

I hope everyone had a pleasant, albeit unusual, long Easter weekend. I thought I would join in the sharing of personal stories about how we're adapting to our new world order, in hopes that it might brighten the beginning of your week.

Since I am quarantining alone in a one bedroom apartment - without a partner to annoy (or children to be annoyed by) – I have come to fully understand what Aristotle meant when he said: *“Man is by nature a social animal.”* Talking to the walls and kitchen appliances is only fun for so long (I'm sure my neighbours think I'm crazy). And while I know many of you would kill for some alone time right now, I couldn't hack it any longer. I needed a change; someone to keep me company.

So, I'm pleased to share that after a few weeks of correspondence with the SSM Humane Society, I was able to bring home my new four-footed flatmate on Saturday. Meet Adorno!



Adorno is a two-year-old, 12.2-lbs domestic short-hair cat who was brought to the SSM Humane Society as a stray earlier this year. After spending Saturday afternoon shyly hiding behind the couch, he eventually worked up the courage to introduce himself and take a look around. Turns out, he's a cuddle-bug with a big personality. He hasn't left my side since!

He gets his name from the German sociologist, Theodor W. Adorno, whose work I have come to admire over my undergraduate career. Adorno was a member of the Frankfurt School, a cohort of Jewish Marxists who emerged in Germany after WWI and developed a body of work known as critical theory. Adorno's ideas about the inner workings of modern society have been influential in the fields of sociology, philosophy, cultural studies, political theory, musicology and more.



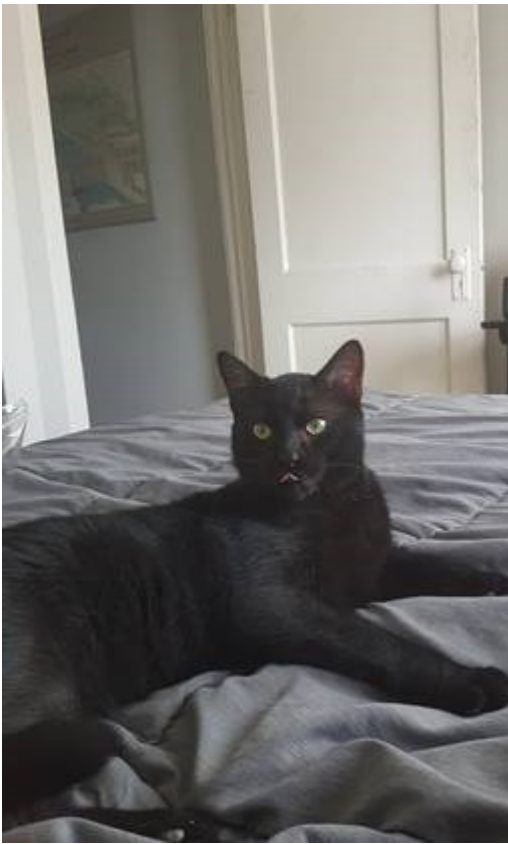
Theodor W. Adorno (1903-1969)

*“Es gibt kein richtiges Leben im falschen”*

(Wrong life cannot be lived rightly)

He is mostly remembered for developing the concept of *der Kulturindustrie*, or ‘culture industry’ in English: the idea that popular culture is akin to a factory producing standardized cultural goods – films, radio programmes, magazines, etc. – that are used to manipulate mass society into passivity and conformity. Think about this next time you’re watching Netflix or listening to a song in the car: how is this cultural good trying to manipulate what I think about society? What messages about power and politics is it concealing? Adorno commands us to be cognizant of this manipulation and to reject it as much as we can; to seek truth, question everything, and live authentically. *Be yourself, everyone else is already taken!*

Here are some related Wikipedia pages if you want to read more: Theodor Adorno: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theodor\\_W.\\_Adorno](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theodor_W._Adorno); The Frankfurt School: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frankfurt\\_School](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frankfurt_School); Critical Theory [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critical\\_theory](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critical_theory).



Although it's only been three days, Adorno has been adjusting to his new domestic life in swift fashion. He's a master of sleeping and eating, and he required no instructions to start using the litterbox. I think we are going to get along just fine!

Anyways, that's how I spent my weekend, and how I will be spending the remainder of this time in isolation.

-Mitchell H.