

To imponderables:

Thank you again, for all that you and Between the Bars do.

A THOUGHT EXPERIMENT

Imagine a one hour window into rush hour traffic the nation over (especially Los Angeles), and in this window you could see all the thoughts, of all the idle humans drifting outward through each car window--as many fleeting thought clusters, as perhaps, stars in our sky.

And in these thoughts, are the answers to life, to the universe, to environmental problems; answers to imponderable degrees for innumerable issues, ideas for new things, movie screenplays, books not written, speeches not yet ... spoken--most of it, lost. All those nuggets of wisdom, gone; disregarded by the individual who thought them as the car in front inches forth another quarter foot.

Now, imagine prison cells the nation over, and from all those cell windows, out between the bars, you can see the thoughts drift out. Many inconsequential, just as in the rush hour cars--but some, world shattering. Think of ... Dostoyevsky, as he sat in the prison fortress at Omsk, Western Siberia learning the scenes first hand that would go to become "The House of the Dead"--but let us imagine if he'd had, a blog! If such a thing could've been there for him, what we'd have today.

"Our written records carry us only a millionth of the way back to the origin of life. Our beginnings, the key events in our early development, are not readily accessible to us. No firsthand accounts have come down to us. They cannot be found in living memory or in the annals of our species. Our time-depth is pathetically, disturbingly shallow. The overwhelming majority of our ancestors are wholly unknown to us. They have no names, no faces, no foibles. No family anecdotes attach to them. They are unreclaimable, lost to us forever. We don't know them from Adam."

--Carl Sagan & Ann Druyan
"Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors"

Between the Bars, I think, serves a purpose bigger than some realize: providing balance to the Human Digitie (if I can coin such a word)--the sum of all human thought and knowledge, as our net forms some information based life form, that in a distant future may outlive our very species, or more interestingly, be part of our own evolution.

I'm a strong believer that many answers to nearly everything we've ever wanted to know, are here, right in front of us--or in someone's mind. This digital exodus of thought taking place, is gathering all our info into a collective never before thought possible--and with algorithms that can peruse it, at length, in milliseconds. As years, decades, centuries pass; something big will become of it. And who knows what Dostoyevskys currently lurk--or will lurk--among our prisons? Many already lost; but Between the Bars could inadvertently document one!

How can a future learn from its past's mistakes, if those mistakes are not completely known? Where would our present be, if our time-depth hindsight was not so "pathetically, disturbingly shallow." Between the Bars is reconnecting families, yes. But it also passes on "firsthand accounts" to those to come--to deny them this, would be morally imponderable.

BUT, AS LONG AS IT'S SUNNY IN PHILADELPHIA
WE CAN PONDER ON AMUSEMENT, PASS ON THEIR FOIBLES!