

Twitter Thread Expertly Dissects Millennial/Gen Z Psychology

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With each successive generation, it seems we get one step closer in Western civilization to peak nihilism.

The Twitter thread below starts with a truncated summary of Gen Z psychology (but also, I would argue, applicable to millennials, the generation I belong to): "to be serious is to be 'cringe', to be in love is to be a 'simp', and to be ambitious is to be a 'try-hard'."

The initial diagnosis is followed by greater elaboration deeper into the thread.

The entire Zoomer outlook on life boils down to not taking anything seriously.

To be serious is to be 'cringe', to be in love is to be a 'simp', and to be ambitious is to be a 'try-hard'.

THREAD pic.twitter.com/rgdMqQCPWO

— Forrest [@Foz89107323](#) [March 31, 2023](#)

The entire thread is worth reading, as it touches on nearly every social illness that grips the younger generations – modern feminism, hookup culture, the rejection of meaning and objective reality itself, and – which I wish to focus on here – the full-throated embrace of irony as a coping mechanism in a world cleansed of inherent meaning.

Requesting promises and commitment from another person is conceived as "exerting pressure".

The goal with dating, therefore, is to put up a facade of unseriousness.

One must hide behind multiple layers of irony and speak indirectly about all things. pic.twitter.com/mKHxIn2Z2

— Forrest □ (@Foz89107323) [March 31, 2023](#)

Irony as a worldview is a pestilence – the song of the bird that has grown to love its own cage, as it has been put elsewhere. David Foster Wallace described the essential problem with irony best:

“Sarcasm, parody, absurdism and irony are great ways to strip off stuff’s mask and show the unpleasant reality behind it. The problem is that once the rules of art are debunked, and once the unpleasant realities the irony diagnoses are revealed and diagnosed, “then” what do we do? Irony’s useful for debunking illusions, but most of the illusion-debunking in the U.S. has now been done and redone...

Postmodern irony and cynicism’s become an end in itself, a measure of hip sophistication and literary savvy. Few artists dare to try to talk about ways of working toward redeeming what’s wrong, because they’ll look sentimental and naive to all the weary ironists. Irony’s gone from liberating to enslaving.” [emphasis added]

The sincere search for meaning, in Gen Z/millennial psychology, is a fool’s errand – one that demonstrates an individual’s antiquated sentimentality, an essential weakness that must be purged from all interpersonal interactions: “Since the zoomer can’t express his true self, nor his emotions, he must remain conscious of himself at all times, like a larp,” the Twitter thread reads.

I would like to take this analysis in a different, but related, direction that is not addressed in the Twitter thread, excellent though it is.

Part of what is going on is spiritual dissatisfaction with the empty promises of material abundance/consumerism.

Material wealth is useful, of course, and a net benefit to a people’s quality of life – poverty of any sort is not ideal. Yet it cannot, despite the fervent promises of clever advertisers, confer spiritual meaning to life.

Over the course of the previous eighty years after World War II and the advent of the global liberal economic order, the West has slowly come to grips with this reality. But Third World countries, which I have spent much time in and which only recently escaped the mire of hand-to-mouth poverty, are still optimistic about the potential of material wealth to deliver the nirvana – the enlightened absence of suffering — we all implicitly crave.

Give them a few more generations to come to the same cynicism that pervades the West, after their Gods of antiquity have all been replaced by the market and secular humanism, just as He has been in the West for some time since Nietzsche lamented his demise in the 1800s.

Man does not subsist on bread alone, as the Bible verse goes.

The thread concludes on a hopeful, positive note – one that the subject of this discourse, millennials and zoomers, would do well to embrace:

“Gen Z is the generation of nihilism. Zoomer’s [sic] are incapable of doing something rather than nothing. They are like Zombies, too dead to live and too alive to die. Don’t abide by their standards. Pursue greatness, live passionately, and do so unapologetically.”

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