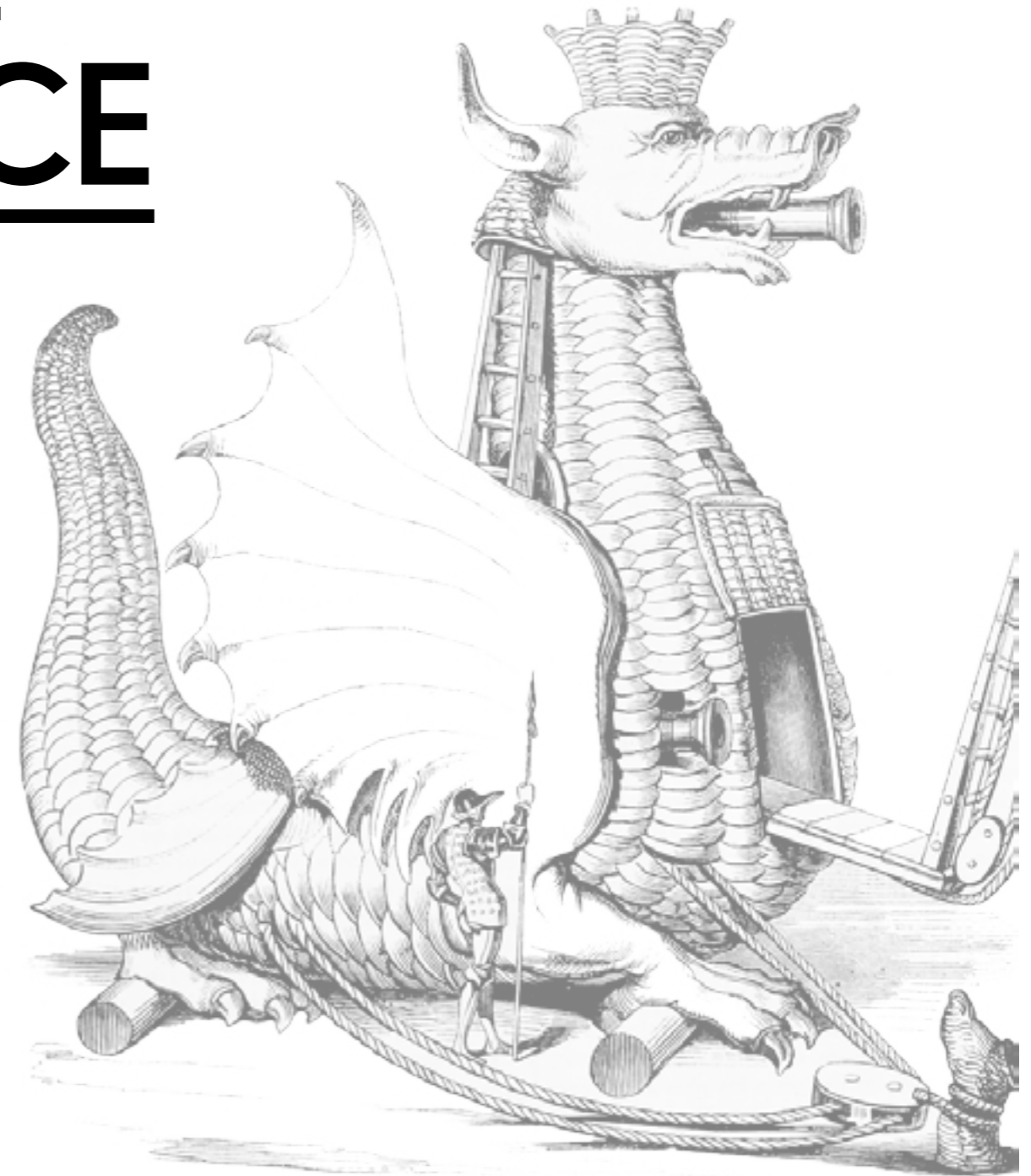
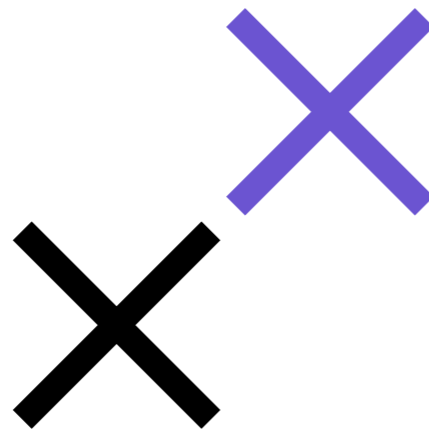


# INTELLIGENT DIS◇BEDIENCE

- HUMAN HISTORY BEGAN WITH AN  
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UNLIKELY THAT IT WILL BE TERMINATED  
BY AN ACT OF OBEDIENCE -

ERICH FROMM





IN THE 2012 TREND REPORT, WE DISCUSSED PEOPLE'S INCREASING DISTRUST FOR GOVERNMENTS, INSTITUTIONS, AND CORPORATIONS, AND THE RISE OF SELF-ORGANISED GROUPS THAT ARE CHALLENGING THE NORM, MOTIVATED BY A THIRST FOR CREDIBILITY AND INDEPENDENCE (SEE [MICRO MIGHTINESS TREND](#)).

In the Reinvention Era, people will become more daring and increasingly question authority. For the last decade in the Western world – and for a large part of history in the rest of the world – institutions, governments, and corporations have proven that they do not have the interest of the majority of people at heart. Established authorities have shown that they are mostly funded by antagonistic interests, whereby what is advantageous for the authority is detrimental to most people. Because people do not feel safe and protected by obeying authority, disillusion and lack of trust in our systems and society will continue to increase. Most citizens distrust their government, up about 9% since a year ago<sup>1</sup>. The least trusted institution is banks, at the bottom of the trust barometer for several years now and increasingly distrusted as time passes.

To cope in this challenging environment, disobedience can be deemed necessary and people will defy the rules set by established authorities. Especially for Millennials, the self-proclaimed Generation Screwed (see Additional Insights), defiance will take centerstage as a way to challenge the principles of power in a bid to overthrow an unjust authority that offers few prospects for a positive future. People will display Intelligent Disobedience (see Additional Insights): the ability to make an informed decision about when and where to be disobedient. Intelligent Disobedience will lead people to turn themselves into Solvers: individuals who are looking for alternative solutions in order to mend a desperately broken system. Solvers are everyday people, hackers, tinkers, artists, activists, anyone who is involved in trying to approach issues and fix

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problems in a different way. Solvers are outspoken: they expose wrongdoing and dare to say no to the established authority. They are critical and are not afraid to go beyond their mental script (see Additional Insights) to face the new realities, regardless of how challenging they are. Solvers are doers; they are motivated by action and result. They display resourcefulness and ingenuity in making repairs and improvements to the system they are trying to fix. They are solution-driven.

Solvers reveal that good behaviour and obedience alone won't always accomplish the needed goals. Breaking the law isn't solvers' motivation, but rather making things better in spite of the limitations the law might impose.

In the Reinvention Era people will become solvers, harnessing digital tools to fix problems and reinvent the future on their own terms.

### **SOLVERS NURTURING A TINKER MINDSET**

In a context where instability and change are the only constant, developing a mindset that helps people find their own solutions will be important. The tinker mindset will help people become active participants in the Reinvention Era. Tinkering can be linked to specific cultural habits; in fact, the more constraints that are placed on people, the more creative and ingenious they tend to become (see Additional Insights). In this sense, emerging markets in LatAm, Africa, and Asia have a tradition of Intelligent Disobedience and Jugaad Innovation, a form of frugal innovation (see Additional Insights). People have been displaying epistemic and civil disobedience for a long time (see Additional Insights) by building underground and alternative systems for survival. They develop a tinker mindset, which emerges from the constraints of their environment. For instance, as Cuba grew increasingly isolated due to the US embargo, Cubans learned to repair and repurpose objects so that they could be used in a different way than their original design. Cubans became tinkerers that displayed technological disobedience. Tinkerers change the lifecycle and use of objects depending on specific needs; they find new functions for objects and, in doing so, invent new ones. Their motives are not based on transgressing authority, but are rather about finding coping mechanisms



within a highly restrictive system. Their proactive attitude towards repurposing and repairing things will come as a great strength in the context of the Reinvention Area. It will provide people with inspiring lessons about how to innovate.

We can envision that some of the greatest examples of reinvention will rise out of “constrained” regions such as CIVETS (Colombia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Egypt, Turkey, South Africa) and MIKT (Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea, and Turkey). For example, South Korea ranks as the second most innovative country due to its leading innovation in electronics and telecommunications<sup>2</sup>. The innovation transfer will increasingly happen from Third World to First World, as opposed to from First World to Third World. It will change the dynamics of the globally connected society and will demonstrate that the greatest innovations can truly come from anywhere. For example, Vostu (see Case Studies), established in Brazil by three returning Harvard graduates, is the largest social gaming company in Latin America. It has over 50 million registered users for their apps and games, and an estimated value of \$300 million<sup>3</sup>.

Nurturing the ability to be critical and take a proactive approach to life will become a recurring topic. People will look at how the educational system can be reinvented to encourage a tinker mindset. The educational system does not traditionally encourage non-linear or divergent thinking. Instead of being told what to do and follow instructions, some studies are showing the value of encouraging students to break the rules and take risks as part of the learning process. This can help increase cognitive ability. According to Alison Gopnik, “While learning from a teacher may help children to get to a specific answer more quickly, it also makes them less likely to discover information about a problem and to create a new and unexpected solution”<sup>4</sup>. The capacity for being disobedient is now perceived as instrumental to our intellectual development toward becoming independent and daring individuals.

Anybody who can identify a problem can contribute to the solution. Fostering critical thinking so that people can develop their own intelligent disobedience will be instrumental in the Reinvention Era.

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## IDENTIFYING THE REAL PROBLEMS AND EXPOSING WRONGDOING

The Reinvention Era will be characterised by people's desire to fix things, by identifying real problems and exposing wrongdoing. With more access to information, knowledge, and networks, the world is becoming more transparent and injustice is more difficult to hide. At the same time, it makes it difficult for people to remain passive observers. They become solvers, and solvers are doers. Solvers care about results instead of fame. They use subversion to approach problems from a different angle. Tinkerers don't embarrass themselves with convention – they look for effective ways to make things happen. They are willing to look outside the perimeters of the law to put things right. Many solvers will draw inspiration from underground and secretive movements to organise themselves and learn how to build their adaptability, uncover new possibilities, and challenge the authorities. Intelligent Disobedience will lead people to embrace digital tools and engage in cyber civil disobedience (see Additional Insights) to fix problems while retaining anonymity. As a result, tinkerers organise themselves in groups that use underground and alternative channels to expose injustice and plan ways to disrupt the authorities. For example, The Deep Web, the set of information resources on the World Wide Web not reported by normal search engines (see Additional Insights), provides a platform for many illegal operations; however, there is also a lot of valuable data located within it. Solvers are willing to use such tools as long as they serve in resolving a problem. For example, the Deep Web can be used to communicate amongst themselves, hidden from the authorities. It is a powerful instrument that is vital for people to freely exchange ideas and information. The Deep Web can promote new ideas and forms of protest. Indeed, solvers fight for the right to privacy and are inexorably combatting initiatives such as SOPA (see Additional Insights), which are increasingly threatening to erode people's privacy. Solvers demonstrate the importance of social criticism and going beyond our mental script.

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Disobedience will creep into many aspects of society, wherever people feel there is injustice or inefficiencies. Civil and epistemic disobedience led by organised minorities who refuse decisions made by the government – exemplified by the Occupy Wall Street movement and Los Indignados – will continue to propagate. Citizen Journalism is a movement led by citizens who want to play an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analysing, and disseminating news and information (see Additional Insights); these types of movements encourage social criticism. The “critical mood” will also affect people’s consumption. Consumer disobedience will manifest through the use of alternative currencies – such as Bitcoins, a digital currency that is untraceable (see Additional Insights) – or by using cash instead of credit cards. Disobedient consumers will also combat planned obsolescence by fixing things the tinkerer way: swapping and repurposing them. They will go off the grid (see Additional Insights), engaging in piracy, saying no to logos, and becoming brand disloyal. Similarly, artists will participate in Intelligent Disobedience and help nurture the critical mood by exposing injustice and wrongdoing. Rhizome, for example, offers a platform for people to expose issues occurring around the world through art projects; the group sometimes commissions projects around specific issues such as surveillance or privacy (see Case Studies).

In the Reinvention Era, solvers will challenge authority and will create alternative solutions for people to become active participants in a globally connected society.

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1. Edelman, Trust Barometer 2012: <http://trust.edelman.com/trust-download/global-results/>
  2. Bloomberg Business Week: [http://images.businessweek.com/ss/09/03/0312\\_innovative\\_countries/30.htm](http://images.businessweek.com/ss/09/03/0312_innovative_countries/30.htm)
  3. <http://www.fastcompany.com/most-innovative-companies/2012/industry/brazil#vostu>
  4. Why Preschool Shouldn’t Be Like School: New research shows that teaching kids more and more, at ever-younger ages, may backfire by Alison Gopnik, for Slate <http://www.slate.com/is/2288402/>



## ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS

**INTELLIGENT DISOBEDIENCE** is a concept used in reference to animals since 1936. It refers to a situation where a service-animal trained to help a disabled person goes directly against their owner's instructions in an effort to make a better decision. (Dr. Gifford Jones, Seeing Eye dogs can teach us a lesson, December 5, 2003)



**EPISTEMIC DISOBEDIENCE** was defined by Alfred Moore as "organised minorities refusing to accept expert claims to authority".

ALFRED MOORE, 2012, EPISTEMIC DISOBEDIENCE



**ELECTRONIC CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE**, also known as ECD or **CYBER CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE**, can refer to any type of civil disobedience in which the participants

use information technology to carry out their actions. Electronic civil disobedience often involves computers and the Internet, and has also been referred to as hacktivism. The term "electronic civil disobedience" was coined in a book title including the term: Critical Art Ensemble's (1996) Electronic Civil Disobedience and Other Unpopular Ideas. Electronic civil disobedience seeks to continue the practices of nonviolent yet disruptive protest, originally pioneered by Henry David Thoreau who, in 1848, published Civil Disobedience. A common form of ECD is a Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attack against a specific target, also known as a virtual sit-in. Virtual sit-ins are sometimes announced on the Internet by groups such as the Electronic Disturbance Theatre or the Borderlands Hacklab. Computerised activism exists at the intersections of politico-social movements and computer-mediated communication. Stefan Wray writes about ECD:

"As hackers become politicised and as activists become computerised, we are going to see an increase in the number of cyber-activists who engage in what will become more widely known as Electronic Civil Disobedience. The same principles of traditional civil disobedience, like trespass and blockage, will still be applied, but more and more these acts will take place in

electronic or digital form. The primary site for Electronic Civil Disobedience will be in cyberspace."

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**MENTAL SCRIPTS** are our conditioned responses to situations. Mental scripts push us, for example, to stubbornly cling to the notion that "this is how we have always done it" and refuse to accept the realities of a new situation. So we find ourselves mistakenly pushing into the future with whatever worked in the past, a slippery slope.

(Laurence Gonzales, Everyday Survival: Why Smart People do Stupid Things, (2008))



**HOLOPTISM** is a term that describes the ability for any member to have horizontal knowledge of what the others are doing, but also the vertical knowledge related to the aims of the project.

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**PANOPTISM** describes how knowledge is distributed in hierarchical organisations. Only the top of the pyramid has a full view of what is going on in the organisation.

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**CREATIVITY FROM CONSTRAINTS:** Dr Patricia Stokes found that “constraints help structure the solution path by limiting (precluding) and direction (promoting) search in a problem space”. The secret to a creative solution is a precise problem.

(The Psychology Breakthrough, 2005)



**DIVERGENT THINKING** is a thought process or method used to generate creative ideas by exploring many possible solutions. It is often used in conjunction with convergent thinking, which follows a particular set of logical steps to arrive at one solution; in some cases it is a “correct” solution. Divergent thinking typically occurs in a spontaneous, free-flowing manner, such that many ideas are generated in an emergent-cognitive fashion. Many possible solutions are explored in a short amount of time and unexpected connections are drawn. After the process of divergent thinking has been completed,

ideas and information are organised and structured using convergent thinking. Psychologists have found that a high IQ alone does not guarantee creativity. Instead, personality traits that promote divergent thinking are more important. Divergent thinking is found among people with personality traits such as nonconformity, curiosity, willingness to take risks, and persistence. Additionally, researchers at Vanderbilt University found that musicians are more adept at utilising both hemispheres, and more likely to use divergent thinking in their thought processes.

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#### **MILLENNIALS - GENERATION SCREWED:**

The wealth gap today between younger and older Americans is the widest on record. Since 2008, the percentage of the workforce under 25 has dropped 13.2% according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The unemployment rate for people between 18 and 29 is 12% in the US, nearly 50% in Spain, 22% in the UK, and 8% in Germany. Generation Screwed is crippled by debt incurred by the senior population and their own student bills. Nationwide tuition debt in the US is close to \$1 trillion.

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**CITIZEN JOURNALISM** is based on public citizens playing an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analysing, and disseminating news and information. Citizen journalism is a specific form of both citizen media and user-generated content in new media technology, such as social networking and media-sharing websites. These tools, in addition to the increasing prevalence of cellular phones, have made citizen journalism more accessible to people around the globe. Due to the availability of technology, citizens can often report breaking news more quickly than traditional media reporters. Meteorologists are increasingly turning to social media for reports and evidence that arrives quicker than traditional storm-spotters. According to one report, there was an overwhelming “ground truth” on social media during recent hurricane Sandy. A quarter of the 20 million tweets published during Sandy included photo and video, verifying meteorologists’ predictions and giving clarity and certainty about the activity of the storm. Other notable examples of citizen journalism include the Arab Spring and the Occupy Wall Street movement. Tim Pool learned about the Occupy Wall Street movement through social media and decided to see it for himself. When he arrived from Chicago, he began to record and document the protests with his smartphone. Before long he became one of the primary independent journalists broadcasting Occupy Wall Street. “With just a smartphone, you can send tweets, you can send messages, photos, and do a broadcast for a very long amount of time.” He reached





about 750,000 viewers on one of the most significant days of the movement. Another example is described in a documentary called High Tech: Low Life, which follows the journey of two of China's first citizen journalists as they travel the country chronicling under-reported news and social issues. Critics of the phenomenon, including professional journalists, claim that citizen journalism is unregulated, overly subjective, amateur, and haphazard in quality and coverage.

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#### **SOCIAL NETWORKS AND SOCIAL CHANGE:**

The 15-M movement emerged during the Spanish campaign for regional and municipal elections in May of 2012. Social networks were key to the success of the movement. The most interesting part of the movement is that it was born and diffused on the Internet, but also had an impressive offline presence. Opposition to the "Ley Sinde" opened the political opportunity to give structure to the movement. The support of thousands of youth around the world – through Wikileaks and the Arab revolution – brought about new venues for political activism online. An auto-organised event launched on Twitter, the movement had around 4,500 members on May 15, 2011, and then grew to about 45,731 within 6 days. As the movement kept growing online, so did the offline protests all over Spain. After the prohibition of the "Acampada Sol", there was an intensified rise

in youth participation in the movement, and growing media coverage.

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**THE DEEP WEB** refers to the set of information resources on the World Wide Web not reported by normal search engines. People can download special software to connect with what lies beneath the "surface" of the Web (the set of websites directly accessible through hyperlinks). The software masks the user's identity, encrypting the user's data. Such software has been downloaded over two million times, revealing the need for many people to find alternative, private communication channels. Activists and campaigners from around the world have been able to organise themselves thanks to this underground channel. For example, many of the videos shot during the Syrian revolution were first posted on the Deep Web, and later transferred to YouTube.

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**STOP ONLINE PIRACY ACT (SOPA)** is a US bill to expand the reach of US law enforcement to fight online trafficking of copyrighted intellectual property and counterfeit goods. Provisions include

the requesting of court orders to bar advertising networks and payment facilities from conducting business with infringing websites, and search engines from linking to the websites. It also includes court orders requiring Internet service providers to block access to the websites. The law would expand existing criminal laws to include unauthorised streaming of copyrighted content, imposing a maximum penalty of five years in prison. Proponents of the legislation assert that it will protect the intellectual-property market and corresponding industry, jobs, and revenue. They report that it is necessary to bolster enforcement of copyright laws, especially against foreign-owned and operated websites. Opponents argue that the proposed legislation threatens free speech and innovation, and enables law enforcement to block access to entire Internet domains due to infringing content posted on a single blog or webpage. They have raised concerns that SOPA would bypass the "safe harbor" protections from liability presently afforded to websites by the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. Library associations have expressed concerns that the legislation's emphasis on stronger copyright enforcement would expose libraries to prosecution. Other opponents state that requiring search engines to delete a domain name could begin a worldwide arms race of unprecedented censorship of the Web; additionally, they believe that it violates the First Amendment. Opponents of the bill have proposed the Online Protection and Enforcement of Digital Trade Act (OPEN) as an alternative, but the plan to draft the bill is currently postponed.

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### OBAMA ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE TO PIPA & SOPA OPPOSITION:

"While we believe that online piracy by foreign websites is a serious problem that requires a serious legislative response, we will not support legislation that reduces freedom of expression, increases cybersecurity risk, or undermines the dynamic, innovative global Internet. Any effort to combat online piracy must guard against the risk of online censorship of lawful activity and must not inhibit innovation by our dynamic businesses large and small."

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**GRAFFITI MARKUP LANGUAGE** is a universal XML-based open file format designed to store graffiti motion data. The format is designed to maximise readability and ease implementation, even for hobbyist programmers, artists, and graffiti writers. Popular applications currently implementing GML include Graffiti Analysis and EyeWriter. Beyond storing data, a main goal of GML is to spark interest in the importance (and fun) of open data and introduce open-source collaborations to new communities. GML is intended to be a simple bridge between ink and code, promoting

collaborations between graffiti writers and hackers. GML is today's new digital standard for tomorrow's vandals.

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**GOING OFF THE GRID:** Some people will decide to show their consumer disobedience by getting away from the consumption economy. According to Nick Rosen, author of Off The Grid: Inside The Movement For More Space, Less Government, And True Independence In Modern America, this new lifestyle is "real life and a real choice for real people". People who are living off the grid do not tend to fill their lives with the same amount of stuff as the average consumer. Rosen estimates that the average off-grid residence uses about 20% of the energy consumed by a typical American home. Rosen believes that "perhaps the biggest motivation at the moment is a loss of trust in the government and the ability of social networks to look after us." The Internet is now making the off-the-grid lifestyle a real choice and possibility.

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**BITCOINS** are a digital cryptocurrency made up of processed data blocks used for online

and offline purchases. Because Bitcoins are limited and their value is determined by market forces, Bitcoins are also traded like stocks. Relatively new and experimental, Bitcoin is described as "the first decentralised digital currency."

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**BUY NOTHING DAY (BND)** is an international day of protest against consumerism, observed by social activists and concerned citizens. Buy Nothing Day is held the Friday after Thanksgiving in North America, and the last Saturday in November internationally. The event was founded in Vancouver by artist Ted Dave, and subsequently promoted by Canadian magazine Adbusters. Buy Nothing Day has recently been modified by Adbusters and renamed Occupy Xmas, a reference to the Occupy Movement. The principles of Occupy Xmas advocate "something as simple as buying locally, going out and putting money into your local economy, or making your Christmas presents by hand." The union of these ideologies calls for Buy Nothing Day to kick off a season of supporting local economy and family.

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### ARGENTINA'S CRUMPLED SHIRT DAY CREATES SMILES AND GREEN AWARENESS:

Argentineans are intimately familiar with angry protests. Perhaps they're weary of serious rallies, which could explain why Día de la Camisa Arrugada (Crumpled Shirt Day) on December 20, 2012, was such a success. Local NGOs coordinated the inaugural event to help prevent global warming by reducing electrical usage.

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**JUGAAD INNOVATION:** Western corporations can no longer just rely on the old formula that sustained innovation and growth for decades: a mix of top-down strategies, expensive R&D projects, and rigid, highly structured innovation processes. Jugaad Innovation argues that the West must look to places like India, China, and Africa for a new, bottom-up approach to frugal and flexible innovation. Jugaad is a Hindi term that translates as "an improvised solution created from ingenuity and cleverness". Jaideep Prabhu, who coined the term, says that this approach to business innovation could help Western companies access emerging markets, while providing their large, poor, rural populations with simpler, more affordable products. Additionally, it could inspire new products for Western markets. "Emerging markets are a big opportunity for Western brands as we live through the recession," says

Prabhu. "It's important for them to understand that approach. It's also important because many conditions in Western markets are starting to emulate conditions in emerging markets... The West faces an era of austerity and perhaps, in order to operate in the West better, [Western brands] could learn from this more frugal approach to creation." <http://jugaadinnovation.com> Millennials relationship to authority differs from that of previous generations. Millennials weren't raised with hierarchical, top-down parenting. They've grown up with "peerents"; they're used to seeing authority figures as equals. Add to that what it means to be born and live within the swarm-power of social media, and you have a potent mix. Millennials don't think of themselves as outside the system. They believe they are the system. The fact that there's no definitive leadership in New York's Zuccotti Park speaks to this generation's complex understanding of power. Young people in the 1960s had a mandate and a message. The Boomers stood outside the gate and issued their list of demands.

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