

Quick and easy

6 July, 2022

There is a trend, long developing and currently approaching a zenith, toward 'quick and easy.' I see it everywhere I look, from the prepackaged foods I am offered at the market to an industry focusing more on exercise-free weight loss than health. These two words, quick and easy, have become so prevalent in mass marketing that it seems the worth of anything requiring – you know – knowledge and effort is somehow diminished in the eyes of a society that prefers its pleasures NOW and of course, devoid of any requirement of hard work.

As a writer, I am dismayed by the decline of such niceties as grammar in the popular press, not to mention the recycling of old, tired ideas by folks with little imagination. The Internet contributes here, as it has encouraged the establishment of myriad channels of communication. This would be a wondrous thing if we used the resource wisely. But an aerial view of the swarms of swimming pools and lush lawns in any large community in the naturally arid areas of this country will swiftly disabuse you of the belief that wisdom is playing a part in our utilization of resources.

So the Internet becomes one more example of 'quick and easy' working to our collective detriment. With more channels comes more opportunity to be heard. All sort of democratic, I suppose. But it's neither a democratic impulse nor even the sharing of knowledge that this expansion seems to best serve. While it's true that people with something useful, informative, entertaining to share find acquiring the technical expertise to reach a mass audience a fairly simple matter\*, the tragic truth is that such folk are less prominent than competitors who've lots of flash but little of worth to offer.

As the channels expand the need for content grows until we are presented with a gaping maw that will accept any sort of rubbish that can be packaged and offered, devoid of such niceties as quality control or even simple fact checking. The sole requirement to grow your channel is that your content – a catch-all term that gives a nod to the denigration of the creative in service of volume – generates hits and thumbs up. And so, you find folks with the wildest or most outrageous or even anti-social ideas assuming the mantle of 'influencer' front and center while the contributions of people who've actually put some thought to their ideas are left in the virtual dust.

Yes, I've ranted about this before in my former blog but I'm old and grumpy and fed up. Truth be told, this wasn't even my intended topic for today but the algorithms that decide what I might 'like' this morning offered me some truly objectionable tripe, so here we are.

I know you're out there, oh ye of interesting musings and correct punctuation. Please lead me to your lair. I long to immerse myself in your art and ideas. Or at least, converse with other adults.

(\* Full disclosure – I do not include myself among those for whom acquisition of technical expertise is a simple matter.)