

A Sleepwalker's Guide to the Collective Nonconscious

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The image of the network has frequently been presented as a figurative global awakening of cognitive consciousness. To some extent, the metaphorical image of this global brain owes a debt to Durkheim's sociology. His concept of collective consciousness emerges as a sum total of higher intelligence from out of the dynamic density of societal interaction.¹ The media prototype of the global brain, nevertheless, belongs to McLuhan. Borrowing from De Chardin's noosphere McLuhan famously imagined media as an extension of the central nervous system: 'a technological brain for the world'.² Various McLuhanesque global brains have since been used to describe emergent collectivity on the Internet. Along these lines, Levy's collective megamind presented a global emergence of a 'cognitive ecology' in which brains and computers come together to form collective intelligence.³ More recently, in the feverish discourses surrounding the so-called cognitive city, wherein information exchanges occur between networks humans, everyday objects and places, the same figural image appears to describe urban environments as nodes in a 'global brain'.⁴ In summary, then, the cognitive image of the network becomes a superior, transcendent command post.

This article questions the cognitive rendering of the network image mainly because its metaphorical overreliance on the emergence of a loftier collective brainpower lacks critical attention to networked exchanges that often dip below consciousness. Indeed, in spite of popular network discourses that foreground cognitive surpluses and information overloads, this article focuses on information vacuums or data voids that can appear after a shock event has occurred. It is the dynamics of these shock events, like mass shootings, for example, which play a significant role in prompting into action contagions of panic, rumour, conspiracy and eventual fabrications of news on a social media network. Developing on my introductory talk at the *Image of the Network* symposium in 2015, I will therefore draw attention to a counter conceptual account of collective thought grasped via a contra-Durkheimian notion of the collective nonconscious.⁵ The aim is to use this concept to grasp social media contagion through an alternative nonconscious network image. Along these lines, networks do not exclusively operate on a global level of psychic awareness, but instead, following a Tardean notion of unconscious associations, relations are grasped as susceptible to shocks that trigger mesmerizing modes of somnambulism. Accordingly, 'social subjects are involuntarily associated with each other via their hypnotic absorption of the contagions of others.'⁶ They tend to sleepwalk through everyday life because they are mesmerized and contaminated by the actions of others, and magnetically drawn to the fascinations of their social environment, including the various events they encounter through access to media technologies.⁷

My objective here is to update the conceptual persona of the somnambulist as an alternative way in which to address the growing entanglement of social media in cultural and political life. As follows, Tarde's sleepwalker is positioned to shed a brighter light on implicit user vulnerabilities linked to a host of persuasive, agentic manipulations by fake news hoaxers, dubious behavioural analytics agencies and political campaigners alike. Indeed, in the current political context, exemplified by Cambridge Analytica, Facebook, and the dubious strategies of the Trump and Brexit elections, the sleepwalker takes on a new conceptual urgency. Certainly, what follows can be seen as an extension of Connolly's broader description of the

shock tactics and Big Lie strategies that surfaced during these recent political events.⁸ To be sure, in his analysis of Trumpian tactics, Connolly treats fake news as endemic to a wider Big Lie far right strategy that targets its constituencies through the coding and pegging of the visceral register of cultural life.⁹ These latest modes of far right rhetoric are intimately related to older forms of the Big Lie strategy adopted by the Nazis, for example. Certainly, by drawing attention to similarities between the rhetorical, gestural, bodily disciplines and facial expressions of Trump and Hitler, Connolly also points to comparative ways by which fascist contagions spread in the 1930s and today. The rhetorical lies in Trump's late night tweets, for example, do not necessarily have to be that convincing, but he uses shock tactics to 'stoke anxiety' and divert anger toward vulnerable and 'convenient figures' of hate.¹⁰ In other words, although Trump's followers might not always believe everything he says (on Twitter or at a rally), the affective tone of his rhetorical lies nevertheless provide these pegs on which to hang their ire and opens up new vectors through which anxiety, rage and hate spreads.

The article begins by drawing attention to how certain fake news strategies exploit inconsistencies in search engine algorithmic processing of unanticipated, shock events. Along these lines, hoaxers introduce disruptive fabrications that can be hidden in the uncertainty of the event. As a specific technological component of the broader aims of a Big Lie strategy, the slippery notion of fake news can thus be grasped, in part, as architected to elude the refined cognitive judgements assumed necessary to discern between truth and falsity as a shock event unfolds. Subsequent fabrications can in effect become camouflaged in the sensory experiences of the shock event,¹¹ therefore appealing more directly to felt visceral experiences rather than the fact-checking capacities of the collective cognitive mind. It is arguably this nonconscious processing of shock events that triggers collective impulses, which resonate contagiously through a network, steering future decisions acts toward predefined political objectives without recourse to cognitive modes of hesitation or reflection. The resulting update of the conceptual persona of the somnambulist therefore focuses on how the primacy of collective nonconscious experiences challenge the secondary emergence of consciousness as understood in the cognitive theoretical frame. Indeed, I contend that the nonconscious not only holds sway over, but often bypasses conscious cognition through a process I locate here in the polarities of somnambulist subjectivity.

The discussion concludes with a highly abstracted, and admittedly experimental, Whiteheadian account of the experiential polarity in which shock events are felt. Herein subjective experiences on a network are not limited to anthropological subjects, but are instead grasped through a broader understanding of experience in which the subjectless subjectivity of the sleepwalker bring about moments of what Whitehead called self-enjoyment.¹²

On Shock Events, Fake News & Thinking in the Data Void

It is my opening gambit that fake news strategically confounds or sidesteps the judgements and fact-checking faculties of computers and brains. Broadly speaking, then, the problem of fake news relates to computational and neurological processes alike. Indeed, if we were to mistakenly follow the cognitive theoretical frame to its origin, and assume that computers and brains are analogically coupled information processors, then fake news might be grasped as a problem associated with a more general model of information processing. Along these lines,

cognitivists argue for solutions that develop higher cognitive skills in critical information literacy,¹³ as well as the invention of new technocognitive tools that go ‘beyond misinformation’ to a more refined, attentive and educated information discernment.¹⁴ However, fake news is often architected to circumvent the cognitive discernment of true and false statements by purposefully taking advantage of a data vacuum created by a deficit of searchable information. This is how so-called search engine data voids are said to occur following a shock event, like a mass shooting or terror attack, which produce the perfect environment for contagious speculative rumours, conspiracies and misinformation to spread online.¹⁵ In short, the algorithmic filtering of true and false cannot function properly when there is an absence of verified information relating to unanticipated events. That is to say, when the motivation and identity of a mass shooter, for example, cannot be absolutely substantiated, the ensuing information vacuum can be strategically disrupted by politically motivated fabrications intended to strike a specific affective tone and potentially trigger affective contagions.

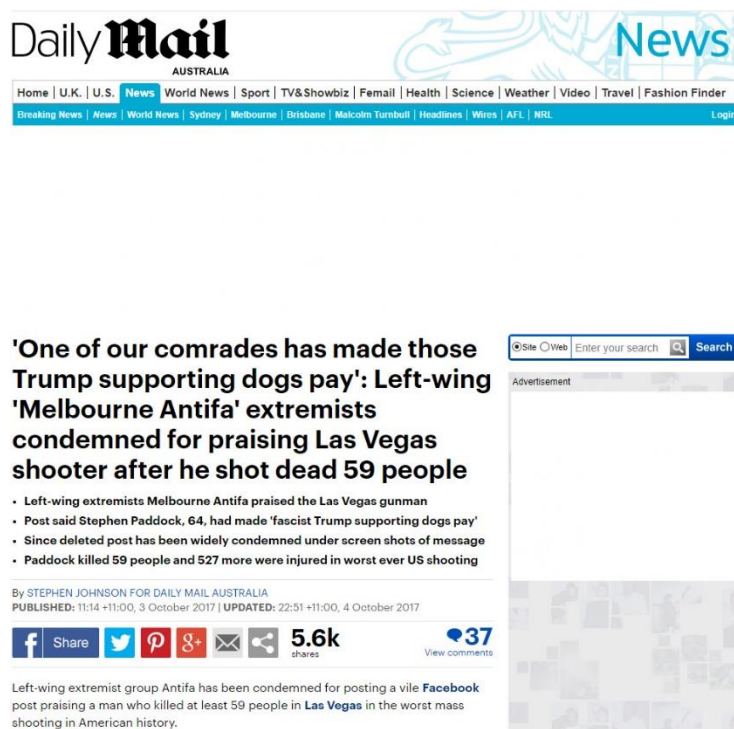
To grasp the role of data voids in fake news strategies it is necessary to cursorily understand how the breaking news of a shock event is processed by search engine algorithms. Search engines assemble an index of links by deploying automated programs that search for content related to an event. As Golebiewski and boyd suggest, we can break this down crudely into three kinds of event. Firstly, events already associated with large quantities of known content will inevitably yield more high quality information and thus rise to the top of the index. Secondly, lesser known events will return less information and appear lower down the index with lower quality information. Thirdly, when an unpredictable and unanticipated shock event happens a ‘data void’ can appear since although the event will attract many searches, the ‘available relevant data is limited, non-existent, or deeply problematic’¹⁶ The problem herein lies in the capacity for hoaxers to leverage the content search engines gather so as to exploit the vulnerability of a data void. For example, following the mass shooting in Vegas on Oct 1st 2017, a series of fake news stories, produced by far right agitators posing as anti-fascists on a fake Facebook account (see figure 1), rapidly climbed up Google’s search index.¹⁷

[Insert figure 1 – add caption ‘The fake Melbourne Antifa Facebook page’]



In short, far right hoaxers were able to strategically introduce searchable fake news content concerning the motivations and identity of the shooter. Indeed, one of the fake news stories relating to Vegas journeyed from this fake Facebook account to Google’s index, before eventually making the headlines of the right-wing newspaper, *The Daily Mail* (see figure 2).¹⁸

[Insert Fig 2 --- Insert Caption 'Headline on online Australian version of *The Daily Mail*)]



Different kinds of shock events clearly present different challenges to search engine algorithms and cognitive strategies dependent on discerning truth and falsity. To be sure, when a mass shooting occurs, everything is suddenly new, rendering algorithmic true/false judgements incomplete. But beyond the logic problem of algorithmic indecision, the shock also produces a powerful sensory lure that draws attention involuntarily toward the possibilities of what Connolly calls 'visceral register of cultural life.'¹⁹ Indeed, the tactics of politically motivated fake news tend to sidestep more refined thinking by exploiting the viscera of nonconscious associations and a tendency for feelings and moods to spread as affective contagions on a network.

Social Media Somnambulism

On a surface level a Tardean account of social media locates users as particularly vulnerable to suggestible contagions that work on a visceral level of affective communication. Along these lines, vulnerabilities occur, in part, because the sleepwalker's involuntary mechanical habits, generally associated with implicit nonconscious felt experiences, take on a primary role compared to a secondary sense of awakened volition experienced explicitly as consciousness.²⁰ It is, arguably, the insensible degrees of separation between implicit and explicit experiences that renders the somnambulist vulnerable to these fake news strategies. This is because the disruption caused by the shock event, and the subsequent spreading of panic and speculative rumours associated with it, lures the felt visceral experiences of the somnambulists toward the event, suggesting and provoking precognitive decisions before refined thinking kicks in. For example, in the panic experienced during the Vegas shooting, police were recorded seemingly confirming rumours about a second shooter. It is indeed the

speculative nature of a shock event that inevitably attracts conspiracy theories and offers occasions for fabrication.

It is important, nonetheless, not to mistake this updated somnambulist for a senseless or irrational individual, easily nudged towards certain goals, involuntarily. On the contrary, the conceptual personae of the sleepwalker are intended to pose weightier questions concerning what constitutes the relational threshold between nonconscious and conscious experiences than a crude irrational/rational or emotion/cognition boundary line would suggest. Somnambulism does not represent the absence of mentality, as such. Paradoxically perhaps, nonconsciousness has mental components. This is not, however, a mentality that is limited to cognitive faculties, but is extended to an array of affects, bodily sensations, habits, microperceptions, thinking-feeling etc.²¹

Taken as a mode of collectivity, Tarde's somnambulist is also understood as vulnerable to hypnotic suggestibility and susceptible to manipulations of contagious affect that elide global awareness.²² But again, we must not mistake, as group psychology did, the insensible degrees between nonconscious and conscious experiences for an awakening of individual reasoning from a subterranean world of collective reverie.²³ The collective nonconscious does not equate to the becoming stupid of individuals caught in the cataleptic crowd theorized by Tarde's contemporary, Le Bon, and expanded on by Freud.²⁴ This analysis does not concern the waking up of somnambulists from a reverie in which they confuse fake news for reality. The intention here is also not to position the sleepwalker as a fantasist who experiences fake news on a spectrum between brutal fact, on one hand, and irrational feelings, beliefs and desires, on the other.²⁵ On the contrary, the sleepwalker paradoxically operates between somnolent and ambulant poles. What is therefore proposed intentionally substitutes cognitive approaches that argue for the disconnection of refined cognitive judgements from irrational actions with an understanding of how nonconscious decision acts can occur before they become rational. This point has important implications since as Connolly contends, to combat Big Lie tactics, the ever-full visceral registers of communication, through which affective contagions spread, need to be better aligned to these more refined judgements.²⁶

Two Approaches to the Collective Nonconsciousness

There are notable conceptual similarities between the somnambulist and the technological nonconscious, as it was originally introduced in Clough's 'user unconscious,'²⁷ and subsequently developed on by Thrift,²⁸ Hayles,²⁹ and Grusin.³⁰ Both approaches certainly consider the implication of the deep entanglement of brains, bodies and the orchestrating operational level of computational media technology. As Hayles argues, following Thrift, the technological nonconscious 'regulate[s] our actions in unconscious and nonconscious ways through routine anticipations, habitual responses, [and] pattern recognition.'³¹ However, rather than considering these brain-computer synchronizations as 'characteristic of the cognitive nonconscious,' as Hayles does, my approach here attempts to avoid the overreliance on emergent consciousness by clearly differentiating the nonconscious from a cognitive framing of the unthought.³²

The cognitive framing of the nonconscious becomes clear in Hayles's more recent work on the cognitive nonconscious and its critique of an assumed 'performative contradiction' in new materialism in particular.³³ Indeed, although broadly supportive of the new materialist's desire to decentre the anthropological subject in the humanities and focus more on material

and affective relations, below Hayles makes some pointed criticisms that set out her claim for the primacy of cognition.

‘Despite their considerable promises, the new materialisms also have significant limitations. Conspicuously absent from their considerations are consciousness and cognition, presumably because of the concern that if they were introduced, it would be all too easy to slip into received ideas and lose the radical edge that the focus on materiality provides. This leads to a performative contradiction: only beings with higher consciousness can read and understand these arguments, yet few if any new materialists acknowledge the functions that cognition enables for living and nonliving entities. Reading them, one looks in vain for recognition of cognitive processes, although they must necessarily have been involved for these discourses to exist at all.’³⁴

Evidently, anyone reading this article will sense, as Hayles does, their own cognitive processes. This seems to be an incontrovertible fact of cognitive thinking. Which is to say, the problem of imagining the collective nonconscious from within the cognitive frame is that the affects of the nonconscious must always travel through the conceptual filter of awakened human consciousness. Accordingly, the affective realm of the nonconscious can never escape mental cognitive perception. Nonetheless, Hayles’ thought experiment contains a clear cognitivist bias that arguably misses some important points concerning a new materialist approach to unthought experience.

Firstly, the decentring of the cognitive subject should not become confused with the disappearance of mentality. Although cognition is regarded by new materialists as something that arrives late, this does not mean that mentality vanishes from affect. The becoming of subjectivity is, in this narrow sense, part of a process that might eventually emerge in a moment of higher consciousness. However, such moments of what Whitehead calls the self-enjoyment of ‘one arising out of the composition of the many,’³⁵ are not a point wherein mind bifurcates from matter. These subjective appropriations (enjoyments) of experience do not, as such, offer the kind of cognitive command post Hayles proposes acts as a filter for affective experiences. On the contrary, self-enjoyment is a process of individuality in which mind and matter are taken together (nonbifurcated). Along these lines, a new materialist approach does not regard the cognitive image as an emerging superior intelligence (or controlling switchboard centre) through which felt experiences are ultimately processed. To be sure, the collective nonconscious is regarded as precognitive³⁶ or a more-than-human user experience that exceeds the filtering of individual phenomenal experience.³⁷

Secondly, although any attempt at higher theoretical analysis must clearly be filtered through higher levels of cognition, as Hayles reasonably contends, that should not preclude a theory of the unthought from speculating about the nature of precognitive or collective mentality. This is an important point given the context of fake news since the complex processes that move from precognitive to cognitive registers of experience make possible what Massumi calls ‘enactive speculations on the future potential of activity.’³⁸ Nonconscious experience is, as such, a process that has mental components of sorts. It is not, however, only in the eventual awakening of these components in conscious cognition that judgements about truth and falsity, for example, are made. Nonconscious habits, which are often misleadingly ‘designated as belonging to the mind’³⁹ develop through complex collective processes that enable judgements and decision acts to occur prior to cognition. It is the collective process that decides!

This account updates the somnambulist by further drawing on Ruyer’s notion that perceptual reality is secondary to the primacy of absolute sensation.⁴⁰ Certainly, the embracing of this

fundamental principle of somnambulism intentionally turns the cognitive frame of reference on its head by prioritizing the felt sensation of the unthought over conscious cognition. As follows, the collective nonconscious can be further theorized as a primary and immediate experience of sensation as differentiated from the self-organization of a secondary collective consciousness. Nonconscious affective experiences are not, like this, filtered through perceptions, but instead derived from feelings of sensation (think-feeling). Subjective experience therefore comes about through the subsequent affecting potentialities of experience rather than a phenomenological sense of self. It is, indeed, in the felt experiences of absolute sensation (the sensation of sensation) that the somnambulist experiences the image of the network; not as a cognitive command post, but as a mere foothold in the viscera of the event.⁴¹

Two Poles of the Somnambulist Tendency

To further grasp the precognitive tendencies of the somnambulist we need to consider the paradoxical nature of the two poles of the sleepwalking experience: somnolent and ambulant. Indeed, sleeping, as Fuller points out, is the ‘somnolent version of the Cretan Paradox,’ since although it provides a distinction between itself and ‘being awake, and thoughtful, hence conscious and knowing,’⁴² sleep in itself ‘cannot be directly known in its native state.’⁴³ In other words, like the liar paradox, to think sleep we risk producing a self-referential logical loop that would frustrate the refined thinking of the logician. As Fuller points out:

‘In order to think about [sleep] we must be awake or to know something... Sleep, unlike any other part of culture has no capacity for reflexivity within its own conditions. In sleeping one simply sleeps, one does not know, anything.’⁴⁴

Sleep is therefore ‘ungraspable, unwritable [and] only perceivable at its edges or its outside.’⁴⁵ To be sure, in sleep we may well still *know* something, but we lose our sense of self as a way of *knowing* it. It is only external to or at the margins of sleep, in dream states or reverie, for instance, that sleep itself is filtered through conscious cognition, and that will only occur by way of a detour into wakeful reflection.⁴⁶

The conceptual persona of the somnambulist therefore provides a unique glimpse of the collective nonconscious because of the exceptional condition sleep offers in terms of cutting out the cognitive I. As Clough similarly explains by referring to Jean-Luc Nancy’s *The Fall of Sleep*:

‘We are told that we do not fall asleep, but that sleep falls upon us. Or, it is not “I” that falls into sleep, not an “I” that can be distinguished itself from anything else, “from anything more than its own indistinctness.” “I fall asleep – that is to say, “I” fall....” “In my own eyes, which no longer look at anything, which are turned toward themselves and toward the black spot inside them,...” I am “isolated from all manifestations, from all phenomenality, the sleeping thing...”’⁴⁷

The ambulant pole of somnambulism provides further paradoxes. Certainty, walking is exceptional since it is a mode of mobility that allows its subject to insensibly drift from nonconscious to conscious experience. Walking, like running or driving a car, provides what Amin and Thrift call an intermesh that connects the body to the world in ways that bring together ‘flesh and stone, humans and non-humans, fixtures and flows and emotions and practices.’⁴⁸ More profoundly, the act of walking can also be performed when sleep falls on

the subject. Sleepwalking is, like this, an impulsive act, which can be achieved when the act itself is out of mind, since its mechanical and habit bound processes are, for the most part, nonconscious rather than conscious.

Walking is also a collective experience wherein bodily interactions become entrained with each other. For this reason, research into unintentional bodily synchrony in the field of entrainment studies is revealing since it too sets out to avoid the cognitivist bias, which states that it is only in consciousness that something like walking becomes real. As Clayton et al argue, in entrainment theory ‘any bodily implementation of interacting processes is real, no matter whether it is consciously experienced or not.’⁴⁹ Moreover, the study of entrained walking provides insights into how the collective nonconscious can be transposed to the image of the network. For example, the nonconscious entrainment of footsteps on a pavement can be substituted for the habitual social media clicking and scrolling of thumbs. In lieu of the rhythmic entrainments of walkers, coupled together through the bobbing of heads, or the synchronizations of marching arms and legs, we find the algorithmically orchestrated and rhythmic coordination of the sleepwalker’s experiences of the technological nonconscious. This is the kind of massive scale, post-phenomenological sharing of experience that R. D. Laing argued would produce controllable consumers and cannon fodder.⁵⁰ As follows, social media sleepwalking is, in effect, the entrainment of collective habit.

Sleepwalking with Whiteheadian

Adding a radical Whiteheadian philosophical spin to the polarities of the sleepwalker, we similarly find that the felt experience of the collective nonconscious does not begin with a cognitive thinker. The thinker-subject is instead on the end of an irreversible experience chain.⁵¹ Indeed, Whitehead upends Descartes ‘thinker who creates the occasional thought,’ with the felt experience of a subjectless subjectivity as the ‘constituent operation in the creation of the occasional thinker.’⁵² As follows, the visceral registers in which shock events are experienced should not be taken as the outcome of a thinker having a thought, and then making a judgement. Not at all; it is the thinker who is the effect of the viscera of sensation that the shock event brings about. No wonder fake news has such a grip on the sleepwalkers.

At the ambulant pole we find the somnambulists walking on the floor of something approaching Plato’s cave. Although they are ostensibly asleep, the sleepwalkers have both eyes wide open. As they amble about they look up from what they think is a subjective vantage point, staring up at the walls of the cave, surveying what they imagine to be objective reality. This reality is not, however, like one of Plato’s infamous shadows. The somnambulists are not so easily fooled; they make the best of their situation in an ever moving and complex series of breaking news events. Following the shock of a mass shooting, sleepwalkers experience a percipient event; a moment of spiralling potential of truth and falsity far too eventful to always concretely discern which is which. All sleepwalkers can do, it seems, is feel the event and speculate on what’s possible. However, any concrete sense of feeling can easily become misplaced. Indeed, it is more the case that it is the event that feels the sleepwalker. This is a moment when the feelings of the shock event grasp the instant of experience and lures the sleepwalker towards the possible. To understand this moment of an eventful feely luring of subjectivity – what Deleuze describes as the moment when an immanent subjective aim becomes filled with its own self-enjoyment,⁵³ we need to bring in a Whiteheadian philosophy again. This is because Whitehead does not limit subjectivity to the

Cartesian thinker who thinks the thought. On the contrary, there is a process evident in the becoming of subjectivity.

So yes, there is the becoming *Subjectum* (the thrown under) of the somnambulist; the sleepwalker's moment of glorious self-enjoyment when she begins to feel her own feelings as part of a richer private life.⁵⁴ Sleepwalkers feel themselves, walking on the floor, inside the cave, and think that this is the phenomenal command post of consciousness. Being there, on the inside of the cave. At the same time though, at the far pole of somnolent subjectivity, the somnambulists are in a deep, deep sleep. They are no longer inside the cave, but somehow floating over it. In this apparent suspension of perception, as conceptual personae, somnambulists do not feel themselves in the interior of the cave. There is no *Subjectum* inside a cave, since, as Deleuze reminds us, the inside is nothing more than a fold of the outside.⁵⁵ There is, however, feeling. Indeed, as Whitehead contends, there is nothing but feeling: the 'primary activity of all existence,' as Debaise puts it.⁵⁶ Here we find the *Superjacio* (the thrown over) of somnambulism. These are not sleepy subjects caught in a zone of dark phenomenology. They are in an unfathomable subjectless sleep in the sense that Clough and Fuller describe it above. This is a moment of an intense overflowing of primary experience that cannot be contained to the experience of the I or indeed filtered through cognition. The feeling of subjectless subjectivity is rather more akin to Ruyer's sensation of sensation.

Somnambulism has a tendency to move exceptionally and irreversibly from subjectless subjectivity to self-enjoyment. This is a rare movement through the experience chain: a propensity to descend from a position thrown over the cave toward an experience placed below on the floor of the cave. This propensity toward the feeling of self-enjoyment tells us something rather profound about Whitehead's contribution here. As Debaise notes, the *Subjectum* has been imposed on modern philosophical ideas of subjective experience as 'a subject that is in possession of its own feelings.'⁵⁷ But Whitehead argued that the potential for self-enjoyment is not contingent on the subject's experience of self, but instead it is the outcome of eventful processes in which potentiality becomes actualized.⁵⁸ The subject is, indeed, *subject to* a coalescing of felt experiences in some kind of centred or multi-centred way. For example, human self-enjoyment seems to be a nonlinear mingling of cells feeling a neuron; feeling a network of other neurons; feeling a brain; feeling the nerve endings in a body; feeling the world; and so on. This is exceptional because feelings do not frequently hold together like unities so that self-enjoyment becomes conscious. In fact, conscious experience is not the rule; it is the exception: a point at which Whitehead's concept of nature is stretched to such a degree that it is able to, in extraordinary conditions of plasticity, feel itself.⁵⁹

Conclusions

This article has pointed to shocks that create further advantages for Big Lies strategies. The shock event of the mass shooting, for example, confounds the algorithmic logic of the search engine, and the conscious brain. It produces something new and indeterminate, opening up possibilities and data voids ripe for the spreading of more Big Lies through the resonating social media machine. The article has also noted how the visceral registers of social media culture provide examples of the primacy of the collective nonconscious. Which is to say, the established resistances of those political opponents of Trump whose preference is for calm, refined and hesitant responses over the agitational performative of Trumpism have become

a secondary concern. Indeed, at this very moment in time, the sound of refined political debate is being drowned out by primitive white rage and the bare desire for strongmen leaders to assume control and make nations great again. It is important, therefore, as Connolly argues, not to downplay these visceral registers and affective communications in which rumours, conspiracies and fabrication flourish in a kind of ‘conceptual cloudiness.’⁶⁰ Perhaps these current populist overflows of the collective nonconscious should not come as a big surprise. Unlike the empty rhetoric of reasoned politicking, ‘there is never... a vacuum on the visceral register.’⁶¹ The unthought of the nonconscious is always full to the brim with feelings (subject and subjectless) as the *unthinkable* election victory of Trump evidenced! Indeed, Trump is *the* shock event, which has lured the dark impulses and gloomy possibilities of the collective nonconsciousness and produced the stuff of an ever-darker moment of Whiteheadian self-enjoyment.

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Notes

¹ Durkheim, *The Rules of the Sociological Method*.

² McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, 32.

³ Levy, *Becoming Virtual*, 86, 87.

⁴ For example, see Khanna, "When Cities Rule the World."

⁵ This symposium was hosted by Yigit Soncul and Jussi Parikka at the Winchester School of Art in 2015. See the website: <https://blog.soton.ac.uk/wsapgr/2015/11/04/the-image-of-the-network/>

⁶ Sampson, 2012, 13.

⁷ For an extended discussion see also Sampson, 2016.

⁸ See Connolly, *Aspirational Fascism*.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 20.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹¹ See Dewan and Kumaraguru, 2015, for example, who present data showing that surges in scams map onto news making events, including the Boston Marathon blasts and the Washington Navy Yard shootings.

¹² As discussed in Whitehead, *Modes of Thought*, 150-52 and *Process and Reality*, 145. In short, Whitehead uses the term to reverse Descartes' idea of self-enjoyment as arising from an individual substance and therefore makes mind bifurcate from matter. For Whitehead, self-enjoyment arises from both mind and matter.

¹³ Mooney, "Fake News and the Sociological Imagination: Theory Informs Practice."

¹⁴ Lewandowsky, Ecker and Cook, "Beyond Misinformation: Understanding and Coping with the "Post-Truth" Era."

¹⁵ Golebiewski and boyd, "Data Voids: Where Missing Data Can Easily Be Exploited."

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ LaCapria, "Did 'Melbourne Antifa' Claim Responsibility for the Vegas Massacre?"

¹⁸ Johnson, "One of our comrades has made those Trump supporting dogs pay."

¹⁹ Connolly, *Aspirational Fascism*.

²⁰ See further discussion on Tarde's description of the porous psychologies of somnambulism in Sampson, *The Assemblage Brain and Virality*

²¹ Massumi, *The Politics of Affect*.

²² Sampson, 2012.

²³ Freud, *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*.

²⁴ Le Bon, *The Crowd*.

²⁵ As, for example, Andersen does in *Fantasyland*.

²⁶ As Connolly contends, the visceral register is never empty. See Connolly, 26-27.

²⁷ Clough, *Autoaffectation*.

²⁸ Thrift, "Remembering the Technological Unconscious by Foregrounding Knowledges of Position."

²⁹ Hayles, "Traumas of Code."

³⁰ Grusin, *Premediation*.

³¹ Hayles, *Unthought*, 119.

³² See Hayles and Sampson, 2018.

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- ³³ Hayles, *Unthought*.
³⁴ *Ibid.*, 65-66.
³⁵ Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 145.
³⁶ Thrift, *Nonrepresentational Theory*.
³⁷ See Clough, *Autoaffection* and *The User Unconscious*.
³⁸ Massumi, *Politics of Affect*, 211.
³⁹ *Ibid.*, 210.
⁴⁰ Ruyer, *Neofinalism*, 190-209.
⁴¹ Following Stengers, *Thinking with Whitehead*.
⁴² Fuller, *How to Sleep*, 13.
⁴³ *Ibid.*, 1.
⁴⁴ *Ibid.*
⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 2.
⁴⁶ *Ibid.* As the reviewer added, not all wakefulness is reflective.
⁴⁷ Clough, *The User Unconscious*, 88.
⁴⁸ Amin and Thrift, "Cities and Ethnicities."
⁴⁹ Clayton, Sager and Will, "In Time with the Music." 70.
⁵⁰ R.D. Laing, *The Politics of Experience*.
⁵¹ Debaise, *Nature as Event*, 53.
⁵² *Ibid.*, 55.
⁵³ Deleuze, *The Fold*, 78.
⁵⁴ *Ibid.*
⁵⁵ *Ibid.*
⁵⁶ Debaise., 53.
⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 54.
⁵⁸ Whitehead, *Modes of Thought*, 150-51.
⁵⁹ Whitehead, *Concept of Nature*.
⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 15.
⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 17.