

Navigating Badlands 3 – Eudaimonia

With Giles Herdale and Katie Muldoon
November 18th, 1700 - 1900 UK GMT

A mini-series on technology for malignant purposes
and cybernetic responses that might help

 CYBERNETICS SOCIETY

On the Ground

Badlands are places and behaviours of the inflictors upon the inflicted. They are systems of threat and generate pathological declines.

Theoreticians appear confounded; the psychiatry, the biology, the sociology, the criminology, the cybernetics and victimology. Practitioners flounder; the police, the courts, social services, the churches. Families and communities offer limited homeostasis.

Those who favour theory cogitate, whilst those who favour action frustrate.

Inadequacies in Scientific Thought

Somewhere we lost our way. Truths are fixed anywhere by anyone. Our sciences have not provided solutions. Our systems do not protect from violations.

Institutions remain internally ultra stable but externally often seen with declining relevance. Any wish for a simpler world does not make it so.

The just man is a happy man, the unjust man in miserable.

Plato, Republic 354a.

According to the Cartesian-Lockean tradition, which still dominates our culture, what we are directly aware of is not the world, but only the representation of the world which exists in the form of ideas in our minds.

Henri Bortoft, Taking Appearance Seriously, 2024.

Getting Out of Dodge

We appear to be in cyclical events where Badlands are generated by systems created by our behaviours and sciences. **We appear to be in a state of eudaimonic deficit.**

We fix belief based upon political truths and promises which can never match complexity.

We seem unable to medicate, arrest, incarcerate, educate, moralise or engineer our way forwards.

Yet, the álgos signalling is rife:

“For too long, we have not placed the importance on tackling stalking that it deserves, leaving those most vulnerable exposed to abuse facilitated by technology.”

(Paraphrased from Jess Phillips MP, Minister for Safeguarding, UK Government response to stalking super-complaint).

History Tells Us Much

Restrictive patterns of thinking have long been recognised:

Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains. Many a one believes himself the master of others, and yet he is a greater slave than they.

Jean Jacques Rousseau,
Du contrat social. 1762.

If meta systemic dynamics are constraining effective leadership. This helps us to consider our responsive pathways:

Man is a prisoner of his own way of thinking and of his own stereotypes of himself. His thinking machine the brain has been programmed to deal with a vanished world. [...] The new world is characterised by the need to manage complexity.

Stafford Beer,
Platform for Change. 1995.

On The Map

Navigation needs a starting point. Systems of Inhumanity provide a basis for understanding higher recursions of sickness. Badlands is a metasystem and diagnostics are needed. So far, cybernetics appears unable to grapple that iron effectively.



Yet our thoughtful predecessors have signposted us towards new systems of thought.



It seems almost as if progress itself ... must end in the downhill path from which we are trying to escape.

Norbert Wiener,
The Human Use of Human Beings, 1988.

Nurturing Eudaimonic Pathways

Emergent change recognises design over planning and adaptation over determination.

Cybernetics can often be seen as engineering or dealing with threats to other electronic systems.

Cybernetics claims to focus on purposeful systems.

- - What greater purpose is there than supporting pathways to the basic human and environmental needs of security, wellbeing, existence and happiness?

- What pathways might be designed?

- . Do we start with enterprises? Do we start with people as systems?

- How might we adapt existing orders?

We Might Start Here

Eudaimonia is an activity of soul in accordance with virtue.

Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics I.7.

We Might Take Heed

I have come to see money as a constraint on the behaviour of eudemonic systems.

Stafford Beer, Platform for Change. 1995.

We Might Engage Variety To Build Variety

It is much more needful to teach people the art of seeing.

Carl Jung, Collected Works, Vol. 12, 1953.

Speakers With Signposts: We welcome two more remarkable people:



Giles Herdale

<https://uk.linkedin.com/in/giles-herdale-85b84119>

<https://www.rusi.org/people/herdale>

Giles will outline his national review of Violence against Women and girls (WAWG).

Giles is a veteran of many engaged experiences and insights within the interface of technology, policing, data, ethics and capabilities. His observations will come from decades of being positioned in and observing what the VSM would call 'system five' – managing the future and policy.



Katie Muldoon

<https://yellowrattle-coaching.com/about-me>

<https://uk.linkedin.com/in/katiemuldoon>

From her striking story of senior leadership in the RAF, Katie will explore how she encourages humans and systems to cope with complexity and nurture their own pathways for greater eudaimonic existence. Dealing with progression technology and innovation.

Using her analogy; 'sprinkling Yellow Rattle can help create meadows of diversity'. In Cybernetic terms we might see this as nurturing variety.

Welcome to #Badlands3

Event One: *The State of the State*

Webcast from Bush House London.

April 30th at 4pm.

Event Two: *Privacy*

(Online) June 18th, 1700 - 1900 UK BST

Event Three: *Eudaimonia*

(Online) with Giles Herdale and Katie Muldoon.

November 18th, 1700 - 1900 UK GMT

We are hugely grateful to:

Our guest speakers who help us to record topographical details on the Badlands map.

The organising team in the Cybernetics Society for their dedicated and professional support.

Kings College London for hosting '*The State of the State*' at Bush House.

Atlantic Technological University for hosting and organizing a developmental workshop on Security Cybernetics.

Centre for Information Management at Loughborough University, our home base and crucible.

Everyone showing interest in this key area of systems knowledge.

