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The new zombie

Beware the modern zombie. They can be hard to spot. He or she will probably look exactly like any other person that you have ever met; don't

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be fooled! You can spot the modern zombie by their eyes, usually darkened from lack of sleep, lightly bloodshot from exhaustion and open for extended periods of time. This is due to long hours spent in front of computer screens, resulting in an apparent failure in remembering how to blink.

The modern zombie (of which we will refer to from now on as a mod zomb) also has a peculiar walk. Do not expect outstretched arms and an aimless gait. Instead, the mod zomb will often be endowed with great speed, though due to their consistently rushed life-style, their walk will often be rather clumsy, bumping into angry peers in a hurry to get to their next meeting/class/scheduled lunch date. Add slightly rigid joints to this equation, due to shortened sleeping periods and a general lack of rest, and we begin to draw a pretty accurate picture of the mod zomb on the move.

Using keen powers of perception, these "walking stressed" can also be spotted by certain accessories they carry. Beware the "audio pleasure cube." This small, white, visually-pleasing gadget is a portal for the mod zomb into an alternate world, detached from the bustle of the human race around them. Plead to a mod zomb to slow down, and they will not hear you. Shout a greeting to a mod zomb, and they will march on by. To enhance the illusion of being in a world separate from our own, the modern zombie often keeps its eyes focused intensely on the ground. These people (if they can still accurately be classified as members of the human race) can, and often do, pass within inches of another human, perhaps someone they have known for years, without ever noticing them, eliminating the need, once again, for human contact.

Often combined with the "audio pleasure cube" is the dangerously-over-flowing shoulder bag filled with loose papers and, undoubtedly, a "cellular telegraph machine." The subject, in their hyper-aware state, will often attempt, with marginal success, to use both of these tiny gadgets at the same time. If you view a mod zomb moving in your direction, pleasure cube headphone in one ear, cellular telegrapher held against the other, rushing towards you in a lopsided gait due



Art by Michael Kelly

to the gargantuan weight of their shoulder bag – AVOID AT ALL COSTS! You do not want to get in the way of a mod zomb at any time, but especially not in this state. You're likely to lose a digit.

If you do have to face the creature in this heightened situation, say, in a dead-end alleyway some night after a movie, dive to the ground and cover your head. If you can, dive towards the creature's headphone side. Due to the volume of the latest Lindsay Lohan single blasting from the speaker, the

subject will most likely pass you by unnoticed, much to the desire of both of you.

Let us not forget, however, that the mod zomb is, in fact, not a species but a self-imposed, mental state. The human was not born a modern zombie – they were made a modern zombie.

How did this harrowing transformation come about? Well, due to certain "time savers" and "communication enhancements" such as the "interweb," "cellular telegraph machines," and "A-I-M" which the subject purchased innocently enough but gradually became inseparable from, the human has willingly, though un-wittingly, transformed into a restless and un-social monstrosity. It is true that many people can indeed use these advancements in technology without any overtly negative effects, but then there are some to whom these gadgets become like a second limb. Without them, they feel shaky, nervous, and are prone to drinking large quantities of Starbucks mocha-frap-lattes with extra whipped-cream and three sugars.

The modern zombie can, at any time, choose to "switch off" their "cellular telegraph machine," "disconnect" their "interweb," or "sit" in a "chair," and they will slowly re-emerge into society as a recharged, renewed human being. However, we must also be aware of another response to excessive amounts of this sort of "de-cluttering" of one's life; the transformation of the regular human being into the "wandering hippy." This also has a great number of negative effects and is overall considered by experts to be more detrimental to society.

Zachary Dinerstein is a super-senior planned studies major who knows there's only two ways to kill a mod zomb. Shoot them in the head or cause a city wide black out. Use a "sixth generation mailing service" to contact him at zdiners1@ithaca.edu.