As everything in the world Mob mentality has pros and cons, you could also say those that merit from it and those that don’t. Friedrich Nietzsche says that there are two types of individuals, the Higher human being and those who belong to the HERD. In this essay, I will be focusing more on the psychology of the herd, how it’s a problem to society.

Gustave Le Bon commonly referred to as the father of crowd psychology wrote in his highly influential work “The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind”. “it is crowds rather than isolated individuals that may be induced to run the risk of death to secure the triumph of creed or an idea, that may be fired with enthusiasm for glory and honor …Such heroism is without doubt somewhat unconscious, but it is such heroism that history is made.”

A crowd forms when an influential idea unites several people and propels them towards a common goal or there has been an event that has increased peoples emotionality (could be referred to as a catalyst) The thing is these ideas are never ideas generated by the crowd but are brought into the world by great (higher) individuals. When an individual becomes part of a crowd, he undergoes a psychological transformation, he is no longer himself, but has become an automaton and has ceased to be guided by his will. In a crowd every sentiment is contagious and the individual readily sacrifices his interest to the collective interest. Since those who compose a crowd are by their very nature mediocre or are incapable of critical thinking, they cannot understand the original form of the idea. Therefore it must be simplified to the lowest level possible which shows how low the level of intelligence of crowds is, to begin with, e.g. “FREEDOM”, “CHANGE”. However great or true an idea may have been, to begin with, it is deprived of its greatness by the mere fact that it has come within the intellectual range of crowds and exerts influence upon them.

“How numerous are the crowds that have heroically faced death for beliefs, ideas, and phrases that they scarcely understood!” –Le Bon.

While mobs are capable of actions that are both good and evil, more often than not crowds commit barbaric and immoral actions. The savage and destructive instincts are the inheritance left dormant in all of us from the primitive ages, once an individual is absorbed into a crowd there is a sense of invincibility which bolsters the destructive urges within, to act as he/she pleases and he is assured impunity which gives him the entire liberty to follow them.

“When the chips are down these civilized people, will eat each other” – The Joker

In mobs, the foolish, ignorant, and envious persons are free from the sense of their insignificance and powerlessness and are possessed, by the notion of brutal and temporary but immense strength.

The tyranny exercised unconsciously on men’s minds is the only real tyranny, because it cannot be fought against.” –Le Bon. This quote by Le Bon stands true because the conscious mind has been taken over by the unconscious (the one that keeps us breathing and our hearts beating)

“The most contrarian thing of all is not to oppose the crowd but to think for yourself” –Peter Thiel

This has gone on for centuries and is a very popular subject for notable psychologists like Friedrich Nietzsche, Carl Jung, Jordan Peterson, and Gustave Le Bon. In the 1600s the mob had Pitchforks and torches, now the pitchforks have been replaced with keyboards. When a person is accused and identified on social media there is often no fair trial, no hearing of both sides of the story, and no critical analysis which breeds cyberbullying and social stigmatization, which in critical cases can lead to suicide. A lot of people have become keyboard warriors that live online, behind the screen and have become the judges of the values that should be acceptable in every other person’s life, the weak minds that compose of this crowd, feeling the fear of missing out or the need to belong, throw in hate comments that they wouldn’t normally say, just to satisfy the collective intention of the crowd. And anyone with contrary opinions will be ostracized, shamed, ridiculed, and whipped into conformity and in essence, silenced.

“For nonconformity, the world whips you with its displeasure” –Ralph Waldo Emerson

As Nietzsche wrote, “There is among men as in every other animal species an excess of failures, of the sick, degenerating, infirm, who suffer necessarily; the successful cases are among men, too, always the exception.”

This envy motivates the slave to take vengeance on the higher human beings, banding together to obtain a communal feeling of power, the only form of power available to the slave. Under the pretext of calls for equality the slave attempts to bring down those who are higher than him to a mediocre level by the construction of the Herd. But the herd does not seek to change the world for the better; instead, it is driven by resentment, envy, and seeks to gain political and social power to provoke destruction as compensation for his impotency and failures.

“When some me fail to accomplish what they desire to do they exclaim angrily ‘May the whole world perish!’ This repulsive emotion is the pinnacle of envy, whose implication is ‘If I cannot have something, no one can have anything, no one is to be anything!’”

Throughout history, the only people that have brought any advancement to the evolution of man are those who chose not to conform, while there exist great pressures to conform, of the two paths to heroism the one less traveled or the cultivation and expression of one’s uniqueness, has long been seen as the superior of the two.

This mentality is dangerous because of its ability to seduce those who are anxious and fearful in the face of the uncertainty and isolation associated with striving for greatness. Most do not question why things are good or evil, rather they uncritically and largely unconsciously adopt the values dominant within society. As a conformist existence can be rarely called living at all, why is it that so many people choose the path to conformity, instead of the superior path of the nonconformist? As Friedrich Nietzsche wrote “Modesty? perhaps in a few rare cases. For the majority it is idleness, inertia, in short, that propensity for laziness”

Finally, those that merit from this kind of mentality is those that are capable of feeding a mob a particular idea, Like DeBeers “Diamonds are forever”, without a doubt one of the most beautiful marketing, the world has ever seen.

In conclusion, to avoid being ruled over by our natural tendencies to accept natural opinions and values, people should learn to think for themselves in every situation not necessarily debunk the popular opinion but understand the idea behind any movement and decide for themselves if they agree or not. Despite how obvious this may sound, as Nietzsche wrote people are generally lazy and will just do what everyone else is doing without any thought to avoid standing out which has been bred into us from the hunter-gatherer days and even in modern society we are trained from childhood no to stand out from everyone which has further fortified this instinct. This attribute of ours is what is utilized by politicians, brands, influencers, and even social media platforms. If everyone is doing something, you better join in, “don’t stand out!” they know this and use it to their advantage.

“Whenever you find yourself on the side of the majority, it’s time to pause and reflect.” –Mark Twain.

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