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ant@antpearce.com

Is man condemned to exist imprisoned by his own mind and the collective mind of society?

Discuss: through comparing and contrasting the principle ideas proposed by Sigmund Freud for the mental model of human beings with selective works by Egon Schiele, Albert Camus, Franz Kafka and J G Ballard.

Abstract

This paper addresses whether or not human beings are condemned to live their lives imprisoned within their own minds and the external prison they create.

The concept of man, unable to deal with his own 'self', choosing to disconnect from it and imprison it, is explored initially through the work of Sigmund Freud and psychoanalysis. The principles of Freud's model of the human mind, the id, ego and super-ego, are explained. His essay *Civilization and its Discontents* provides a base to establish how the formation of the super-ego, through human fear of loss of love, causes repression of the individual. Shared ideas of Freud and his contemporary, the expressionist artist Egon Schiele are introduced by examining two of Schiele's pieces, *Dead mother* and *Self-portrait of a prisoner*.

The concepts of the existential and absurdist movements are covered through specific works of the philosophical novelists Albert Camus and Franz Kafka. Freud and Schiele's ideas are shown to emerge from these philosophies by examining the novels *The Outsider* and *The Trial* (respectively).

Finally, the works: *Concrete Island* and *High-rise*, by the author J G Ballard are reviewed. His personal experiences of growing up in a Japanese internment during World War II fuelled his imagination and manifests itself in these novels by combining the concepts of the human psyche and the absurd.

Based on these disciplines, it is concluded that man is unable to live without creating barriers within his own mind to block out the reality, which surrounds him. The freedom he has been born with is too much to endure; it frightens him and makes him dizzy. He first builds a prison in his own mind, which later forms into a collective prison within society, to protect himself from the overwhelming truth of his existence, which is after all meaningless.

Keywords

absurdist; cage; existentialist; internment; psychoanalysis; super-ego.

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Introduction

During October 2011 I had a solo show at the New Gallery London. A considerable number of pieces which I had produced over the last 7 months were displayed in one space. This forced me to stand back and reflect on my artworks. What I noticed coming through very strongly was that I had represented the human element of all my work in a repressed and imprisoned condition. This realisation coincided with my growing fixation of the London landscape and my increased awareness that the man-made environment was filled with bars and cages in the form of numerous intimidating gates topped with spikes, barriers, grilled windows and shop fronts with metal shutters. I soon began to see this grid like image of a cage in almost all built structures, it began to manifest itself in everything from pavements, to scaffolding to decorative tiling to name just a few. The artificial man-made environment appeared to incarcerate everything. This fascinated me and so I decided to research the idea of man living within his own prison.

Since the origins of all human behaviours stem from their minds, this paper begins by investigating the theories proposed during the early part of the 20th century by the founder of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud. The implications of Freud's mental model for the individual will be reviewed and considered in a wider context by applying it to the cultural and social human collective.

Whilst Freud was developing psychoanalysis, another Austrian, the expressionist artist Egon Schiele, was exploring the themes of mortality, sexuality and the self. Two of his works will be presented to establish whether there are associations between them and Freud's concepts. Are there common themes or ideas coming through? What differences are there between their interpretations of the self?

Since the early 1900's and moving forward into the 1940's, the existentialist and absurdist movements had become well established. These philosophies share

the belief that philosophical thinking begins with the human subject and therefore seemed appropriate for inclusion within this paper. Selected works of the philosophical novelists Albert Camus and Franz Kafka will be reviewed. A key question that will be considered is: whether patterns emerge between the three disciplines of psychoanalysis, expressionist art, and the existentialist and absurdist philosophies?

Finally, the consequences of imprisonment will be explored through the writings of the author James Graham Ballard (J G Ballard) who as a boy was detained within a Japanese internment during World War II. Key questions that will be considered are: do these early life experiences come through in Ballard's work and how does his view of human psychology compare to those previously discussed?

The idea that the only way human beings can pass through this life is by imprisoning themselves as individuals and as a collective will be analysed throughout.

The psychoanalyst

In the 1920's, Sigmund Freud, one of the most influential and controversial minds of the 20th century suggested a new structural model for the human mind. (BBC History, 2011). He stated in *Civilization and its Discontents* that:

Normally we are sure of nothing so much as a sense of self, of our own ego. The ego appears autonomous, uniform and clearly sets off against everything else. It is psychoanalytic research that first taught us that this was a delusion, that in fact the ego extends inwards, with no clear boundary, into an unconscious psychical entity that we call the id, and for which it serves, so to speak, as a façade. (Freud, 2004, p.3)

The id is an unconscious reservoir of instincts that drives man based on the pleasure principle, instinctual life and a 'wanting' or 'desire' for two goals. (Donnet, 2005a) 'On the one hand it aims at an absence of pain and unpleasurable experiences; on the other at strong feelings of pleasure.' (Freud, 2004, p.16) The ego is formed by the id (and remains connected to it) because of the influences of the external world. It acts as a mask or door for the id to the outside environment and is 'a mental projection of the surface of the body' operating on both conscious and unconscious levels (Mijolla, 2005). The ego filters the demands of the id by the more reserved reality principle, which considers the restrictions imposed by the immediate environment. Freud likens this relationship to a man and his horse: 'Often a rider, if he is not to be parted from his horse, is obliged to guide it where it wants to go. So, in the same way the ego is in the habit of transforming the id's will into action as if it were its own.' Freud (1923 cited in Mijolla, 2005).

Freud suggests that if our sense of 'self' relates to our ego, we are all in effect serving two masters; the id to which we are bound and the external environment which delays or defers instinctive actions via a process of thought. Yet, there is

another master; the super-ego that functions to supervise and censor the ego. The super-ego manifests from a fear of a loss of love and possible punishment from an external authority – the father. It evokes conscience and a sense of guilt as well as aggression towards the external authority. By association, this impenetrable authority becomes incorporated into the self, and readily takes over.

Three dangers and three types of anxiety are correlated with these three masters...moral anxiety (arising from conscience), neurotic anxiety (arising from instincts), and realistic anxiety (arising from the reality principle). Freud (1923 cited in Donnet 2005b).

Freud also raises the notion that ‘...the community too evolves a super-ego and that the development of civilization takes place under its influence.’ (2004, pp.100–101) The origins of this cultural super-ego may arise from great leaders who make harsh ideal demands (ethics), which if not adhered to, results in punishment through a ‘fear of conscience’. However, the primary function of ethics is to remove aggression between human beings and as such tend not to take into account the individuals psychological make-up. For example, ‘Love thy neighbour as thy self’ does not show enough concern for the happiness of the individual’s ego and disregards the instinctual strength of the id. Such a commandment assumes that the ego has absolute control over the id which, as Freud points out ‘...is an error. [...] control of the id cannot be increased beyond certain limits. To demand more is to provoke the individual to rebellion or neurosis, or make him unhappy.’ (2004, p.103)

Based on these theories, the id can be thought of as our true ‘self’. It is what we come into the world with and is driven by basic instincts. Its survival within the external environment is dependent on the creation and employment of the ego which navigates it through life. In doing so, a barrier or form of cage is created by the ego and the id since although the ego operates on both conscious and

unconscious levels, its access to the whole of the id and our true 'self' is constantly repressed. Furthermore, outside restrictions imposed on us by external authorities result in formation of the super-ego who's sadistic treatment of the ego may run so deep, that the relentless punishment at both conscious and subconscious levels causes the ego to become confined to a harsher and increasingly violent prison environment.

In the following sections, Freud's theory of the human mind and the concept of the 'free self' will be explored through expressionist art, absurdist and existentialist philosophies and the novelist J G Ballard.

The expressionist artist

The expressionist artist Egon Schiele, had a preoccupation with the human existence which paralleled that of his contemporary Freud and he rejected traditional aesthetics in preference for artwork that focussed on his own intense feelings for these ideas. Two of Schiele's works; *Dead mother* (Image 1) and *Self portrait of a prisoner* (Image 2) have been chosen to demonstrate expression of the 'self' and the internal prisons that man creates in order to survive.



Image 1

Dead mother 1910

(Mitsch, 2003, p.123)

Dead mother (Image 1) conveys Freud's concepts of the id, ego and super-ego in symbolic form. The id is represented as a fluid, undefined and unknown body of the child. The ego emerges as the head and face, together with the hands. The child's fear of the loss of love from its mother and the formation of the super-ego is depicted as a womb-like prison, which the mother's image has been merged with to form a single entity. The mother's three fingers and head, form the bars of the cage in which the child has been trapped. She looks down upon the child, taking on the role of the all-seeing omnipresent super-ego. The position of the head and left hand of the child suggests that it is trying to escape the overwhelming 'consciousness of guilt' being inflicted upon it, with the dark image of the blanket symbolising the resulting anxiety. In essence, the subject has been caged by the initial fear of the loss of love from the mother, resulting in the formation of an imprisoned mind, in which the man will remain.

Several of Schiele's works explore human sexuality and many of his pieces were considered pornographic (Jones, 2003). Society's disapproval of this material, led to his arrest on April 13 1912, for the suspicion of abducting a young girl who frequented his studio. Although this charge was unfounded, he spent a total of twenty-four days in prison and while on remand, he produced several works including *Self-portrait as a prisoner* (Image2). (Mitsch, 2003)



Image 2

Self-portrait as a prisoner 1912

(Mitsch, 2003, p.79)

This self-portrait (Image 2) shows similarities to the *Dead mother* and visually brings to life the ideas of the three agencies: the id, ego and super-ego. The man's body, Schiele's, is represented as an abstract free form that is almost fluid (the id). From this emerges his head and face, with all features clearly defined (the ego and mask to the external world). The abstract form, likened to a womb (the super-ego) engulfs and contorts the figure. The facial expression is one of pain and suffering with the head twisted and bent over, depicting the restriction of the ego. Four strong vertical lines crossing the centre of the body add to the effigy of a man trapped. Only part of the left hand has broken free of this cage but even this is twisted and distorted.

A key difference between Schiele's and Freud's interpretation of the self is Schiele's use of the womb to depict the cage, alluring to the love of the mother not the authority and fear of the father. However if we re-examine Freud's theory of the formation of the super-ego, we see that it is initiated by a fear of loss of love. Since what a child desires most in the world is its mother's love, it seems somewhat appropriate that the cage be represented as a womb, particularly since the womb was the original prison defined by the mother's body before birth.

The philosophical novelist

The concept that humans seem unable to exist without being imprisoned by their own minds or by the collective mind of society will be explored through the literary works of the absurdist and existential philosophical writers Albert Camus and Franz Kafka. Specific reference will be made to the novels: *The Outsider* (Camus, 2000) and *The Trial* (Kafka, 2000).

The notion of the absurd arises from the tension between the idea that the world is meaningless and yet human beings aspire to find a meaning. Camus (2005, pp.19–20) writes in *The Myth of Sisyphus*:

...blind reason, may well claim that all is clear. [...], I know that is false. [...]
what is absurd is the confrontation of the irrational and the wild longing for
clarity whose call echoes in the human heart. The absurd depends as much
on man as on the world. For the moment, it is all that links them together. It
binds them one to the other as only hatred can weld two creatures together.
This is all I can discern clearly in this measureless universe where my
adventure takes place.

Existentialism accepts the premise that there is no world of meaning waiting for
us and that it is merely created by man. As Sartre explains in his lecture
Existentialism is a humanism ‘...man first of all exists, encounters himself, surges
up in the world – and defines himself afterwards’ (Sartre, 2005).

Sartre (In our time, 2001) famously said, ‘man is condemned to be free’, but if
man has to create a world of meaning or define himself, this is akin to having to
create his own prison, his own cage, to embrace his existence? Absurdist and
existentialist philosophies thus demonstrate that man is unable to simply exist,
true to himself and free.

The Outsider (Camus, 2000) tells the story of a law abiding French man
Meursault, who has not resorted to imprisoning himself to exist. Instead his
character exhibits a positive id to ego relationship and he is portrayed as free
flowing, the absurd anti-hero.

The novel begins with the death of Meursault’s mother. His reaction to her death
is impassive: ‘I realised [...] that mother was now buried, that I was going to go
back to work and that after all, nothing had changed.’ (Camus, 2000, p. 28) The
day after her funeral he continues to live his happy and carefree life. He goes to
the beach, swims in the sea, meets his girlfriend Marie, takes her to the cinema
and sleeps with her.

The turning point in the story occurs one Sunday at a beach gathering, when his
friend Raymond has an altercation with some Arabs. Raymond is about to shoot

one of them when Meursault stops him, explaining that he cannot shoot if the Arab has not drawn his knife. He takes Raymond's gun and the Arabs retreat. A short time after this, Meursault returns alone to the same place where the argument had occurred. He is confronted by an Arab who draws a knife. Meursault responds by firing the gun and realising what he has done he pauses and calmly fires four more shots into the Arab's body. The description of the shooting: 'The trigger gave...' (Camus, 2000, p.60) has certain calmness to it, as if it happened almost by accident.

The second part of the novel begins with Meursault meeting his lawyer and the magistrate. Both seem shocked and uncomfortable by his apparent honesty and absence of guilt or remorse for the murder he has committed. The lawyer also comments on Meursault's lack of emotion on the day of his mother's funeral:

...he [the lawyer] asked me [Meursault] if he could say that I'd controlled my natural feelings that day. I said 'No, because it's not true.' He looked at me in a peculiar way, as if he found me slightly disgusting. (Camus, 2000, p.65)

Similarly, the magistrate shows signs of distress when Meursault openly rejects belief in God:

...he [the magistrate] interrupted me [Meursault] and pleaded with me...asking me if I believed in God. I said no. [...] He told me that was impossible, that all men believe in God [...] if he should ever doubt it, his life would become meaningless... (Camus, 2000, p.68)

It becomes clear that it is not simply the murder for which Meursault is being tried but the inner freedom that he possesses and which society seems unable to accept. Meursault's sense of truth exposes their lives for what they are, meaningless. They become aware of the prisons they create for themselves and without which they are unable to exist. Society is compelled to find him guilty, not so much for the murder but because he is truly free. The cultural super-ego

reacts by physically imprisoning him; punishing him by taking away his so called worldly freedom and sentencing him by death.

Meursault accepts life as a prisoner but maintains an air of freedom about him:

I often thought in those days that even if I had been made to live in a tree trunk, with nothing to do but look up at a bit of sky overhead, I'd gradually have got used to it. I'd have looked forward to seeing birds fly past or clouds run together...it was an idea of mother's...that you ended up getting used to everything. (Camus, 2000, p.75)

On the day of Meursault's execution, a Chaplain visits him against his wishes in an attempt to get him to admit his guilt and renounce his sin (as he puts it) to God. The Chaplain claims all men turn to God, that they all see His face in the prison walls. Meursault says he has seen a face in the walls, 'But that face was the colour of the sun and burning with desire: it was Marie's face.' (Camus, 2000, p.114)

The novel ends with Meursault lying on his bunk looking up at the night sky. He opens himself up to the '...benign indifference of the world.' Finding it much like himself, bound to it, he realises he had been happy and was still happy'. (Camus, 2000, p.117) The id is very much alive in Meursault, and there is no indication of any sadistic super-ego taking over. He remains true to himself and has not caged his mind.

Kafka's novel *The Trial* (Kafka, 2000) addresses the concepts of man's imprisonment, both externally and internally, through complex, layered and symbolic text. The novel begins with Joseph K. who, on awakening on the morning of his thirtieth birthday, is informed that he is under arrest. Akin to the character Meursault in *The Outsider* (Camus, 2000), K is put on trial, found guilty and executed. The series of events that lead up to his execution are however quite different, since neither K (nor the reader) is told of the charge or which authority has apprehended him. The warden merely states that 'Our

authorities...do not go in search of guilt in the population but are, as it says in the law, drawn to guilt... That is the law.' (Kafka, 2000, p.5) Furthermore, K is not physically imprisoned but instead becomes entrapped within a wretched, suffocating world of the omnipresent 'law', a labyrinth of confusion with endless options but no clear path and where men view him as condemned.

At times K is portrayed as a child like character, as if his id has overpowered the ego. For example, he impulsively bursts into a theatrical speech during his first examination, mocking the court and reacting without thought to the situation he has found himself in. On another occasion he demands, like an impatient child to be shown out of the court by the usher, "No, no," said K. "I won't wait, and you must come with me now" (Kafka, 2000 p.52). K's childish outbursts might therefore be interpreted as the attempts of the id to suppress the super-ego and maintain control of the 'self'.

K appears determined to surpass 'the law', but there are clear indications that he does feel the guilt imposed upon him. For instance, whilst looking for the place where his first examination was to take place, he recalls the warden's remark on the day of his arrest, '...that the law court is drawn to guilt' and, as if he unconsciously accepts his guilt, he assumes his random choice of direction must be leading him to the courtroom (Kafka, 2000 p.28) Although still in denial, by the end of the text his 'consciousness of guilt' has taken hold, emerging through fear and anxiety. K comments on his fear of not daring to refuse any out of office assignments asked of him from the bank because, '...if his fear had even the slightest foundation, declining an assignment would be an avowal of his anxiety.' (Kafka, 2000 p.154)

By the closing scenes, K's internal guilt and self-examination has become deep rooted. He acknowledges that resistance is futile, and permits two gentlemen in black to lead him through the streets for execution. On reflection he concludes:

I always wanted to grab at life, and not with the best intentions either. That was not right; and am I to show now that not even these proceedings...could teach me anything? Am I to depart as an utterly stupid man? Are they going to say when I have gone, that I wanted to end the case at the beginning and now, at the end, I want it to begin again? (Kafka, 2000, p.176)

This passage suggests that societies' cultural super-ego has overpowered K and the internal super-ego has taken hold, causing him to doubt himself. He gives up the fight and appears to wish he had more willingly succumbed to the super-ego but it is too late. However, the shadow of his 'self' reappears when he is about to be executed and on seeing a figure at a window, he has a sudden surge of hope that maybe this man is a friend or judge that he had not yet seen and who will free him. At this moment the execution proceeds and a knife is driven through his heart. K's final words are, 'Like a dog!' (Kafka, 2000, p.178) He has been totally overpowered and punished by 'the law'.

Throughout the novel, Kafka compels the reader to switch between K and the external world, K and his own mind and the other characters internal worlds. In doing so, he successfully portrays the idea that man is indeed imprisoned if not by the ideals of society then by his own mind. For example, while at work, K hears sighs coming from a door that he has never opened but had always assumed concealed an old lumber-room. To abate his curiosity, he tears the door open and to his surprise discovers the two wardens who had arrested him are about to be flogged. He is told that they are to be punished because of a complaint he raised to the magistrate regarding their behaviour. He tries to bribe the vindicator to pardon the men but this fails. When one of the warden's screams out in pain K's concerns for him become transformed into an anxiety that the outcry will draw the attention of his colleagues and he shuts the door, leaving the men to be punished. The next evening he goes back to the lumber-room expecting to find it empty. To his horror the men are again being punished.

Unable to cope with the situation, he instructs some clerks to clear the room (Kafka, 2000 pp.66–71).

The old lumber-room provides a metaphor for K's unconscious mind and depicts how his own unconscious guilt is punishing him. Struggling with this guilt, he represses his instincts and thoughts by ordering the room to be cleared. The power of the cultural super-ego to act upon many 'selves' is also demonstrated by the fact that the wardens' egos are punished for their actions on the morning of K's arrest.

This event clearly shows how man is unable to escape entrapment. He either creates or imposes restrictions, a cage, on the instinctual 'self' in an attempt to surpass the super-ego or, if he conforms, in this case to the law, the resultant aggression and anxiety distorts the 'self' and thus still warrants punishment.

The novelist (through experience)

Finally, the concept of 'free self' will be explored through two novels by J G Ballard: *Concrete Island* (2011a) and *High-Rise* (2011b). Ballard acknowledges that he considers the Japanese internment where he grew up to be his real home, to which he always referred to in his imagination (Thompson, 1991) and that his interest in human psychological fulfilment and repressed memories of the break down in social order he experienced come through in both these novels '...almost like a ghost, an invisible guest at a party...' (BBC, 1994, 6 mins.)

Concrete Island (2011a) tells the story of Robert Maitland, a 35-year-old architect, who has a blowout and crashes his Jaguar into the wasteland at the foot of a motorway embankment. Injured, he is unable to leave the wasteland, which he calls 'the island'. Maitland quickly becomes driven by his basic need for water, food and shelter but also focuses his attentions on devising an escape plan. However, as time goes by, he begins to break away from the cage of his old life and accept his new imprisoned existence. At one point he speaks aloud like '...a priest officiating at the eucharist of his own body. "I am the island."' (Ballard, 2011a, p.71)

Later, when he is attacked by a mentally defective tramp Proctor, he discovers that there is yet another resident of the island, a young woman called Jane, who breaks off the attack and nurses Maitland's wounds. When Maitland finds himself under the control of these two individuals, he realises that he must '...dominate the senile tramp and wayward young woman' (Ballard, 2011a, p.139) if he is to break free from the prison they are imposing on him. He does this by urinating in the tramp's face and having sex with Jane.

As time passes, his desire to leave the island ceases. He explains to Jane, '...I don't particularly want to get away from here.' (Ballard, 2011a, p.136) It is as if he deliberately imprisoned himself on the island to escape from his old 'self'.

When the tramp dies and Jane informs Maitland that she will be leaving for good, although she offers to get help and facilitate his rescue, he makes her promise that she will tell no one where he is. Saying 'I'll leave the island, but I'll do it in my own time.' (Ballard, 2011a, p.174)

The novel ends with Maitland alone thinking to himself, 'When he had eaten it would be time to rest, and to plan his escape.' (Ballard, 2011a, p.176) It becomes clear that he has no intention of ever leaving the island. This prison is his true home. He has found his salvation.

High-Rise (Ballard, 2011b) refers more directly to Freud's warnings that if society demands too much of a human being, this will lead to revolt, neurosis or misery. The new self-contained and orderly high-rise apartment block described in the novel provides a metaphor for 'perfect' social order. However, soon the strain of this utopia develops into alcohol-fuelled violence and a 'war' erupts between the lower, middle and upper level residence. Ballard's memories of real war come alive – where no one knows which side he/she is on and where there are no real enemies. (BBC, 1994)

Despite the conflict, the residence are psychologically compelled to remain living there, finding relief from the initial order by '...working off the most extraordinary backlog of infantile aggressions.' (Ballard, 2011b, p. 109) They disassociate themselves from the outside world, and as one character (Talbot) describes:

The model here seems to be less the noble savage than our un-innocent post-Freudian selves, outraged by all that over-indulgent toilet training, dedicated breast feeding and parental affection...' (Ballard, 2011b, p.109)

Another character (Wilder) digresses, refusing to speak '...as if words introduced the wrong set of meaning to everything.' (Ballard, 2011b, p.130) thereby touching on elements of the absurd.

Within a short time, the once immaculate high-rise is reduced to mayhem and comparisons to the scene where Ballard returns to his once lavish house to find it in disarray, in the semi-autobiographical film *Empire of the Sun* (Spielberg, 2006, 31–33 mins), are evident. By the end of the book, an alternative kind of social order has emerged whereby individuals' band together to form small groups and from the chaos a new kind of prison is constructed.

Conclusion

The materials reviewed in this paper support the concept that human beings are unable to exist without placing themselves within a cage or prison. This seems to emerge initially through our individual psyche and is then projected into society.

Examining the works of Freud, one has to question what becomes of the 'self' once the internal authority has been established? Not acting on our wants or desires makes no difference, as we are unable to hide anything, not even our thoughts, from the all knowing, all present super-ego and, although the instinctive desires persist, 'the freedom of the self' must surely become constrained by the consciousness of guilt and unconscious need for punishment.

We may enter the world helpless and free but as we become aware of this freedom and experience it, we are overcome by it. It fills us with fear and anxiety, which the existentialists describe as nausea, vertigo and dizziness. (Radio 4, 2001) It would appear the only way man can survive is to detach further and further from his true 'self' by imposing layer after layer of caging. The cage he constructs is necessary to support him, to enable him to move through this meaningless world much as a lame man relies on a crutch to stop him from falling.

One can only presume that once established within our collective psyche, the image of the cage then seeps out through our unconscious, materialising itself in the man-made environment. The incessant gates and bars manifest as a physical

prison which somehow goes unnoticed as we go about our daily lives perhaps providing the misconception that we are safe and ‘...that all is well’ (Camus, 2005 p.118).

Nevertheless, should we not take heed of the lessons learned from psychoanalysis, philosophy and experience? To construct prisons which are too secure will inevitably constrain the individual beyond their limits, so that they feel chained, unrest, and without a sense of identity. Surely to cage ‘the id’ can only lead to revolt through violence, neurosis or misery.

If man is unable to be truly free then what options are available to him to obtain momentary freedom? For some, suicide offers the only solution, although this does not seem to address the problem but rather avoid it. Intoxication is commonplace in today’s society but although it may offer some relief this is not without risk of potential addiction and enslavement. Art, whether visual, through acting, the written word or music maybe a solution?

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