

It's a Good Thing the Internet Makes it Easier for Crazies to Find Each Other

The most common criticism I hear right after a “but” or “however” preceded by praise of the “fantastic” and “amazing” and “revolutionary” internet is that it's made it easier for people with crazy ideas to find each other and congregate.

This is “bad” because it means that more and more crazy ideas are persisting and spreading; ideas that range in their craziness from the benign to the unscientific to the outright dangerous (gasp!).

I have no less than two reasons to believe that this phenomenon is a good thing. Now, when I say “a good thing” I mean that it's good from a voluntarist perspective, or in other words, this phenomenon moves society in a direction that voluntarists would like society to move, that is, more liberty, peace, and prosperity, and less conflict, war, and poverty.

The first, which is probably the one most touted by my fellow voluntarists, libertarians, and anarchists, is the fact that the internet has been instrumental in bringing libertarian ideas to my generation. I know it has for me. And not only libertarian ideas, but peaceful parenting and unschooling ideas, too. Ask a non-radical and you'll find that these ideas are considered just as crazy as flat earth theory and alt-rightism.

But the fact that we political and parental radicals have found these ideas and each other is not only a silver lining to this larger phenomenon, nor should we who recognize this and the other kinds of crazy that are persisting and spreading lament it as such. I think we do our voluntarist ideals a disservice when we do, which brings me to my second reason.

When people hold beliefs considered outside the mainstream, they are all too often made targets of harassment, ridicule, ostracism, and even violence. They are traumatized and pushed out of society. This has a real effect on people. If it coerces them to change, then they've betrayed themselves, with all the psychological issues that may follow. If it doesn't force a change, then it may lead to resentment and hatred. A virtual caste system is created separating the radicals from the non-radicals. I ask you, when has this ever not caused problems in a society, problems shrouded in interpersonal conflict often leading to violence?

On the other hand, when these people are able to avoid all of this misery by finding normalcy for their crazy, they are less traumatized, less self-betrayed, less resentful, less hateful, less conflict-creating, and less prone to violence.

It's as simple as this: non-mainstream beliefs *lead to* traumatic experience *leads to*

psychological problems and/or resentment *leads to* conflict *leads to* violence.

The fact that people who hold “crazy” ideas are able to avoid traumatic experience by finding each other and a sense of normalcy is a *benefit* to society toward moving in the direction that voluntaryists want it to move.

This phenomenon isn't a bug, it's a feature, and a fucking *glorious* one at that!