

# The Libido for the Mass Culture and the Fetish for Human Compliance

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**How to cite this paper:** Gerardi, S. (2018). The Libido for the Mass Culture and the Fetish for Human Compliance. *Sociology Mind*, 8, \*\*-\*\*. <https://doi.org/10.4236/sm.2018.83017>

**Received:** April 3, 2018

**Accepted:** May 18, 2018

**Published:** May 21, 2018

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## Abstract

This effort suggests that the modern periods' concept (the period appropriately mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> century, ending in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century) of the Mass Media is antiquated due to the advancements in digital technology (computers, phones, computer apps, educational technology, video games and Social Media). Therefore, due to these advances, this effort will not refer to the mass media; rather labeling this social instruction as the Mass Culture. This effort will also include in the concept of Mass culture, the original concept of "Technological Nihilism" to complete the Mass Culture concept. The Digital electric components found in the Mass Culture have been created to think and act like a human, therefore because of the nature of these components is to dehumanize, and alienate the "species-being". This effort will exam the effect of the Mass Culture on 1) intellectual growth for its simplifying affect; 2) conformity for the Herd Behavior outcome, and 3) the family's loss of influence on their offspring.

## Keywords

Mass Culture, Herd Behavior, Social Conformity, Dehumanization, Alienation

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## 1. Introduction

The Modern Period's viewed of the "Mass Media" was a means of communication that reached a very large population in a brief period using the technology of the time (i.e. t.v. radio, newspapers and magazines). Indeed, the Modern Period's Mass Media was a socially progressive movement which validated free human consciences, and creativity. However, with the historic growth of the Mass Culture (Postmodern Digital technology and the counterpart social media), there has been a negative effect on individual freedom of expression, au-

tonomy, free choices, healthy relationships, and psyche. This effort will define the mass culture as a commination technique using simplistic messages with little or no higher order symbolic content to reach all social backgrounds. The Mass Culture as was mentioned earlier must include Technological Nihilism. Technological Nihilism is the intrinsic perception of a free creative individual as being insignificant, without purpose manage by technological rationality (Gerardi, 2014: p. 1), together they profoundly affect human behavior, intellectual outcomes, the family's role, mental health, and personal relationships, all managed by formal rationality fostering human complacency.

## 2. Mass Culture and the Fetish for Compliance

Mass Culture claims to be a democratic force by providing individual free choice and individuality. But the reality is only a few individuals (the media "superstars" and sports figures) dictate the public's perceptions of freedom, personal relationships, ethical behavior, intellectual growth and individuality (Gerardi, 2014). The mass public's appetite for the Mass Culture is a fetish because of the blind devotion, an unquestioning behavior, seen as almost magical necessity (i.e. Cell phones, Facebook, etc.), which has homogenized the mass population into a socially/politically passive social group. The sociological outcome is the inability to perceive ones' real economic, social, and political life, degrading contemporary free human spirit into the logic of rational domination. Mass Culture has been restructured into a repressive force based in social conformity, isolation, unhealthy human relationships, and a loss of intellectual growth. This effort will look at the Mass Cultures effects on; 1) intellectual growth; 2) conformity, and 3) the family for they all have been profoundly affected by the Mass Culture.

1) *Intellectual Effects*: The purpose of the Mass Culture is to simplify all forms of systems (Gerardi, 2017). Due to the nature and function of the Mass Culture, the effect on human thought process has been to negatively affect creativity and critical thinking (defined as the ability to create concepts, read and interpret arguments, employing inductive/deductive reasoning in solving problems, keeping an open mind, inquisitiveness, flexibility, and the ability to develop a concept of individuality).

Indeed, according to the National Endowment for the Arts, literary reading has declined 10 percentage points from 1982 to 2002 and the rate of decline is accelerating. A drop-off in reading has possibly contributed to a decline in critical thinking. Moreover, the average number of Google searches per day has grown from 9800 in 1998 to over 4.7 trillion today suggesting that the brain relies on complex data to assist in the process of creating critical thinking (Lie, 2011). Moreover, the concept known as the Google Effect or Digital Amnesia suggests that humans are prone to forget important data and issues easily found "online" and stored on a Computers (Sparrow, Liu, & Wegner, 2011). Moreover, the human Mean IQ will drop by 2050 to 86.32 from 91.64 in 1950 (Lynn & Vanhanen, 2006). In a UCLA study it was suggested that technology (but also

for the purposes of this effort) has had a negative affected on skills, and in critical thinking and analysis (Greenfield, 2009). This effort cites these data to suggest that the Mass Culture has had a profound effect on intellectual outcomes. Furthermore, exposure to the simplifying data may also have declining anatomical function on the brain and intellectual outcomes. Furthermore, the size of the brain can be changed by providing either enrichment which increases the size of the brain. On the other hand, a lack of enrichment may decrease the size of the brain. The enriched brain may suggest an increase in learning ability, and a brain not enriched having decreases abilities (Diamond 1998).

2) *Conformity Effect*: In recent study completed at UCLA a group of teenagers were asked to respond to peer influence. These data suggested that the teens were willing to conform to the majority view, or “The conformity effect” (Crutchfield, 1955), the result was that little individual opinions were offered, resembling “herd behavior” (individuals in a group act collectively without understanding the direction assuming their view is correct). Moreover, the Mass Culture’s language usages resemble Orwell’s New Speak, in that there is a growing usage of acronyms simplifying the Language. Orwell stated “the whole aim of Newspeak is to narrow the range of thought? In the end we shall make thought-crime literally impossible, because there will be no words in which to express it. Every concept that can ever be needed will be expressed by exactly one word, with its meaning rigidly defined and all its subsidiary meanings rubbed out and forgotten” (<https://www.quotes.net/authors/george+orwell>). For example, during communication within the Mass Culture acronyms are used to describe complicated ideas (such as LOL= Laugh out loud; MBF=my best friend; OMG = oh my god; Pothus = Presentient of the United States), just to mention a few. Orwell further argued it is like “...tearing human mind to pieces and putting them together again in new shapes of your own choosing.” (<https://www.quotes.net/authors/george+orwell>) The Sociologist Basil Bernstein in his work on language, coding theory, curriculum and the transmission of knowledge is an important interpretation of class, educational background and family. Bernstein suggested that there are two forms of language Public language, and Formal language-use. Formal language relies in a greater complexity of possibilities, which permits higher order processing. Public Language is structured around mediating personal qualifications and is limited in symbolic expression, in the description of tangible, concrete, and visual statements. The difference in these two language structures underlies the attitudes, values, and SES, effecting life-chances (Gerardi, 2010). Orwell concluded “...Every year fewer and fewer words, and the range of consciousness always a little smaller” ([www.quotes.net/authors/george+orwell](http://www.quotes.net/authors/george+orwell)).

3) *Family Effect*: The Mass Culture has changed the form and function of the nuclear family by alienating and dehumanizing the family. The family’s responsibility historically has been to impart such concepts as personal behavior, values, attitudes, individuality and personal relationships. However, the Mass Cul-

ture leaves little or no time for family interaction. The current data suggests that, 22% of teenagers log on to their favorite social media site more than 10 times a day, 75% of teenagers now own cell phones, and 25% use them for social media, 54% use them for texting, and 24% use them for instant messaging (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2017). This effort suggest that frequent online access will create expressions of offline behaviors, such as bullying, clique-forming, sexual experimentation, and violence. Introducing such social problems such as cyber-bullying, privacy issues, “sexting” and mass gun violence. A case in point is the Parkland, Florida, USA. School mass shooting. A former student of this school murdered 17 students and teachers in just a few minutes. When the shooters home life was revealed, it was learned that he spent 15 hours a day playing violent video games. Hence, Mass Culture leaves little or no time for meaningful family interaction, in fact has sublimated the family alienating members.

### 3. Conclusion

To sum up, this effort strongly suggests that over-exposure to the forces of the Mass Culture can lead to: 1) social conformity, 2) loss of individuality, 3) hampering critical thinking, 4) has created a challenged to intellectual growth, and 5) the family. Indeed, Plato’s “The Allegory of the Cave” (Williams, 2010) best describes the current social condition of over exposure to the Mass Culture. Plato suggested that one should picture a cave in which children are chained to a wall with their backs to the opening, never seeing the light of day (metaphor for the truth), only shadows or illusions. This effort suggested that the illusions of the Mass Culture has created a false narrative of human interaction, resulting in an unhealthy libidinous fetish with an unquestioned devotion to the Mass Culture culminating in vast human compliance or what this effort has labeled “herd behavior”.

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