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Respondent: "Flexible Factory", "A Clean, Well-Lighted Hearth"

The clock strikes six a.m. and the worker must emerge from a dream. The worker shudders at the sound of his alarm clock. He must be on time. This occurs five days a week. As repetitive as it is, as willed as he is to it, he never questions Being "on time." On the contrary, it is accepted as an a priori function. Being "on time" is thus the first enactment of social control. The worker arises out of bed and turns on the light. Another day begins.

One could argue that industry has caused us to "throw light on the fire," so to speak. Industrial technology has enabled us through the mechanization of lighting to see, therefore to know, to be "all-knowing." Therefore the factory produces not only goods and services, but faith in them. This faith or as David Nye calls it a "positive electrical consciousness," was bought and sold. In turn seeing, and thus believing became a commodity.

Once dwelling-- the last bastion of interiority--had succumb to "home economics," humanity was outside of itself. We avoided ourselves. This is evident in the fetishized insistence of a clean house. This eliminated the signs of life or rather Death. "Cleanliness is next to Godliness"--or as David Nye puts it ... "a cultural uplift" was provided. Technology as God. Technology ascended to the heavens.

What fell was the worker. The worker became the ever disappearing subject. The system erected by man was sucking him up, enveloping him. Defensive strategies were established such as unions to combat this existence. But these strategies were from within this system. Thus welfare capitalism and the law of scientific management superficially resurrected the worker economically. However his "disappearance" due to increasing mechanic proficiency was immanent.

Yet faith is what sustains. Industry and the advancement of technology did not create this faith, society did. But if as David Nye states "...in a world emptied of meaning, the electric light held back the void and confirms a temporary existence," than this faith is as empty as the void it confronts.

In our present postindustrial society heaps of garbage abound. Yet the void still exists. Perhaps today we must step into the fire and awaken to the possibilities of incandescence rather than simply flicking on a light switch. Perhaps today the worker will be late because he or she has found a new way to work.