The Age of Access: The New Culture of Hypercapitalism Where All of Life is a Paid-For Experience

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The Age of Access: The New Culture of Hypercapitalism Where All of Life is a Paid-For Experience

Posted on May 1, 2002 by Editor


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University Librarian, Pacific University

So… … … … .what will happen if “Civilization nails its time span to the moment and loses a sense of history and the future”? Jeremy Rifkin, a prolific social critic sometimes called the “Dark Prophet”, cautions that our technology-based society now poses exactly that threat. Author of 14 or so books including “The End of Work” and “The Biotech Century”, Rifkin has focused his latest work on how technology is rapidly leading us to “Hypercapitalism”—a state where all that we do, feel and experience is rented, and where we live only in the present. In a hypercapitalist economy, ownership and commitment are burdensome and prevent individuals and corporations alike from being able to change directions rapidly. It is an economy, Rifkin tells us, that values only efficiency and profit. Companies seek “weightlessness” by divesting themselves of real estate, by leasing facilities and equipment, outsourcing work units, and shrinking inventories. Individuals spend an ever-increasing portion of their incomes to purchase access rather than goods—leases, memberships, subscriptions and retainers. Rifkin asserts that this trend is growing and will eventually mean that virtually every experience outside of one’s immediate family will be paid for. Further, it fosters a systemic dependency on a maintained level of income rather than on tangible assets. Lives based in convenience, instant gratification and commercially orchestrated experience do not foster critical thinking and evaluation skills. So, as Rifkin sees it, the wealthiest 1/5 of the world’s population, as wired participants in the new economy, are rushing through life relatively unencumbered—allotting little or no time for reflection, and purchasing periodic access to shallow experiences that lack context. After establishing his concern over this developing trend that treats culture and human relationships as a market in a technologically savvy world, Rifkin draws a sharp contrast to those who are increasingly left
behind. It may be surprising that not only do about 2/3rds of the world’s people have no computer access to today’s cyber-economy, but that 65% of the people in the world have never used a telephone. Whether or not readers accept Rifkin’s predictions of hypercapitalism and the social and intellectual ills it may breed, his examination of the deepening plight of vast world populations who are “Living outside the Electronic Gates” is sobering. If, as seems to be the case, making one’s way in the world and in today’s economy demands access to technology, and if the world’s “disenfranchised and dispossessed also are becoming the disconnected… “, the sheer weight of social ills may make it impossible for a cyber-economy to endure and flourish.

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13 THOUGHTS ON “THE AGE OF ACCESS: THE NEW CULTURE OF HYPERCAPITALISM WHERE ALL OF LIFE IS A PAID-FOR EXPERIENCE”

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**donosy**  
**on January 30, 2014 at 7:09 AM** said:

I really appreciate searching through on this web site, it has superb blog posts. “I have a brand new philosophy. I’m only going to dread a single day at a time.” by Charles M. Schulz.

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**Ann**  
**on January 30, 2014 at 2:07 PM** said:

Hello, every time i used to check web site posts here in the early hours in the daylight, because i enjoy to find out more and more.

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**windows 8 activator**  
**on January 30, 2014 at 10:59 PM** said:

This paragraph offers clear idea in favor of the new viewers of blogging, that truly how to do blogging and site-building.
Hello, I think that I saw you visited my site so I came to “return the favor”. I’m trying to find things to enhance my website! I suppose it’s OK to use a few of your ideas!

Hey would you mind letting me know which web host you’re utilizing? I’ve loaded your blog in 3 completely different internet browsers and I must say this blog loads a lot quicker than most. Can you suggest a good web hosting provider at a honest price? Kudos, I appreciate it!

Hey really cool web site! Guy .. Beautiful .. Superb .. I’ll bookmark your blog and take the feeds also…I am satisfied to find so numerous interesting information here from the post, we’d like develop much more approaches in this regard, thanks for sharing.

Incredible points. Outstanding arguments. Maintain up the great spirit.
Hello my family member! I wish to say that this article is amazing, great written and include almost all significant infos. 
I would like to see extra posts like this.

Windows 8 product key

Wow, this piece of writing is fastidious, my sister is analyzing these kinds of things, therefore I am going to convey her.

Attractive section of content. I just stumbled upon your weblog and in accession capital to assert that I invest in actually enjoyed account your blog posts. Any way I’ll be subscribing for your augment and even I accomplishment you access consistently quickly.

Hi there, Sorry for ones long comment Thanks for sharing your article, next time can you write about wart removal products. Also is there any proven residence cure for skin warts? Can you suggest me some? I live in Canada. Please dont forget that some stuff may not be offered in my area. That is certainly why suggest me general points which could be observed everywhere. Also would you recommend buying wartrol online? is it not dangerous?
nigeria entertainment news

on February 4, 2014 at 10:36 AM said:

I might be beating a dead horse, but thank you for posting this!

Marcelino

on February 4, 2014 at 5:36 PM said:

Greetings! Very helpful advice within this post! It’s the little changes that make the most significant changes.
Thanks a lot for sharing!