



ISOLATED

MUSINGS OF

AN OVERACTIVE MIND

This zine should distract you from

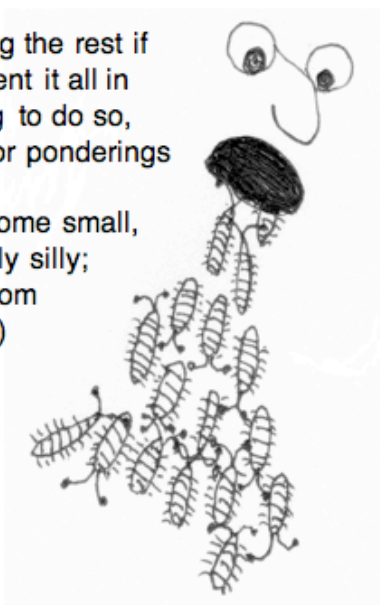
the mediocrity of existence for a good 30 minutes.

Introduction...

There would not be much point in writing the rest if I could adequately describe and represent it all in an introduction, so instead of attempting to do so, I give you this doodle. Swap the bugs for ponderings and that's pretty much what this is:

an assortment of thoughts, some big, some small, some silly, some serious...though mostly silly; along with some "illustrations" cut out from old magazines (since I draw like this ►) and an illusion in there too.

- Miss Nomer



Warning: All contents are the product of uncensored, raw thought. Not recommended to people who take things too seriously, people who believe things without good reason to and those who don't like to think in general. Also potentially offensive to certain species of rats. Remember, it's all just questionably tasteful fun.





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Mini-Musings

Bus tickets must be beings of uttermost confidence, for their sole function is to be validated.

I think one of the most groundbreaking inventions of all time is the jackhammer...

Food is the opiate of the massive.

Following things blindly must be hard

You mock those who blindly follow the majority... now turn your attention to those who are so dedicated to deviating from the norm that they would gladly cease breathing if it were suggested to them that inhalation was a form of conformity; for they deserve just as much scrutiny and ridicule.

Avoiding something simply because it is "cool"* is, in effect, as bad as liking something merely on the basis of its socially favoured status. This is because a person undertaking the former is still acknowledging the "cool" status of the item in question, and deciding their position on something solely because of the opinions of others. Flocking from trends is just as reprehensible as flocking towards them, because one is allowing trends to influence their preferences in both cases. Your preferences should frolic freely amongst all possibilities and not shift in response to trends. A



mindless avoider of trends who does not subject them to his own judgement but cultivates distaste for them based solely on the fact that others favour them is not noticeably less retarded than he who mindlessly cultivates a fondness for anything that currently happens to be in the limelight of others' affections.

*My usage of the word 'cool' doesn't necessarily mean that which is advocated and approved of by the mass majority. Cool as I've used it can be anything that any group of people assent to within any subculture. Consequently, the meanings of the words 'mainstream' and 'majority' incorporate the "sub-majorities" within smaller groups, as well as the overall masses.

One must make their decisions of what they do and don't like independently of what anyone else happens to like, or else face the fact that one is either conforming, or conforming to non-conformity. For example: if you liked piercings, of your own accord, but now that everybody is doing it, you don't like them anymore, then you're just as influenced as the thousands of newly pierced trend-followers. Likewise, if you find yourself appreciating pop music that you would otherwise dislike due to its mainstream nature, but shun away from it for the sole reason that it is majority-approved, you're no better than people who *don't* like said music but follow the herd and buy the CD anyway, the people who live their lives floating down the mainstream. Systematic rejection of all things mainstream doesn't equate to the rejection of conformity itself; rather, it is a different flavour of conformity which often goes unnoticed – conforming to non conformity. As long as you base your preferences on those of the majority, whether adopting them or avoiding them, you sacrifice your own perspective and choice to approve or disapprove freely, instead allowing the irrelevant inclinations of the majority to dictate your views.



More on morons after the following interlude into whimsy:

The Tale of The Tail

We were late to our tutorial today because we were distracted by a bizarre spectacle whilst wandering from the car to the campus. We were walking along the lake (or river if you must), admiring the scenery, birds, and other such natural manifestations of beauty. A bunch of seagulls and ducks were clustered in a manner most strange around a section of the riverbank, doing nothing in particular, collectively. This happened to be one of our favourite pastimes, so we decided to explore the reason behind their congregation. As we neared them, they parted to reveal the focus of their interest – a small, brown, furry creature nestled in the bank. We exclaimed joy over the prospect of seeing a little beaver, hamster, or other miscellaneous little critter, and approached it enthusiastically to better examine the mystery. The little guy looked up as we neared, revealing a cute little whiskered face, which could identify him as either a hamster, guinea pig or gerbil. The imagined friendly cuteness of our discovery propelled us closer still, until our proximity threatened the creature and forced him to emerge in full view as he slowly backed away from our large, menacing selves.

As soon as we witnessed the object of our joy & attention in full, it became apparent that we were mistaken in our expectations of cuteness, for the creature was, in fact, a huge rat. Our adoration faded immediately, and we stopped advancing towards him, instead standing frozen in disbelief. We had processed the new information and judged that pursuing closer contact with the rat would be unwise.



The only visible distinction between the rat and the "miscellaneous, cute, furry critter" we had anticipated was its long, tentacle-like tail. This singular body part was capable of shattering all of our warm feelings and reversing our attitude and intentions towards him. We now saw a filthy, massive wet rat, and associated with it disease, filth, danger and threat (mostly subconsciously). How quickly and unjustifiably our attitudes and associations change with the sight of something so miniscule. The enormous revision came because the new information placed the creature into a distinct category – "rat", and attached to the term came a swarm pre-learned attitudes and expectations.

Judgements we had made previously about the general nature of rats now applied to this creature, and in an instant, he transformed from friendly to filthy, from little to huge; cute to disgusting, etc. This happened as soon as we detected the species of the being and applied our prior conceptions of his class to him. How quickly our perceptions can warp with the introduction of a mere morsel of new empirical data! The incident demonstrated the immense capacity for our preconceptions of reality to influence our everyday experiences. The rat itself had not committed anything to warrant such judgement: he was as little, furry, and cute-faced as he had ever been. And yet his tail forced him to undergo judgement based on our questionable stereotype of rats.

Luckily, the rat was blissfully unaware of the injustice and misapprehension to which his tail had doomed him. He proceeded to plonk himself into the river and used said tail to propel himself under the water and swim away. The birds reformed their voyeuristic ensemble in the water and continued to stalk the rat in awe and interest, unable to comprehend this strange creature, yet seemingly eager to do so. We humans, having barged in and promptly established the nature of things, left the scene. Yet perhaps we are ill equipped in making judgements, for although our associative, categorical approach is a quicker method of understanding our surroundings, it is not always as accurate as we hold it to be.

In retrospect, however, maybe our judgement was justified, for not only did the rat cause me to be tardy, the thought of the rat incident made me inattentive throughout the lesson as I focused on the creation of this speculative babble.

A highly speculative account of the origins of spiritual beliefs

In the before time, in the long long ago, there were a mere handful of spiritual beliefs, conveniently clustering people into religions. It was easy to ask someone if they believed in God, enquire as to which one, and from thereon in steer the conversation away from superficial crap (gossip, weather, attempted flirting etc.), towards a friendly debate about the possibility of their religion being incorrect, and maybe learn something about why man is so eager to believe along the way. The idea that I could inspire thought in the minds of those around me was one of my main motivations for enduring the pheromone-drenched mating grounds that we call 'bars' and 'clubs'.

Lately, I have come across a barrage of humanoids of the "new age" persuasion. These modern-day "believers" generally maintain that organised religions are bollocks; somehow, though, they are able to reconcile this view with their faith in strangely similar, though more obscure, new beliefs of their own. I call it disorganised religion, and it's much harder to talk to these people than the other theists, since they all believe slightly different things, and have slightly different reasons as to why, how, and who these things come from. Take auras, ghosts, aliens, all of that ninkempoopery. These people have had enough of organised religion, but, upon abandoning it, are faced with the stench of their fast approaching mortality; so their minds stumble back into something comforting. They rebel against the beliefs of the former generation, only to submerge themselves in a new faith of their own devising - a grab-bag of new convictions just as preposterous as those found in traditional religions: anything to forget the non-existence which they cannot grasp and thus reject. Close your eyes and imagine what it'd be like to not exist. Do you see blackness? Whiteness? All we've ever known is existence, and anything that we try to conjure up about what non-existence would "be like" is fundamentally flawed. It wouldn't "be like" anything precisely because you wouldn't "be" at all. **Non-existence is inconceivable to the human mind.** I pontificate that that which I have boldly boldened is the root of all religions, whether organised, disorganised, primitive or modern. The "eternal life" feature is something that all religions share, and this may, at first, seem odd,

since some developed entirely independently of one-another. One explanation would be that there really is eternal life and all those who believe in it have tapped into this fact in their own way. A more reasonable explanation (because it postulates less entities and no unknown phenomena) is that without a clear picture of non-existence our minds have a tendency to invent or cling to alternatives which they can grasp. Our minds stubbornly avoid the "non-existence" hypothesis of what happens after death, instead postulating (or accepting others' postulations of) spirits, reincarnation, a god or two – any means necessary for holding onto the notion of eternal existence. Back when societies were smaller, one such belief tended to dominate in any given population – meaning that there was, generally, one accepted means for eternal life per people-cluster; non-believers were deemed blasphemers and sacrificed or banished. It was a way for people to deal with death, life in light of death, as well as a supplement of moral fibre in some cases. Sound familiar?



I understand if you've been brought up in a religious family and kept sheltered from independent thinking, and still believe what your parents told you to believe – I was guilty of this myself until I flicked the switch on my brain to "on" at about 14 and started noticing some inconsistencies in Christianity. But if one has already rejected religion and straddled the high horse of scepticism, neighed all over the beliefs of one's ancestors and broken out of faith-land, why steer that horse right back into another land of faith, though differently labelled, and get off of the horse upon arrival? Why apply logical thinking when it comes to appraising organised religion but think that some new age nonsense has no need for corresponding assessment? I have very little sympathy for these people - they are clearly armed with the powers of independent thought but apply them only to escape an old faith for a new one. Granted, they might not think this is what they are doing, indeed, most of these people consider themselves non-religious, yet they remain entirely convinced that there must be *something* out there, that this couldn't possibly be *all* there is. Why? Because it's inconceivable to us that this is all there is, plus it's depressing, and it can make your head hurt from thinking too much about how to salvage some meaning out of such an existence.

You want to know what it feels like to be dead, to cease existing? It's surprisingly similar to the non-existence you didn't experience before you became conscious. I believe in Reunincarnation: you don't exist, then you do for a bit, then you go back to not existing.



Amuse yourself by harvesting the most fruitful & sustainable resource in the universe – human stupidity!

#1: Closing, Confusing or Detonating Overly Open Minds



“In all affairs it’s a healthy thing now and then to hang a question mark on the things you have long taken for granted[?]”

- Bertrand Russell

A tell-tale sign of the "new age" flavour of human stupidity is adherence to the view that perpetual open-mindedness is the ultimate virtue, whilst any closed-mindedness is the mark of a stubborn fool. I agree with Russell: adding a dash of doubt to what you hold most true can reveal any inconsistencies in your belief systems – it’s like playing devil’s advocate with yourself, and can be both fun and enlightening (fun can be maximised by trying on different voices for viewpoints).

The people I speak of are dedicated to an extreme, excessive “open-mindedness”, not for the purposes of acquiring knowledge – the notion is most often invoked to shield their (largely) shonky beliefs from any critique. Open-mindedness as they conceive it actively discourages the whole process of reasoning – some people actually advocate that we not only treat new ideas with an open mind, but that we retain this attitude in the face of proof or strong evidence that the idea is incorrect!

I think somewhere along the way these people got ideas like being tolerant of others' opinions and thinking outside the box confused with total, relentless open-mindedness. It is thoroughly counterproductive to be and remain entirely open to everything, no matter how incoherent, irrelevant or preposterous it may be, since:

1) Some things are a certain way by definition or are logically possible/impossible, such as "all bachelors are unmarried men". These are necessary truths/falsehoods, questioning them is pointless; they are amongst the few things our minds can be forever closed on.

2) Every time we reach even a simple conclusion, we are closing our minds to the possibility that it is incorrect, and reopening them only upon discovery of new, relevant information on the matter. For instance, I have closed my mind to the possibility that the zine fair is a mere figment of my imagination. If I show up tomorrow and there is nobody there I would rethink this; for now, however, it is necessary that my mind is closed on the matter if I'm to meet the deadline. If we didn't systematically close our minds to things that are highly improbable or shown to be false, we would start behaving in very strange ways and probably end up like Tommy, the insane cheese-midget/Howard's mentor from the Jungle episode of something so mighty you would have seen it by now.

3) To be open to everything isn't to think outside the box, but rather trap oneself in an "openness" box, applying the same rigid rule to every new idea and bypassing the need for individual thought altogether. It's stupid...but is it really stupid? See what I mean; it's stupid.

4) There are many more reasons, too many to mention here - think of your own. Send it in if you think you've got a particularly insightful one, so that I may look upon it and see that it is good.

So what can one do when faced with interacting with such an individual, someone who advocates a unique blend of nonsense beliefs (conspiracies/homeopathy/energies/aliens etc.), supported by

mere anecdotal evidence, if any at all; someone who will no doubt label anyone that dares question said beliefs closed minded and disregard all that they say? It is impossible to believe something with such passion that evidence of its truth becomes irrelevant without being entirely closed minded on the matter. They're wrong, in so many ways, but that's not the point. The point is: **how can we amuse ourselves with this, this new branch on the ever-growing tree of human stupidity?**

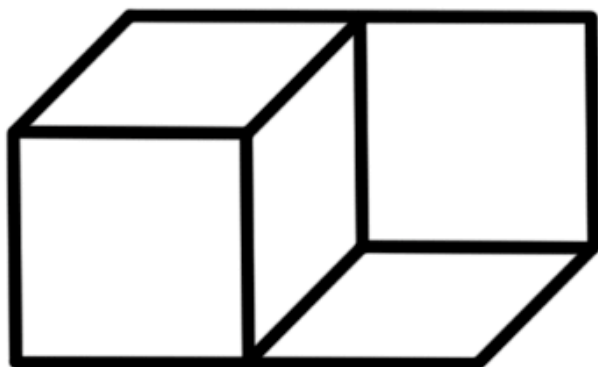
There is but one thing to do, though this one thing will not only encourage thought in the open-mindedness-toting imbeciles but also confuse and stun them into producing the facial expression of a bewildered jackass for your amusement:

Firstly, point out that they themselves are extremely closed-minded about the virtues of being closed-minded; proceed to inform them that you won't stand for such closed-mindedness and, finally, demand that they be more open-minded about becoming more closed-minded. Pause, for dramatic effect, and to allow processing time. If they happen to be curious imbeciles, it may appear as though their head will explode from the concentration – don't get your hopes up though, as it usually doesn't – and it's all guilt free fun, since you were trying to teach, dammit.



3-d Brainfuck

I wanted to draw in three dimensions, and I didn't let my utter lack of ability to do so stop me. I went out and got a math book with some oversized squares, cranked out my connector pens, and drew some squares and parallelograms hanging out together, in their own special ways. Since I still didn't quite grasp where they were supposed to go, I ended up with trippy things such as this. Is it protruding in or out?



I've got more that I'll put into upcoming issues. They can pop out of the page even more if you colour them in – especially with grey, black and white. Just make sure both squares end up the same colour, and both of the horizontal parallelograms match too, or it won't work. It's most effective is when you're on the brink of hallucinating already – whether that be from something you smoked or lack of sleep. Let me know if it works for you.

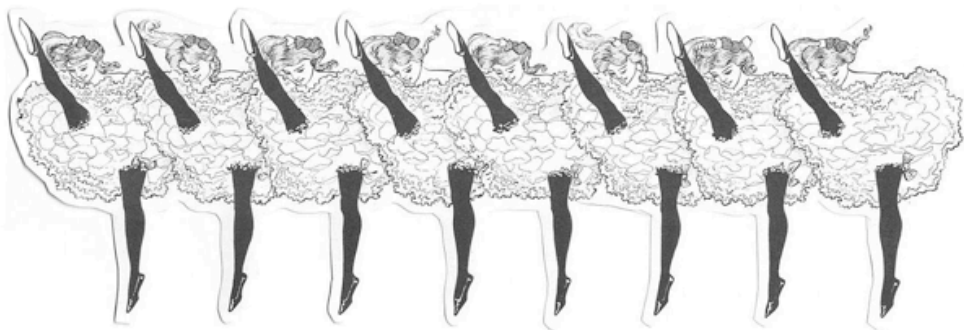


About the Author
About the Pseudonym

Pseudonyms are a great way of forcing the reader to read objectively, freed from all of those sub-conscious social drives that bear influence over one's opinions when one reads material from known authors. My identity shouldn't hold any influence over your appreciation, or lack thereof, of what I've written. If this particular bit of mind-biscuit had been your best friend's new zine, you would react to it in a fundamentally different way, since any person close enough to you probably forms a vital piece of your own mind-cake. Now, bearing with my hunger-inspired-baked-goods-analogy, what I suggest is that you nibble on my various writings ignoring what kind of cake my mind might be, to be spouting such things. As the late, great, Muscular Beaver once said – "My identity is so secret, not even I know who I am".

If procrastination doesn't debilitate me before #2, I'll have less writing in it and more short sillies – I'll dish out thoughts in conveniently bite-sized chunks and save on toner too. Send your thoughts, love letters and/or hate mail to overactive_mind@hotmail.com.

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