



Hi there,

It feels like things are getting worse. Do you feel it too? Maybe it's all the ads for cryptocurrency. Maybe it's our democracy that is well on its way to crumbling. But, maybe it's grocery store self-checkouts.

One day we all woke up and got a watered-down training to be both cashier and bagger at the local Safeway/Publix/Shop Rite under the guise of "speed" and "efficiency," when it was really an excuse for the store not to hire more employees. Did we not question it? Did no one fight back? Some have even told me they prefer this check out method because they like "not having to deal with another human interaction," to which I say: what the fuck.

I don't want to weigh my onions and avocados and then bag them myself. I don't want yet another machine barking commands at me while I am running an errand; I have an office job. And I definitely don't want, nor do I understand, the invariable consequence of me scanning a cereal box wrong and an employee coming over to then (!!!) ring the item up for me. It's just bad design.

As I said on Twitter, I think this portends the downfall of society. Well, I guess before that it was a stagnant minimum wage while the cost of living increased. And then before that it was the separation of the worker from the means of production, and then back to Descartes and the scam that is private property and blah blah blah. I mean the decline of modern society; I mean *now*. I mean the podcast ad market of mattresses and toothbrushes and underwear, which is all just normal stuff that is not broken and did not need fixing. I mean plastic-

wrapped bananas. Watching Olympic skiers fly down a slope of fake snow in the middle of an industrial park. The fact that a box of crackers costs like, \$7 now. Celebrities with their ugly ass NFT profile pictures, which basically translate to GUILLOTINE ME. [This Tweet](#). We are failing in the basic arts of humanity!

Look, I am not necessarily helping this precipitous decline. But I am trying to be more aware. I went to the mall the other day: I felt the scraps of polyester in my hand, smelled tester perfumes while waiting in line, told the cashier thanks and have a nice day.

LET'S CONSUME MEDIA

Books

- ***Lady Chatterley's Lover*** by DH Lawrence. I think this book was 19th-century smut, and boy was it problematic!
- ***Matrix*** by Lauren Groff. She's just a great writer. Everything else is allowed to be secondary when you're a great writer.
- ***Sheets*** by Brenna Thummler. Super sad graphic novel. Beautiful art, though.

TV & Movies

- ***Broad City***. For some reason, I thought I had finished this series, so seeing season 5 one day on Hulu was a nice treat. The girls grew up!
- ***Letterkenny***. lol, I don't know what to say about this show. I love it a lot despite the general decline in quality and the tiresome repetition.

These are called "pieces" for some reason!

- ["A Grand Unified Theory of Buying Stuff"](#) Paul Ford in *Wired*. So you've acquired a new thing. And now you want accessories. Ask yourself: Will the potential experience be worth the cost to the supply chain?
- [John Early's Practical, Sainly, and Futile Guide to Hosting a Party](#). "'Joy' is not 'an act of resistance,' despite what some infographics might tell you. It's a fucking skill, so listen up."

Music

- The indie girls are at it again, baby! New **Mitski** is wonderful and **Big Thief's** new album is like a ray of sunshine.