

Black & White

Add more extreme contrast to your life:

Man is black, woman is white?

Increasing contrast?

I'm starting to think that if we apply the black-and-white art photography aesthetic to real life, maybe the idea of "preserving the midtones" is a bit boring.

The general notion of crushing the blacks is when you're processing or post processing your photos, you dragged the black slider all the way to 100, and you also crank up the contrast to 100.

Aesthetically, I think this makes for much more striking and interesting images.

First, midtones are boring. Almost universally, the more you increase the contrast of something or the photos, the better.

For example, even when we design our homes. What is the best way to design a home? Very very simple, use white and black accents.

For example in my eyes, the ideal home exterior paint color is not a matte black, but rather, a pure clean white, with black trimming.

Also, with cars... I think we've discovered is the apex is both a shiny white with shiny black accents -- gloss, not matte.

I think matte, matte black, the whole matte aesthetic is centered around jet stealth fighters, which desire to escape enemy detection. So typically when you try to matte black your car and murder it out... aesthetic you're going for stealth bomber, or jet fighter aesthetic?

But the irony that I find... nobody would ever matte black or murder out their Prius, to escape detection from the police or the other party. We typically do it to our sports cars, our Teslas, etc.

Put the strange inconsistency I see here is on one hand, we want to be seen and to show up, on the other hand, we want to be fake low-key, and be “humble”?

Bitch be humble?

A few years back, the song HUMBLE by Kendrick Lamar went triple maxi viral. It was the most viral song of all time, maybe even more viral than the recent “They Not Like Us” song.

The song was very bizarre to me. Because I’m not sure what Kendrick was really trying to say. Two interpretations --

1. First, he is calling the counterparty a bitch, and telling them to sit down and be humble because I am so much greater than you
2. Or, trying to remind everybody to be humble in general.

But the weird inconsistency in modern day life is we are centered around Christian Jesus ethics, or some sort of quaker Protestant morality which is centered around notion of humility, being humble, close to the ground etc. This is why you will never ever meet a rich person in America called themselves rich, they will call themselves “fortunate“, or “lucky” .

Also another bizarre thing in the world of bodybuilding... you almost never ever ever see bodybuilders proud to flex unabashedly, like Arnold in the documentary *Pumping Iron*, back in the day. It is very uncommon for you to see self-confident men at the gym, working out topless, in booty shorts, 3 inch short shorts, flexing their muscles in the mirror, not trying to hide it etc.

The big issue with the typical bodybuilder is that they are trying to become dominant, but be humble about it? Really weird?

Lord Achilles

I am currently reading the Iliad by Emily Wilson, I am always always happy to see a new translation or a fresh take on the classic.

Anyways, also an interesting thought... I like the idea of reading a female woman translate the most manly literature of all time. I think the problem when I was talking to my friend Kelly, is that traditionally in the past, it was a bunch of impotent old men who would translate great classics like the Iliad or the Odyssey, using their own fake impotent machismo, to translate it.

For example, a lot of the misogyny, misogynistic language from 100 years ago or so, was actually very inaccurate.

Anyways, something worth noting is how artful, succinct, beautiful, and unlike English ancient Greek was. In fact, I definitely want to get Seneca on the classics, get him into Latin and ancient Greek, and mathematics like NASSIM TALEB recommended.

If you think about it long enough, what are the least harmful majors which exist? Classics, math, physics.

Classics is almost like the superior form of sociology, physical theory, it is the pillar of the humanities. Either classics or history.

Math, it will never hurt nobody. There are simple binary rules of math, it is either right or wrong, but then again the problem with a lot of mathematicians math teachers or people who are too into math, they seek some sort of rationality behind real life, society and people... but the true wise man knows that humans are not mathematical equations, ones and zeros. **Humans are messy, even the Ancient Greek gods -- they are all flawed!** They are a bunch of petty, incestuous, sibling rivalry, family drama folks.

What to focus on?

My friend Anton (congrats on your new kid!) told me something interesting... it was his general observation that individuals like me, who diversified themselves, and did not just focus on street photography were the ones that succeeded, and won in the long run.

For example, I bemoan the death of digitalrev it was literally the best thing since Top Gear for photography and street photography. But also here, I think the cautionary tale of digital rev is critical, because whenever you build an empire on a foreign platform, it is like building your castle in a marsh or quicksand.

Even something which shocked me ,, the infamous video of me shooting street photography in Hong Kong with Kaiman Wong, I think was either taken down or deleted by digital rev? Really weird, I guess it was too controversial?

Anyways, once again, I think the rational thing is whenever you post something, know that it is built on a cotton candy foundation, whether it be Facebook Instagram YouTube TikTok etc.... Even Twitter... **Know that it is destined to die.**

I even heard some kids at the mall yesterday talk about myspace, so funny... nobody has any idea what that is. Or xanga, Friendster, live journal?

Sooner or later whenever you build something on a foreign platform, two things are inevitable to happen; either your account will eventually get deleted, taken down, blacklisted, grey listed, banned shadow banned real banned, or just made obsolete.

Neopan 1600

Some suggestions to Fujifilm:

First -- make a new filter, call it extreme monochrome. The general idea is that you want to make a black-and-white filter so hardcore, so extreme, it will blow the Ricoh GR strong monochrome out of the water!

I really love the Fujifilm cameras, for the color filters, before some reason, they really lack a good black-and-white filter mode. The across filter on it sucks.

A simple idea: make a neopan black and white film simulation, and make it extreme high contrast, like neopan 1600! Or like the effect of taking neopan 400, and pushing it two stops to 1600!

Right now, the only real competition to Fujifilm is Ricoh Pentax. And it seems that Leica is dying a slow death.

First, it seems that the Leica Q is only cash cow keeping Leica alive. Also, it seems that Leica is desperate to maintain her clutches on her film photography heritage, resurrecting the Leica M6, the like etc.

But I think the critical issue here is that in some ways, what the Germans do is kind of like kaizen; they take the existing model, and they just keep iterating it, making the new version maybe 3% better... There is never a 100% revolutionary new product, like what Elon did with cybertruck etc.

Once again, the glory of cybertruck is that when it is on the road, it is literally impossible to ignore! You could pretend like you didn't see it, but you did see it! And if you did not see it, definitely your 3 1/2 year-old kid will see it!

And this is where I am still Tesla and Elon... As long as the kids love it, the future is bright!

Even Lamborghini... It isn't cool anymore. And nobody even knows what a Ferrari is.

I think things will go bananas when Tesla puts out a mini cyber truck, imagine a Tesla model Y, but a baby cyber truck version?

The best car is the car not yet innovated invented or released.

I've always loved cars, car culture etc. I feel bad for anybody whoever purchases any brand new car, because the sad reality is that it will become obsolete in a matter of months or years?

For example, all of these guys who bought a Lamborghini Urus, only to have the new version come out, or even guys who bought the Lamborghini Huracan, with a new one that just came out?

Or even the guys who bought the Aventador... All these rappers from five or 10 years ago... Now that the new Revuelto is out, their Aventador is made obsolete?

You fools!

“I pity the fool?”

A random sidenote... It seems that the most constructive way to approach life is through compassion, empathy, maybe even pity.

For example, whenever there are people that I am suspicious of, they are on my bad side, and then finally, I see them without a hat on, without sunglasses, in direct light, and I see how sickly or unwell they are -- the first feeling is extreme compassion. Like I find myself to be the fool -- there is somebody that I vilified, or made into a bad guy, or somebody that I created a totem for my general hate or despise... And then I see how unhealthy they are, and then I realize,...

Wait,,, this whole time, when I am painting this guy as a bad guy, and then I truly see you and witness that in fact, they are just a poor miserable soul, slowly dying... Why was I so negative towards that person?

Something I learned about living in LA... everyone here has problems. For example, a lot of women, their husband is cheating on them, and they know what, but don't want to admit it. Even Jay Z... Probably still 100% cheating on Beyoncé... Why?

And all these assholes who honk at you in the road... spending a lot of time out of a car, just walking around now, observing traffic politics, if you actually get a really good look at the driver, they are either miserable looking Uber drivers, food delivery people, or just very very unwell sickly looking people, insanely poor health, who may be just want to get home because they were stuck in traffic for two hours?

When to be compassionate, when not to be a pushover?

It seems that the primary issue here is the strange bifurcation of ethics. First, we are taught to forgive, turn the other cheek etc., but then you have all these assholes honking at you from behind. So in this case, what are you supposed to do, take it up the ass, because you're afraid that they might have a gun and shoot you? Or the other person may commit road rage, and do something dangerous?

I think the issue here is why should you live your life in fear that some asshole some pussy coward might have a gun, and pop you?

Obviously, I do not want to get shot by some random coward, because I have my son to live for. But still... Isn't the real role of a man to stand up for his child, and to never ever ever see your father get pistol whipped around?

Stand up

I think this is also where manly masculine ethics are different than feminine ones. For example, if you see some asshole smoking in the park, and you're there with your kid... Obviously the correct strategy is to tell them to please stop smoking. I have a new line that I'm experimenting with--

"No smoking,,, pleeeeeease!"

For example, two assholes in front of the Apple campus on Washington in Culver City... Apple 10, 8777 Washington -- One fat guy wearing some sort of blue Greek food T-shirt, I think he might be an Apple employee... I was walking with Seneca down Washington, on the Apple side, and this asshole is smoking indignantly on the side, blowing his secondhand smoke all the way down the block.

I came up to him, and I said, no smoking... *pleeeeeease*

And this asshole has audacity to tell me that "I'm on my break..." And then I stopped, looked at him and eyes, and I said, "that's why I said please". He had no response, his jaw dropped. And like an asshole he kept smoking.

Anyways, fortunately there was some security guards down the block, and I asked them to tell the guy to stop smoking. Maybe next time this happens, I'll just record him or take a picture of him on my iPhone, shame him.

Extreme ethics

I think the big issue is in today's world, ain't nobody have a backbone or ethics anymore.

In actually... The big issue here is that it seems at 99.9% of people just become passive aggressive, and never confront-- we are a non-confrontational society, yet we hide behind our cars and honk at people? Because we are shielded from recompense?

For example, I think this is also where people become keyboard warriors... You would never talk smack about me face-to-face, because you will see how much stronger, taller, more charismatic, and dominant I am than you. In fact, some of the things that I've discovered **after meeting some of my "haters"-- were in fact, they were my greatest lovers!** The biggest issue here was actually... Unrequited hate or love.

What is worse, unrequited hate or unrequited love?

Once again, some bizarre inconsistencies here; I've never hated anybody. Why? Because I'm not that interested in anybody else, nor do I really desire the affection of somebody else that much?

And also, the reason why a lot of men become misogynists, and hate women is because of unrequited love. Then the unrequited love becomes hate.

Everything starts off as love, then evolves to hate?

An alternate theory; *maybe hate is just a more exaggerated or extreme version of love?*

Super facts

The internet is a toxic place. Don't let your kids go on it.

Why? I even have this kind of shocking memory, when I was a 12-year-old kid in Bayside Queens, New York. I was connected to the Internet, AOL 3.0, on my 38.8 K modem... and I was randomly in this chat room, and then I was chatting with this guy, who then instant messaged me, (IM) via AOL instant messenger, AIM, and then eventually started to say weird stuff like pedophile stuff like it feels really good to get your dick sucked by another guy?

Anyways, obviously I got super scared and just banned him.

And I think the issue is in today's world, I think the safe strategy in assumption is that 100% of people on the internet are just malicious bots. And it's starting to get scary... If you could program a bot to be malicious, and to create more malicious bots, ad infinitum -- shit starts to get scary.

For example, Michael Saylor was talking about how whenever he tweets something, and somebody responds to it in a very malicious way... almost 100% it was a bot! And actually the big problem then is **there are real life human beings having back-and-forth inflamed debates with these malicious bots.**

Think about it... Let us say that you are interacting with someone on Twitter, and you have no idea that it is a bot you assume it is real person... Who is going to win in the long run? Obviously the bot!

Adding friction to the digital and cyber world

Bitcoin is virtuous

As time goes on, I'm starting to think of bitcoin like a more ethical idea.

For example, Michael Saylor has an incredibly genius idea of fixing all of this toxicity on the internet, just adding a little bit of monetary, bitcoin or Satoshi friction;

For example, if it cost \$10 worth of US dollars, or satoshis to create an account on Twitter or some social media account, then, overnight practically 100% of the malicious bots will be made obsolete or deleted from the platform.

Why? Right now it cost only a nickel to spin up 100,000 bots, to troll your worst enemy on Twitter. But, if it cost \$10 a bot, it cost you \$1 million to cyber bully somebody, you probably wouldn't... because it is too expensive and *you don't hate them that much*.

I think it is Chris Rock or Chris Tucker who had this funny comedy bit about making bullets super expensive. Then the ideas that if you really really hate somebody, and let us say that one bullet is worth \$100,000, then if you really want to kill them, or even with multiple bullets, you might think twice.

Financial friction and consequences is a good idea

Maybe the greatest use of money is physical friction, monetary friction, consequences.

Fines work, monetary penalties, like getting \$500 traffic tickets for turning red on a red light and not stopping. This has certainly changed my driving behavior.

So I suppose the critical intelligent thing to consider is want to make things free, and want to make things cost money, to direct human behavior.

For good behavior, make it free.

For bad behavior, make it very expensive.

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Funny experiments

Some very very simple things to consider:

First, make **things expensive, don't make them free.**

For example, let us say that you dip into the prOn-- but you don't want to do it anymore, for whatever reason. Maybe make it a thing that if you want to watch it, you have to go to an adult DVD store, and pay \$20 bucks to buy the CD or whatever.

Or, for activities... I think often signing up and paying for an activity is a good idea because it creates sense of ownership, responsibility, or follow through. Or commitment.

For example, perhaps the intelligence of paying money for a trainer or a personal trainer is that you you know that if you don't show up there is a fiscal penalty.

But the new ones is you don't want to breed fake virtuosity for the sake of fake virtuosity.

For example, there is this weird notion in American culture that pain and suffering and overcoming is virtuous. No. Fools!

Exercise workout or whatever is not virtuous, it is something that you do because it is fun enjoyable and something that you like!

For example, would you bribe your kid money to play at the playground? No! So why do this for yourself?

What now?

1. Upload your best photos to arsbeta.com --

2. Start your own self hosted blog via Wordpress.org and bluehost.com
3. Think humanity!

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What I'm consuming

All interviews by Michael Saylor at <https://www.michael.com>

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Iliad by [Emily Wilson](#)

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