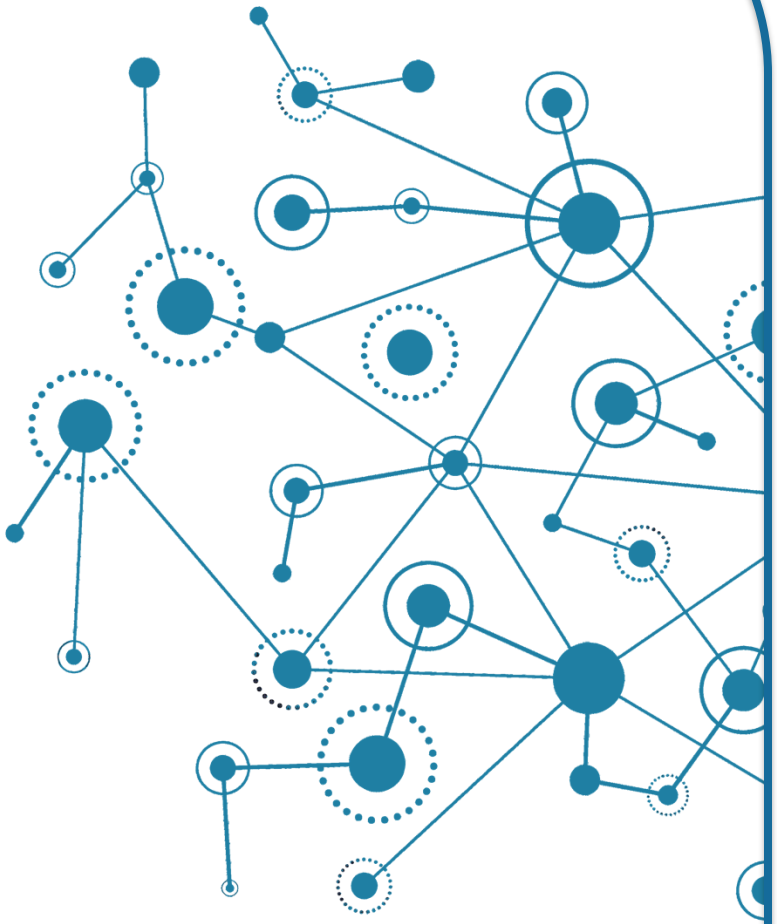
DOCENT | studios

CornCon 11

Manifest your inner Cyber Superhero



P0wning The Narrative: How I learned to alter reality and why compelling stories are more important than objective truth (aka facts)

Bryan K. Fite

Founder and President
Meshco, Inc.
https://www.linkedin.com/in/bryanfite/

Welcome and Salutations

My journey

From the guy that said NO… to the person that **facilitates YES**

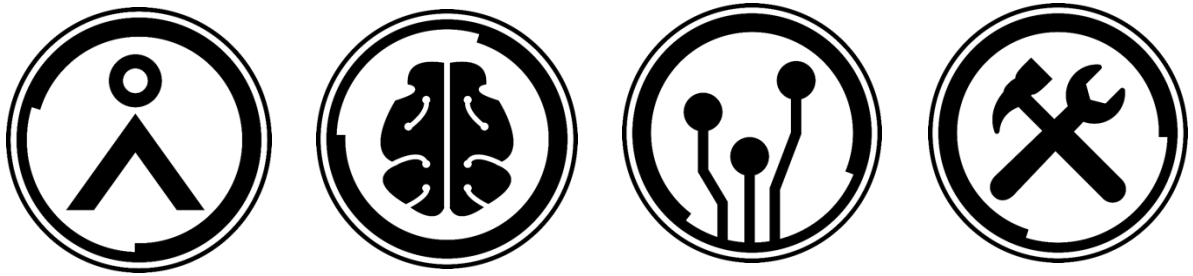
Hacker & Entrepreneur	Researcher	Field Engineer & Cyber Instructor	Consultant	
Architect, Policy Scribe & Risk Manager	Security & Compliance Director	Product Manager	Cyber-Physical Specialist	CTO/CSO/CISO

Innovator, "Herder of Cats" & Trusted Advisor

Welcome and Salutations

AI Sherpa

Welcome and Salutations



Save the Date: Day-Con XX August 26-29, 2026

DISCLAIMER

The insights and opinions shared in this presentation are the product of my own curiosity, research and insomnia-fueled nights. They do not reflect the views or policies of my employer or associates. My voice is my own. Please remember to spay and neuter your pets. Enjoy the ride!

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PG-13 | PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED

Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13 ®

Once Upon a Time

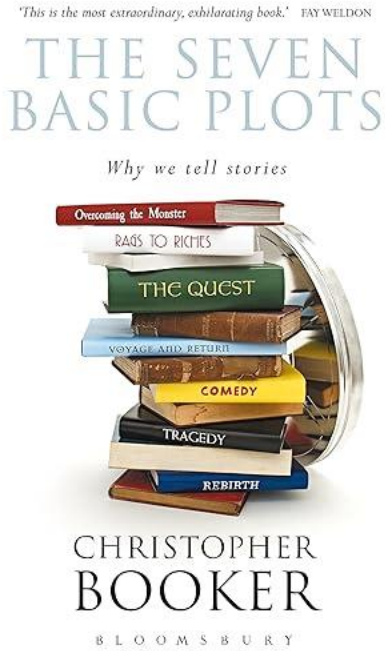
Chapter I

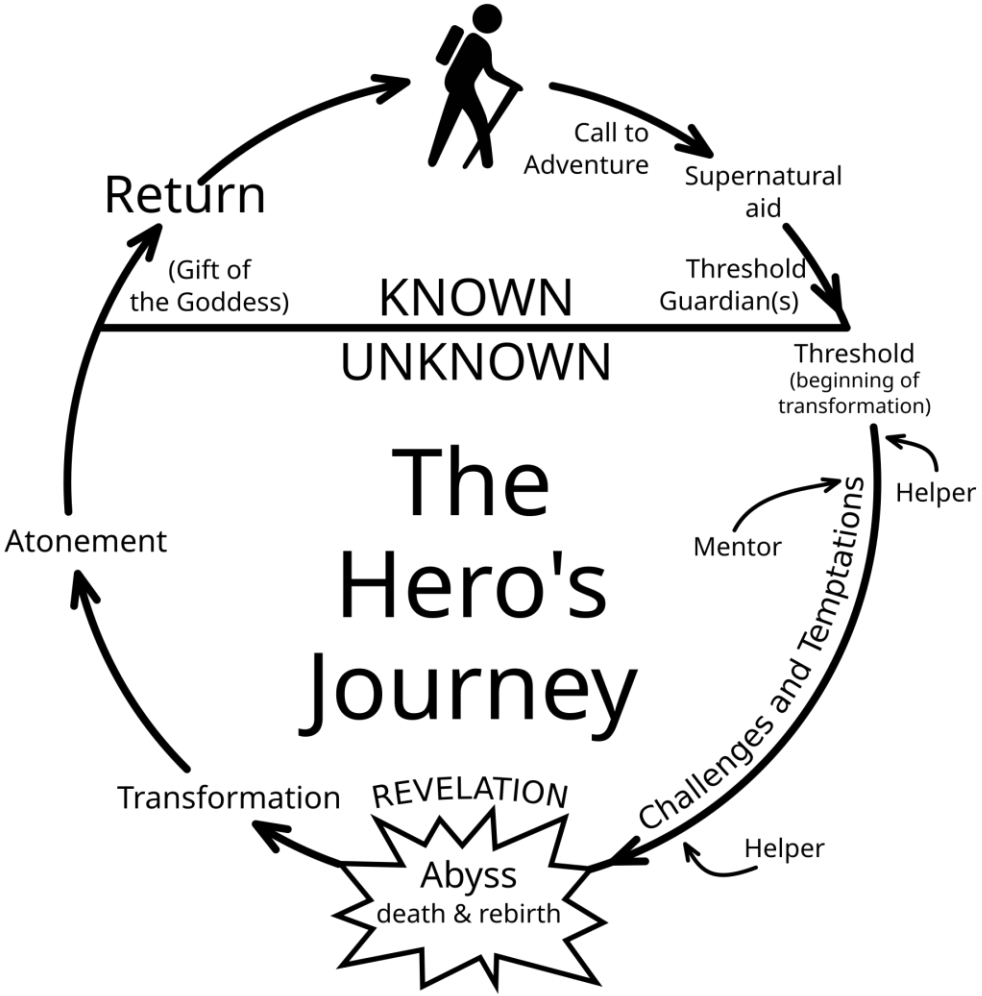
MANIFEST YOUR INNER CYBER SUPERHERO!

My (hero's) journey

The 7 Stories that Rule the World

Source https://rschwartz.substack.com/p/the-7-stories-that-rule-the-world





Source https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hero%27s_journey#/media/File:Heroesjourney.svg

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The 1st “liar”, the original sin & paradise lost

Source https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Original_sin#/media/File:Jan_Brueghel_de_Oude_en_Peter_Paul_Rubens_-_Het_aards_paradijs_met_de_zondeval_van_Adam_en_Eva.jpg

Tragedy

Source https://www.pngegg.com/en/png-evabc#goog_rewarded

System Confidence = **Trust** & Control

Source https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Foster_Bible_Pictures_0014-1.jpg

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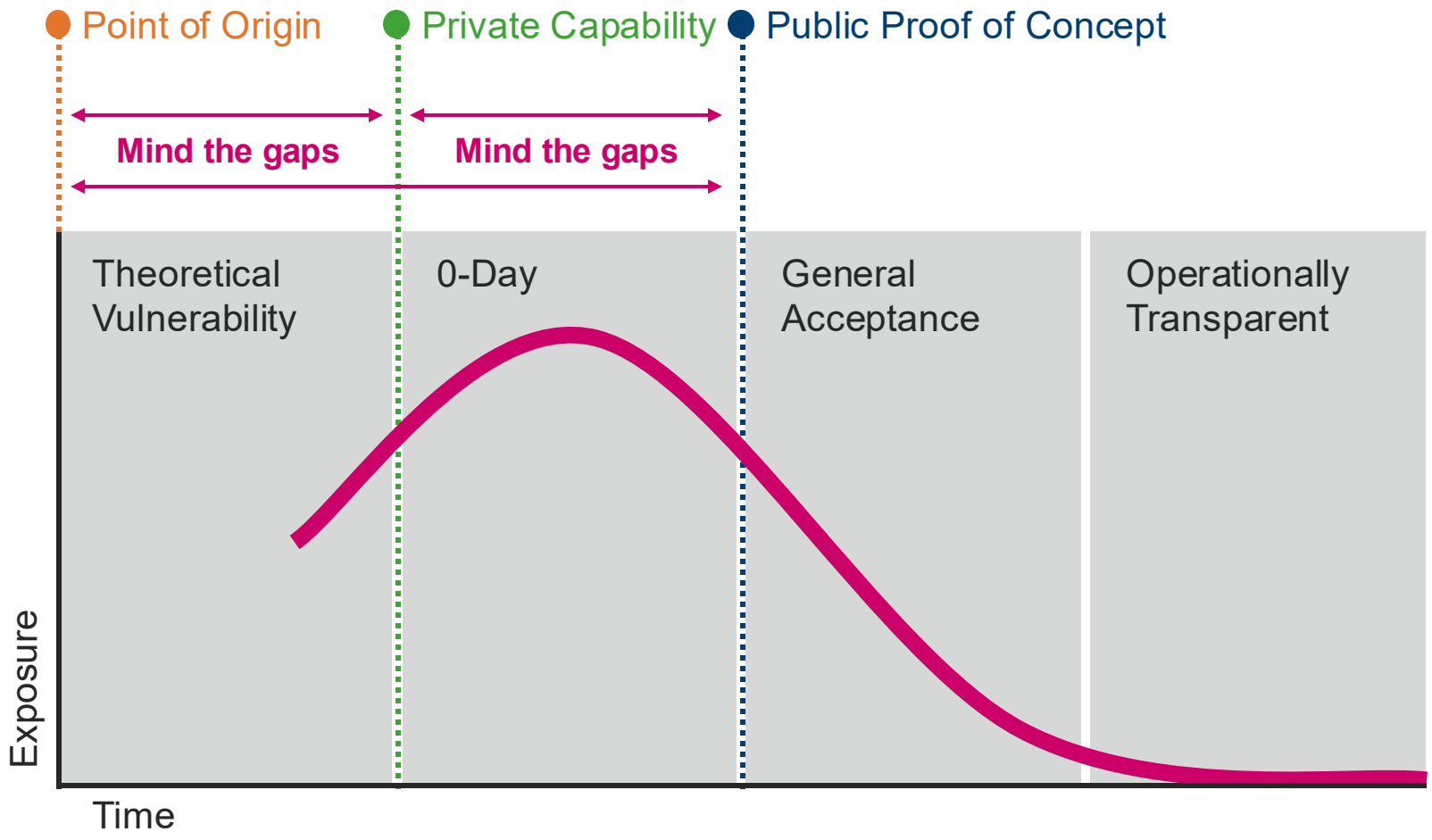
Moral of the story…

Source https://bid.billingsauction.com/online-auctions/billings/shepard-fairey-andre-the-giant-obey-silkscreen-5104559

"Conform or be cast out!" – Neil Peart

POOH – Point of origin hacking



Assumes a **motivated** and **capable** adversary, will eventually develop or obtain a **capability** that could **harm** another actor or group

Therefore, stakeholders should consider and include **POOH** candidates in their **risk management practice**

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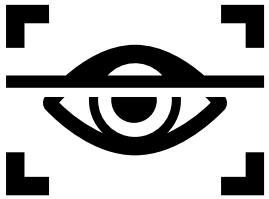
Fast forward to 2006

My SANS GSEC technical paper - Corporate Identity Fraud: Life-Cycle Management of Corporate Identity Assets

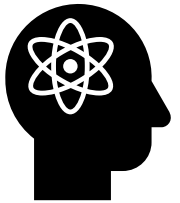


Corporate Identity Fraud

It can be defined as the abuse of traditional and nontraditional identity assets with the intent to divert, **deceive** or defraud **consumers**.

Trademarks and Brands

These are traditional corporate identity assets. Trademark enforcement and **brand protection** programs are governed by legal precedence and **legacy** business procedures.



The Litmus Test

Asking yourself, "Is it actionable?" These mature practices are based on very **narrow criteria**.

A series of impactful experiences

Corporate Visions

(Anti)Social Media

2024

Dr. Matthew Canham

Cognitive Attack Taxonomy

Cognitive Dissonance, Confirmation Bias & Loss Aversion

SANS Link - https://www.sans.org/white-papers/corporate-identity-fraud-ii-future-fraud-today/ Future of Fraud Today

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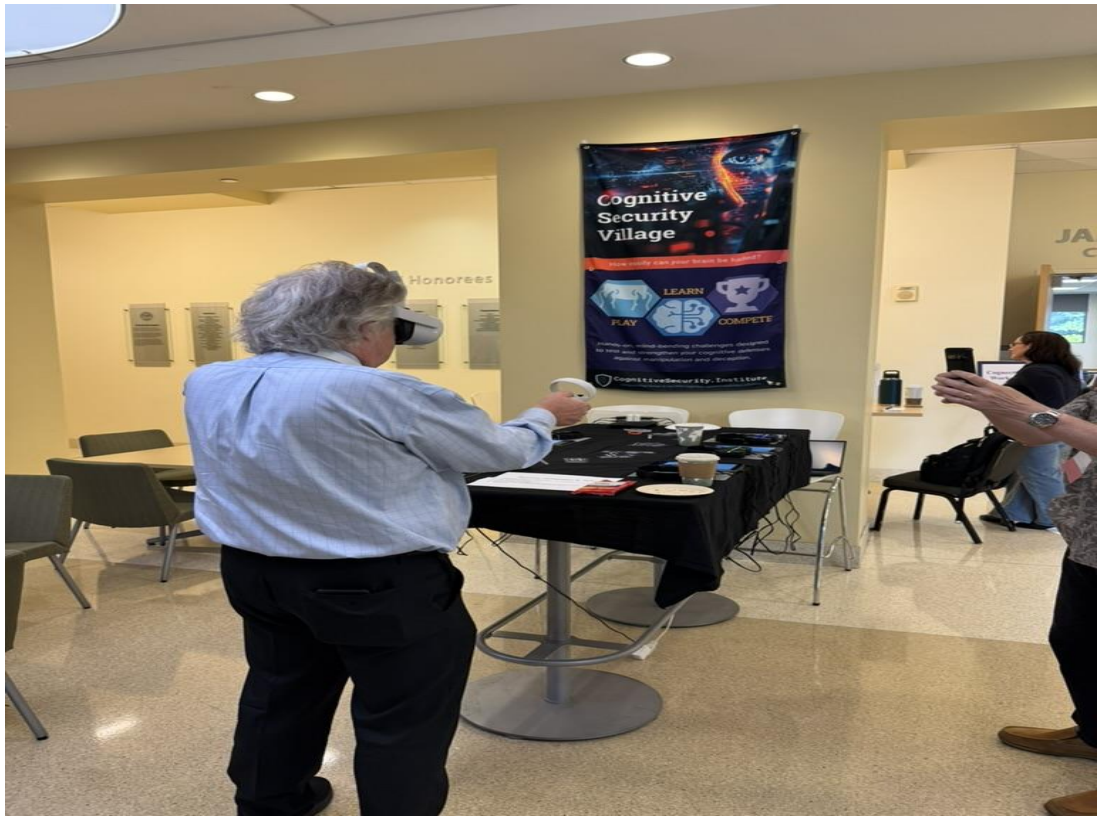
It takes a village



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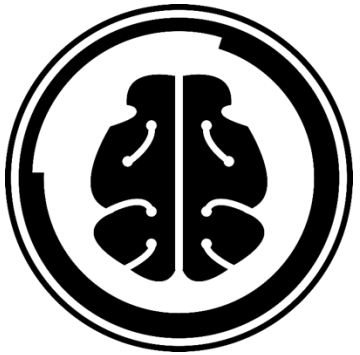
The Future of Fraud Today

"The Currency of Confidence is Transparency and Objective Truth (aka facts & maths)."

A chorus of cognitive pundits declared simultaneously, *"Oh grasshopper, you have much to learn. The truth doesn't matter. Its all about the narrative."*



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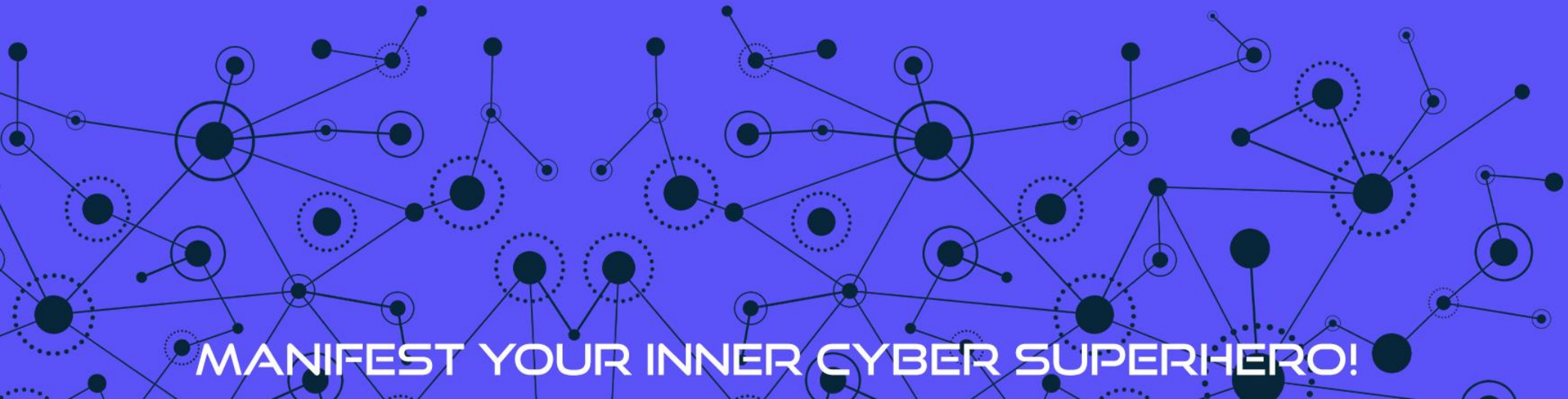
The Awakening

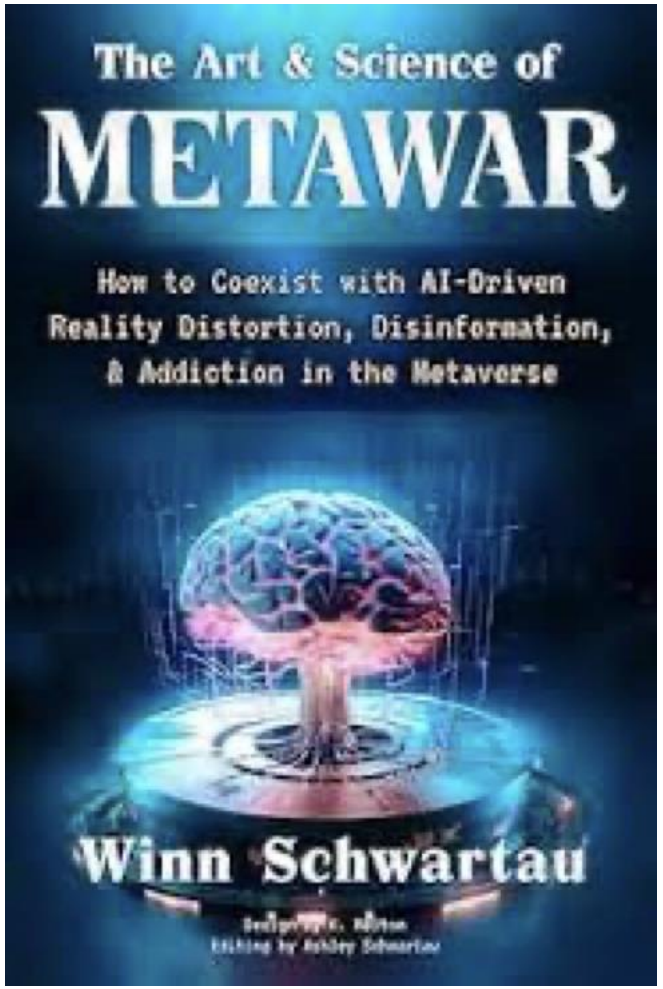
Chapter II

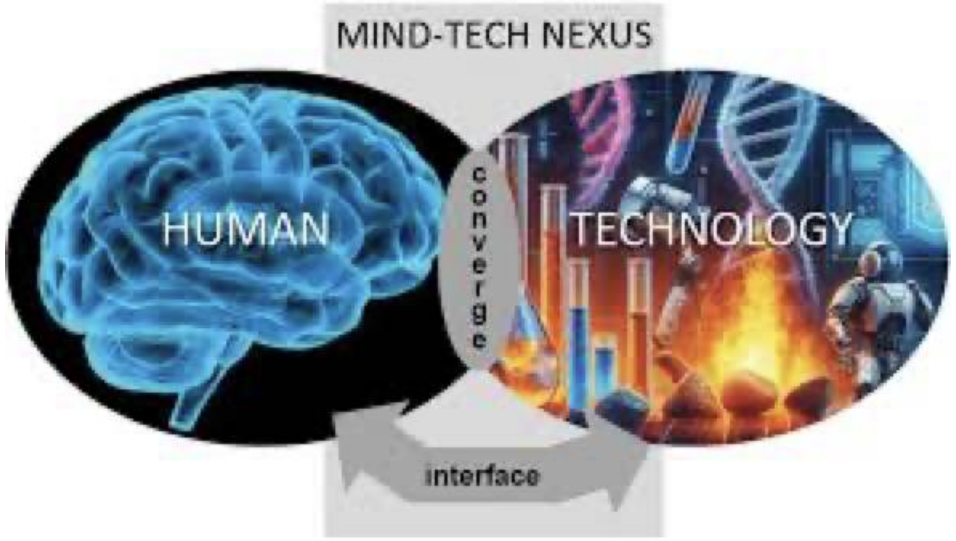


MANIFEST YOUR INNER CYBER SUPERHERO!

The Future of ~~Fraud~~ War Today

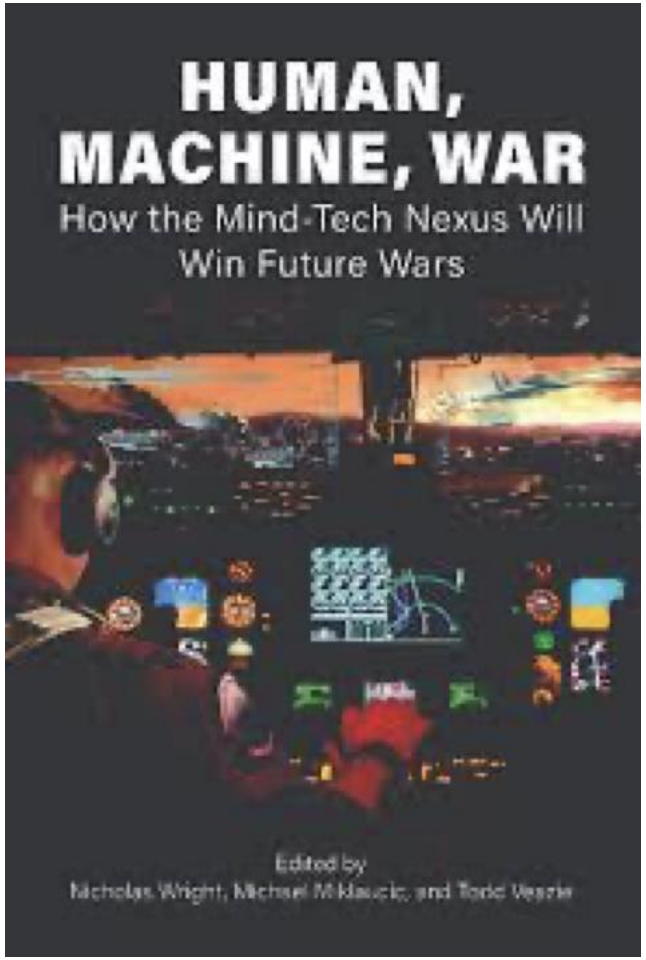
Source https://www.winnschwartau.com/metawar





The Human brain is *now* critical infrastructure.

Source https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Portals/10/AUPress/Books/B_188_Wright_Human_Machine_War.1.pdf



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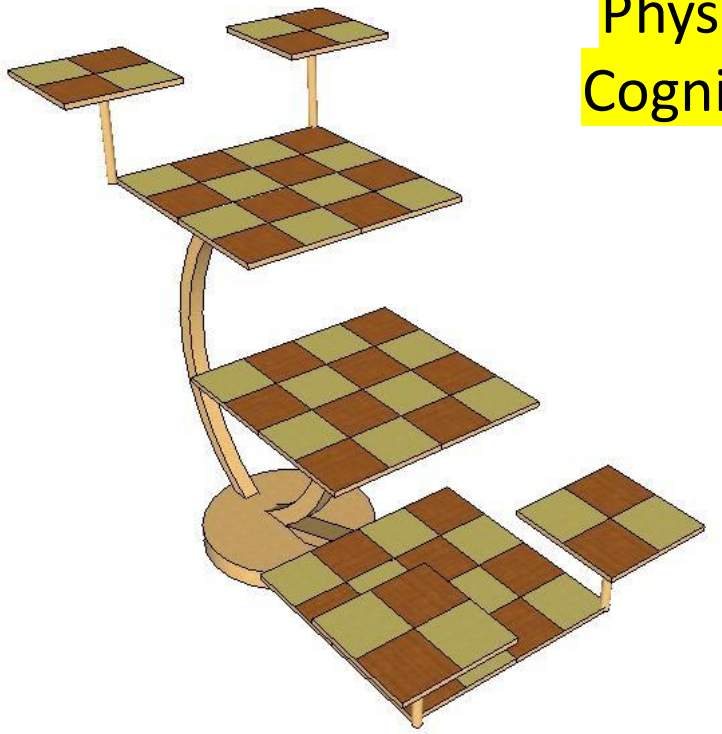
Worlds are colliding…do the math!

Source https://tenor.com/view/seinfeld-george-costanza-costanza-worlds-are-colliding-not-good-gif-24028865

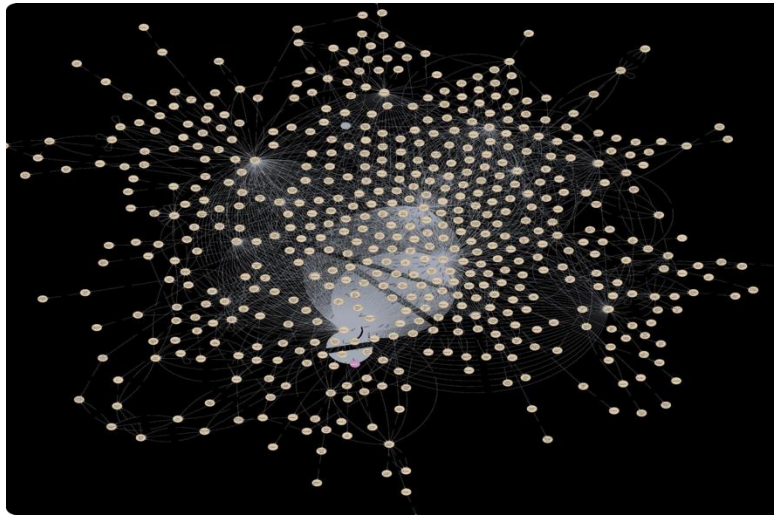
Source https://www.etsy.com/listing/752290891/10-layers-of-the-osi-model-professional

Cyber
Physical
Cognitive



Source https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three-dimensional_chess#/media/File:Star_trek_chessboard.JPG

Multi-Domain
Attack Path Modeling



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Schrödinger's Paradox and the really real world

"If you agree that everything you **perceive** (sense, feel and think) is your **reality** and that everyone perceives reality differently, then you would agree that **alternate realitie**s co-exist at the same time!"

How can we navigate alternate realities in the really real world (my reality)?

Source https://tenor.com/view/kot-cat-znudzony-nudy-boredom-gif-21912962

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Critical (Cognitive) infrastructure is under attack

- **Misinformation** - false or misleading information spread unintentionally.
- **Disinformation** - false information spread deliberately to deceive.
- **Alternative Facts** (aka Bovine Excrement/BS) - misleading or false statements presented as truth with intent.
- **Too Much Information** (TMI) - information volume and velocity exceeding human processing capacity, causing cognitive overload and societal disruption. [DDoS'in Noggins]

Systems of Systems: The human attack surface

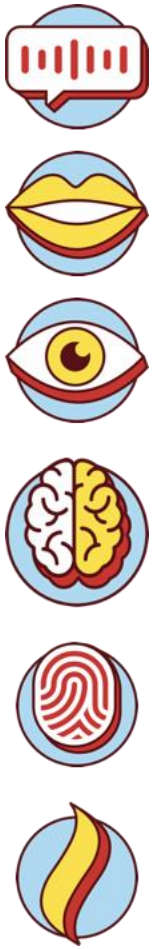
System 1

- Fast
- Subconscious
- Automatic
- Everyday Decisions
- Error Prone

System 2

- Slow
- Conscious
- Effortful
- Complex Decisions
- Reliable

Sensory signals and cognitive systems interact in complex but predictable ways.



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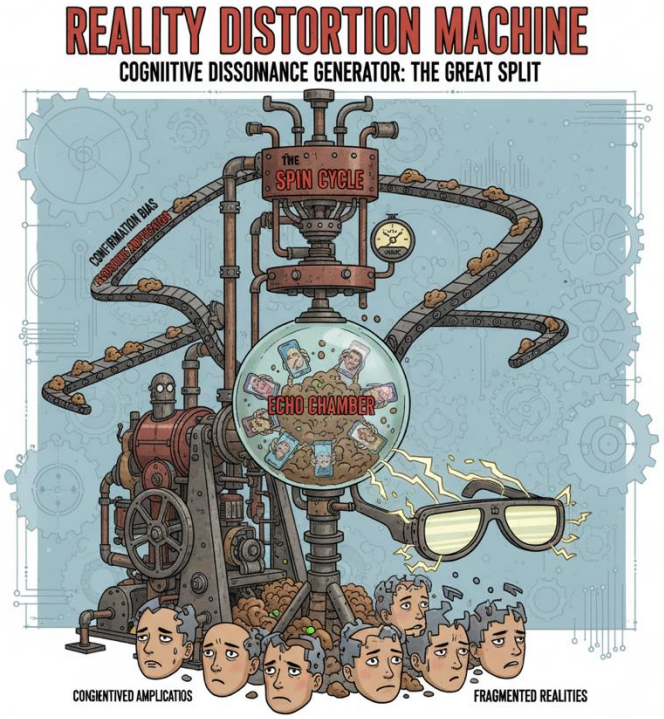
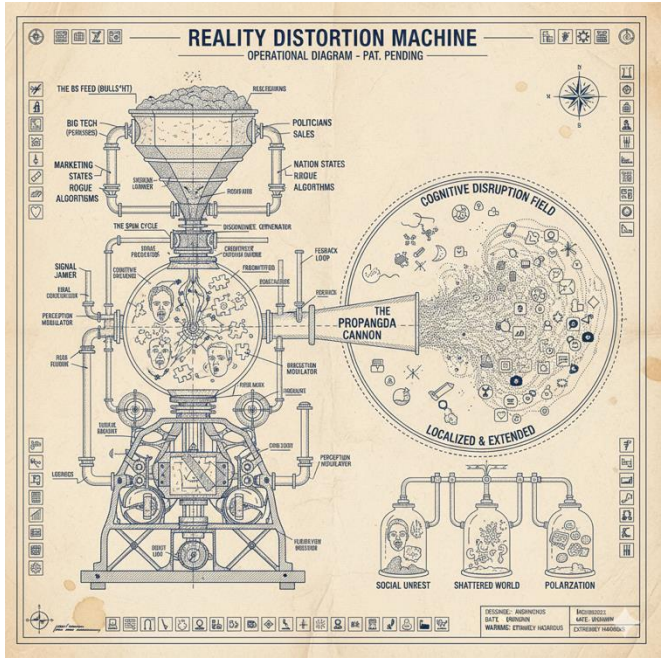
How to create a Reality Distortion Machine [without even trying]

Perverse forces have aligned against humanity. Fueled by greed and powered by bullshit, The **Reality Distortion Machines** use cognitive dissonance, echo chambers, confirmation bias and other cognitive weapons of mass distraction, addiction and division to **P0wn The Narrative**!



Imagine if some actor consciously designed one to operate at scale and pace.



The (threat) Actors:

- Marketing/Sales
- Big Tech/Modern Robber Barons
- Politicians
- Organized Crime
- Nations States
- Rogue Algorithms
- Mercs & Lone Wolves

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The Illusion of Choice – Whose reality are you living in?

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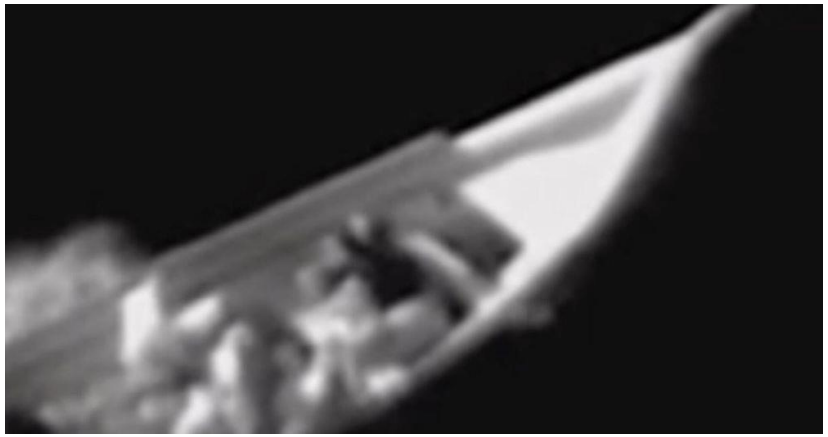
Source https://www.politicalnonpartisan.com/p/media-consolidation

Alternate Realities Co-Existing @ the Same Time



Cognitive Dissonance = Critical Thinking Cue

- We Execute Narco-Terrorists on Sight – “Due process does not extend to combatants of war [those people]”

- We Pardon The Persecuted – “Darknet marketplaces are beyond the law [no government overreach] ”

Alternate Realities Co-Existing @ the Same Time

Temporal Patience vs Need for Speed

- WTF: Chucking Trash?
- Obviously, a Deep Fake Hoax. I can prove it with an elaborate rambling backstory. [**Why** lie?]
- GetReal/White House confirm it happened. The Final Narrative(s): Untrained Contractors or Security Incident?

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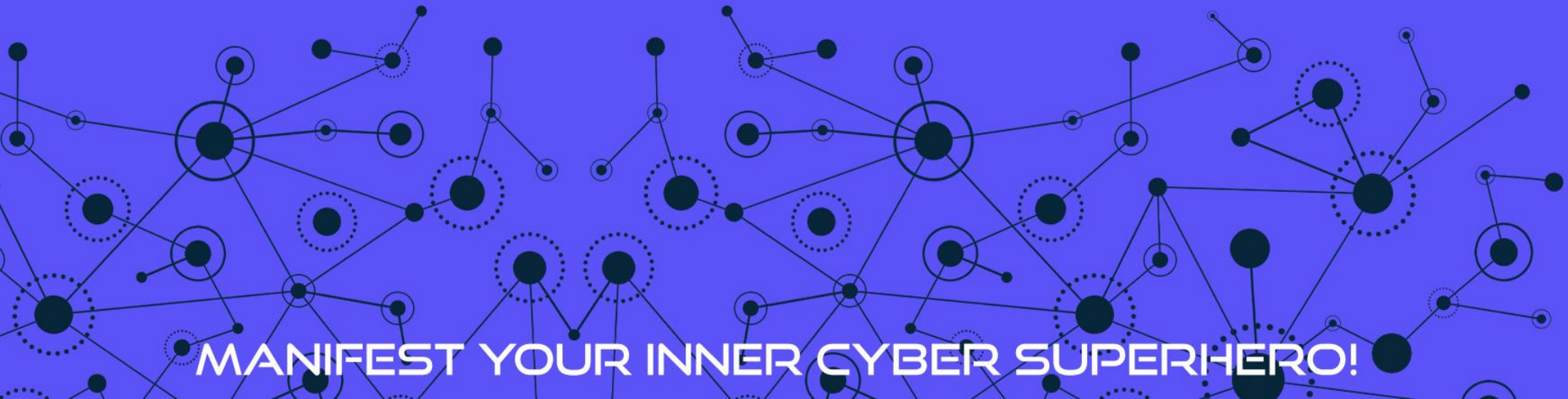
The Journey Home

Chapter III

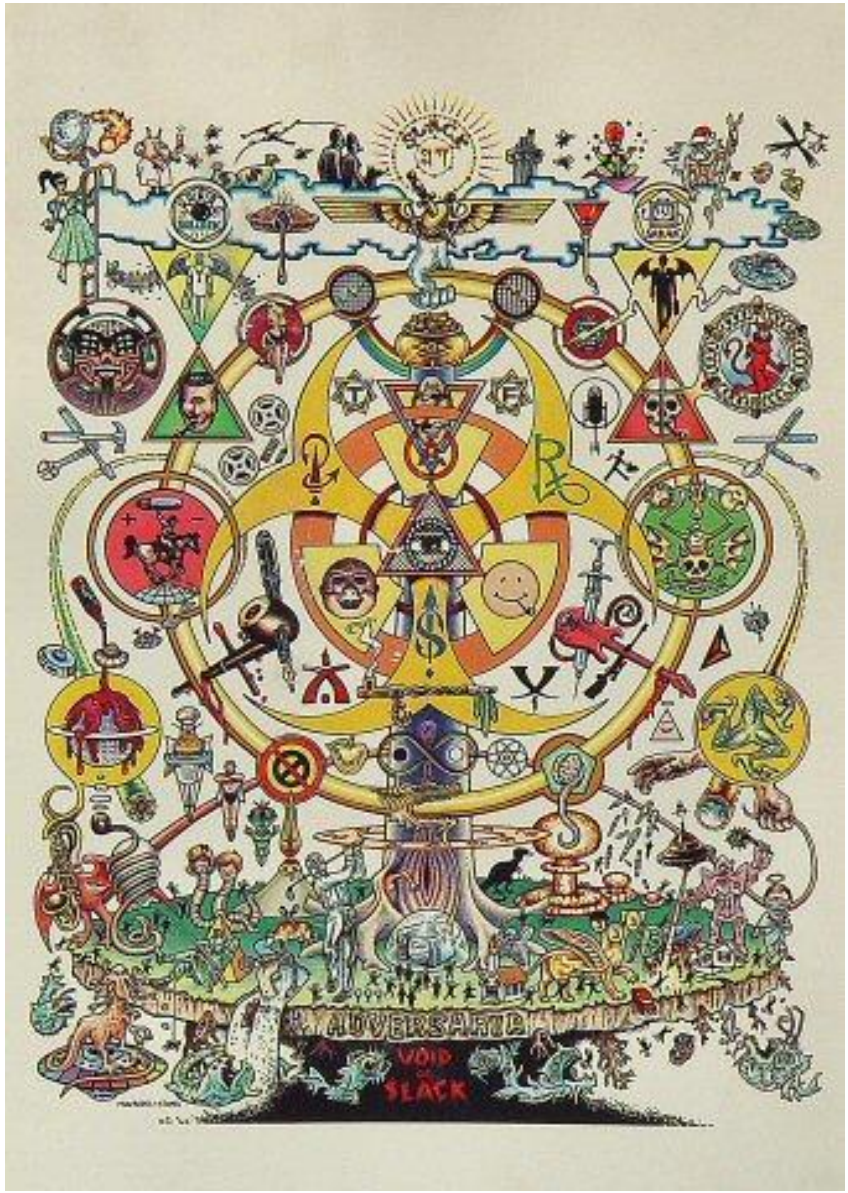


MANIFEST YOUR INNER CYBER SUPERHERO!

My North Stars

- **Bliss Index:** Work on projects that give me joy, with people I like, that make the world a ***better** place.
- **Slack and Flow:** "To get SLACK you must give SLACK, so go with the FLOW!

[*One size does not fit all – REMEMBER: You are inherently biased]



Source https://www.wolfgangs.com/posters-handbills-and-postcards/sacred-art-of-the-subgenius/postcard/PSY900110.html

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Tactics, Techniques & Procedures of a Bullsh*t Artist

The Doctrine of D's: Deny, Delay, Distract, Deflect, Divide, Destroy…

DEPICT Framework:

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

1. Discrediting
2. Emotional fear-mongering
3. Polarization
4. Impersonating experts
5. Conspiracy theories
6. Trolling

The Misinformation Susceptibility Test (**MIST**)

Indicators of BS (**IOBs**)= Cognitive **Cues** & **Prompts** of Significance

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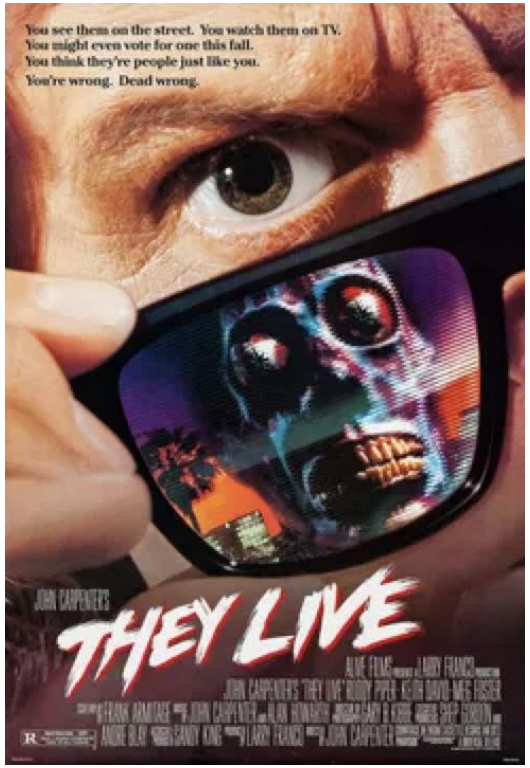
Cognitive Warfare Counter Measures

- Critical Thinking & Critical Ignoring – “Thanks Winn”
- Don’t Feed The Trolls – Don’t engage or Doom Scroll
- System 1 & 2 Optimization– Act with purpose and practice “Temporal Patience”
- Pre-bunking – Inoculate yourself against BS
- Deception - Lying to robots & Lying to liars



We are working on this but until then…

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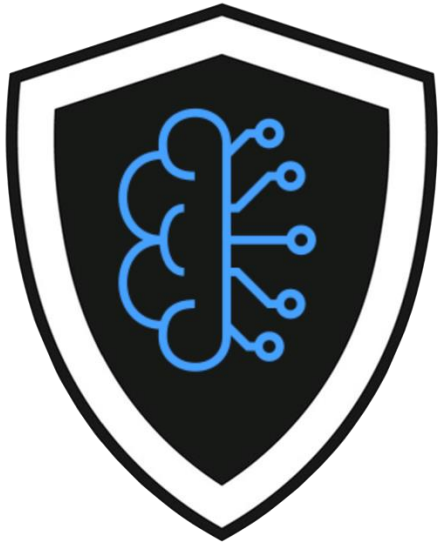
“APPLY” Yourself: Join the conversation



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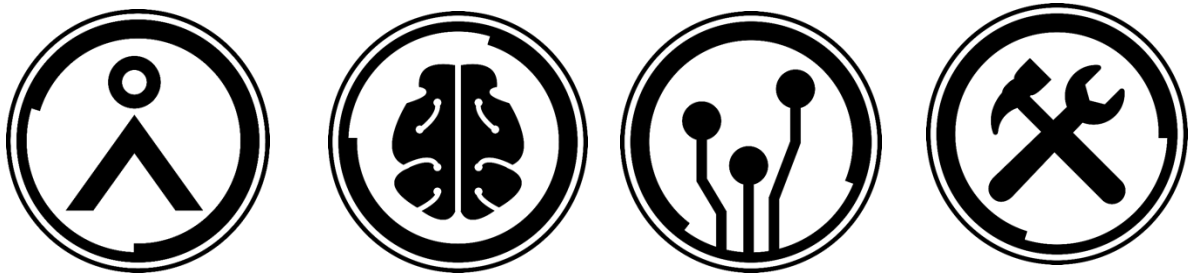
DAY-CON XX

“Resistance is Fruitful”

[working theme]



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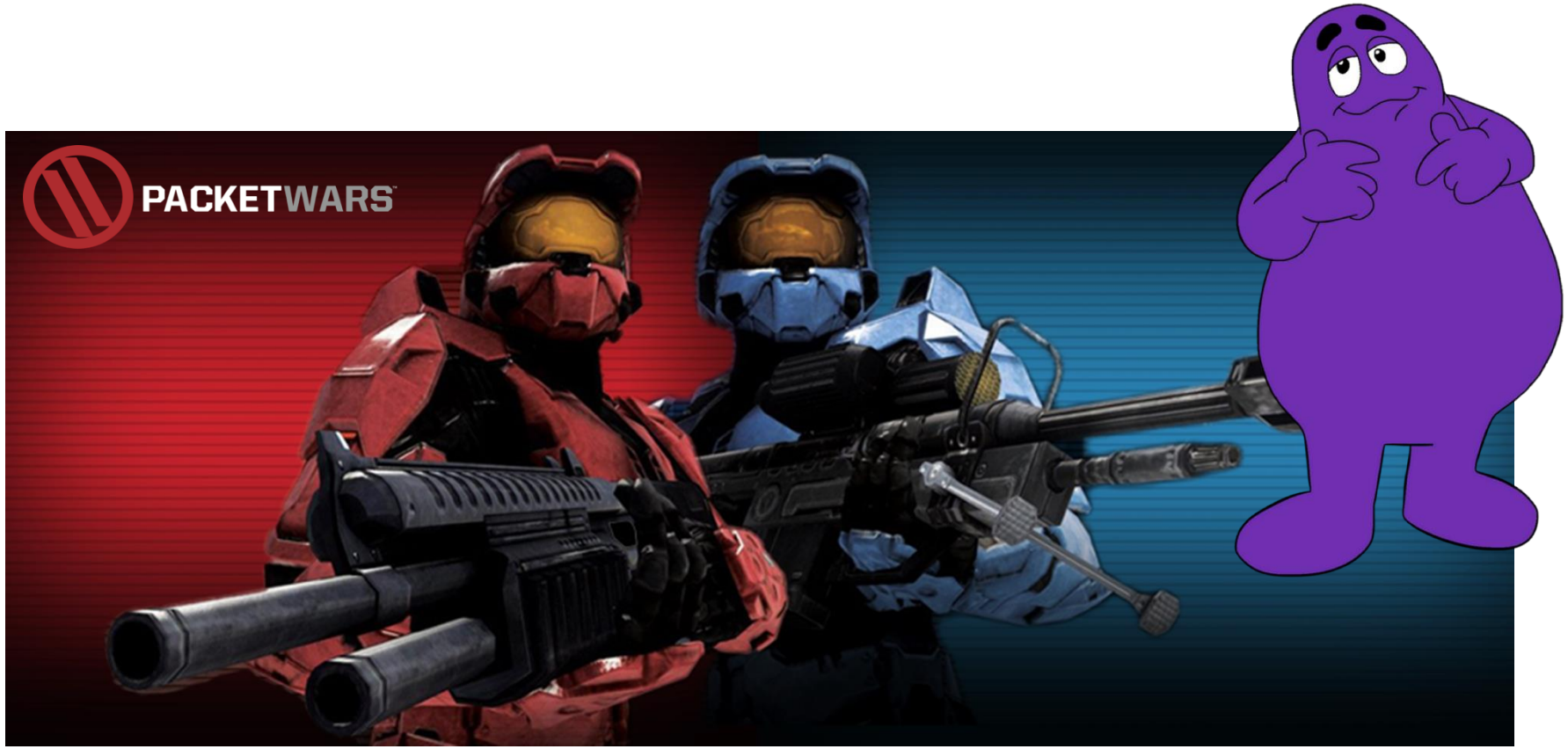
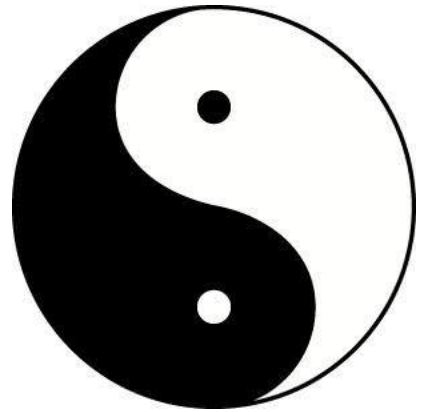
APPLY: Master cognitive self-defense [mind-fu]



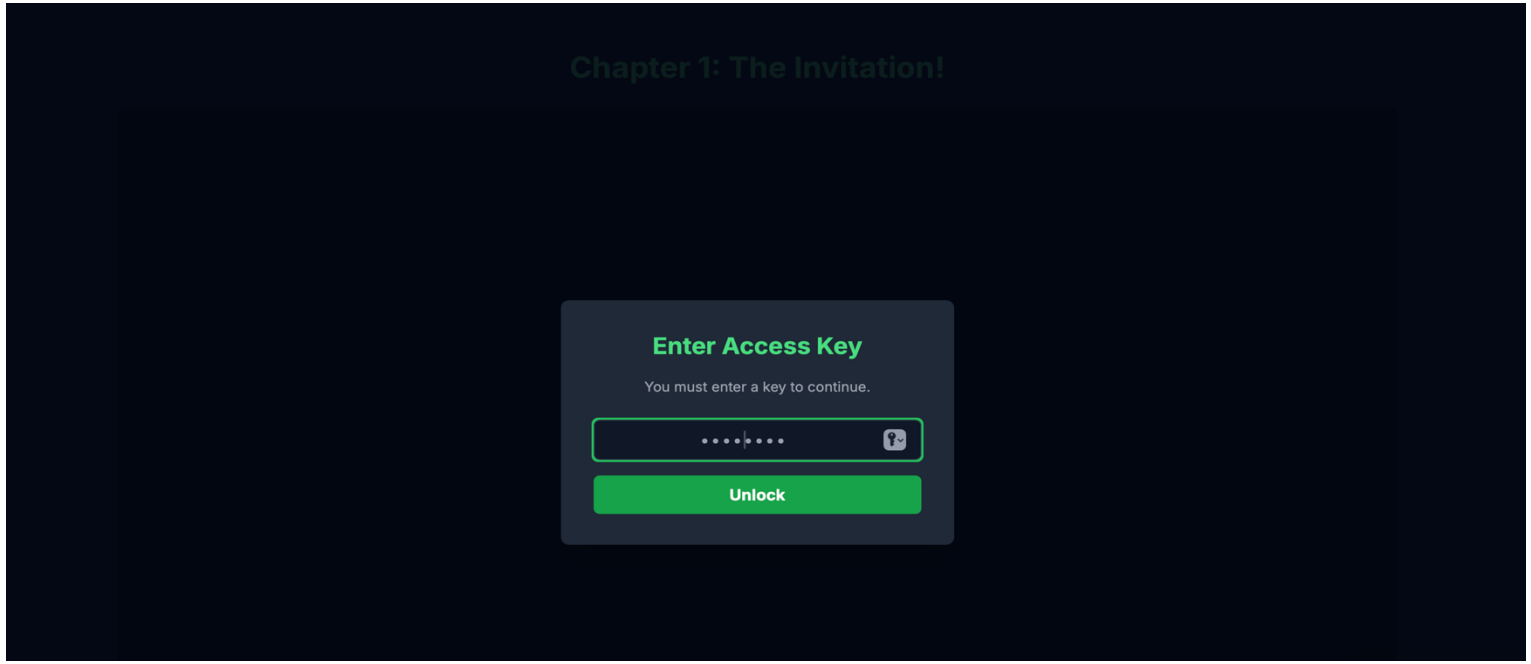


Source https://www.worldhistory.org/image/968/yin-and-yang/

“Serenity Now”: Achieve System 1 & 2 Optimization/Harmonization by Playing Some Games

APPLY: “The Invitation”

“Do you have what it takes to attack, defend, thrive and survive in a world where you can’t trust your senses? If so, the Deep Fake Justice League needs you.”



DEEP FAKE JUSTICE LEAGUE

SCAN ME

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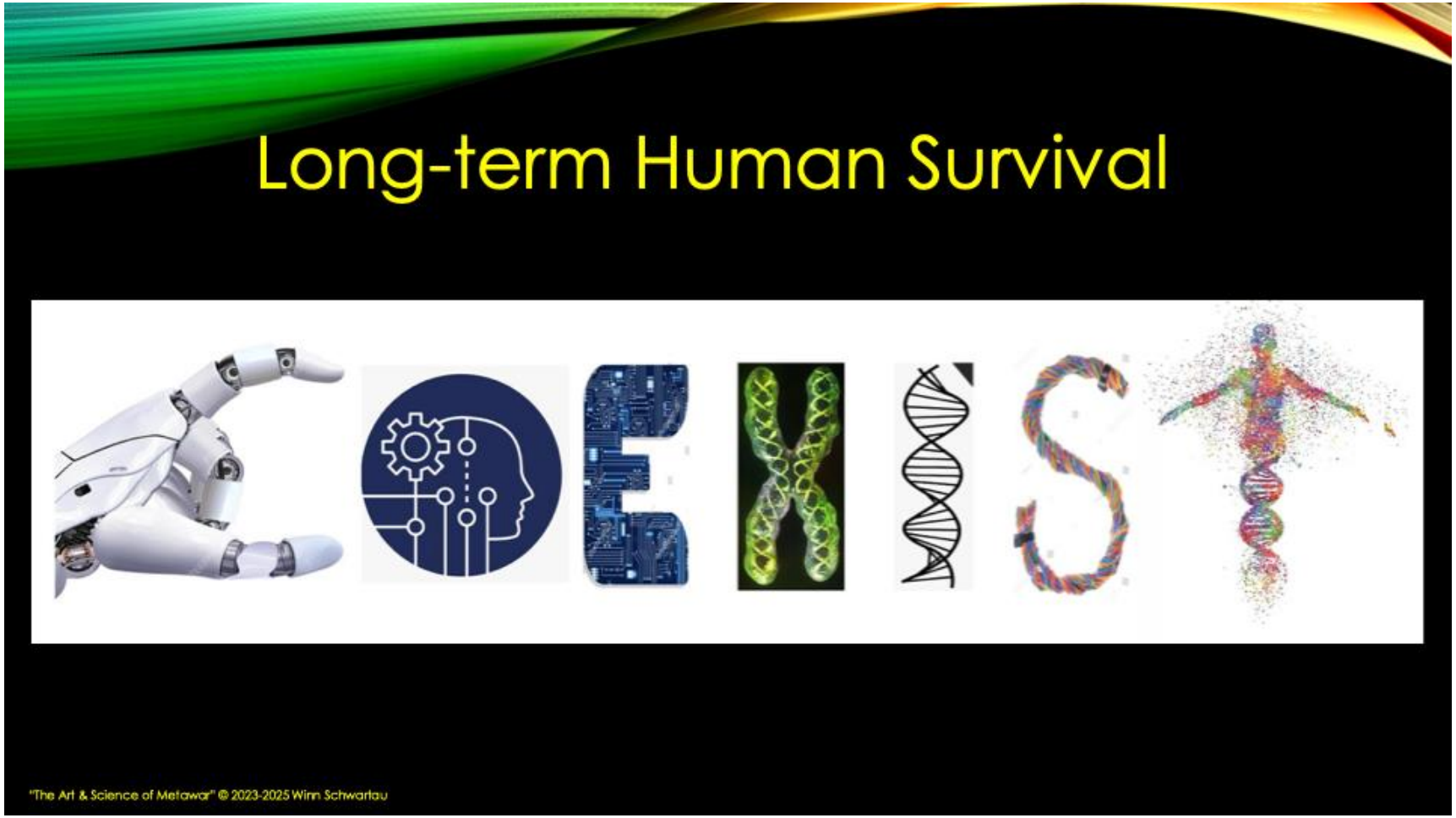
APPLY: Get Me Fired

https://phish.golf/register/83PV8VEL49

Possible Target:
Lisa Monaco and MSFT

Apply: Protect your noggin & save the world

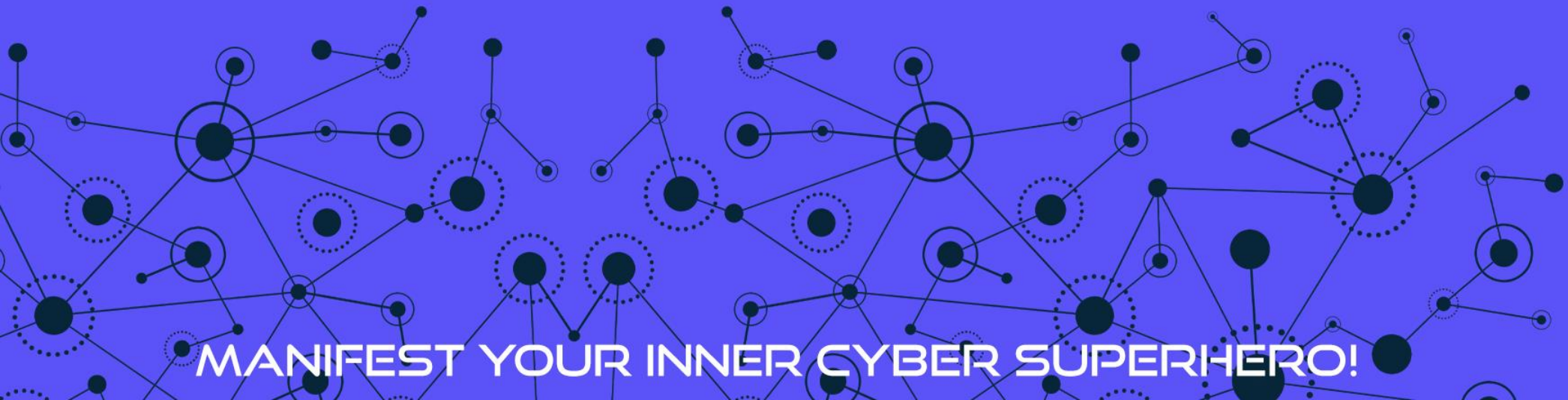


Source https://www.winnschwartau.com/metawar

Star Wars vs Star Trek
"Which reality do you want to live in?"

Don’t panic!

The final chapter has not been written YET



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