

LIS-3353

Quasi-Anonymity And Cognitive/Social Surplus

Econ 101

I'm bringing up “Economics” (in our case, “American capitalism”) mostly to criticize it; unless you're reading a wide array of scholarly material, odds are what you're looking at is no better than astrology...

(See “Confessions of an Economic Hit-Man” for why this is so)

Econ 101

Nonetheless, these ideas must be learned – not because they are necessarily true, but because people believe they are true and then construct policy around them.

*(but seriously, one or two semesters of Econ is probably **worse** than none)*

Econ 101

“The study of how to satisfy unlimited needs with limited resources”

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INCENTIVES!!

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...is frequently a silly and cruel idea

Cognitive Surplus

(thanks, Clay Shirky)

- Industrial Revolution!
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No more dawn to dusk, but 8 hour days.

What did they do?

Gin. Lots of Gin.



No, really. LOTS of gin

(any resemblance to college life is purely coincidental, I'm sure)



What replaced gin in the good ol' USA?

What replaced gin in the good ol' USA?



But then, the Internet...

BINGE-WATCH

Okay, that..but what else?

But then, the Internet...



Okay, THAT TOO..but what else?

Econ 101: How to make complicated things with a bunch of people?



“Incentives” or “coercion”

Either way, it's – 'do this or you don't eat!'

This is basic economics, right?

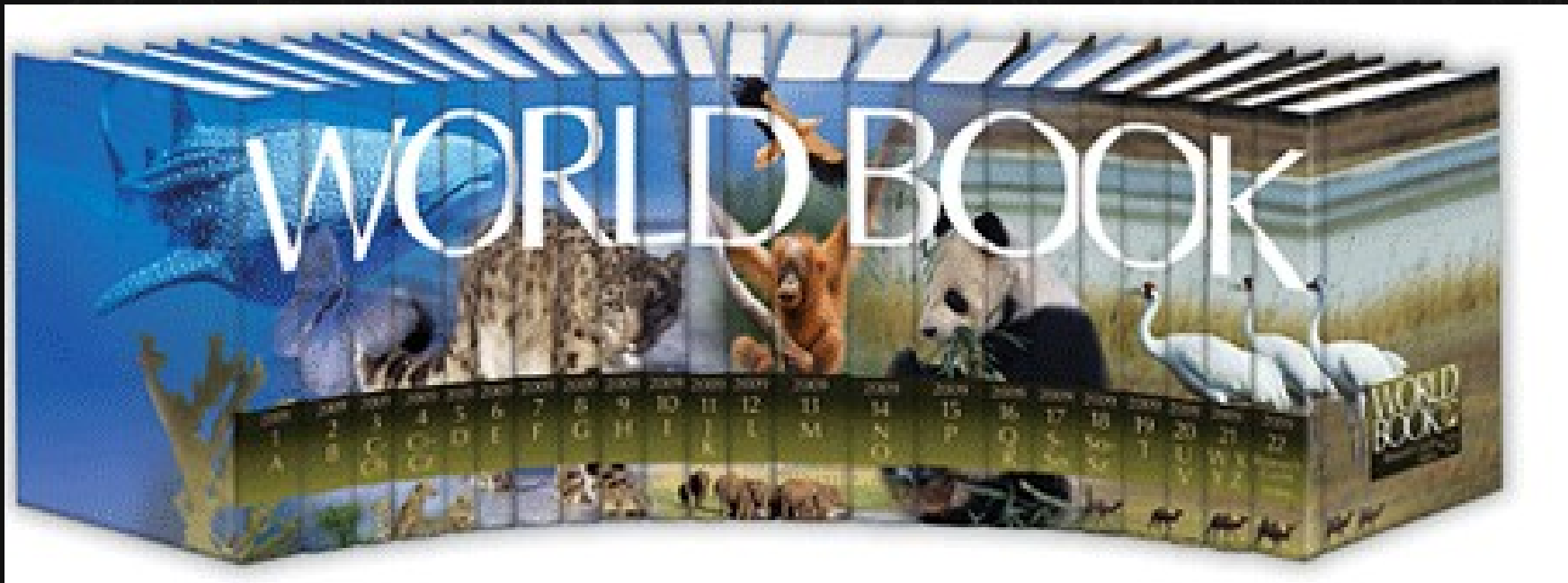
....well, it was...

Also, the converse idea, that we
hear:

“If you can't get paid to do it, it won't get
done.”

(pity the poor music industry)

Encyclopedias?



Spontaneous Organization

- Usually, you come up with a concrete purpose or a goal, THEN organize a group around achieving that..

But this can now happen BACKWARDS thanks to the internet. The group organizes, THEN just sort of ends up doing something surprisingly useful/complex.

Spontaneous Organization

Sometimes, but not always, fueled by

(pseudo) Anonymity

New Theory: Moglen's Metaphorical Corollary to Faraday's Law

Faraday's Law: If you wrap a wire around a magnet and spin it, electricity flows through it:

New Theory: Moglen's Metaphorical Corollary to Faraday's Law

Moglen's Corollary:

Wrap the Internet around every person on the planet and spin the planet, then “software” (i.e. beauty, science and culture) ” flows in the network.

People will create things for one another's pleasure and to conquer their uneasy sense of being too alone.

Flash mobs



Ice Cream (in Belarus?)



Arrested.



4chan? /b/

CENSORED

“Anonymous”



Reddit Stuff

- Movie Plots
- Random acts of Pizza
- Etc etc etc

But of course, the good stuff..

- Wikipedia
- Linux
-
-
- Millions of specialized message boards on useful information, and so on...

Social Activism

- Occupy Wall Street
- Black Lives Matter
- Ice Bucket Challenge

...and so on

Crowdfunding? Kickstarter

- Cool! Pay for things that don't yet exist.

Reduction of risk, basically.

Enter Capitalism: Have we entered another era?

One of predominant

“social surplus exploitation?”

“Anything cool, new, exciting is **immediately** converted into advertising or a revenue stream?”

“Crowdsourcing?”

- Yes, but notice the “sourcing” part.

Frequently, this is where the crowd does the work and someone else gets paid.

But we're all doing it, I suppose...

“Crowdsourcing?”

e.g.

From couchsurfing to Airbnb?

From ridesharing to Uber?

“Crowdsourcing?”

And, of course...

Social media.

- 1) How do you use it?
- 2) How does it make money from you?
- 3) What externalities does it cause?