**Illusions**

**Google has admitted that 56 percent of ads on the Internet are never even "in view" -- defined as being on screen for one second or more. Advertisers pay for illusory "impressions" of these ads, though they're not seen. *(Oz.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, December 19, 2014)***

**The Scots long ago came up with an ancient word for a magic spell that creates an illusion of beauty where no beauty exists. The word is “glamour.” *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Blanket cynicism gives the illusion of understanding. *(Marcia Angell, Harvard lecturer)***

**We risk being the first people in history to have been able to make their illusions so vivid, so persuasive, so "realistic" that they can live in them. *(Daniel Boorstin, historian)***

**At the beginning of this century, Percival Lowell was the most eminent astronomer in the world. It was in 1906 that he announced the presence of red canals on the planet Mars from his telescope in Flagstaff, Arizona. This indicated to him and to our world that there was intelligent life on this planet. Somebody must have built those canals. He followed this up by drawing intricate charts of these canals, which made their way into school textbooks and world atlases. Nobody questioned his charts nor his conclusions because he was “the expert.” Probably no one else looked through a telescope at Mars, or, if they did, like the people viewing “The Emperor's New Clothes,” they decided that they, too, MUST see canals, so they said they did. What is so important is that for decades, all of us raised in that period viewed Lowell's drawings of the canals and, as vulnerable children, certainly believed with no doubt that there were canals and sentient beings on Mars. Ray Bradbury was a school child at this time of universal belief and, because of that, his “Martian Chronicles” all contain stories about the canals of Mars. Well, of course, with modern telescopes and close-ups of Mars taken by spacecraft, we now know that there are no canals on Mars and no evidence of any life. But imagine, for over 50 years this myth has been spread around the world. What is so interesting to me is that my mind now knows there are no canals on Mars, but my inner child has not forgotten that old belief. Down deep, I know that in some future time, somehow, someone will discover those canals. How strange it is to contemplate that whole illusion that became so much a part of my life. And the Lowell Syndrome? That is a medical condition named after the great astronomer because he apparently suffered from it. It's quite rare, but the main symptom is that the patient is able to see the blood vessels in his own eyes. This seems to reinforce the concept that what we think we are seeing at a distance is nothing more than a projection of something inside ourselves. *(Bev Ludwig)***

**In his analysis of “truth," a student of “deep" named Sam Keen wrote: “We have to move from the illusion of certainty to the certainty of illusion." *(L. M. Boyd)***

**A flock of chickens in an artificially lighted coop will lay bigger eggs with stronger shells if timers in the coop create the illusion of a 28-hour day. So say Cornell University researchers. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**It is respectable to have no illusions – and safe, and profitable, and dull. *(Joseph Conrad)***

**There is no such thing as conversation. It is an illusion. There are intersecting monologues, that is all. *(Dame Rebecca West, Irish-born author and journalist)***

**I’m a realist and so I think regretting is a useless occupation. You help no one with it. But you can’t live without illusions even if you must fight for them, such as “love conquers all.” It isn’t true, but I would like it to be. *(Marlene Dietrich, German-born actress)***

**Disillusion is the last illusion. *(Wallace Stevens)***

**People like us who believe in physics know that the distinction between past, present, and future is only a stubbornly persistent illusion. *(Albert Einstein)***

**Your elusive future self: Most of us acknowledge that our values, preferences, and personalities have changed quite a bit from a decade ago. But when asked to project 10 years into the future, a new Harvard University study has found, we assume we’ll be exactly the same, if a bit more wrinkled – what researchers are calling “the end of history illusion.” Psychologist Daniel Gilbert and colleagues surveyed more than 19,000 people between the ages of 18 and 68 and found that the vast majority were unable to imagine changing as much in the future as they readily admitted they had in the past. “All of us seem to have this sense that development is a process that has delivered us to this point and now we’re done,” Gilbert tells LiveScience.com. Younger people were particularly prone to believing that what they thought and valued now would hold true throughout their lives. “The end of history illusion” helps to explain why people get ill-advised tattoos, marry questionable partners, or make financial-planning decisions they come to regret. “People really aren’t very good at knowing who they’re going to be and hence what they’re going to want a decade from now,” Gilbert says. “At every age we think we’re having the last laugh, and at every age we’re wrong.” *(The Week magazine, January 25, 2013)***

**The great enemy of communication is the illusion of it. *(William H. Whyte)***

**What fairy tales teach girls: Girls raised on fairy tales like Cinderella and Beauty and the Beast are more likely to be victims of domestic violence later in life, new research suggests. Researchers interviewed a cross-section of women and found that those who said they most enjoyed fairy tales when they were young were more likely to be submissive adults -- and more likely to be battered spouses. Fairy-tale princesses, researcher Susan Darker-Smith of the U.K.'s University of Derby tells the London Daily Telegraph, make poor role models. Cinderella, for example, is down-trodden and miserable until she is rescued by a prince, suggesting that she is incapable of rescuing herself. Stories like Beauty and the Beast, Darker-Smith says, may leave the impression that love can "magically transform" an abusive man. "They believe if their love is strong enough," says Darker-Smith, "they can change their partner's behavior." *(The Week magazine, May 13, 2005)***

**In youth we feel richer for every new illusion; in maturer years, for every one we lose. *(Anne Sophie Swetchine, Russian-French author)***

**The late sage Erich Fromm said every normal young man reveres two illusions: that he’s a good driver and a good lover. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**How strange when an illusion dies. It's as though you've lost a child. *(Judy Garland)***

**Every healing of Jesus was a turning away from the illusion of good and evil to the recognition of the perfect Life of God as the only Reality. Because he understood this, he could speak with authority. He could order the man with the withered hand to stretch forth his hand because Jesus did not see a withered hand. He saw only the wholeness of Life*. (Jack E. Addington, in The Hidden Mystery of the Bible, p. 131)***

**The first American settlers came expecting that almost anything could exist in the New World. They came because they had a love affair with their illusions. This was true of those who came across the ocean and those who moved across the continent. Disillusionment came on the installment plan. Only gradually did the settlers find out that the marvelous promises were not always or altogether true. *(Daniel J. Bornstin and Nicolas L. Noxon, in Reader’s Digest)***

**People do not marry people, not real ones anyway; they marry what they think the person is; they marry illusions and images. The exciting adventure of marriage is finding out who the partner really is. *(James L. Framo)***

**Illusions are like umbrellas -- you no sooner get them than you lose them, and the loss always leaves a little painful wound. *(W. Somerset Maugham, in A Traveller in Romance)***

**Death of a Salesman, Arthur Miller's drama of smashed illusions, opened on Broadway February 10, 1949, and starred Lee J. Cobb as Willy Loman, the failing salesman whose product was himself. Written in just six weeks, the play was praised for Miller's deft use of flashbacks and his honest, sympathetic treatment of Loman's disintegration. "One of the first dramas in the whole range of American theatre," said the New York Times. Death of a Salesman won four Tony Awards and the 1949 Pulitzer Prize for drama and propelled Miller to the forefront of American letters. He died in 2005, at age 89. *(Alison McLean, in Smithsonian magazine)***

**The most fatal illusion is the settled point of view. Since life is growth and motion, a fixed point of view kills anybody who has one. *(Brooks Atkinson, American drama critic)***

**Nuclear weapons have made war obsolete as a means of resolving conflicts between great powers. In the nuclear age, our goal must be peace. But perfect peace – a world without conflict – is an illusion. It has never existed and will never exist. Real peace is not an end to conflict but a means to living with conflict. *(Richard Nixon, in Victory Without War)***

**The comparative study of peaceful societies is just beginning in the social sciences, and there are still no generally agreed upon standards as to how such cultures would be identified or how degrees of peacefulness would be measured. Indeed, for some, the whole enterprise of identifying societies as peaceful or otherwise is an illusion, since what constitutes an aggressive act in one culture may not be perceived that way in another. *(Thomas Gregor, in A Natural History of Peace, p. xvii)***

**All photos are accurate. None of them is the truth. *(Richard Avedon)***

**We must select the illusion which appeals to our temperament and embrace it with passion, if we want to be happy. *(Cyril Connolly)***

**The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place. *(George Bernard Shaw)***

**Time is an illusion. Lunchtime doubly so. *(Douglas Adams)***

**In his analysis of “truth,” a student of “deep” named Sam Keen wrote: “We have to move from the illusion of certainty to the certainty of illusion.” *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Don’t part with your illusions. When they are gone you may still exist, but you have ceased to live. *(Mark Twain)***

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