

Re: Technical and Spiritual Development

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William Mook wrote:

- > *Well, back in 1800 I suppose one could make an argument that a society*
- > *equipped with cheap universally available anesthetics would endure more*
- > *self-inflicted pain. Others might argue that only the wealthy would be*
- > *free from pain. Still others would argue in ways that have been argued*
- > *here.*
- >
- > *Such arguments would be wrong. The evidence of history argues that*
- > *anesthetics once discovered were developed in ways that made them cheap*
- > *and universally available. This created a society that had an*
- > *increased sensitivity to pain in any form leading to the ending of*
- > *slavery and the rise of anti-cruelty movements.*

ah, you're contradicting yourself.

You are saying that a medical advance (anaesthetics) caused people to feel no pain and thus led to a greatly reduced tolerance for pain and the things that cause it (such as slavery).

So if you apply that to antiaging sera, then people would feel no death and thus develop a greatly reduced tolerance to death or the things that cause it, such as risk-taking.

Which is it, Bill?

- > *I think that once an anti-aging process is discovered it will be*
- > *developed in ways that make it cheap and universally available. This*
- > *will create a society that values life more than ever before and spell*
- > *the end of death and dying, and the end of killing and dying for one's*
- > *beliefs and one's country.*

along with the end of anything else that tends to produce killing and dying.

- >>*More reason to fervently resist anything that*
- >>*might get you killed accidentally.*
- >

- >
- > *Nonsense. People don't act this way. People who are healthy and vital*
- > *feel compelled to take more risks in order to live their lives fully.*
- > *People who have had their youth restored will likely be the greatest*
- > *risk takers of all, having the deep seated notion they have cheated*
- > *death once, they'll be like gamblers who have just come off a string of*
- > *wins. They'll believe they can cheat death always.*

Let's do a thought experiment here, Bill:

Let's say that you and a friend of yours are some of the first to have taken the serum and will live forever, or a nontrivial subset thereof. Your buddy goes off on a K2 expedition. And is killed when an ice shelf collapses under him.

Now: do you tell yourself "well, he died doing what he always wanted to do", or do you say "that fucking idiot! He pissed away immortality for a stunt!"

- >
- >>>>*Person's Puppeteers are are fictional extraterrestrial species*
- >
- > *created*
- >
- >>>>*by Larry Niven in his Ringworld novels. They do not exist except*
- >
- > *as a*
- >
- >>>>*fiction.*
- >>>>
- >>>>
- >>>>
- >>>>*But as with much fiction, there is some valuable truth in them.*
- >
- >
- > *They are useful as metaphors in an argument illustrating a point, they*
- > *cannot be expected to carry an argument.*

except that they do not illustrate the point you were trying to make, Bill. Puppeteers are not immortal. That has no bearing on why they are so risk-averse. Your analogy totally fails.

- >>*In Niven's "Known Space" stories it was the *hominids* that had*
- >>*Boosterspice/Tree-of-life to extend their lives. IIRC Ringworld*
- >
- > *happened*
- >
- >>*as Louis Wu turned 200.*
- >
- >
- > *Boosterspice/Tree-of-life extended your age, but at the cost of making*

> *you something other than humans.*

sort of. Tree Of Life was the yamlike root that converted a breeder Pak into a Protector.

Boosterspice was a UN invention derived from the Tree Of Life in Ptsshspok's ship. It doesn't make you immortal, and it doesn't change you from a human breeder to a Protector. It just keep syou artificially young.

> *Humans as they are in the real world*

> *are in Niven's book, called breeders.*

>

> *And this suggests a useful property for any anti-aging serum to*

> *incorporate, infertility. A law requiring an anti-aging serum to*

> *render the person taking it infertile would automatically place limits*

> *on the population making the dire predictions outlined by many here*

> *impossible.*

"A law" for something that you think will be administered universally, across all countries and cultures?

Who exactly is going to pass and enforce *a* law, Bill?

> *In fact, making everyone infertile who takes anti-aging drugs would*

> *lead to a decline in human numbers if eveyrone took it. So, an*

> *anti-aging drug that only supressed fertility would be ideal.*

another thought experiment:

Suppose you are a Colombian drug cartel jefe. You can easily afford the serum. You have long since bought the entire government of your country, so you control the elected officials who pass and enforce the laws.

Now: do you voluntarily give yourself an effective vasectomy, or do you realize that if you *and your entire clan* is immortal and breeds like crazy and gives your offspring the serum so they are immortal and..., then in a very short period of time you can be the Emperor of the entire planet?

> *There will be those who elect not to take the drug – and there will be*

> *those who will take the drug for a while, and then stop. Those who*

> *continue to take the drug, even though its cheap, will do so because*

> *they want life and will value that life more highly as a consequence.*

> *People who value life tend to achieve more.*

"The worst robber baron scumbag of the 19th century did more to achieve world peace (by enabling people to make a living) than all the Ben & Jerry's ice cream ever made".

– P.J. O'Rourke

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- > *People who feel*
- > *invulnerable tend to achieve more as well.*

remember the world's greatest Russian roulette player? Lifetime record of 77-1.

- > *So, I believe this drug*
- > *will have many beneficial effects on personal human psyche.*
- > *Sociologically, such a drug will transform society. One of the ways*
- > *society will be transformed is the rise of a great sensitivity to death*
- > *and dying. As a consequence, killing and dying for a cause will seem*
- > *an appalling concept.*

and rushing into a burning building to save the civilians inside will seem an appalling concept as well. So much for the fire department...

- > *Creativity and innovation are associated with risk taking. Someone who*
- > *feels invulnerable, someone who thinks they'll live forever, someone*
- > *who has cheated death once – will be a person who is willing to take*
- > *risks.*

then why is it that artists (painters, writers, musicians, athletes too) have a nasty habit of getting boring, predictable, and risk-averse after they achieve massive success?

Why do Microsoft products *really* suck now that Bill Gates has his own estate and a Foundation named after him?

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"Every gardener knows nature's random cruelty"
-Paul Simon RE: George Harrison