

Eighteen Experiments in the Gay Science

Oubliette - Upon observing modern behavior, one begins to notice that many people have constructed a kind of dungeon at the bottom of their minds, the purpose of which is to forget. Indeed, most members of "civilized societies" have a well-stocked oubliette where they place every mystery, conundrum, complexity, and inconvenient controversy they have ever encountered. Ironically, the more someone fills this mind-dungeon of theirs, the less free they become... and all the more "civilized"!

Neither Agreeing Nor Disagreeing - When modern folk are presented with a thorny issue, the default response for many is to neither agree nor disagree, instead remaining an impartial observer. We don't know enough about that to decide, they say - the issue is beyond us or none of our concern. We see this issue as trivial, they say - it's best if we just all try to move past petty differences. Such a passive attitude, reminiscent of a woman relying on her date to choose the time and place for dinner, may be convenient in the short term and even quite beneficial to one's relationships, career, and reputation. However, as usual, the woman proves to be wiser - at least she will be able to eat when all is said and done!

Expediency - People are no longer expected to be consistent, only to meet the needs of the moment. Above all else, one must never get in the way of progress, and one must never become a nuisance or inefficiency.

Triaging - Some people would rather die than accept there's a user manual. Woe to those who get in their way!

Authenticity - Kafka was ashamed of his real face; what a tragedy! Perhaps the only greater tragedy is to be afraid of imposing upon the masses.

Pushing Through - Someone who is part of a system often must push when they should yield, and yield when they should push. Realizing things are backwards constitutes groundbreaking innovation in sales and customer service by the peddlers of business wisdom.

Wallflower - We accept the life we think we deserve.

Peculiar Life - Some of the most beautiful things are hidden away for the benefit of those who care.

Gehinnom - Some Jewish rabbis have related a story where a sage cried with a young boy for an hour because the boy was breaking an important Jewish law. The sage's tears fell onto the boy's hand as he said "This hand is going to burn in Gehinnom, it breaks my heart". Honest people who study human nature know that at some point in most people's lives, they became demoralized, and since then have refused many of the growth opportunities presented to them. Such folk are already in Gehinnom - and will be rather disappointed with their ultimate harvest.

Rainbow Rockstar - So how you gonna do it? I'm gonna trade this life for the Noahide Laws, I get to keep the bacon and my fancy car...

Tricky Truths - Most of Western history has been a process of finding a middle way between two extremes, and perhaps the most challenging truth for the species to grasp is that we are a united entity better off living our lives as such. However, this balance between individuality and togetherness has been catastrophically challenging to find.

The Worldwide Prisoner's Dilemma - You are stuck on this planet with everyone else. If you collaborate and they collaborate, you have utopia. If you collaborate and they don't, you die. If they collaborate and they don't, you dominate at great cost. If you both don't collaborate, you get nuclear war. Choose your choice!

Time to Think - Use it or lose it.

Reich - When everyone is living a lie, what is there to talk about besides the weather and popular culture?

Testing the Waters - Confucius is famous for saying that he expected students to complete lessons on their own once given "one corner of the square". In this generation, many people have no idea a corner is even being offered to them. What did that blasted Nazarene say about pearls?

Patience and Punchline - Eventually, people will get it, or you will be ejected from your paranoid and backwards social system. Don't give them too much, too soon!

Living Death - The grave cannot be avoided, but living an authentic life can be.

Technology - The ropes that bind can also strangle; the poison fruits of knowledge dangle...