

10 Arguments for Deleting Your Social Media Accounts Right Now - By Jaron Lanier

Notes by Lev Janashvili

Goal: To be a "cat" not a "dog".

1. You are losing free will. Social media (SM) has become a kleptocratic influence matrix that redeems Pavlovian and Skinnerian control-oriented paradigms from their descent into irrelevance. Learn to distinguish monopolies and duopolies from monopsonies and duopsonies (i.e., concentrations of sellers vs. concentrations of buyers).

2. Most finely targeted way to resist the insanity. The BUMMER (behavior of users modified and made into an empire for rent) machine's business model is designed to modify behavior, largely by fueling and exploiting negative emotions. Rather than compare BUMMER to the tobacco industry, think about parallels with lead paint. You can use paint when you have a non-toxic product. BUMMER is toxic in six ways: ABCDEF; A is Attention Acquisition Leading to Asshole Supremacy. B is Budding into Everyone's Lives. C is Content Cramming. D is Directing Behavior. E is Earning Money Unethically. F= Fake Mobs/Society. Delete the BUMMER accounts.

3. SM is making you into an asshole, statistically speaking. Addicts are cranky, selfish, seeking suffering and reasons for aggression. A gambling addict is not addicted to winning, but rather to a process in which losing is far more likely. We are manipulating each other and inflating ourselves. There is a clear correlation between the growth of social media and the prevalence of asshole behavior and rank tribalism.

4. SM is undermining truth. A: Assholes change discourse into discharge. B: Subjected to constant spying by big tech companies, people lose authenticity. C: When product messages are being crammed down your throat, the loss of truth is the product. D: When engineered addictions manipulate people for commercial gain, truth suffers because it no longer matters. E: Perverse incentives disfavor truth. F: Fake people have no reason to speak truthfully.

5. SM is making speech meaningless. Social media is divorcing speech from context, making meaning impossible. Our speech is not received as it is intended. It aligns with BUMMER's intentions. You are just an account and a digital avatar feeding the machine content to metabolize. BUMMER rewards click bait. Writers are losing connection to their context. The metrics are meaningless in ways that are as hard to see as air. There are signs of hope, contexts relatively unmolested by BUMMER (e.g., podcasts) but they too are vulnerable to Bummerization.

6. SM is destroying your capacity for empathy. As your speech becomes meaningless, so does the speech of everyone else, making it increasingly difficult for us to relate to each other's experiences. Because our information diet is managed and personalized by algorithms, we do not know the information diets of our fellow human beings. Filter bubbles are a powerful force. Perversions of language (e.g., "engage"=manipulate). Theory of mind undermined.

7. SM is making you unhappy. The cheerful rhetoric from BUMMER companies about creating a more connected world seems increasingly laughable. They are creating an atomized anhedonic world increasingly fueled by negative emotions. Our energy is being diverted from real relationships to digital connections. We are constantly judged (including by ourselves) in comparison to manufactured narratives. We accept and respect the algorithms making us miserable. When authenticity dies, self-esteem becomes impossible.

8. SM is undermining economic dignity. BUMMER is part of the reason for the emergence of the gig economy which undermines economic dignity, tyrannizing human agents. The idea of free software is the core reason the Big Tech business models are dependent on "advertising" (i.e., algorithmic manipulation). The cult of personality has replaced rules-based corporate governance. False narratives about BUMMER as the only way obscure sustainable/ethical alternatives and psychologically victimize the individual user.

9. SM is making politics impossible. Rise of authoritarian leaders around the world. The end of truth has metastasized through every domain of life. Anonymity has undermined accountability. The nastiest content yields the richest rewards. Bummer is great for con artists. The early-adopter idealists are co-opted.

10. SM hates your soul. With our empathy occluded, our darkest impulses consistently fueled and rewarded, our discourse deeply degrades, our understanding of fellow humans obscured by filter bubbles, we find ourselves in a spiritual terra incognita. The idea of free will is now incoherent and quaint. Life without truth is by definition spiritually bankrupt. Nonsense has become a more effective organizing principle than truth. Virality is truth. BUMMER is the new pantheon. Zuckerberg is messiah.