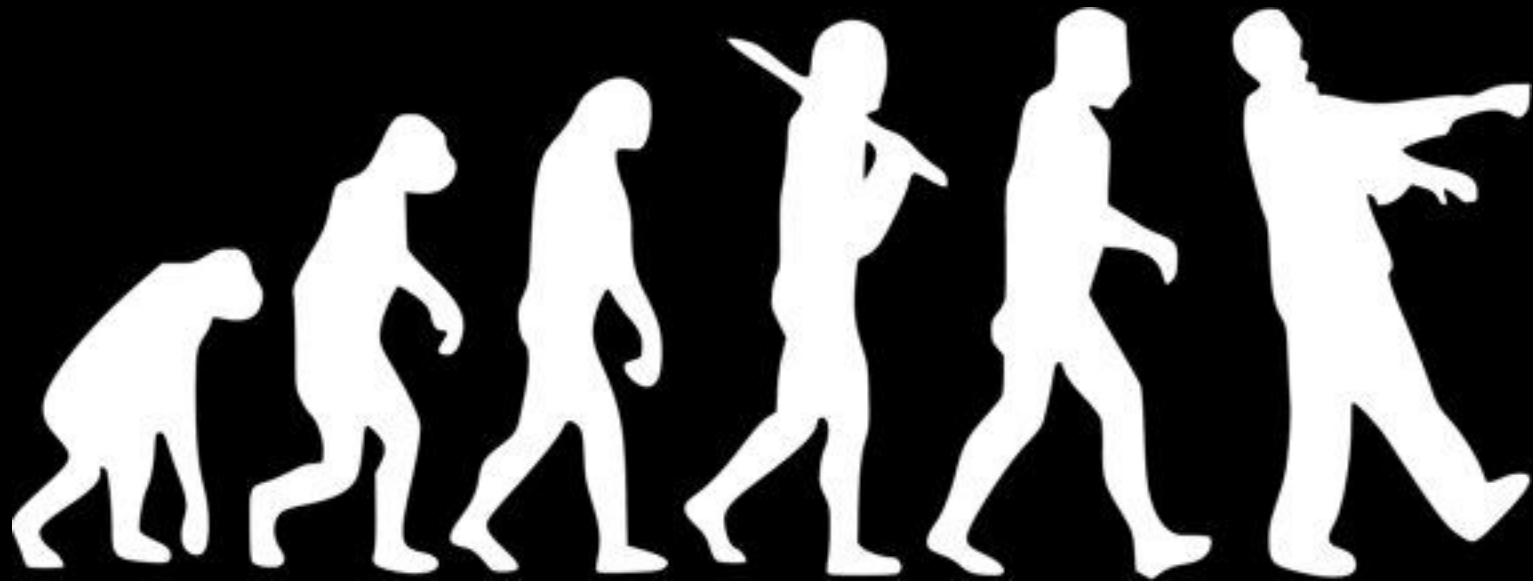


# Distorted Humans: Selfies and Zombies

- Genevieve Gillespie
- Temple University



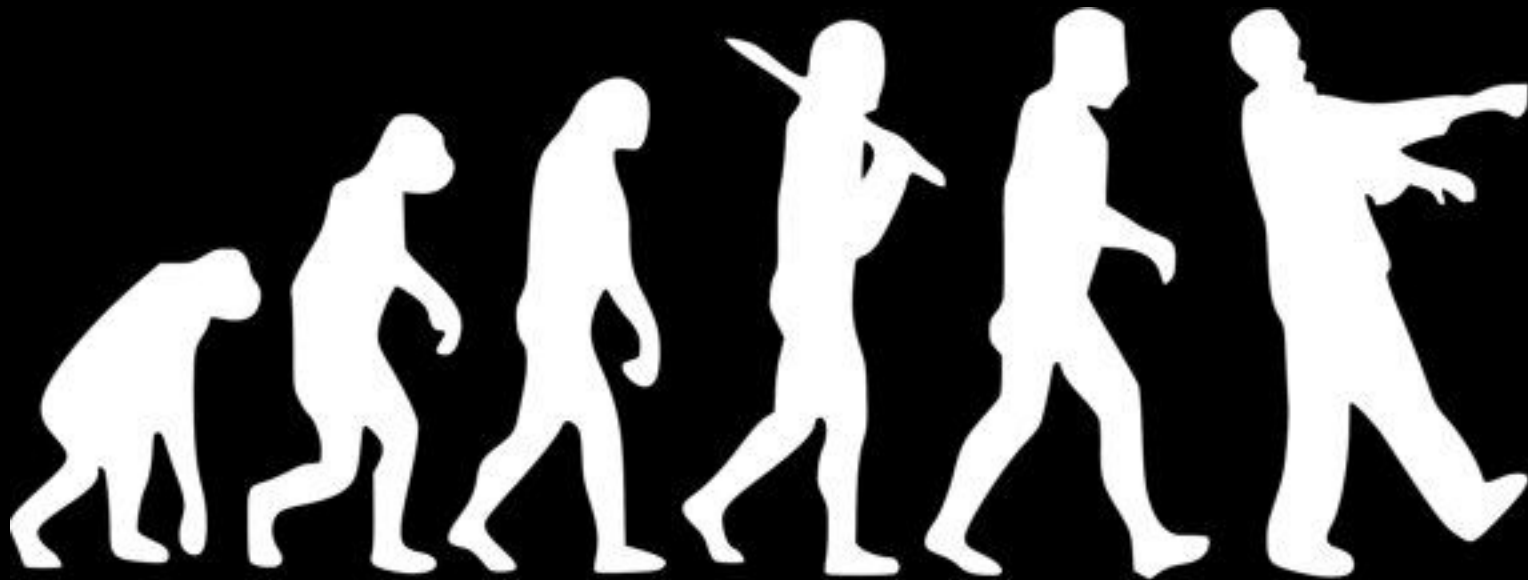
# Analysis of Zombie as “Other”



leaves no consideration for... trajectory of “self” into “Other”

# Zombies are...

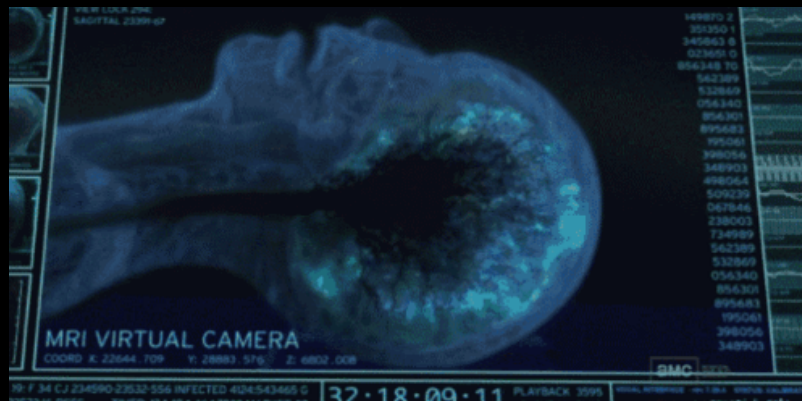
- Transformative
- Predictive
- Reflective



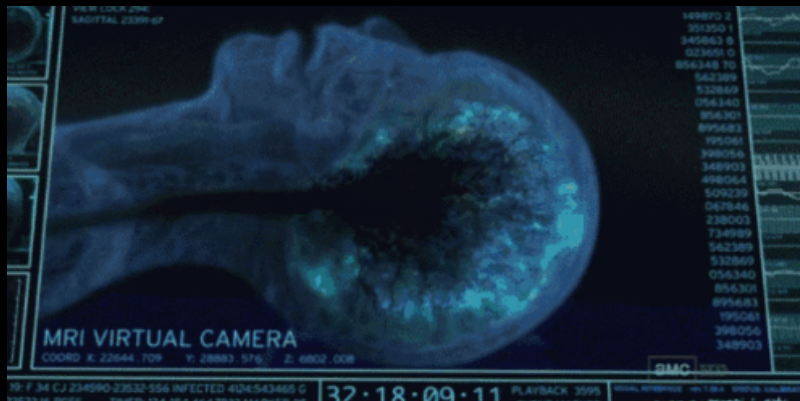
# Nature of the Zombie



- *The Walking Dead*
- Season 1, Final episode



- Red = reanimated brain

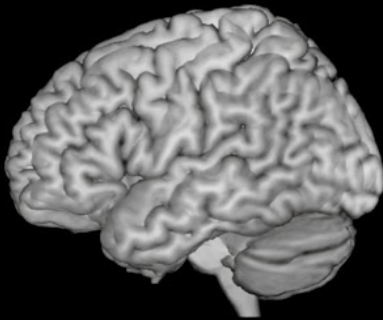


# Nature of the Zombie

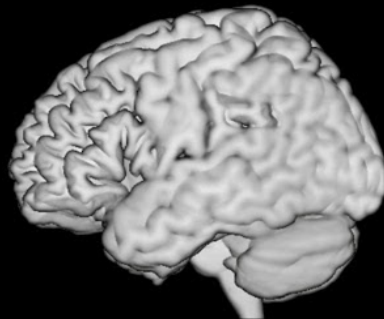
## THE LIVING DEAD BRAIN

USING NEUROSCIENCE TO UNDERSTAND THE ZOMBIE BRAIN

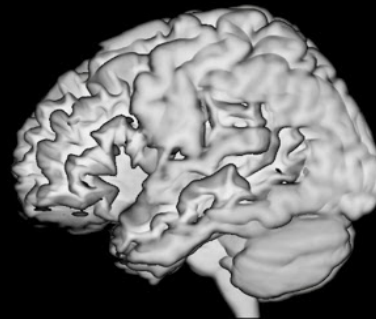
Human



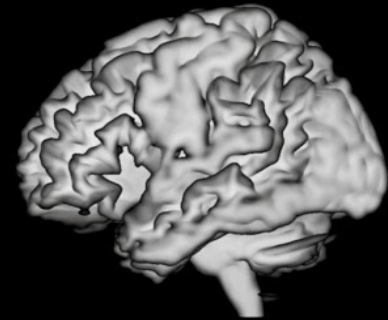
Early Infection



Fast Zombie



Slow Zombie



Zombie Research Society

# Nature of the Zombie

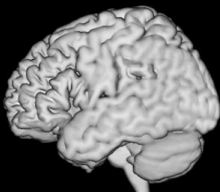
## THE LIVING DEAD BRAIN

USING NEUROSCIENCE TO UNDERSTAND THE ZOMBIE BRAIN

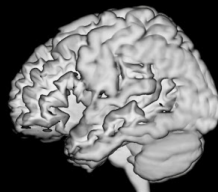
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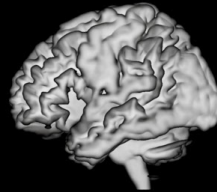
Early Infection



Fast Zombie



Slow Zombie





# Nature of the Zombie 2.0

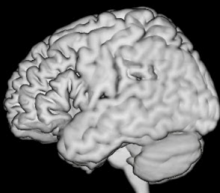
## THE LIVING DEAD BRAIN

USING NEUROSCIENCE TO UNDERSTAND THE ZOMBIE BRAIN

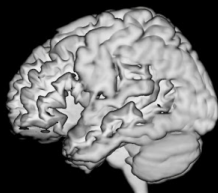
Human



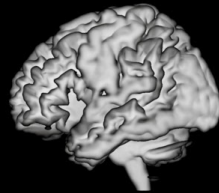
Early Infection



Fast Zombie



Slow Zombie





# Nature of the Zombie

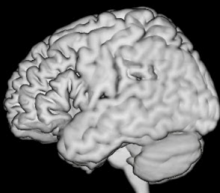
## THE LIVING DEAD BRAIN

USING NEUROSCIENCE TO UNDERSTAND THE ZOMBIE BRAIN

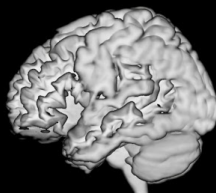
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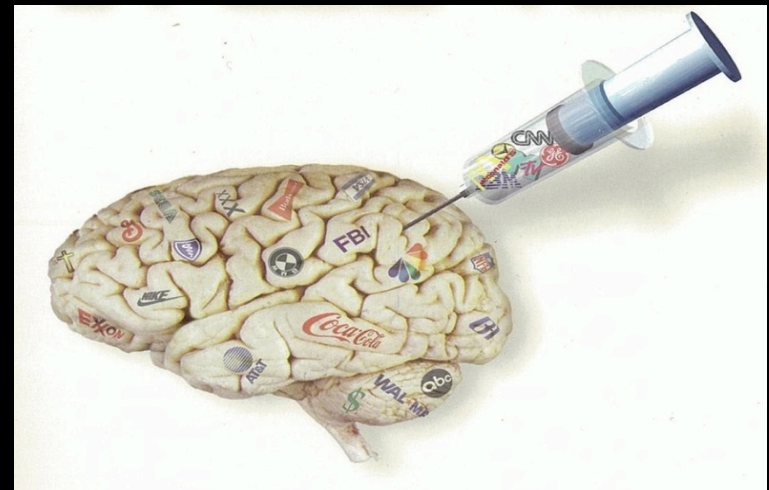
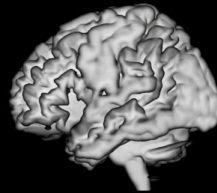
Early Infection



Fast Zombie



Slow Zombie



**Genetic** Virus of the Mind

# Nature of the Zombie

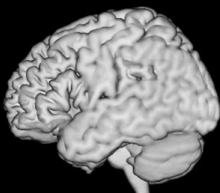
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USING NEUROSCIENCE TO UNDERSTAND THE ZOMBIE BRAIN

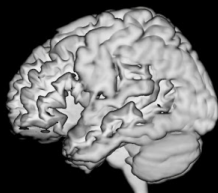
Human



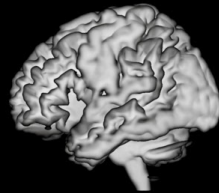
Early Infection



Fast Zombie



Slow Zombie

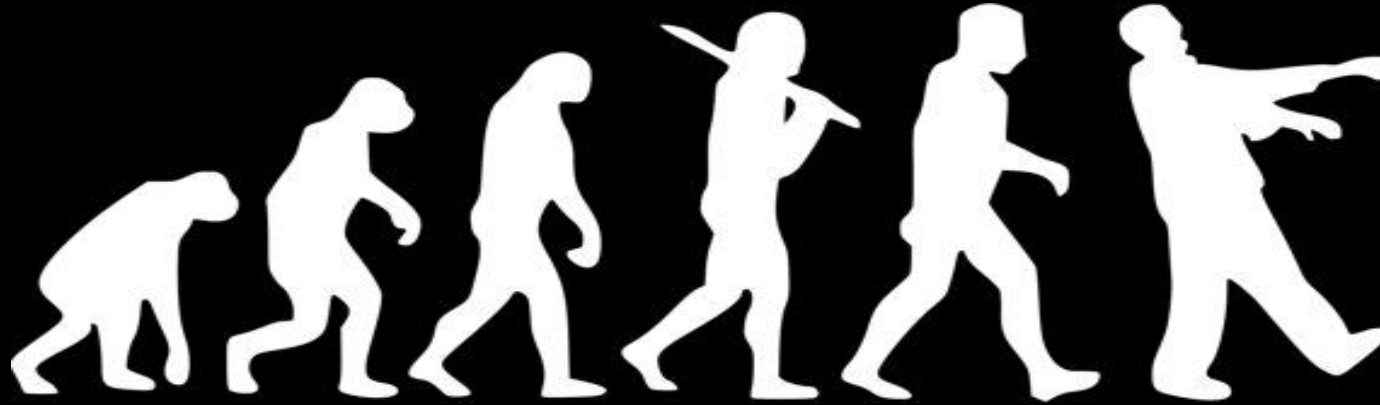


**Genetic** Virus of the Mind

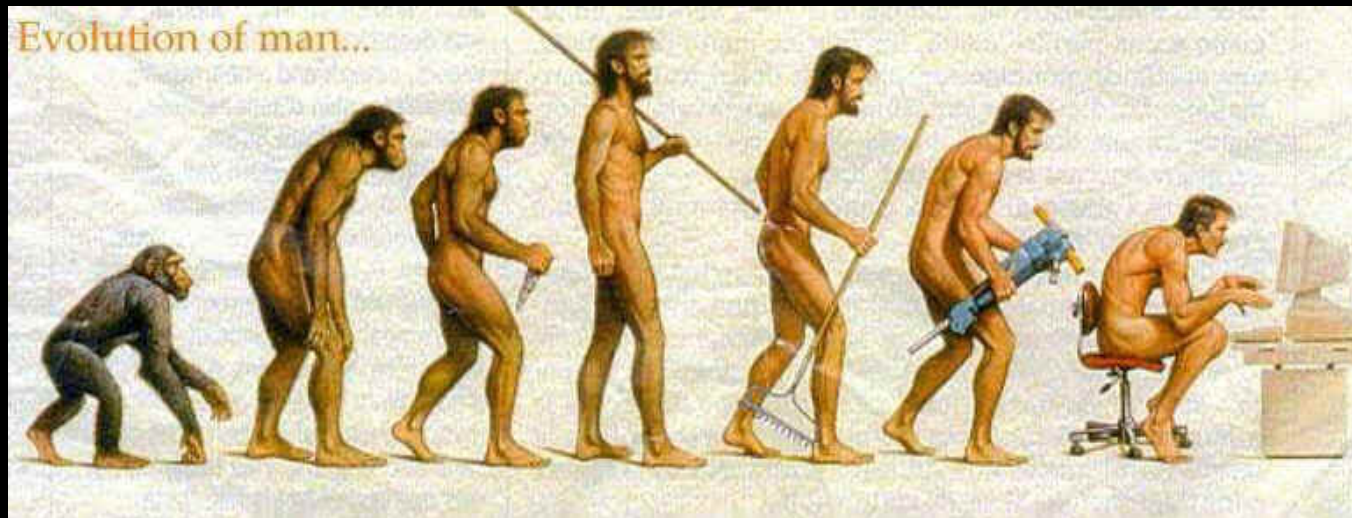
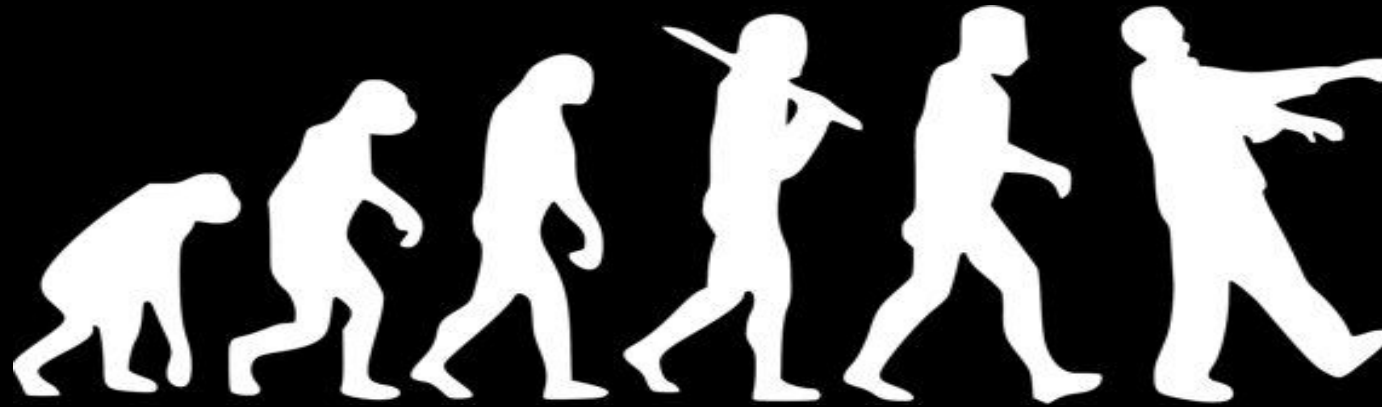


**Memetic** Virus of the Mind

# Two Parallel Trajectories



# Two Parallel Trajectories



- Film and TV programs that illustrate...
  - Relationship between zombie narratives and virtual reality narratives
  - Relationship between zombie narratives and selfies





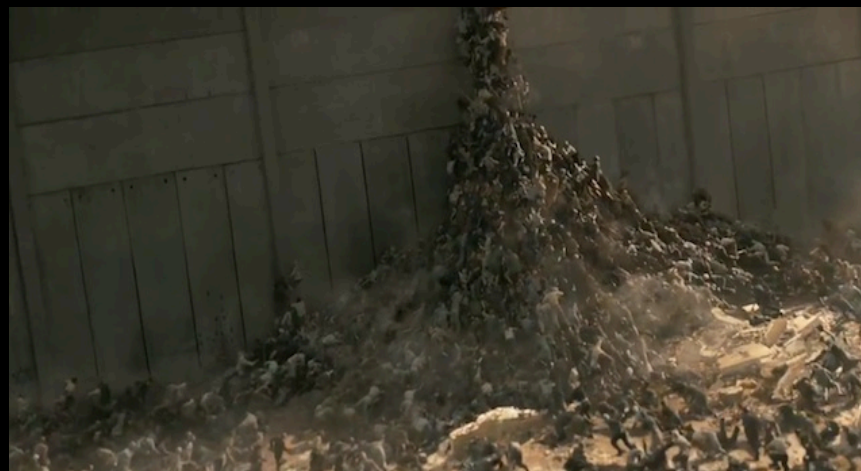
*Dawn of the Dead*



*The Walking Dead*



*Warm Bodies*



*World War Z*



*The Matrix*



*eXistenz*



*Inception*



*Vanilla Sky*



## Zombies and Virtual Reality Parallels

	<i>Dawn of the Dead</i>	<i>The Walking Dead</i>	<i>Vanilla Sky</i>	<i>Inception</i>
<b>VIRTUAL REALITY</b>				
<b>ZOMBIE-NESS</b>				
<b>SELF-NESS</b>				
<b>NATURE VS. CIVILIZATION</b>				
<b>DISEMBODIMENT</b>				

## Zombies and Virtual Reality Parallels

	<i>Dawn of the Dead</i>	<i>The Walking Dead</i>	<i>Vanilla Sky</i>	<i>Inception</i>
<b>VIRTUAL REALITY</b>				
<b>ZOMBIE-NESS</b>	Close to being something without actually being it.			
<b>SELF-NESS</b>	Self-aware humans start behaving as zombies, blurring distinction.			
<b>NATURE VS. CIVILIZATION</b>	Zombies appear in the quintessential antithesis of nature – mall.			
<b>DISEMBODIMENT</b>	Body is living but brain is dead.			

## Zombies and Virtual Reality Parallels

	<i>Dawn of the Dead</i>	<i>The Walking Dead</i>	<i>Vanilla Sky</i>	<i>Inception</i>
<b>VIRTUAL REALITY</b>				
<b>ZOMBIE-NESS</b>	Close to being something without actually being it.	Close to being something without actually being it.		
<b>SELF-NESS</b>	Self-aware humans start behaving as zombies, blurring distinction.	Regaining identity and individualism by moving away from high-tech city centers.		
<b>NATURE VS. CIVILIZATION</b>	Zombies appear in the quintessential antithesis of nature – mall.	Nature as the benevolent resource. Nature as the destination.		
<b>DISEMBODIMENT</b>	Body is living but brain is dead.	Body is living but brain is dead.		

## Zombies and Virtual Reality Parallels

	<i>Dawn of the Dead</i>	<i>The Walking Dead</i>	<i>Vanilla Sky</i>	<i>Inception</i>
<b>VIRTUAL REALITY</b>			Most of life lived after death in virtual reality.	
<b>ZOMBIE-NESS</b>	Close to being something without actually being it.	Close to being something without actually being it.	Inauthentic life lived after death. Appearing alive but not actually being alive.	
<b>SELF-NESS</b>	Self-aware humans start behaving as zombies, blurring distinction.	Regaining identity and individualism by moving away from high-tech city centers.	Finding fake personal trajectory through virtual reality. Hyperreal existence.	
<b>NATURE VS. CIVILIZATION</b>	Zombies appear in the quintessential antithesis of nature – mall.	Nature as the benevolent resource. Nature as the destination.	Tom Cruize chooses natural death over virtual paradise.	
<b>DISEMBODIMENT</b>	Body is living but brain is dead.	Body is living but brain is dead.	Brain is living but body is dead.	

## Zombies and Virtual Reality Parallels

	<i>Dawn of the Dead</i>	<i>The Walking Dead</i>	<i>Vanilla Sky</i>	<i>Inception</i>
<b>VIRTUAL REALITY</b>			Most of life lived after death in virtual reality.	Those who live between real life and virtual dream spaces start confusing the two.
<b>ZOMBIE-NESS</b>	Close to being something without actually being it.	Close to being something without actually being it.	Inauthentic life lived after death. Appearing alive but not actually being alive.	Virtual people attack with blank stares.  Mol is dead, but replicated in dream spaces.
<b>SELF-NESS</b>	Self-aware humans start behaving as zombies, blurring distinction.	Regaining identity and individualism by moving away from high-tech city centers.	Finding fake personal trajectory through virtual reality. Hyperreal existence.	<b>Characters:</b> Losing selfness, “a shadow of a human being.”  <b>Extras:</b> Inauthentic human prototypes setting behavioral status quo.
<b>NATURE VS. CIVILIZATION</b>	Zombies appear in the quintessential antithesis of nature – mall.	Nature as the benevolent resource. Nature as the destination.	Tom Cruise chooses natural death over virtual paradise.	Nature is desolate in virtual spaces and fertile in real spaces.
<b>DISEMBODIMENT</b>	Body is living but brain is dead.	Body is living but brain is dead.	Brain is living but body is dead.	Brain is living but body is dead.

If our technologies reflect and shape society and are extensions of the biological and psychological self ...

... then why do we equate them with zombie-ness?

When a new technology strikes a society, the most natural reaction is to clutch at the immediately preceding period for familiar and comforting images [...]"

-Marshall McLuhan, *War in the Global Village*



Return to nature – familiar and comforting images.



Return to nature – familiar and comforting images.



“New technology disturbs the image, both private and corporate, in any society, so much so that fear and anxiety ensue and a new quest for identity has to begin. We are more frantic to recover and put together the pieces of the shattered image than any past society whatever. It is this impulse that motivates the orgy of rear-view mirrorism [...] When a new technology strikes a society, the most natural reaction is to clutch at the immediately preceding period for familiar and comforting images [...]”

-Marshall McLuhan, *War in the Global Village*

## Zombies and Virtual Reality Parallels

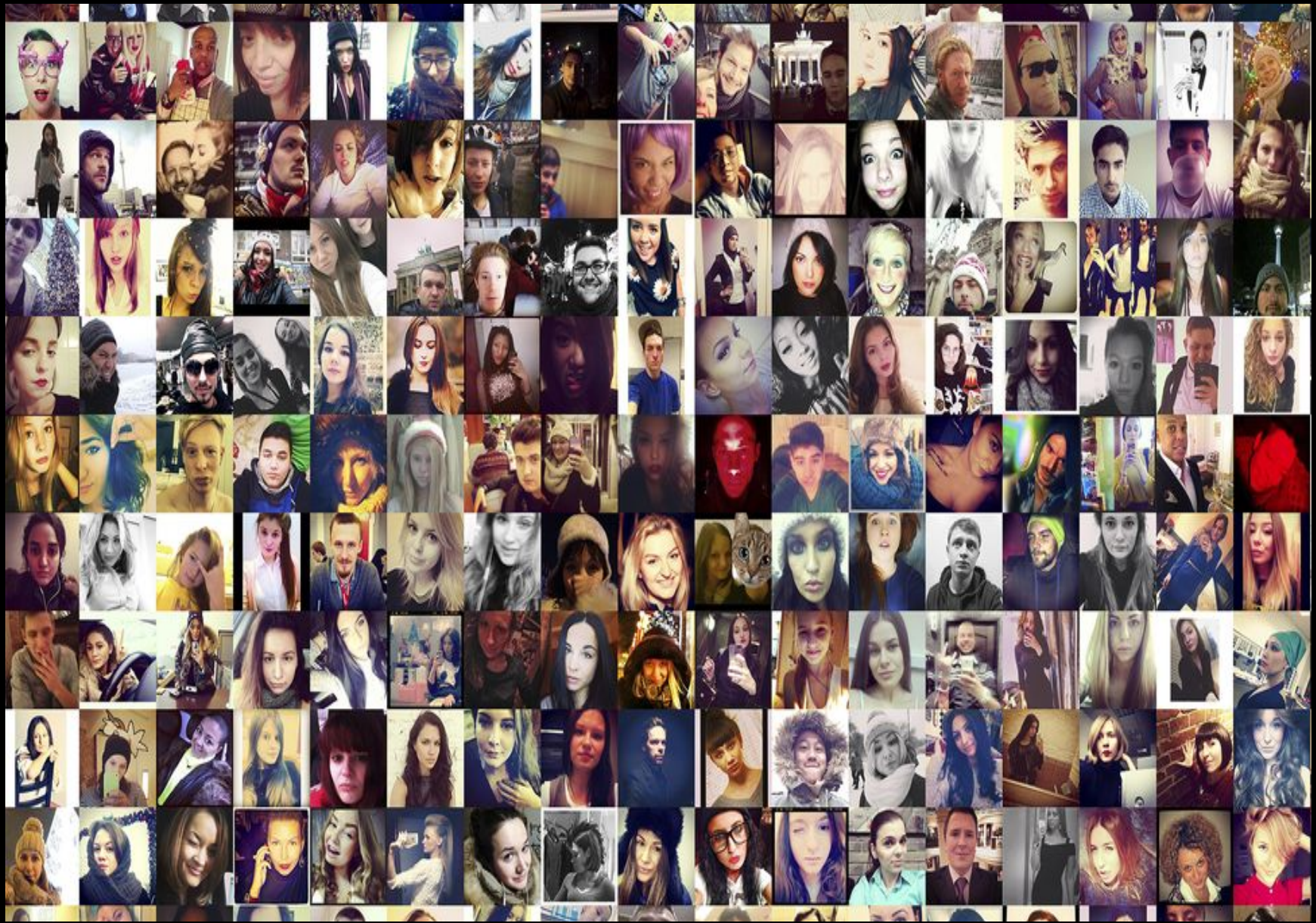
	<i>Dawn of the Dead</i>	<i>The Walking Dead</i>	<i>Vanilla Sky</i>	<i>Inception</i>
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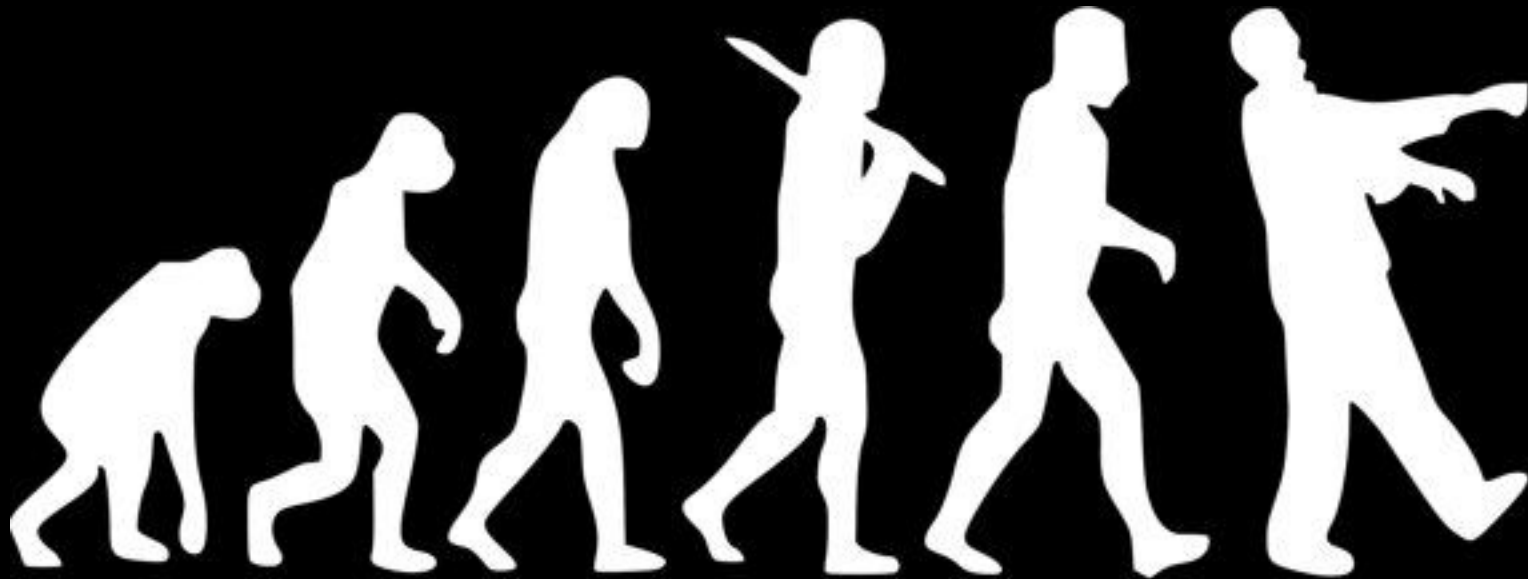






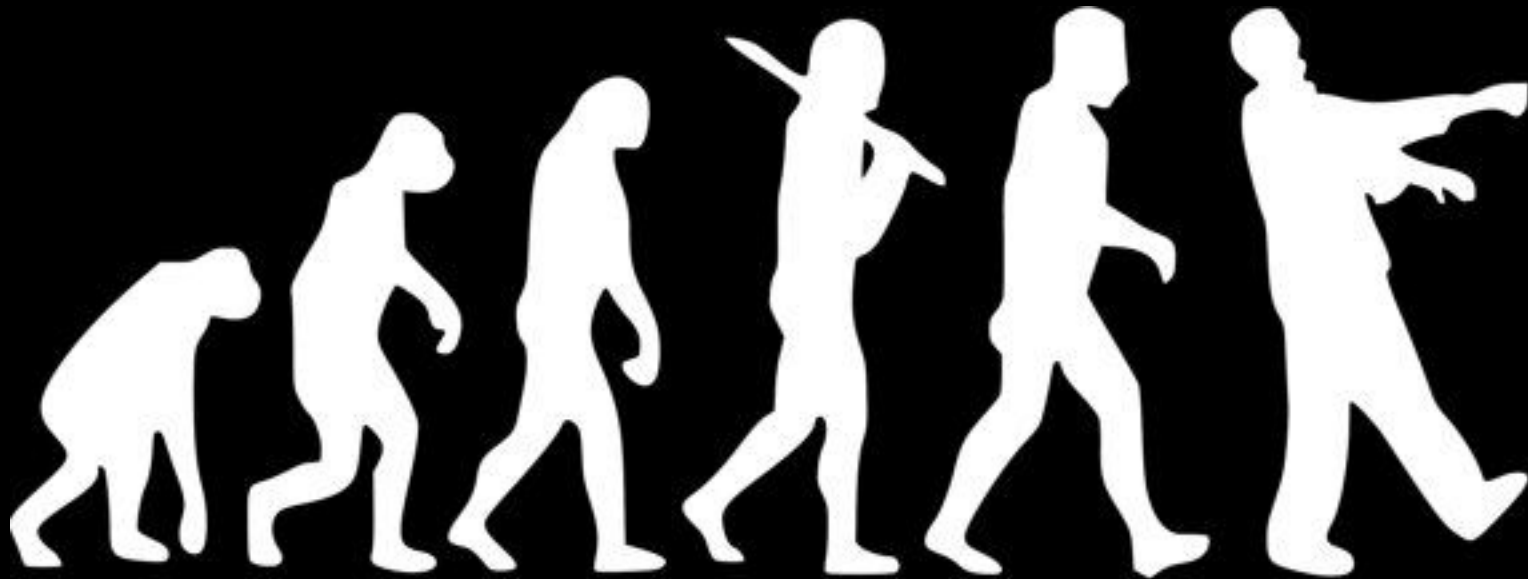
# Zombies are...

- Transformative
- Predictive
- Reflective



# Zombies are...

- Transformative
- Predictive
- Reflective



Selfies **are** the Zombies

# Selfies **are** the Zombies

- Distortion/  
disembodiment of  
Zombie
- Distortion/  
disembodiment of  
Selfie

# Selfies **are** the Zombies

- Distortion/  
disembodiment of  
Zombie
- Using information  
technologies...
- Distortion/  
disembodiment of  
Selfie
- For non-intelligent,  
brain-dead self  
replication



# Selfies **are** the Zombies

- Distortion/  
disembodiment of  
Zombie
- Using information  
technologies...
- Zombie has no identity
- Distortion/  
disembodiment of  
Selfie
- For non-intelligent,  
brain-dead self  
replication
- Selfies attempt to  
reestablish lost identity

