



FALL 2020

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*magazine*

AN APOLLO ASTRONAUT  
MADE ME DINNER  
**Why Character is  
Essential in Leadership**

ciLive! Remembers  
Al Worden, 1932-2020

RETURNING TO A SOURCE OF DELIGHT:  
**A Talk About Brand Loyalty**

WHY WOMEN ARE EXCLUDED FROM POWER:  
**Lessons From Cleopatra, Nefertiti,  
and Other Egyptian Queens**

HOBBY TO HERO:  
**How I Built A Career From Scratch**

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COVER PHOTO: AL IN THE COCKPIT  
OF HIS T 38. (PHOTO CREDIT: NASA)



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# EDITOR'S NOTE

## *When I was an impressionable young music student at the University of North Texas,*

my greatest obsession was learning how to be the best saxophonist. Not better; the best. Because I was told only the best in the industry thrive. Only the best leave a legacy. Only the best succeed. And long after I'd switched majors to creative writing, I still believed it.

Criticism has always been hard for me, not because I'm an unyielding believer in everything I think and make and do, but because I'm my own worst critic. In my head, I carry the stinging words of every naysayer in my life—worried parents, doubtful siblings, jealous friends, ambitious competitors, even trusted advisors—and to this day, before I can invite in any feedback, I must first silence the ghostly voices of the fears that haunt me as a professional writer.

In the 13 years since my graduation, I've learned these voices will always be with me, but also that they're figments as false as an overblown ego. Who's the best is up for argument, and legacies, sadly, are often won by the worst. Success is measured by what you make of your life, by how well you feed what captivates you, and the search for it is perpetual. I never gave up music; I

only added more disciplines to it, and I am better for it. Writing to me now includes lyrics, performance now embraces reading my work before an audience, and business-ownership now drives my artistic practices.

To my eye, the authors in this issue have all lived similar stories. Egyptologist Dr. Kara Cooney is a coffin specialist, but she writes captivating monographs on ancient, powerful women to shake the cage of the modern patriarchy. Ken Schmidt, former Director of Communications for Harley-Davidson Motor Company, now delivers his business wisdom as a public speaker on brand development. Professional gamer and content-creator Nick Overton effectively monetized his obsession with winning video games into a custom career that earns half a million dollars a year. And author Dr. Tony Paustian shares a personal lesson from the late Apollo 15 Astronaut Al Worden—that simple virtues like resilience and generosity can send you to the stars.

Build from what you love, strive for constant reinvention, and understand that money isn't necessarily success. That's what these authors advise. Examine the

past to identify opportunities for change. Pursue your passions, but keep your options open. Make informed decisions, and remember that what potential fans and customers crave is the same as what you want: joy. Live for joy, and you'll never go wrong.

I, for one, am joyous for the new opportunity to introduce you to these brilliant minds. I hope they inspire you to trust in possibility, just as they have inspired me.



**JASON BRANDT SCHAEFER, CO-EDITOR**  
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AL WORDEN. PHOTO CREDIT: MARK USIACK

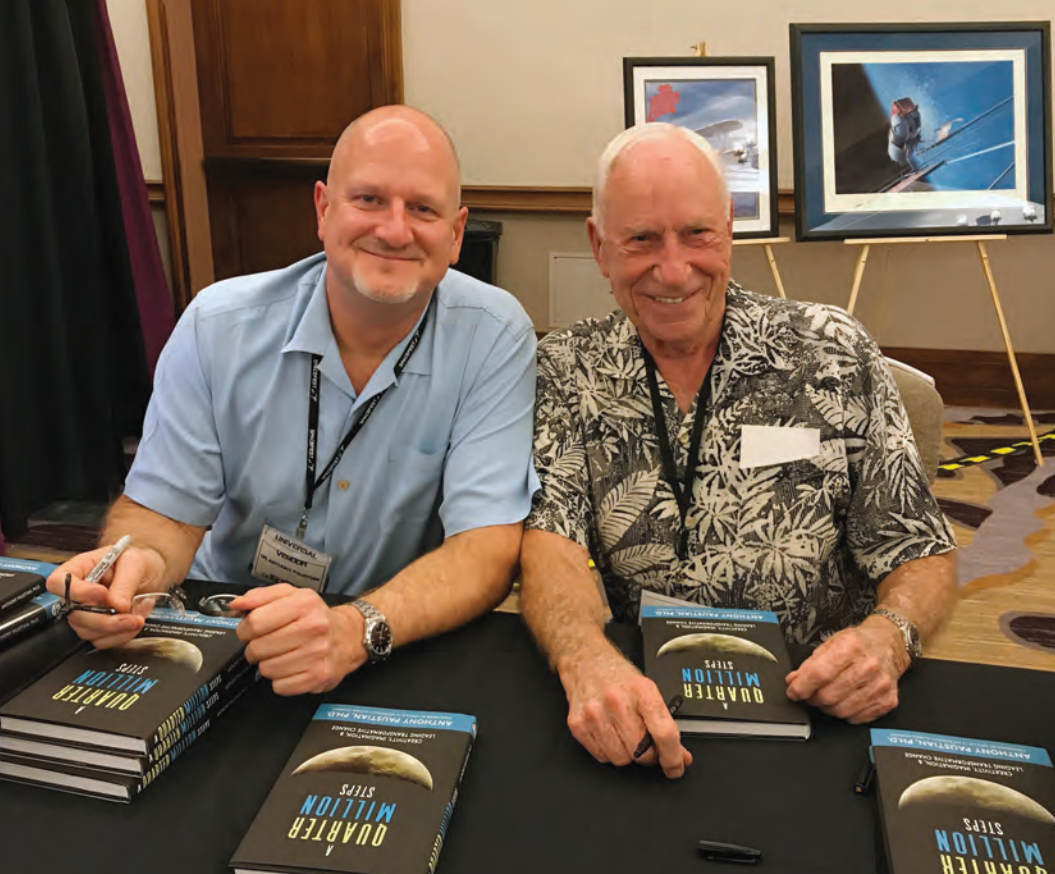


BY DR. ANTHONY PAUSTIAN

## AN APOLLO ASTRONAUT MADE ME DINNER

### *Why Character is Essential in Leadership*

*In March, we lost an Apollo astronaut, a beloved member of the space community, and in my own case, a personal friend—Al Worden, the Command Module Pilot for Apollo 15. To those who knew him, his passing may have come as a bit of a shock, especially in light of his outgoing personality and unlimited energy despite his advanced age.*



SIGNING BOOKS AT SPACEFEST 2018. PHOTO CREDIT: MELISSA HOLSMAN



AL STANDING IN FRONT OF HIS MISSION IMAGE AT JOHNSON SPACE CENTER. PHOTO CREDIT: ANTHONY PAUSTIAN

Al and I became close later in his life. While visiting him last fall at his home in Houston, I assumed we would simply do what we always did—talk space, but also discuss family and politics, while eating out for every meal, as was our routine. This trip was different. While we did dine at restaurants, Al decided he wanted to make dinner. Despite my telling him it wasn't necessary, he was determined, and there was no altering his trajectory once it was set. While he prepared the lavish spread of steak, potatoes, asparagus, and dessert, I could only watch as he wanted absolutely no help. At that moment, I realized here was one of my personal heroes, a global celebrity, and one of only a handful of people to travel to another heavenly body, making and serving a common guest dinner. That one simple act completely summed up Al's character. While I've gotten to know many important people and celebrities over the years, I can't see any of them taking the time

to make and serve me dinner, let alone treating an ordinary guy as an equal. Some say a person's true character reveals itself when no one is watching. One's character can inspire or discourage others as well as influence how someone interprets and shapes the world around them. Al Worden inspired many because he genuinely

*One's character can inspire or discourage others as well as influence how someone interprets and shapes the world around them.*

believed in people and was willing to freely help whenever asked, and often even when he wasn't.

However, when observing the behavior of some of today's leaders in both the public and private sectors, it's easy to

question whether we've lost sight of character. Thousands of books have been written on leadership style, but few have been written on character. This may be because character is difficult to define, is seen as old-fashioned, or there's no clear consensus on what it is or how to assess it objectively. Words like authentic and transparent are frequently tossed around as desired leadership qualities, but are they actually qualities, or the result of a leader simply behaving in a manner consistent with their character?

Some have defined character as the sum total of an individual's personality traits and values. However, there are limitless possible personality traits, and values are often based on a personal set of beliefs that can vary widely. Take the concept of quality as an example. Most would agree that having good quality is an essential value in the context of producing and purchasing things, yet



the degree of quality for anything rests with the perception of the person doing the evaluating. This perception is formed through an assessment of the objective qualities specific to the product in question—the separate elements, features, points of comparison, or components—that help to set it apart.

On the other hand, the thing in question also has subjective qualities—softness, roughness, fit, flavor, and others—that aren't specific to either the object itself or its observer. These qualities come as a result of the interaction between the thing, the observer, and the environment surrounding them. The difference then between objective and subjective qualities is that the former is based on a sense of measurement while the latter is based on feeling or emotion.

It's this sense of feeling that creates the perception of quality: a sense of attractiveness, excellence, superiority, and worthiness—attributes that are very difficult to observe or quantify, but much easier to have a gut feeling about. Thus, the value of quality is associated with a thing insofar as it is perceived to be an instrument for achieving some goal or objective.

People are not things, but the quality of one's character is often determined in the same manner. Whether through regular observation or a single interaction, people will assess another's character based on their perception of that person's qualities, and that perception is often based on a number of behavioral habits—actions exhibited on a fairly consistent basis. Habitual behavior is developed over time and is therefore a good representation of character.



AL TRAINING FOR HIS APOLLO 15 LUNAR FLIGHT. PHOTO CREDIT: NASA

While the list is long, I believe character is primarily perceived through these five behavioral habits:

**1. AUTHENTICITY:** Authentic leaders are genuine, and lead with both their hearts and minds. They walk the talk regardless of the role they're serving and inspire respect through their actions, not just their words. They don't need the spotlight and are happy to cast it onto others. They are open-minded, approachable, and often vulnerable. They are aware of their strengths, limitations, and emotions, don't profess to be something they're not, and unapologetically do what they believe is right.

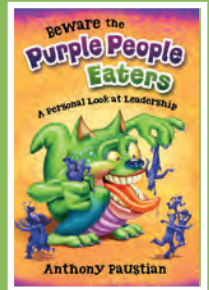
**2. GENEROSITY:** Generous leaders are grateful, and realize their success is often due in large part because of what others have given to them. They freely give to both people and causes without expectations because they hope for a better world. They live by example, don't ask for anything in return, and truly care and work to enhance the well-being of others.

**3. TRUSTWORTHINESS:** Trustworthy leaders are honest and transparent, possess personal integrity, and people are naturally drawn to them. Their behavior is consistent and they provide constant support. While they naturally see the best in other people, they are also willing to "tell it like it is."



AL SPEAKING TO A GROUP OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN IN IOWA. PHOTO CREDIT: ANTHONY PAUSTIAN

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**4. HUMILITY:** Humble leaders are secure in themselves regardless of their popularity and wealth. They are able to put aside their egos, recognize their weaknesses, and seek and acknowledge the input and ideas of others. They are service-oriented and frequently put others before themselves. In the words of Ken Blanchard, the author of *The One Minute Manager*, “People with humility do not think less of themselves; they just think about themselves less.”

**5 RESILIENCE:** Resilient leaders see failure as temporary setbacks. They have grit, remain positive despite adversity or negative outcomes, and find ways to move forward. They are unyielding in the face of hardship and lean on their relationships with others when necessary to overcome obstacles.

No one is perfect, and developing character is a lifelong journey. For 88 years, Al Worden lived a life most of us only dream about. He was a graduate of West Point, an Air Force test pilot, an Apollo

*Some say a person’s true character reveals itself when no one is watching. One’s character can inspire or discourage others, as well as influence how someone interprets and shapes the world around them.*

astronaut, a global celebrity, and a national hero. Al’s character was developed through his many life experiences and interactions with people.

His character was always on display regardless of whether anyone was watching. Whether it was taking the time to speak to groups of children, presenting to civic and community groups, having lunch with strangers at a fast-food restaurant, or interacting with people on social media, Al made everyone feel like he was their best friend.

He was never concerned about what people thought of him. While many with his celebrity status work hard to put on a great show and create a perception of how they want people to see them, Al exhibited an authentic care and concern for others, which is why he was adored by so many. In the long term, you can’t hide your heart, good or bad, and his was good.

Everywhere Al Worden went, he left a lasting, positive impression. He was exceptionally generous, especially with the one commodity he had the least of: time. He approached life with a thoughtful yet laid-back, almost poetic, mindset. Whether it was meeting the world’s wealthiest people, the leaders of nations, famous rock stars, or a few wide-eyed third-graders, Al would frequently respond, “No big deal. There are no strangers in this world, only friends I haven’t met yet.” ■



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BY KEN SCHMIDT

WOULD YOU WANT YOUR BUSINESS'S CUSTOMERS TO BE LOYAL TO YOUR PRODUCTS OR TO YOUR BUSINESS?  
PHOTOS USED WITH PERMISSION.

# RETURNING TO A SOURCE OF DELIGHT:

## *A Talk About Brand Loyalty*

*QUICK: Think of something you love—maybe your phone, your car, your favorite food—then imagine what it would take to convince you to have the logo of the corporation behind that thing tattooed onto your body for the world to see for the rest of your life. Who'd do that? Not me. I love KFC Extra Crispy, but there's not enough money or booze in the world to have The Colonel inked onto my skin.*



IMAGINE ADMIRING A BUSINESS SO MUCH THAT YOU HAD ITS LOGO PERMANENTLY INKED ONTO YOUR SKIN.

But keep an eye out this weekend, and I promise, if you happen upon any Harley-Davidson riders, you're going to see Harley logo tattoos. Whether or not you've paid attention, you've seen them your entire life. There's no corporate symbol in the world that's been inked onto more bodies than Harley's has, and nobody would be crazy enough to argue that isn't true. Bet you can't name another business that has even one logo-tattooed customer.

I've heard it said thousands of times that those tattoos are the most profound symbols of brand loyalty in the world. I even said it myself countless times during my working years at Harley-Davidson, especially when I was talking with potential investors in the business. But here's the thing I wish I'd learned before I'd said it: My aim was off. I've come to discover that those tattoos aren't testaments to their owners' loyalty to their beloved bikes, as most folks naturally assume. They're

*Live by product, die by product. Or substitute "service" if appropriate.*

testaments to their loyalty to the people behind their bikes—the organization that designed, engineered, built, sold and services them and gives its customers access to incredible lifestyle experiences all over the planet. They're professing their loyalty to Harley-Davidson Motor Company.

The mistaken belief that businesses can somehow make customers loyal to the stuff they produce and/or sell shines a bright light on one of the biggest problems bedeviling the business world, where you work or soon will. The problem: People don't understand what loyalty is. Which is why they struggle to keep their customers and other important publics loyal. Which is why they say things like, "Loyalty is dead," and "People only care about low prices,"

and make excuses when their customers take their dollars elsewhere. But you're never going to say stuff like that.

In the two decades that have passed since I left the greatest job in the world to discover even greater opportunities advising business leaders and delivering speeches around the globe, I've found a few common threads that flow through just about any company of any size. Foremost among them is the very wrong belief that their product (or service or whatever it is they do) is key to their competitive advantage. "If we have a great product, price it attractively, back it and continuously improve it, the market will prefer us to our competitors." Sounds reasonable, right?

To those people, I offer a little self-invented axiom, six words long, and easy to remember and repeat: Live by product, die by product. Or substitute "service" if appropriate. (Lock "Remember and Repeat" into your memory bank. If you tell people things they can't remember and tell others about, you didn't tell them anything!)

It's understandable that business leaders embrace a product-above-all ethic because, for most of them, that's what they have been taught. I think it's a hangover effect from business philosophies embraced back in the 1980s and '90s, when seemingly every business was focused on quality and efficiency. Whoever had the best stuff routinely made the most money and had the highest market share.

The world has changed and opened a lot since then, though, and businesses were quick to pounce on globalization, which created new supply chains that made their offerings better while making them faster, cheaper, and easier to produce and bring to market. They weren't so quick to notice



the impact this was having. An unfortunate dividend of globalization was the parity it brought to markets. Within a few short years, that “quality” businesses sought so feverishly became commonplace. Suppliers that couldn’t keep up with new demand dynamics were replaced by an almost endless supply of those that consistently improved their offerings.

Simply put, stuff got real good, real fast, and quality became taken for granted in the marketplace. It got harder and harder for us as consumers to know who made what. And we started to care less about that because, as we learned through personal experience, the stuff we were buying was fully meeting our expectations. And, of course, it still is. The companies selling shoddy stuff and performing badly just ... disappeared. Everybody’s good at what they do now!

But here’s the thing: When it’s hard to know the differences between products and their suppliers and customers assume it’s “all the same,” bad things happen. What do businesses do when faced with a marketplace where buyers see parity between suppliers? They lower their prices. And that’s where things go from bad to really bad because lowering prices simply isn’t sustainable. Squeezed profit margins mean businesses have less to invest in their payrolls, to say nothing of their research and development—the stuff that drives innovation.

Then consider the impact of the digitalization of everything—in particular, how things are bought and sold—and how that created dynamics in which we, as buyers, can quickly assess options, find whoever’s willing to sell us what we’re after at the lowest price, hit the “buy” button and await the brown box that shows up two days later. Like clockwork. Who doesn’t shop this way?

Anytime I’m advising business leaders or speaking somewhere, I always start by offering up a simple truth: “There’s nothing you can sell me that I can’t get from someone else, probably for less money.” Folks running businesses don’t like to hear that because it forces them to confront the painful reality that, even though their pride made them believe they have “the best stuff,” and “the highest quality,” because their working cultures “have an iron-clad commitment to customer satisfaction,” in truth the market sees no real differences between them and their competitors.

Here’s proof that illustrates my point in an easy-to-visualize way and shows what nearly every business on Earth is up against and has allowed to endure.

Say you needed to buy a flat-screen TV, a nice 40-incher. What’s that going to cost

you? Less—maybe way less—than \$250. That’s nuts! Those things used to cost upward of a thousand bucks, now they’re practically given away, and their prices are typically just a few dollars different brand-to-brand. If you went to your favorite big-box or electronics store to buy one, you know what you’d see before you got there: Rows of identical shiny, black rectangles with identical high-def images lighting up their screens. Your eyes and brain would quickly deduce that all of the flatscreens look identical and are very similarly priced. Because they are. So which would you buy?

Now think of the center bars on the base of the TVs where the producers’ logos are displayed. You know they’re there to tell you something, or to trigger a memory or message in your brain, right? Maybe an emotional connection. Something that says, “You know who we are and what



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we stand for. This is the one you want.” But all of the names tend to blur. You can probably name 10 without thinking—Samsung, Panasonic, Sharp, Vizio, Sanyo, Mitsubishi, JVC, Toshiba, Pioneer, LG—but which stands out? Or which would you be embarrassed to own? They’re all great products from household-name businesses. So you’re confident you can choose any one of them and not go wrong, which is true.

As bad as this product parity is for the flat-screen producers in the above scenario, it’s about to get worse. Why? Because you’re a consumer. Even at the great prices on these TVs, you don’t want to just grab one at random and hope for the best; you want to make an informed choice.

At least you think you do. So you start to study the spec tags or the display stickers below each unit. The first one you see has language like “240 Effective Refresh Rate” as the primary message its producer wants you to know. You have no idea what that means because you’ve never heard of it before. And what of that “240”? Is that a good number?

Here’s the self-inflicted problem this creates for the manufacturers: What do we do, as buyers, any time a potential supplier gives us terminology and data we don’t understand? The answer’s easy: We compare it to other suppliers’ terminology and data hoping to find something we do understand. The next TV’s tag says “120 Clear Motion Rate.” What? Is CMR the

same as ERR? Is 120 a better number or worse? You can check every tag, and you’ll see nonsense like this. You’ll see it pretty much any time you shop for anything you’re not deeply familiar with (like your laptop or health insurance). This is the monkey-see, monkey-do glorification of product that drives commoditization.

But guess what? There’s always one piece of data you do understand. And that’s the price. Which is why the TV you buy today is the one that’s only a buck less than its closest competitor. And you’re going to be happy with what you bought, but you won’t tell anybody about it. It’s just an appliance that’s going to do precisely what it was designed to do. It’s a commodity. Quick: Can you name any industry or



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IT'S NOT THE DESTINATION, IT'S THE JOURNEY.

product category that isn't commoditized like the TVs with lookalike, similar stuff with only price as a differentiator? (I can't.)

What does this have to do with loyalty? Well, if you're like most people, you'd have to think long and hard to recall the names on the flatscreen TVs in your home right now even though you see them every day. If you needed to buy one for another room in your house, which brand would you look for? Or if a friend asked you for a recommendation, what would you say? See? No loyalty. Nothing to talk about. Nothing to remember and repeat. And that's not good.

But that's fixable!

Understanding a few basic drivers of human behavior can create incredible opportunities for businesses to build their reputations, create more demand for what they do and vastly improve the loyalty of the people they serve (and employ). And what I'm going to teach you will involve motorcycles, which is always a good thing.

I'm sure you've noticed that we Harley riders like to make our bikes loud, and that any time we're stopped at a red light or stop sign, we reflexively rev our engines. It's impossible to miss. As a rider since my

youth, I'd always assumed this was a cultural thing we Harley riders did to announce our presence and be different from the dorks (sorry) on quiet bikes. Then one day, while watching a rider revving his engine and looking for reactions across the intersection from me, a lightning bolt hit me. And my career hasn't been the same since.

You see, something magical happens when we rev our engines. As we do it, we're talking to you. And what we're saying comes through crystal clear: "Look at me!" It's that split second when you look at us, and we see you looking at us, that the magic occurs. We—that's everybody—





*Understanding a few basic drivers of human behavior can create incredible opportunities for businesses to build their reputations, create more demand for what they do and vastly improve the loyalty of the people they serve (and employ).*

someone delights us, we're going to keep coming back for more. It's why people get so addicted to their phones. When people respond to your social media posts with likes, it feels good to you. So you post again and again to feed that little dopamine buzz. Do you think you'd keep posting stuff if nobody gave you likes?

There's a huge bonus here, too, in that buzz. When something consistently delights us, we tell other people about it. That advocacy is solid gold in the business world. It's what drives demand and attracts new customers. And so on and so on.

This begs an obvious question: Should businesses be focused on promoting and glorifying the stuff they make, sell and service—and you've seen where that leads—or on glorifying and delighting people?

The smart answer is to serve as a source of delight for everyone important to the business. That's my challenge to business leaders everywhere. It's easier than you think. We all know what passion and enthusiasm look and sound like ("Please hold!" and "May I help you?" aren't particularly inviting statements). Businesses that focus on that (and teaching how to do that is a big part of how I earn a living) will consistently outperform those who act like it's still the last century, which is nearly everybody.

are so accustomed to being invisible, to not eliciting a reaction from the people we pass by every day, to simply blending into the background, that when somebody actually notices us, it feels good. Even though it's just for a split second.

All humans have the same needs, as I'm sure you recall from your middle school classroom days. We all share the same physiological needs for food, water, shelter and security, all of which are easy for businesses to provide. But we also have other needs that are much harder to attain, namely our emotional need for validation, a need to feel special and important.

When we see you seeing us as we rev our motors, that quick blast of validation and its accompanying boost to our self-esteem causes the release of dopamine, the pleasure drug, into our brain. We get a quick blast of delight, the stuff we all live for but don't get enough of.

Now let's take this deeper so we can weaponize it.

What do we, as humans, do anytime we experience delight? We return to that glorious source of delight faithfully until it fails to delight us. Guess what? I just defined "loyalty." When something or





HARLEY RIDERS FEEL LIKE THEY'RE PART OF A FAMILY OF LIKE-MINDED INDIVIDUALS—A FEELING THE COMPANY WORKS HARD TO MAKE REALITY.

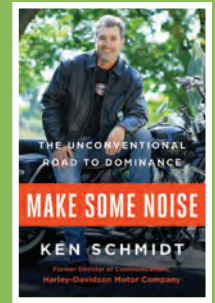


A PERFECT EXAMPLE OF HOW ALL HUMANS SEEK VALIDATION. WHEN HARLEY RIDERS REV THEIR ENGINES, THEY'RE SAYING, "LOOK AT ME!"

Remember, the marketplace sees your business as an equal. So if customers and potential customers like you just a tiny bit more than your competitors, because you've made an obvious effort to give them a little joy, and what you stand for pleases them, you win. And don't fool yourself. Any business can do this.

Another fun discovery: Humans—that's us—humanize everything. Of course we do! When we're thinking or talking about a business, we tend not to think about that business in terms of "what they do," but instead "who they are." When we're thinking or talking about a business, we're talking about their culture, what they stand for, and the effort they make to delight us. Or not.

Ken Schmidt is a marketing expert, known for playing a key role in one of the most celebrated turnarounds in corporate history. In 1985, Schmidt was asked to work with then-struggling Harley-Davidson to help restore the company's image and create demand for its motorcycles. Within a few short years, Harley-Davidson became one of the most visible and frequently reported-on companies in the world. Schmidt would go on to become director of Harley-Davidson's corporate and financial communications, and served as the company's primary spokesperson to the media and financial communities. He is also the author of the 2018 book, *Make Some Noise: The Unconventional Road to Dominance* ([kenspeaks.com](http://kenspeaks.com)).



I can prove it. Try telling a story about a business, any business, without using the word "they." They're cool. They suck. They're the best in town. See? We all do that.

Now think of those flatscreens again. Do you have a great "they" story about any of their namesakes? As in, "I like Panasonic because they..." When we don't have a positive "they" story to tell about businesses vying for our attention, low price is our primary purchase criteria every time. It's that simple.

On my first day of work at Harley-Davidson, I developed three questions. They get to the heart of what makes a business a dominant competitor with loyal customers and employees or sinks that business as another look-alike also-ran. Every business in existence should be focused on these three things: What are people saying about us? What do we want them to say? And what are we doing to make them say it? ■





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RELIEF FROM HATSHEPSUT'S RED CHAPEL DEPICTING HATSHEPSUT AND THUTMOSES III (CA. 1479-1458 B.C.E.)  
(IMAGE SOURCE: PUBLIC DOMAIN)



BY DR. KARA COONEY

## WHY WOMEN ARE EXCLUDED FROM POWER:

*Lessons from Cleopatra, Nefertiti, and Other Egyptian Queens*

*I am a coffin expert, a strange thing to say. If you put a picture of an Egyptian coffin in front of me, I will know what dynasty, and maybe even what king's reign, it was built in. It's a strange skill set to have, but I don't look at coffins because I'm obsessed with death or the Egyptian afterlife; I study them like others study a car or an outfit or a wedding dress coming down the aisle—for socioeconomic information.*

Parts of this article first appeared in *Time*, <https://time.com/5425216/ancient-egypt-women-in-power-today>





CLEOPATRA AND HER SON CAESARION AT DENDERA TEMPLE (CA. 52 - 31 B.C.E.)  
(IMAGE SOURCE: PUBLIC DOMAIN)

I look at coffins to understand how the ancient Egyptians competed with each other socially—who could afford gold and Egyptian blue, who had to emulate what they could with what they could afford. This work is complicated, heavily footnoted and full of tables and spreadsheets. It's complex and data-heavy. Thus, writing books comes as a breath of fresh air and a way for me to bring Egyptology to a wider audience and connect ancient history to our modern world.

I have written two books on ancient Egyptian women in power, one a biography about the female king Hatshepsut called *The Woman Who Would Be King*, published by Crown Books in 2014, and the other a synthetic work of all the Egyptian women who claimed political power as leader of state called *When Women Ruled the World*, published by National Geographic Books in 2018. I've also completed an Audible Original called *Powerful Women Who Ruled the Ancient*

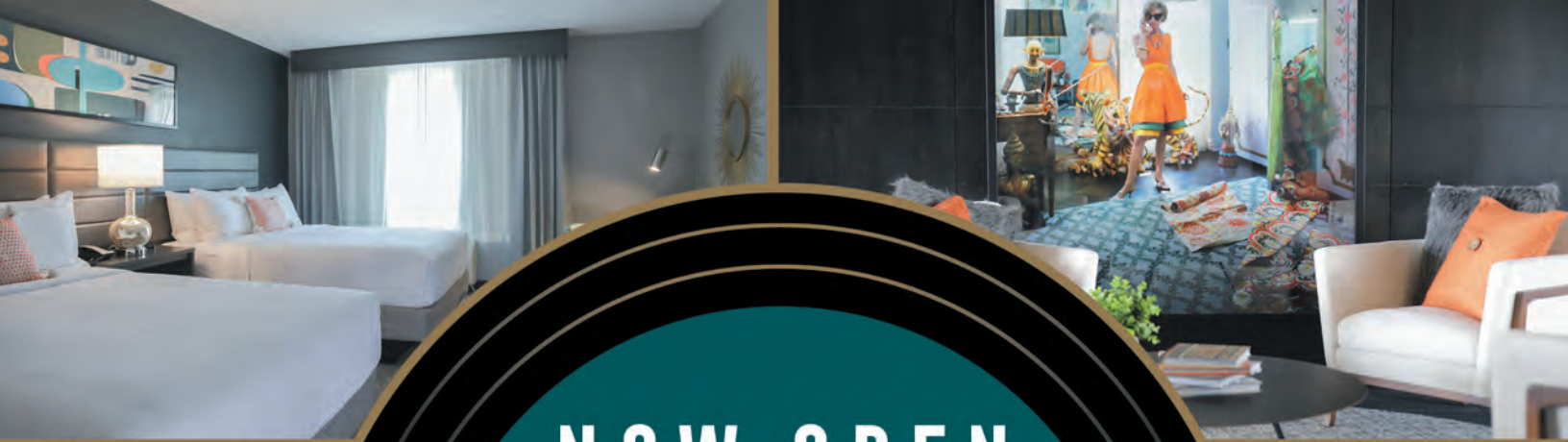


FAIENCE AMULET OF A LIONESS-HEADED GODDESS  
(CA. 664-525 B.C.E.) (IMAGE SOURCE: PUBLIC DOMAIN)

*World*. This work allows me to jump back into a different side of my brain, one that muses and poses big questions, one that makes the ancient world relevant to the modern, one that uses the lens of antiquity to help me figure out why the modern world functions the way it does.

Modern society still has a problem with women in power. But why didn't the ancient Egyptians? They allowed six women to act as leaders of state during





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their 3,000-year history: Merneith of Dynasty 1, Neferusobek of Dynasty 12, Hatshepsut of Dynasty 18, Nefertiti of Dynasty 18, Tawosret of Dynasty 19, and Cleopatra of the Ptolemaic Dynasty. What can we learn from them? What secrets can they whisper to us from the past?

Since 2014, I have taught a popular undergraduate class at UCLA called Women and Power in the Ancient World, and I start every quarter with these two slides—one of a female political leader at a podium, and the other of a male. I ask the students how they feel when they look at the woman versus the man. The discussions are enlightening, and I hear comments on how the women seem to be acting more forcefully than the men. We are distracted by the makeup, hair, clothes, and age of the female leaders, but not by the men. The men wear suits and ties, get away with short and simple hair (most of the time) and no makeup (again, most of the time), drawing much less scrutiny of their appearance. Emotionally, we feel the female leaders are angry at us, challenging us, threatening us, but somehow, we don't feel these same emotions from the male leaders. Yes, there are many opinions in the class, and no, gender and sexuality aren't really binaries, better arranged more along a gradient, but the overall class discussion indicates we are still challenged by female ambition and female power.

Indeed, statistics from around the world highlight this hostility toward women who want power. There are few female leaders of state from around the world, and those that exist come from parliamentary systems, not direct elections. In the United States, we have still not elected a female President. We have few female CEOs—six percent female in the United States, two percent worldwide. Women have almost

no real power in Abrahamic religions, including Judeo-Christian-Mormon traditions, with the exclusion of a handful of Protestant denominations. They are also largely excluded from Buddhist and Hindu leadership positions. Finally, although females are making great strides in pushing the officer corps to almost one-quarter women, few females are allowed into combat in military institutions. The truth is we don't allow women into power often, even today. Why? Why isn't 50 percent of the population allowed 50 percent of the power? Was it ever different in the ancient world?

We seem to be afraid of the female's power. She is too fierce for us, too mercurial in its most stereotypical form. For example, ancient Egypt's female feline goddess had two sides. As Bastet, she could nurture and protect; as Sakhmet, she had a propensity to brutally attack and maim without control. But in both forms, she had one *raison d'être*: to protect and nurture the patriarchy. These goddesses were the Daughters of Re, protectors of their father, the king of all, ready to strike against any who would harm him.

Such was the case for strong Egyptian goddesses in general, and for the real female leaders of that time. They weren't in it for themselves, to help a sisterhood rise up, to change the playing field for all women; they used their great and mercurial power to help the men around them—to protect them with their ferocity, to shield them from harm, to keep the same system going.

The stories of the women I study reveal a troubling and difficult aspect of female power in history, and one worth keeping in mind today. Though a high number of women in positions of power is often seen

as a marker of progress in governments and corporations, history shows that what matters is not how many women rise to that level, but what they do once they get there.

In ancient Egypt, at least six women rose up to reign as the highest decision-maker in the land, not counting the dozens of others who acted as queen-regents or high priestesses or influential wives. Ancient Egypt allowed more females into power than any other place on Earth, at any time. Was that society somehow more progressive than we might expect? The answer is a quick and deflating no.

Merneith of Dynasty 1 only ruled to see her young son Den ascend to the throne unmolested, and it's how he ended up becoming his Dynasty's longest-lived and most successful king. Neferusobek of Dynasty 12 ruled only because an anemic and inbred family lineage was



BUST DEPICTING A 12TH DYNASTY QUEEN, PROBABLY NEFERUSOBEK (CA. 1991-1802 B.C.E.) (IMAGE SOURCE: PUBLIC DOMAIN)





RELIEF OF NEFERTITI AND TWO OF HER DAUGHTERS (CA. 1353-1336 B.C.E.) (IMAGE SOURCE: PUBLIC DOMAIN)

withering on the vine. She was the last person standing of her great dynasty, a mere placeholder until another man from another dynasty stepped in. Hatshepsut of Dynasty 18 ruled to maintain the power of her young nephew, only to have her legacy as female king—the word “queen” connoting a mere sexual helpmate, not a ruler—ripped away from her some 20 years after her death when her names and images were erased and smashed, her great achievements relabeled for her father or brother instead. (Hatshepsut

reminds us all that when women succeed in the workplace, the credit can always be reassigned to the patriarchy.)

Nefertiti of Dynasty 18, if she really ruled at all, knew she had to cloak her ambition and feminine self with new masculine names. (She likely ruled as co-king Ankhkheperure Neferneferuaten and, perhaps later, as sole-king Ankhkheperure Smenkhkare.) Nefertiti must have known she was just paving the path for the next male in line—none other than the young Tutankhamun, so famous

to us today for his intact tomb in the Valley of the Kings. Tawosret of Dynasty 19 also found power by ruling on behalf of a boy-king before taking the kingship for herself alone. Tawosret didn’t hide her ambition; she had competitors eliminated. But such female ambition would not be tolerated, and Tawosret was removed by a warlord who positioned himself as restoring law and order to an increasingly militaristic Egypt. And then there was Cleopatra, who led insurrections against her own brothers, both of whom were taken out by her ruthless actions, and who used powerful men like Julius Caesar and Marc Antony more as sperm donors than as husbands who could control her. But even Cleopatra, who styled herself after the goddess of love and beauty, Hathor, couldn’t stop herself from becoming more of a maternal Isis in the end, paving the path to the kingship for her son Ptolemy XV—better known as Caesarion, the name that, fittingly, emphasizes his father rather than his mother. In the end, if he had lived to rule Egypt rather than being murdered by Octavian, she too would have acted as a mere placeholder in the larger patriarchal system.

Six powerful queens, five of them becoming pharaohs in their own right. Yet each and every one of them had to fit the patriarchal systems of power around them rather than fashion something new. The story of female power in ancient Egypt is a tragedy.

So when we look at female power in the world, today or yesterday, we must not assume that a woman in a high position is there to lay the groundwork for other women to follow or for any larger feminist agenda. Instead we must ask whom these women are really serving. In most cases, these women are serving an agenda in line with keeping men as the leaders of society.

Take the U.K., with its parliamentary system that has elected two female prime





BUST DEPICTING A 12TH DYNASTY QUEEN, PROBABLY NEFERUSOBEK (CA. 1991-1802 B.C.E.) (IMAGE SOURCE: PUBLIC DOMAIN)

ministers over the last four decades. Consider whether Margaret Thatcher or Theresa May challenged or protected the male-driven agendas around them. India and Pakistan have both seen great female leaders over the last half-century, but these women have stepped into the halls of power on behalf of their fathers and husbands and brothers. Ivanka Trump has an (informal) position in the White House as an influencer of her father, President Trump, but that authority comes from her unthreatening role as a daughter. When a woman does directly challenge the privilege of a man, she faces the possibility of threats like the ones experienced by Christine Blasey Ford. And there is perhaps no better symbol for this dynamic than Sarah Huckabee Sanders, whose power was derived from speaking on behalf of a man (perhaps a reason why this particular woman makes so many other women so very angry).

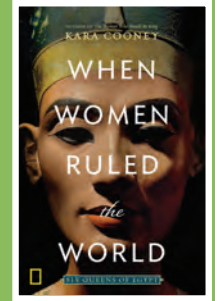
The Egyptian female king was only allowed to enter the political fray for a short time to support the male-dominated system around her. Her memory and legacy were erased afterward if she was successful (think Hatshepsut), or her mistakes aggrandized as a cautionary tale if she was a failure (think Cleopatra). Female power was forced upon a people during moments of great crises like kingly succession, civil war, or imperial aggression, but only when all hope for a male leader was lost. For the Egyptian system of divine kingship, women were actually the best choice to maintain the status quo because their caretaking for family could be so easily turned into protection of the patriarchy itself.

And that is the tragedy of female power that the Egyptian female kings whisper to us from the past. Breaking glass ceilings is one thing, but until women can act with their own agendas, most women in power, today and yesterday, are just serving the status quo—like Nefertiti and Cleopatra, part of a long line of women protecting their masculine overlords. It's not always easy to tell the difference between merely working in a patriarchal system and those who have chosen not to advance causes that help other women, but it is crucial that we try. ■

*Though a high number of women in positions of power is often seen as a marker of progress in governments and corporations, history shows that what matters is not how many women rise to that level, but what they do once they get there.*

Dr. Kara Cooney is a professor of Egyptian Art and Architecture at UCLA. She produced and hosted a comparative archaeology television series, *Out of Egypt*, which aired on the Discovery Channel and is currently available online via Netflix and Amazon. Cooney specializes in craft production, coffin studies and economies in the ancient world. Her first book, *The Woman Who Would Be King: Hatshepsut's Rise to Power in Ancient Egypt*, relies on her years of experience at various excavations in Egypt and expert perspective on Egypt's ancient history to share the biography of its least known female king. Her ongoing research takes her around the world to study and document nearly 300 coffins in collections, including those in Cairo, London, Paris, Berlin and Vatican City.

([karacooney.squarespace.com](http://karacooney.squarespace.com)).



IMAGES:

Faience amulet of a lioness-headed goddess (ca. 664-525 B.C.E.) (public domain) [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Egyptian\\_-\\_Lioness\\_Headed\\_Goddess\\_-\\_Walters\\_481546.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Egyptian_-_Lioness_Headed_Goddess_-_Walters_481546.jpg)

Bust depicting a 12th Dynasty queen, probably Neferusobek (ca. 1991-1802 B.C.E.) (public domain) [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Statue\\_of\\_Sobekneferu\\_\(Berlin\\_Egyptian\\_Museum\\_14475\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Statue_of_Sobekneferu_(Berlin_Egyptian_Museum_14475).jpg)

Relief from Hatshepsut's Red Chapel depicting Hatshepsut and Thutmose III (ca. 1479-1458 B.C.E.) (public domain) [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/index.php?sort=relevance&search=red+chapel&title=Special:Search&profile=advanced&fulltext=1&advancedSearch-current=%7B%7D&ns0=1&ns6=1&ns12=1&ns14=1&ns100=1&ns106=1&searchToken=8872mmossaukd79e9pgrj#%2Fmedia%2FFile%3ARed\\_Chapel\\_detail2.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/index.php?sort=relevance&search=red+chapel&title=Special:Search&profile=advanced&fulltext=1&advancedSearch-current=%7B%7D&ns0=1&ns6=1&ns12=1&ns14=1&ns100=1&ns106=1&searchToken=8872mmossaukd79e9pgrj#%2Fmedia%2FFile%3ARed_Chapel_detail2.jpg)

Relief of Nefertiti and two of her daughters (ca. 1353-1336 B.C.E.) (public domain) <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/index.php?search=nefertiti&title=Special:SASearch&go=60&ns0=1&ns6=1&ns12=1&ns14=1&ns100=1&ns106=1#media/File:Mekeletaten-Nefertiti.tiff>

Foundation deposit brick with the names of Tawosret (ca. 1191-1189 B.C.E.) (public domain) [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Brick\\_with\\_the\\_Names\\_of\\_Tawosret\\_MET\\_32.2.44\\_\(939101\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Brick_with_the_Names_of_Tawosret_MET_32.2.44_(939101).jpg)

Cleopatra and her son Caesarion at Dendera Temple (ca. 52 - 31 B.C.E.) (public domain) [https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cleopatra\\_VIII#/media/File:Denderah3\\_Cleopatra\\_Cesarion.jpg](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cleopatra_VIII#/media/File:Denderah3_Cleopatra_Cesarion.jpg)



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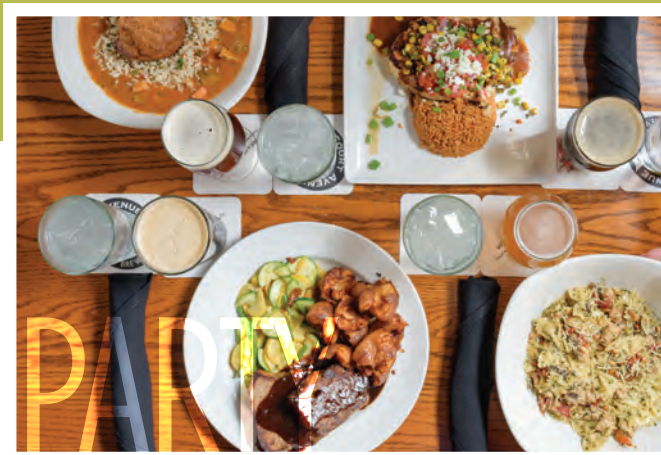




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BY NICK OVERTON

## HOBBY TO HERO:

### *How I Built A Career From Scratch*

*If you're reading this, you're probably wondering how someone could build a profession by playing video games. You may have a child, a friend, or a relative who adores gaming or at the very least, you may know someone you believe plays way too many video games. The modern generalization we all hear is that video games have a negative impact on gamers' lives, but that's simply not true. Tons of opportunities exist within the gaming world, and I'd like to share with you my story of earning a formal education at DMACC and the University of Iowa and applying it to create an unconventional job.*



FORTNITE WORLD CUP 2019. USED WITH PERMISSION.

Before we get into the how-do-you-make-money-playing-games spiel, I'd like to first give you some context. I grew up in Iowa and always had a fascination with technology. I enjoyed the outdoors, spending time fishing, catching minnows down in the creek, and playing hide-and-seek outside on warm summer nights. I was involved in some sports, I terrorized my younger brother, and I liked watching TV on Saturday mornings. I had played some video games at friends' houses before because I didn't own any consoles myself, but my parents were nice enough to notice my interest in them and grace me with a Nintendo 64 for Christmas in the late '90s. I was able to compete against my dad, brother, neighbors and friends in whatever games we had, and that competitive streak is what got me hooked. Because of this, it's fair to say I grew up with video games, from the N64 in the

'90s to modern-day Xbox, PlayStation, and PC games. If I enjoyed playing it, I wanted to be the best I could be. That led to a lot of game time, though.

My parents didn't see me playing games as much as I did as a good thing, which probably isn't a big surprise. There really wasn't any precedent for people making a living through video games. It wasn't even on the radar until people began uploading video game footage of their exploits on YouTube. Some of these earlier clips might have captured a cool highlight, presented a how-to video, or mimicked TV sports with commentary over simple footage. After a few years of gamers creating content on YouTube and growing their channels, they were able to generate revenue from it. It became a mutual relationship between creators and YouTube where the creators would provide content for people to watch,

and YouTube would serve ads over that content and give the creators a portion of the money.

Only a very small number of creators generated enough traffic to make a living solely from ad revenue, so everyone was trying to think of additional ways to monetize content. Fast forward a decade. By 2019–2020, gaming entertainment has blown up and continues to grow. It's one of the largest genres of entertainment in the world coming from live-streamed content on Twitch.tv or prerecorded/edited content on YouTube. Tons of websites have cropped up that help creators of all types generate additional revenue. These could be competitors that promise better deals than platforms like YouTube or Twitch and offer signing bonuses, or sites like Patreon that are essentially crowdfunding for creators. Additionally, platforms



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themselves have looked to other places to help creators monetize their content. A model was created that allows fans to subscribe to content for a small monthly fee and take advantage of extra benefits over normal users. The creator would then receive a portion of the funds from those subscriptions. These extra forms of monetization helped make full-time content creation a reality for many mid-sized creators. Now we can move to the real story.

I grew up surrounded by technology. Not only has my generation grown up with the Internet, but my dad also worked in the tech industry. I had access to computers and gaming consoles from a young age. They were fun to play with friends and I enjoyed them, but my gaming never became a serious career until games met the Internet. Online play was what sucked me in more than anything. Being the best player among your group of friends is one thing, but when you start getting stacked against other good players around the world, you start to see where your skills are lacking. Plus I absolutely hated losing. If there was something I found enjoyable, I wanted to win while doing it. If I was going fishing, I wanted to catch the most and the biggest fish. If I was playing any type of game or sport, I'd do everything I could to get my team the win. I became very good at the games I was playing due to that drive to win and my exposure to better and better players in online matches. These obsessions played a major role in making my career as a professional gamer successful.

Let me backtrack for one quick moment: you don't have to be good at a game to make a living playing it. It doesn't hurt, but it isn't required. When it comes to gaming-related content, people prefer three main categories—Entertainment, Skill and Informative. You can choose what type of creator you'd like to be. Some people

like to make funny videos or share wacky highlights. Those are a perfect example of Entertainment videos. They don't require any necessary skill; they just need to entertain the viewers. Some people like to model high-level gameplay—crazy tactics, insane plays, amazing shots, you get the point. That'd be classified under the Skill category. Finally, Informative videos are basically the “how-tos” of gaming. How to beat a certain boss or level, how to find this secret Easter egg. You don't have to pick a certain type of content to create— plenty of people mix categories—but usually you'll be known for one style of content.

As I played games online and tried to hone my skills, I started looking up videos on how to improve myself. I'd watch top-level players to find some tip or trick I could try to implement in my gameplay or build off of to create something new. The more I watched, the more I became convinced that I was as good as some of the people in these videos and in some cases, better. I figured if they could do this, why couldn't I? I tried to record footage, add a voiceover explaining what I was doing, and upload what I would consider high-tier gameplay. If future me could tell past me anything, it would be that just because you're a good player doesn't mean you can make entertaining videos. It's rare to have both of these talents. I was a pretty good player, but I royally sucked at editing and creating gameplay fun to watch. I spent years learning and improving, and there's still room for improvement today. If you listen to my first video, though, which is still on YouTube, the difference between then and now is pretty apparent.

Obviously, you can't just start making videos and then, boom!, you're a full-time creator. Your growth needs to be sustainable. I made videos as a hobby while I worked and went to school. It was a way to express some creativity while also

having some fun, a kind of little pet project. Have you ever planted a few seeds in a small pot of soil, then water it and leave it on the window sill? That's basically how I treated YouTube. I created some videos on a consistent basis that people enjoyed, and the channel grew slowly over time. During that time, though, I went to school and looked toward the future, which I had no expectation would be what it is now. I figured I'd keep content-creation as a hobby and work toward a career within gaming, like development. I decided the smart decision would be to attend a community college at DMACC West Campus and complete my core classes, then transfer to the University of Iowa for my bachelor's degree. Again, I had absolutely no expectation that being able to play games and create content around them could be a career choice for me. In my head, educating myself on things I was interested in was a good way to improve and raise my odds of finding a career in those interests. School was the obvious decision.

I took two years of classes at the DMACC West Campus and even held a gaming event there for a couple of days one year. Students could come and play games in the main atrium while on break between classes. Here's where things get tricky. Before my last semester at the DMACC West Campus, I was on summer break and landed an internship at Justin.tv, now Twitch.tv, the largest gaming streaming platform in the world. I was able to get hands-on experience at a company focused on gaming content creation. I had sporadically produced videos, but I'd never really known I could also livestream gameplay. It opened up an entirely new world of content creation to me. I couldn't focus on making content nearly as much, though, since I was working full-time. It was a paid position, which was cool, but I had to fly from Iowa to San Francisco on a week's notice and start helping them build





NICK SPEAKING AT CILIVE! 11 IN 2020.

out their gaming program, and I lived with some of the other employees while I was out there.

The craziest part of that internship was that it had come from my being active within the gaming community. A local guy, Ben, started a gaming community in Iowa. He held a few tournaments. I went to E3 with him to write about some gaming news, and he'd host some gaming events here and there throughout the year. He also produced a weekly podcast for a while that focused on gaming news—new game releases, developer news, with some drama sprinkled in, maybe. He invited me to host the podcast with him from time to time, and we'd try to have a guest on every week. One of those weeks, he invited a streamer by the name of Kona onto the show. He was a relatively small streamer by today's standards, but back then, he was doing really well getting a few hundred viewers on his daily streams. Kona and I got to talking, and he told me he needed

somebody to come help him host a stream booth at the PAX East gaming culture festival. He'd be controlling all the technical stuff, but he needed on-air talent, and he thought my demeanor would fit it well. To be honest, that alone was a miracle because at the time, I was still pretty new to content creation and wasn't entirely comfortable with it or good at making it all flow seamlessly. Nonetheless, he had asked, and I was definitely interested. I just needed to cover my plane ticket, and the rest would be taken care of.

I jumped on a plane and headed to PAX East to be an interviewer and on-air talent at the Alienware and League of Legends booths. I was attending one of the biggest gaming events in the world to interview the developers and designers about a game I'd never played (League of Legends) and Alienware's newest computer, which I knew nothing about. It didn't turn out that badly, really, but because it was being livestreamed on

Justin.tv, their COO Kevin Lin was out there. I talked with Kevin while we were at the booth, and he learned a bit about me and mentioned that they needed someone who knew the shooting game genre. I came from Call of Duty and Halo, both prominent first-person shooter (FPS) games, and knew a lot of the key players they wanted to stream on their platform. We finished up the PAX event and went our separate ways. Two weeks after the convention, I shot Kevin an email asking if they had any positions open on the gaming side of things. We had an interview two days later, and I flew out to San Francisco that next week to start the internship. This was all made possible simply by being active within my local gaming community.

Working at Twitch was amazing. The vision they had for their platform was perfect, in my opinion, and the people working to make it happen were geniuses. I worked there as an intern for two months,

then they offered a full-time position. The only caveat was that I had to stay in San Francisco and work from their main office. If I'd been braver or more daring, I might have taken that offer, but there were three big downsides in my mind. The pay was pretty low for San Francisco, it was a fairly long way from my family, and I wouldn't have been able to finish my degree. I thought if I took a break from school, I might never go back. I won't lie to you; I wasn't the biggest fan of early morning classes, doing homework, and studying for tests, but I thought getting an education was important, and I still do today. So I declined the offer. They did give me a pretty awesome deal, though, where I could continue my work as a Partner Manager from home and stay on as a contractor for a year. I agreed to that, then flew back to Iowa and finished my last semester and my degree at DMACC, before transferring to the University of Iowa and completing my bachelor's.

I gained valuable experience that year while also still being around family and continuing school. It also helped me choose my major at the University of Iowa. After my time at Twitch, I decided that working within the gaming community to set up and maintain partnerships was something I enjoyed and wanted to improve upon. There's not really a major specifically designed for that (some might call it a business degree), but in reality, I needed people and communication skills. I also knew that I had to write a lot for press releases and partner memos, so I went with Journalism and Mass Communication. I was even lucky enough to register for a gaming journalism class. Sadly, it filled up instantly, and they didn't have additional room, but the professor was nice enough to let me come to some of the classes anyway. When my year was up, Twitch and I parted ways, but with nothing else to fill my time besides school, I started

uploading daily videos to YouTube to try and grow the channel more. I uploaded videos daily until I graduated from Iowa.

When I graduated, I decided to start streaming daily in addition to my recorded videos and cross-promote each platform. I tried to focus on providing quality content on a consistent basis to grow my channels. There were good months and bad months, and one of the hardest parts of doing it was learning to accept the good and the bad. It was always great when I was killing it, but when I had slumps, I'd be looking anywhere and everywhere to try and find what was causing it. I'd also look at what was doing well for other creators and try similar stuff to bring my analytics up a bit. Money wasn't the most important analytic, and it still isn't, even today. It's all about how many people are watching. It boils down to this—I made something I think is cool, and I want other people to look at that and say it's cool too. It's about sharing something I enjoy with others in hopes they enjoy it as much as I do, which is really misconstrued in the gaming industry.

As my channel grew larger, I had opportunities for sponsorships. Ninety-five percent of sponsorship emails include this: "We can help you make more money." Or "We think you can leverage your fanbase and do yadda yadda yadda ..." All these companies are concerned with is making more money or using creators' influence for something totally outlandish. Almost no one cares about those offers. Sometimes a good opportunity comes along, and you have a chance to work with a top tier company that creates or provides great products or games. Those opportunities are the diamond in the rough. You might not get them until you have a big enough channel, but fostering relationships with those companies is key. If you work with them once, and it goes well, you'll most likely have another chance to work with

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them in the future. Building rapport with companies and developers is extremely important. You don't have to be a suck-up, but offering good criticism respectfully goes a long way, especially in comparison to screaming things like, "This game sucks!" Keeping those companies and developers happy is beneficial in the long run, though, since sponsorships can generate a good amount of revenue depending on how many you get.

It took years of uploading videos and streaming to grow my channel into what it is today. My focus has always been to grow and share what I make with more and more people. In spite of that goal, I did take a year off from streaming to pursue a more corporate-style job at another streaming platform in 2015, but after a year with them, our visions of what we wanted didn't align, and I left to be a full-time content creator. It also helped that YouTube and streaming at that point earned more than I was making working with them. I had been uploading daily videos for three years when I decided to make the transition of hobby to job. That came with a new set of challenges as I basically just became a business owner and inherited those responsibilities. Despite the challenges, I'm happy to have been able to create videos for the past eight years, and even though this market has some extreme volatility, I hope to do it for as long as I can. ■



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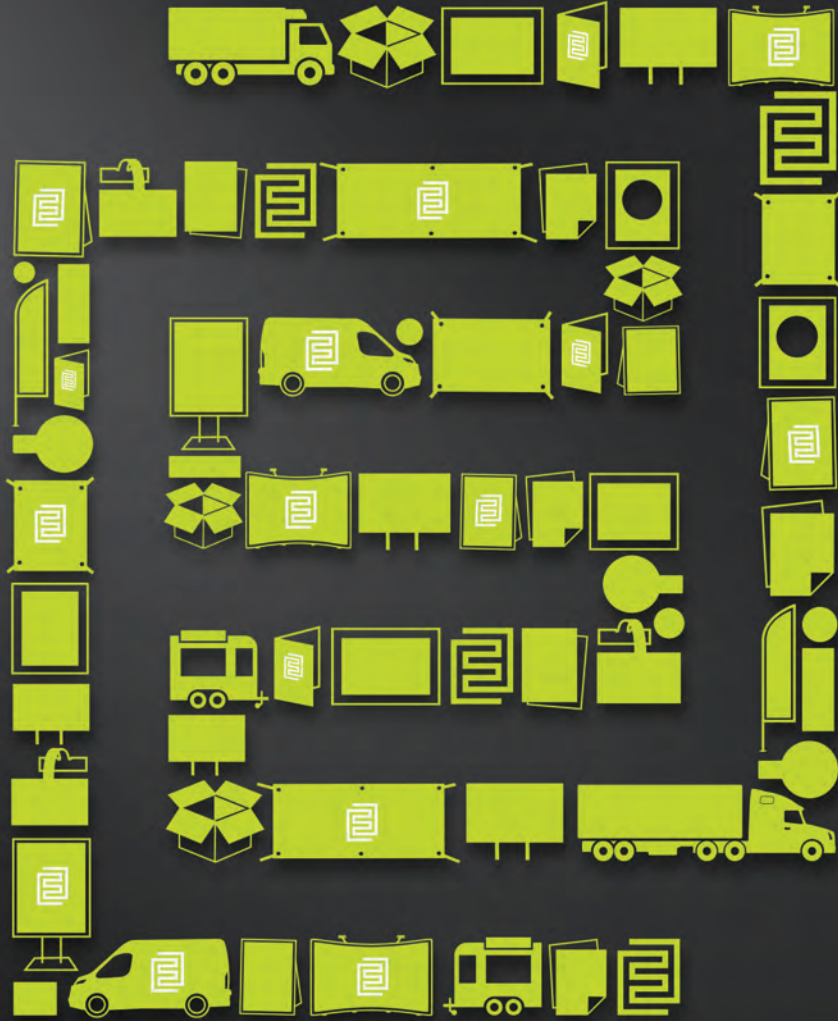
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