

## All.Net Analyst Report and Newsletter

### Welcome to our Analyst Report and Newsletter

#### **Virtual reality makes it easier to do wrong things – and response**

I was granted access to my good friend and business partner Chris's operational technology on his boat last week. He wanted to show me his water cannon (among other things), which can be remotely controlled (up down left right) and which shoots water at a reasonably high velocity and volume.

#### **So naturally**

The first thing I did was to shoot the cannon at him. Not just for a second or two, but rather, I continued to aim it at him as water continued to flow, and sought to hit him in the face with it.

#### **To be clear**

He was able to get out of the way or shut it off at any time. And he did at some point. And he stood there in front of the water stream taking it without flinching. And afterwards he demonstrated that he was indeed wet with a great sense of humor.

#### **However**

As I have thought about it, it is something I never would have done in person. Holding a hose in my hand, I would never have done this. Perhaps for a second or two a small burst for fun, or if he could fight back in a game atmosphere, but never in an asymmetric manner and always looking for the expressions on his face and body movements. But really, never.

#### **Separation of reality**

from actions we take was able to, in a matter of a few seconds, empower me to do something I never would have done without the virtualization of it. It was a game, but it had real world consequences. It was a toy but the toy physically effected my friend.

What if he had slipped off the roof and become injured? It was possible with that amount of water in that situation. And nobody was close enough to do anything about it. If he hit his head while falling, he could have died. And it would have been my fault. An accident, but anticipated. Not like in person where I would be there to act immediately to mitigate the situation. Not even like him in a place with others, he was alone and far from any assistance.

#### **Weapons of war**

Stand-off weapons of war seem like they are games. No real sounds, no real blood, no real smells, just the cold screen, and in many cases, no ability to see the reality of the target of your actions. This disassociation is what allows people to do this to other people and not feel sick within themselves. It is well known that you depersonalize the enemy by giving them a common evil name and making certain they are associated with a lack of humanity.

#### **Conclusions**

This virtual stuff is dangerous in that it removes the humanity from the interaction and makes it impersonal. And harming another person should always be personal. Otherwise we become callous to the feelings of others and spiral down the path of destruction as a society.

## Response from Charles Preston

I thought it was a good analysis of potential results, but incomplete as a means of empowerment. As I commented during a previous advisory call when you brought this up:

*"Thus the explanation for flame wars and social media".*

### Flame wars

Human inhibitions against harming others seem to arise initially in children only from potential consequences and supervision and teaching of rules.

If someone accused you of lying and intellectual property theft, and fraud, in a forum,

They knew they were not immediately going to suffer any physical harm, and probably never.

And probably not suffer any financial harm.

They were free to accuse, and demean, and maybe project their own attitude about bad acts and other people by transferring that motive to you.

There was a chance that they would persuade at least some other people, and do you harm without cause or excuse in complete safety.

That was called flame wars.

### Social media amplification

Social media amplification has made potential inexcusable and undeserved harm much greater, but with a lack of tangible consequences such as physical harm or other loss. Especially immediate consequences.

*Particularly where there is anonymity.*

### How it came to be

Formal and informal rules of social interaction in all sizes of human groups, as well as redress of grievances through the king, or civil lawsuits and criminal trials done in the name of the state (not the injured parties) are all to lower the hazard of insulting or harming another.

Over history, authorization of violence is reserved to the government or leader (master, in the case of slavery) because the necessary work of food gathering, or running a city, is disrupted when people are killed or maimed due to some actual or misinterpreted insult or injury to another person or member of their family.

*Fear of injury or death is a really good reason not to go to work, even if you are a really important or essential worker.*

### Conclusion

Becoming callous to the feelings of others is a real concern, but only to people already living within a "civilized" group. And with sociopaths, maybe around 4% of the population, who have no internal model of other people's feelings or don't care, it is only potential consequences or force that will inhibit them.

I credit you for being appalled at your behavior, but I think zero possibility of being drenched by a water cannon in the next 10 seconds played a part in your go/no go decision.