Prize winner Richard Feynman, who claimed that “the process of creating the notes and sketches is part of the cognitive work itself” (Smart, 2012). Thinking of this using Floridi’s informational standpoint, inforgs can more permanently store (externalize) pieces of their information within the analog infosphere in their immediate surroundings. With modern technologies, the Internet in particular, this ability to extend the mind elsewhere is increased tremendously. If, as Peirce thought through his inkstand and Feynman with his notes, we think through our portals to the Internet world, the entire process of living differs, and entirely new thoughts are both more frequent and influenced by outside sources. Our inkstand in this case is bursting with social life and extraordinarily vast amounts of information. It is an instantaneous, interactive, connected web consisting of the masses. This is our new extended mind.

Paul Smart applies this theory of mind extension to the Internet for a philosophical analysis that builds on Peirce’s classic theory. The article is called “The Web-Extended Mind”, which Smart defines as “the idea that the technological and informational elements of the Web can sometimes serve as part of the mechanistic substrate that realizes human mental states and processes” (Smart, 2012). Through this externalization, Smart says that Internet users are presented with “new opportunities for interaction and engagement with a global space of information, and, in some cases, such interactive opportunities may contribute to profound shifts in the way we see ourselves and the nature of our cognitive processing.” Smart discusses some of the differences between a conventional notebook (or Peirce’s inkstand) and, for example, a smartphone as the modern variety. He says, “Another

advantage of Web-based access is, of course, that we are put in touch with a vast repository of information and knowledge – one much larger than anything we could hope to accumulate in a conventional notebook. The implications of this informational access from an extended mind perspective are potentially profound. For example, if we are enabled to have more-or-less immediate, reliable, and easy access to bodies of information on the Web, and if such information is indeed poised to count as part of our own body of knowledge and beliefs about the world – in the same way, perhaps, as the content of our biologically based (semantic) memories – then we may be only a few technological steps away from an era in which the limits of our personal knowledge are defined by the extent of the Web’s reach!” I argue that this is already the case for many. Anyone who has readily available Internet access, especially on a mobile device, is limited only by what is available to them on the Web.

It is important at this point to consider a counter-argument that deals with the physical limitations of the human mind. If inforgs have migrated into the digital infosphere, is their “ability” to gain information truly increased? The capabilities of the mind are not increased due to a wider and more instantaneous means of gaining information from outside of their physical location. Their minds are still localized. Inforgs, it can be argued, are simply using their technology as a means to gain information or socialize with each other from different places. Take their technology away and they are still fully functioning beings. I argue that many of their mental capabilities would not be possible without these externalized pieces of themselves. So much is saved elsewhere that without access to these pieces of themselves stored

in the infosphere, the retrieval (or even inception) of these thoughts would not be possible, as with Peirce's inkstand, but much more dramatically.

Admittedly, many of these concepts of hyper-externalization are rather vague and largely philosophical and metaphysical. However, they can build a foundation on which to understand where we are at and where we are headed as a human race. Things start to make more sense when looked at through the lens of hyper-externalization, from human behavior and psychology to social relations and more, as has been discussed above and will be further in upcoming sections. In fact, all aspects of the human condition are prone to shifts large and small when its inforgs are hyper-externalizing themselves into an instant and connected infosphere. The ontology of humanity – how people relate to the rest of the Universe – is changing. We are only experiencing the very beginning of these changes.

Smart discusses some of the potential increases in the Internet's impact in the future, which are beginning to already manifest themselves. He discusses the Real World Web, also known as the Internet of Things, in which more portals for externalization are made available in our everyday world. More products and even entire rooms will become web-enabled. Predictive technologies, he says, will also become more advanced. The Web will be able to predict what information we like, want, and need based on what we have externalized and consumed in the past. This is already becoming popular, with Twitter recommending accounts to follow, suggested products on Amazon based on browsing history, and news apps such as Flipboard and Zite, which curate content based on previously viewed items and gleaned interests of the user. Smart says the Web will be "part of the perceptual

backdrop against which our everyday thoughts and actions take shape” (Smart, 2012). This will take the form of augmented reality, such as Google Glass, and beyond. In fact, the University of Washington has already developed technology for Web-enabled retinal projection contact lenses (Hickey, 2008).

Another scholar, Eric Olson, authored an article called “The Extended Self”, in which he built upon what is known as the extended mind theory, which says that thought processes can move beyond someone’s mind and into the environment around them, such as onto a notebook (Olson, 2011, 481-495). As Olson says, “external mental states are those that extend beyond the brain or body or skin (‘the skin’ for short).” He then argues for the idea that, if indeed our thought processes can extend beyond the limits of our minds, “it is possible for a human person to extend beyond her skin.” Rather than considering our communication and information transfer on a surface level, we can realize that we are truly inforgs extending ourselves beyond our skin into the infosphere. We are extending *ourselves* into the infosphere, not just transferring information, because we are informational beings. Inforgs move beyond the confines of their physical bodies, merging themselves into the infosphere. With access to the Internet, then, the human person can extend themselves in limitless ways that have never been possible before, not dependent on physical space or time. An inforg merges with the infosphere and with others, and vice versa. Because it is a metaphysical shift into the infosphere, our minds, rather than our bodies, are primarily affected.

Recalling Peirce’s inkstand argument and Olson’s extended self, something such as a notebook can serve as a local but external source of thoughts and memory

- a brain on paper, almost. Now, however, inforgs have more hyper-external, powerful, non-local facets to upload their minds. One could say that the popular multimedia note-taking app Evernote, for example, serves as part of the modern age's inkstand or notebook for many people. Thoughts of all kinds are recorded and stored for retrieval at any future point. This single app plays an important role as a part of the external brain for so many of its daily users, and it is just one of many thousands of apps and countless other websites available immediately to Internet users.

Another counter-argument at this point could be that not everyone uses online applications to record their thoughts. In fact, not everyone will have even heard of a service such as Evernote. Some people do not even have Internet access or email accounts. However, when we realize how early humanity is in the adoption of these technologies, and how quickly their usage is growing, this argument weakens. Just because not every person uses the Internet does not mean that it is not an extremely powerful facilitator of hyper-externalization. It is clear that more and more people will continue to use the Internet, and it is becoming a necessity in everyday life, so the argument that not *everyone* uses it is not very strong. Additionally, with an increasing amount of society further hyper-externalizing, even non-users are still impacted by the changing nature of the users surrounding them.

"The Google Effect" by Anne Casselman published in *Scientific American Mind* applies the theories of the Internet as an external mind in another very real and current way, citing psychological studies (2011). She argues that Google acts as a sort of external storage unit for memories, a brain outside humanity's skin.

Casselman references psychologist Betsy Sparrow, who said, “[The Internet] is an external memory storage space, and we make it responsible for remembering things.” Rather than storing informational pieces of ourselves within our own brain, we extend it beyond our skin and into the infosphere. Later, when we need to recall the information, we use our technology to find the information in the infosphere. This means that, with the vastness of the online infosphere at our disposal, we can obtain much more information than if we were to just try to remember everything, as our brains are very limited in comparison to all the information available online. Studies that Casselman cites show that we do rely on the Internet for information recall, and do not remember these things offline as well when we know the information is available online. Casselman maintains an optimistic perspective, however, saying that it is not dumbing us down, but simply creating an even smarter external memory source with which we can pull information. We just need to learn to adapt to it. The storage and access of information in the infosphere is just one way in which the Internet acts as a hyper-externalizing agent for inforgs. The communication of information between hyper-externalized inforgs is another main component that the Internet impacts, as discussed in the next section.

Online Self-Identity

Hyper-externalized inforgs experience changes in themselves due to increased exposure to others and a vast amount of information online. If people are externalizing themselves into the infosphere and into others within it, who they are is prone to change. Because it is so difficult to define what makes someone who they are, one’s own analysis and perception of self makes for an important determinant.

Some literature is available that discusses self-identity in an online environment, which I will summarize soon. First, though, I will identify some definitions of self-identity in order to have a clearer image of what exactly is being externalized and changed when we refer to the term. One such definition comes from “Media’s Externalization of Kids’ Self-identity”, an excerpt from Jim Taylor’s book Raising Generation Tech published in Psychology Today. “The self-identity encompasses the totality of the knowledge and understanding that [people] gain about themselves including their personalities, aptitudes and capabilities, intellectual and physical attributes, interests, and relationships” (Taylor, 2012).

Beyond the broader, defining introduction, Taylor gets into more specific aspects of children’s self-identity. He says that self-identity has three essential “senses”. The first is “a sense of consistency and stability over time ... Second, it gives [them] a sense of uniqueness” (Taylor, 2012). I argue that through social media and the Internet’s ability to draw large numbers of people together, uniqueness begins to diminish. People online (especially teenagers and digital natives rather than migrants) seem to possess large amounts of mundane sameness in their projected personalities. This is because they are more often connected as their externalized selves in the infosphere. This manifests itself in a variety of ways. They repost varying versions of the same memes, speak in similar ways, obsess about similar things through trending and shared posts, and lose aspects of originality that may have been present in the offline world. However, with so much predictable noise flooding the Internet masses, it may also make traits that truly are unique stand out more, thus accentuating the things about a person that truly differs

from the daily social format. If you like a Facebook page or artist that few if any of your friends like, that small fact may make you feel more original in that one aspect. Of course, in the offline realm, there is a certain level of sameness as well that is derived from social interactions. However, in an infosphere of hyper-externalized inforgs, this is a much wider reaching phenomenon. More things will become increasingly similar because of such a spike in exposure to other people and their ideas. For example, if something is difficult to do, there are so many ways to describe how difficult that thing is. This is admittedly an extremely vague concept, but it helps illustrate the point. In modern online society, a user may post their variation of the popular meme that begins "One does not simply..." to describe the difficulty of a situation they are discussing. Because this meme has been externalized and consumed by so many inforgs online, it has narrowed the variety of describing certain situations to just a few differing words. This, of course, is not empirical evidence of increasing sameness, but provides an area of interest for further research to support this, as the studies have not yet been done to address this.

The third sense that self-identity provides, affiliation, is strengthened then through a hyper-externalization into the social infosphere. Taylor says, "self-identity gives them a sense of affiliation in which, while seeing themselves as distinct beings, also feel an integral part of a group and capable of building nurturing relationships in different aspects of their lives" (2012). Because everyone is hyper-externalized into the same web, their identities may begin to merge and they will naturally find more pieces of themselves in others, and vice versa. Followers of Twitter accounts,

frequenters of sub-reddits, members of Facebook groups, bronies, juggalos, and counter-intuitively even members of Anonymous find affiliation in the similarities they share with other externalized online beings. These groups have such public, even viral stereotypes associated with them that people may assume members of the groups all have a certain set of shared personality traits. In a broader sense, all Facebook members even, over a billion monthly active users, are a part of this global village, because ideas, content, and information can spread so quickly. You could be in any place in the country, and in some cases across the world, and hear the same or similar threads of conversation. In summary, the Internet makes uniqueness more rare but stand out more where it is present, while also creating wider and more unifying affiliation.

Taylor continues by emphasizing, "Feedback from the social world plays a significant role in the evolution of [self-identity]" (2012). He mentions how the social world has expanded dramatically "to an almost limitless universe of people due to the proliferation of the Internet". Then he gets into the heart of the argument, "the shift from being internally to externally driven." He emphasizes that yes, social factors have always had an impact on self-identity, but "now the sheer ubiquity and force of the recent technological advances has taken that influence and turned its volume up to a deafening roar." He discusses some of the negative impacts that this may have on our children's self-identity, but for the purposes of this paper, the important thing to realize is that the shift is happening, good or bad. With any development and technology, there will be good and bad at play, so to engage in the

argumentative tug of war from both sides would be too complex and unending for the confines of this research.

One influencer of the self-identities of children in particular, Taylor says, is pop culture, which presents images of idealized selves and scenarios. It in fact turns self-identity into more of “an identity projected onto children by popular culture” and even has a dreary name called the “Nobody Scenario”. Second, people do not express their deeply true self-identities online, but rather versions of themselves that will seem most appealing, a phenomenon that researchers later in this paper have observed as well. “The goal for children in their use of technology, whether Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, or text messaging, becomes how they can curry acceptance, popularity, status, and, by extension, self-esteem.” The quote that closes out the article summarizes the phenomena discussed, especially pertaining to digital natives such as teenagers. Back in the MySpace era, Christine Rosen said, “It is an overwhelmingly dull sea of monotonous uniqueness, of conventional individuality, of distinctive sameness” (Taylor, 2012).

Uniqueness and individuality can only be measured when compared to others, and hyper-externalization creates a state of constant comparison for inforgs. The concept of the self for a connected inforg who is hyper-externalizing into and merging with the infosphere and other inforgs becomes ontologically more complex, as there is much more to compare each inforg with. Connected inforgs’ selves become more reliant on other inforgs, as their very selves are intertwining and influencing each other in the infosphere. Soraj Hongladarom addressed this by presenting the problem of social media’s changes to how the self is to be considered.

“As these sites are social,” he said, “they relate someone with others in a network. Thus there seems to emerge a new kind of self which exists in the online world” (2011, 533-548). As this has expanded, he says, the online and offline worlds are beginning to combine, and thus the online and offline selves. Online, inforgs compare and contrast the information that make up who they are with that of so many other inforgs in the infosphere. They are, as Hongladarom said, relating themselves into others in a network (the infosphere), who are in turn doing the same. This information which inforgs find in each other and in the infosphere become a part of who they are, because everyone online is externalizing the information that *is* them into each other. It is a constant exchange of information between selves, and thus a merging of these networked people.

On an even deeper level, the ontology of humanity is shifting. That is, how humans relate to everything else in existence is changing through this externalization. Hongladarom agrees, saying, “Instead an externalist account of the identity of the self is offered that locates the identity in question in the self’s relations with other selves as well as other events and objects” (2011). What we have online, I add, is merging personalities, traits, cultures, and ideas, and thus increasingly so in the offline world as well. A counterpoint to this, though, is that there will be in fact *more* variation because people will *have* to be much more different in order to stand out from the fusing masses. This could be thought of as a sort of digital evolution of personality. However, I believe both will happen. On a larger scale, there will be more consistency and similarities because everyone is externalizing themselves into one communal body. Meanwhile, there will be a few

polarized examples of digital inforgs clawing at individuality with all they have, making changes to themselves to be seen as different. Again, though, this is an area where further research is needed to provide more evidence.

Thai users of Facebook make for an interesting conundrum of identity according to Hongladarom. Users in Thailand make their Facebook accounts so unlike their actual selves, with different names and photos of animals or objects rather than their faces, that it would be very difficult to tell who you are actually interacting with online. However, even with such a separation from the offline self in the online environment, mass unification is still observed. Rather than using their last names, for example, they may use "Love the King" as a replacement for their surname to indicate political affiliation, or on the other side something like "Love Everybody". This makes it difficult for modern users of the Internet, in Thailand and beyond, to understand who they "really" are – their offline self or one/all of their online identities. Hongladarom maintains the position that all selves presented are equally as real, online or offline. One of the ways he words this is that "the self is not the same as the body". If so much of our waking time is spent on a persona that exists entirely online, that does not make the online persona any less real than the offline, physical person. This is supported by Floridi's analysis of our informational nature as inforgs. We are made up of information, and physical bodies or local confines do not limit what makes us who we are.

If we indeed are more able to present ourselves in ways beyond the confines of our physical bodies, this lifts many barriers of human personality that exist in the localized, physical realm. The extent to which people actually present themselves as

different from their offline selves, however, is rarely extreme, at least at this point in the Internet era. Liam Bullingham and Ana Vasconcelos studied identity within the confines of blogs and the popular game *Second Life*. The element that stuck out the most seems to contrast what Hongladarom observed in Thailand. People do not seem to want to re-create entirely their identity when given the opportunity in an online setting (2013, 101-112). People often seem to base their online personas on their real selves, even in games such as *Second Life* where the possibilities are endless. However, the key factor is that they certainly do tweak certain aspects about themselves. It seems that people want to keep their core traits exposed in an online environment, while tweaking other aspects of themselves that they feel would improve others' perceptions of that person. Essentially, they want to be seen as themselves, but as improved versions of themselves, now that the opportunity to do so is easier than ever in an online environment.

Furthermore, due to the vastness and complexity of the Internet, inforgs have an easier ability to present themselves in many different ways within different contexts or websites as well. Essentially, they can split their identity into as many pieces as they want. José van Dijck claims that people "perform" as themselves on various social networks, specifically focusing on Facebook and LinkedIn (2013, 199-215). Other users serve as the audience, he claims, and who they come across as may not be an exactly accurate depiction, but a modified version of aspects of their character. This helps support my claims that people are externalizing themselves in multiple places – different representations of themselves in different online social settings. Van Dijck describes this as a split. We are splitting our self into several

varying parts in the digital environment through various interfaces and outlets. People may present their professional, optimistic, highly networked selves on LinkedIn, while presenting their funny, uncensored, and carefree side on a site such as Facebook or Twitter. Beyond this, some users may post highly controversial posts on a site such as 4Chan, while presenting themselves as tremendously professional and politically correct workaholics on LinkedIn. Thus, I argue, they are externalizing themselves in more places than would be possible at one time in a strictly physical environment. Sure, people may have been classically presenting themselves in a different way in professional settings than in other social settings with friends. However, the opportunity to do both at once while networking with more people than those in the immediate environment has never been a possibility before. Basically, you can be more than one person at once when you are online. In the near future, we may always or almost always be online. That means that who we are will be externalized, split, and polished.

Conclusion

Humanity is hyper-externalizing online. Just as Peirce's inkstand allowed him to take his mind and operate/store it elsewhere, the Internet and modern digital technologies give us a connected, social, information-rich world of the digital infosphere into which we extend ourselves. While we externalize ourselves, everyone else online is externalizing themselves, creating a massive cluster of social information that is spilling out into our physical world as we are sending ourselves out into it. No aspect of humanity is or will be left untouched by this hyper-externalization. The arguments of good or bad put aside, inforgs are changing

ontologically. We relate to the Universe differently than we did before, and are only on the cusp of this deep and rapidly accelerating change. In understanding this technological revolution as an era of hyper-externalization, we can gauge where we are, what is changing, and where we are going. I predict this will be evident in a number of ways. The following examples range from vague to very specific and just begin to scratch the surface of the impacts of hyper-externalization. Many of these predictions and observations are meant to suggest areas of research to see if these changes are yet taking place, rather than based on currently available empirical evidence.

Personalities will unify, producing less variance. Individuality will diminish on the large scale, but in other cases will be more extreme as a way to fight the tide of new-era monotony. People will experience shifts in many aspects of themselves due to the constant interaction with other hyper-externalized inforgs in the digital infosphere. More people will develop multiple personas online that in turn affect their offline selves. In fact, notably contradicting the previous statement that accentuates the complexity of hyper-externalization, offline and online selves will become so inter-dependent that it will nearly become pointless to differentiate the two. Minds will continue to combine, ideas will build and spread more quickly, information will become more available, and the massive digital infosphere will help the entire world operate as a global village. Billions of externalizing inforgs will send their information and interactions into the same connected online infosphere and their ideas will mate, their personalities will collide, and they will be drawn together

in a whole new world of instantaneous limitlessness. All of this and so much more will be the repercussions of hyper-externalization.

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