

Essay on roszak

Society



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In Roszak's text, he seeks to discover exactly why religious mysticism has disappeared from modern society. According to him, the "energies of transcendence" have vanished from our culture, which has incredible effects on how we live our lives. He states that religions sensibilities have been excised in order to make room for urban industrial development and the advancement of technology. The increasing secularization of our culture has stemmed from an idealism stating that we can do things on our own, and that we do not need pie-in-the-sky figures to help us along the way. There is no feeling of loss on the part of cultures when they become secularized; blind faith is simply replaced by a perception of added maturity and greater wisdom as to the workings of the world. However, a new radicalism has emerged that encourages visionaries to bring forth a new religious fervor in their politics, culture and reality. He wishes to look at science as the thing that has mostly replaced religion in the eyes of society as the thing that answers all our questions.

In his writings, he also discusses the importance of the psyche for the whole of society; both physical and metaphysical aspects are discussed as potential elements that drive the individual. Our quintessential fear of death represents a fear of the organic and the real, especially in the face of anything unsanitary or unclean such as garbage or trash. Despite our increasing fear of the metaphysical, we keep it in the form of therapy, as it is “mysticism with all the metaphysical commitments drained off.” People want to avoid mysticism, as it sounds too exotic and fanciful; yet people pursue it because of its exoticism. Due to the easy access of the extraordinary within the urban industrial setting, the mundane (cows, regular flowers) becomes the new exotic.

Raszak’s primary point is that we need to stop separating ourselves from the rest of existence and putting ourselves up on a pedestal. We need to expand our ability to empathize with human beings to encompass the whole of creation, as we could then learn something from the world around us. In this way, we will have a better understanding our place in the world and how our society can relate to our environment. We can realize just why we fear disorder, chaos, uncertainty – and also why we both fear and seek out mysticism as a metaphysical answer to our problems.

Karl Polanyi

Polanyi, in Chapter 4, goes over what makes up a market economy, and how it has developed throughout history. Adam Smith suggests that “the division of labor in society was dependent upon the existence of markets,” further cementing ideas that greater populations of people need to specialize in a single task and produce more of it, depending on each other for the rest of

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those needs. Societies such as the Kula ring and the Trobriand Islands, despite their relative small size and primitive societies, still have economic concepts such as division of labor.

The two primary principles of behavior in society that are related to economics are reciprocity and redistribution. The concept of reciprocity revolves mostly around the family and kinship – continuing the family line and taking care of your territory. Every action is taken in order to preserve yourself and your offspring. People produce more in order to feed their families; reciprocity is the motivating factor to work. There is also redistribution, which involves societies that have a central leader. All of the goods and foodstuffs that are gathered or created are given to the leader, who then distributes them as he sees fit. This promotes a centrist society where the person on top is trusted to allocate resources to those who need it. These concepts and more are a substantial part of how markets have developed up to the nineteenth century.

Polanyi's text allows us to know more about the mechanics of society, especially economics-based societies. We see that, throughout history, the same types of societies and economies keep cropping up, and small microcosms of each exist in all corners of the world. No matter the size of the society, there is always an even division of labor, as well as concepts of reciprocity and redistribution. This allows us to comprehend why we do the things that we do (taking care of our family via work, submitting some of our goods to central leadership for appropriate redistribution), and how that works for the good of the people. Cultural activities and aspects are almost directly related to the economy and how it is operated, especially in a

redistribution-related system. The symbiotic relationship between every type of workforce helps to determine how these same people behave and interact outside of the workplace.

James Rinehart

Rinehart, in his article “ Alienation and the Development of Industrial Capitalism in Canada,” he demonstrates the concept of alienation and how it is explored in different societies to form what is known as industrial capitalism. Particularly, Rinehart sees how Canadian industrial capitalism came to be, starting from the 1840 pre-industrial agrarian societies that were found throughout most of the countries. With the advent of industry, these societies became self-sufficient. Economic concerns were less important in these pre-industrial days, but this changed when division of labor was introduced in order to accommodate the new industrial productivity that came with this technology. Once factories came along, the people became commodities, “ costs,” as they turned into single-service workers for these industrial facilities.

The advent of the industrial age, according to Reinhart, led to a greater emphasis on homogenization, and the individual started to be sold short. As a result, autonomy and personal fulfillment are sought outside the workplace, still not acting as an appropriate substitute for the “ long stretches of gray workdays.” The sheer amount of time that is spent working, however, dramatically diminishes the quality of life of a people, as they do not have as much time for leisure and their own personal pursuits.

Rinehart's viewpoint allows us to see how an increasingly industrialized society affects our culture. Division of labor turns from subsistence to strictly regimented tasks that increase our dependence on one another for the things we need to survive. We also see a little bit more about the role of the Self in all of this, as the individual's desires become secondary to the needs of the many, putting individual liberty behind in lieu of those long weekdays and dozens of hours a week sacrificed to potentially soul-crushing work. Our increasingly hectic and fast-paced lifestyles, including those long work weeks, are taking time away from what we really want to be doing. Through Rinehart's words, we see how our society developed into what it is now, and how it came to be so compartmentalized, sacrificing our personal lives for the work of the community.

Sigmund Freud

Freud, in his lecture "The Dream-Work," he examines the nature of distortion in dreams and how they can be used to determine the meaning of symbols that you see in said dreams. When you dream, you dream of things that are representative of varying factors or people in your life. The interpretation of these dreams involves understanding the dream as a whole, which allows the separate components to be divided and related to it. Condensation must first be done in a dream work; this involves the realization that an entire dream contains separate parts which act as an "abbreviated translation" of the whole thing. This showcases the existence of composite structures within a dream that all mean the same thing, but tell the story in different scales.

Displacement is another achievement of this dream work; this involves a latent element of the dream being replaced by an allusion, something separate from the whole of the dream. Also, the dream is made stranger by the removal of a related element and its replacement by an unimportant and unrelated one. Finally, the most interesting part of the dream work is its ability to manifest latent thoughts into images. These images represent some thought or desire carried by the subconscious, and can be vital for the creation of dreams. The exploration of these three factors is absolutely paramount to the interpretation of dreams and the awareness of our unconscious mental life.

Freud's determinations are absolutely crucial for understanding the Self. Our subconscious carries with us all of our secret desires and resentments; often, they manifest themselves in our dreams. However, they can be masked in metaphor and image, and that combined with the fleeting nature of dreams can make it difficult for an individual to figure out what it all means. Through an understanding of the dream work, a person can use that to make their best guess as to what is bothering them, and learn a bit more about what they secret want or feel. Even the sheer knowledge that there is something that exists under the surface for each person, communicating everything we don't realize or vocalize about the world around us, is groundbreaking. This realization and its subsequent exploration can lead to a better comprehension of ourselves.

Jeremy Rifkin

In the advent of the Information Age, fewer and fewer workers are needed, due to the automation and instant information provided by machines. As a

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result, global unemployment is at epidemic levels, and the entire social process needs to be reconsidered to give human beings a smaller part. With people being required to do fewer things, they need to do something else instead. The more technology advances, the more workerless our world becomes. This results in stagnation and a criminal outlaw subculture rising up to provide for these people who have nowhere else to turn.

With this in mind, a different America is emerging. Dual economies are rising, where the rich and poor become much more widely segregated to the point where they barely even interact anymore. As a result, the middle-class is dying out to be replaced by either an incredibly destitute subculture or a superelite that enjoys an incredibly lavish lifestyle that prevents them from feeling the ill effects of this workerless world. Given the new ability granted to corporations to produce more and more goods with fewer workers, it is necessary to determine a new way of living that still accommodates everyone while allowing us to remain efficient and profitable as an economy.

Rifkin's commentary provides a very important realization of the way modern society is transforming, and how that is affecting culture. This also demonstrates how closely tied economy is with society, as the work environment changing additionally affects the overall cultural environment. With fewer workers and greater automation comes a wider income disparity, and cultures can change and shift because of it. Given the new roles that people have in this Information Age (the disappearance of the middle class, the increasing wealth of the rich, and the destitution of the quickly expanding poor), the way we interact with each other will change just as much as the number of jobs on the market. Rifkin makes it clear that the <https://assignbuster.com/essay-on-roszak/>

shifting of most of the world's wealth to an elite few will radically change the way our culture operates, essentially creating two societies out of an existing one, and they will barely, if ever, interact with each other.

Freud's Two Theories of Instincts

Freud's two theories of instincts are categorized as life (eros) and death (thanatos), respectively. With life instincts, they all are related to the concepts of survival and reproduction, as well as hedonistic pleasure. One's sex drive is an important life instinct; it relates to both reproduction and pleasure, focusing on making the individual's life more enjoyable, as well as continuing the species. Libido is the name for the energy that life instinct generates, and it fuels all pro-social actions that the individual takes. Avoiding pain is yet another life instinct, as well as the desire to take in food and drink.

On the other side of the coin are death instincts, such as any type of self destructive behavior. Violence and aggressive feelings towards others can be external expressions of these death instincts. These instincts come from a place of dissatisfaction with life, and can often follow any sort of major trauma, as the body wishes to carry out an unconscious desire to die. This part of the psyche despises order and seeks to derail it; it comes from the same place as the cathartic feeling you get when you destroy something. For the most part, life instincts are strong enough to overcome these death instincts, but they can come out under times of great duress and stress. War, the loss of a friend or loved one, or any sort of disaster can help to trigger one's death instincts.