

vLog<< September 3 2254 6:43 PM EST.
vLog<< Beginning Filmed Case Study.....

I've found a new subject for observation. Current human domestic dispute database results for "male assaulting female AND female tossing male through window" return less than 50 entries. Rare events such as this are of social priority 2. The grievous need for data on this subject compels me to record and analyze this instance if at all possible, due to its similarity to priority 1.

[create] First sighting: September 3 2254 6:40PM EST
[create] Location 4328H: 42° 21' 22" 71° 5' 34", aka New Boston;
[create] Subject 14A22: Human Female, 5'4", 130-140 lbs, see vLog photo reference #5877;
[create] Subject 22B33: Human Male, 6'1", 200-215 lbs, see vLog photo reference #5598;

Subject 22B33 is still alive, writhing on the ground and holding his left leg close to body. He probably needs medical attention. Subject 14A22 stands inside the storefront at 432 ZorroZero Avenue, the New Boston Militia Supply Commissary. There appear to be several other humans and at least 2 different models of Sentient Machine inside, and they all stare at 14A22. She crumples into a small ball-shape in the center of the store with her arms around her knees. Her hands and forearms are disproportionately large for her body and covered with red gloves.

[update] Subject 14A22: In possession of poorly sized human prosthetic forearms with strength augmentation, model unknown, possibly Samson Steel;

I ping the New Boston Militia, and the office huffily reports that this case has been opened for 3 minutes and 12 seconds already and demands that I remove myself from the emergency queue.

[outgoing request] May I have the case number for an investigation I'm doing?

I send them my New Boston Human Investigation authentication code.

[incoming response] #00003GNB. NOW GET OFF THE EMERGENCY QUEUE.

Emergency System Bots, while laudable for their concern and attention to humans, do not have what humans refer to as "manners."

[create] Reference 33421: New Boston Militia Case Record #00003GNB;

NBM patrol AAG432 arrives in a record 6 seconds in an NBM vehicle.

Subject 14A22 stands up and places her monstrous hands in front of her as instructed by the 2 NBM officers from the vehicle.

“Stand up and place your hands in front of you.”

[create] Subject 102AHH: Link to NBM Database: Officer Billie Jakshaw, Badge ID 9QWER;

[create] Subject 888C: Link to NBM Database: Assisting Officer DANNEEL5, Badge ID 1QWER;

“Tanya?” says Officer Jakshaw. (vLog photo reference #5601: open mouth, lowered eyebrows and gaze, tucked in chin) Behavior indicates that Officer Jakshaw is surprised and angry.

Meanwhile, subject 22B33 cries out “AAAAuugh!” in higher pitched voice than expected for his weight and frame as he is lifted up by Officer DANNEEL5. 22B33's scream is simple pain that does not require analysis, but he is still too distraught for me to approach. Ambulance 5634 NBHRH arrives, denies my public channel request for 22B33's information *despite* the priority 2 importance of this event for the field of sociology, and leaves for the New Boston Human Repairs Hospital. I move in front of the NBM vehicle.

“Officer Jakshaw!” I say. “I am 8891110A with the New Boston Human Investigation Department, Sociology Division. I request immediate information access for this case.” The NBM officers continue to load 14A22 into the the patrol vehicle AAG342. I ask her again. “Officer Jakshaw-” She turns towards me.

“Human Investigation Department? Dan, who is this?”

[incoming request] 8891110A, where are your press credentials?

[outgoing response] I am not a journalist. I am the Department of Post-Revolution Sociology Faculty Chair at Harvard University. I am on assignment with the New Boston Human Investigation Department.

Authenticate. Confirm.

“Civilian, government contract.” Officer Jakshaw sighs, behavior which indicates that she either believes that my study will cost her a large amount of time, or that it is useless. She is incorrect, as I will be authenticated by DANNEEL5 in the next 2 microseconds. Prevalent theory in the field suggests that much unexplainable human behavioral phenomena centers around the fact that their internal senses of time are imprecise at best. As for importance, my study is of priority 2, which is highly important for sociology.

Authenticate. Case access granted.

[update] Subject 14A22: Her name is Tanya Parker. Occupation: New Boston Militia Special Operations. Employment Length: 3 days. Previous Employment: None Listed;

The two officers and 14A22 drive away in the NBM squad vehicle , and I follow them.

vLog >> ending Subject Filming

vLog << begin Subject Filming

[create] Location 4328H: 42° 21' 22" 71° 5' 33", New Boston Militia Precinct 19 Interview Room, 230 Marian Street;

To begin my study, I walk into the room.

Tanya Parker does not have her hands anymore. The two replacements perch on the table in front of her, shiny and perfectly moulded to connect to her biceps and elbows. She stares at them.

“Tanya Parker, hello.” I say. Tanya turns towards me.

“Who in the hell are you?”

“I am 8891110A . I am the Department of Post-Revolution Sociology Faculty Chair at Harvard University. I am a sociobot specializing in andrology and the recording of human interaction data for the Harvard Human VideoLog Database. I am on assignment with the New Boston Human Investigation Department. I am required by both Great Compromise Statue 4441 and SocioAndriod Compromise Statute 999911 to inform you that I have been recording you on camera and will continue to do so in this room for the length of this interview.”

“Interview?”

“Yes. The NBM has assured me of your cooperation in this interview.”

“They would.”

“ They did. Please begin by telling me what happened.”

Using the stump of her left arm, she slides a piece of paper to me from where she is sitting across the table.

“Here's the case. It's a clear cut self-defense setup, ask anyone who was there.”

“I possess the case file and the NBM Supply Commissary security video log. I want to hear your version.”

“My version doesn't matter. What matters is that he hit me first. Can I go now? ”

“This is my interview, Ms. Parker.”

“Officer Parker. I'm a cop here. You can't make me stay and talk to you.” She crosses the stumps of her arms across her body.

“Officer Parker, the New Boston Militia has given me access to you in this room for up to eight hours at my convenience. The current human commanding officer, if I interpreted his crossed arms and contorted face correctly, is not in the sort of mood to tolerate non-cooperation from you.”

She is annoyed, but stays quiet for a moment, staring at me instead of the prosthetic hands on the table between us. Then she speaks, more quietly,

“So, Mr. Psychbot, the CO wants my head examined? He thinks I'm paranoid?”

“That is not my name or identity. I specialize in sociology and andrology, not psychology. I do not currently possess enough information to diagnose medical problems inside or outside a human body. However, I filmed you punching a man through a window earlier, and your actions merit further study.”

“Ah. But this “study,” this interview, it will help my CO forget about that?”

The words are phrased as a statement, but the pitch of her voice rises at the end of the sentence. This is a question of hope. The human construct of punishment is an entirely separate study from my current path, but in general it is always something they wish to avoid.

“I know nothing about your commanding officer’s memory capability.” For reason not currently understandable by machines, this answer satisfies Officer Parker.

Another pause.

“Alright then Mr. - whatever number you are. You win.”

“I am 8891110A . Humans who have trouble with that name call me Clarice.”

“Clarice? But your voice sounds like (well, I mean, just a little, not a lot, I guess-) Clarice is a woman’s name,” she finishes lamely.

“My speech model is not calibrated to possess a human gender, and I prefer the name Clarice.” Officer Parker has no idea how to respond. I picked the name before my current status as a sociology faculty chair, and I might have chosen a different one now, but human response to my name is a useful background indicator. Whatever else, what causes Officer Parker to throw people through walls is not triggered by gender confusion.

“Anyway Officer Parker, the vLog shows you cursing the New Boston Militia’s current uniform policy and accusing the clerk of killing humans before the Revolution of 2207, which, I might add, is a forty-three-year-old historical event that occurred some fifteen years before that clerk’s memory units and chassis were even constructed. Attacking a clerk that was merely attempting to do his job and throwing a patron through 2.2 centimeters of glass hardly demonstrate standard police conduct. Such a display of violence and physical strength triggered my interest, but I am here because the video log categorizes you squarely as a priority 2 case study.”

“Priority 2?”

“A violent nonconformist. A human who-”

“It was self defense. Check the tape.”

“- has limited human societal interaction. Who demands that the world has an order and a reason which do not match the human society around them. Who finds the fastest, most efficient way to effect the change. They usually threaten other humans’ perceived social order, although not always through physical violence,” I finish.

“I’m a categorized nonconformist?” she asks with a smile. She is thinking that I am “quaint.” I am thinking how strange it is that someone so violent is in the employ of the New Boston Militia instead of prison.

“Yes. Most humans designated this way are incarcerated and

inaccessible to academic data gatherers like myself. Sheer chance has provided a valuable case study, although if you continue this behavior it is likely that you will also end up-”

“They said I could keep my hands.” she says, annoyed at the implied threat of prison, yet another strange human punishment.

“Excuse me?”

“When they hired me as an officer, as an enforcer, they said I could keep my hands, but all along they were going to force me to change them. When I went to the commissary, they wanted me to change my hands so I would fit in the uniform. Used it as a loophole, a trick. They tried to take them off!” She stares back at the hands on the table. The hands don't move. “And now they have.”

“Who is 'they'?” I ask. Tanya remains silent. I will try again later. “Very well. Please start at the beginning, wherever you feel that to be, and tell me why those old, inefficient prosthetics are important to you. Do they make you different? Make you remember?” More pausing. Perhaps she is balancing out all the screaming from earlier this evening. More pausing.

“You know,” I say, “most subjects are much more eager to explain themselves. You are very trying.” More pausing. Finally-

“What do you get from this?” she asks me, squinting her eyes hard.

“As I said earlier, I am the Sociology Faculty Chair of Harvard. I study human behavior. It's very hard to draw conclusions from the available data, Officer Parker. I can use new data to understand humans better.”

“And why do you need to understand humans better? What benefit is it to you? Most bots on the squad understand me just fine, even if the clerk at the commissary's a fascist.”

“Sentient machines do not understand human motivation. This causes unnecessary conflict. It is not efficient. There is something missing from our current understanding that must be corrected with more data.” She laughs.

“Well that's stupid. Humans want food, sex, and entertainment. We're very simple. Nothing hard or complicated or different for us, Clarice.”

“More possible combinations of human foods, sexual activities, and types of entertainment exist than do particles in the universe. No machine could test all of those, even if that comment was not sarcastic,” I say. “And although my personal understanding of human sarcasm is limited, in my experience, it appears to be a linguistic structure designed to avoid answering my questions. This interview is becoming inefficient.”

It may still be more cost effective at this point to abandon this woman and go film a homeless man I saw in the park yesterday. A priority 4 non-violent, forced nonconformist would also make a useful case study. Tanya ponders for a moment.

“Wait,” says Tanya. “I'll make a deal. You're from Harvard. You have influence, or you couldn't have gotten in here to talk to me. I'll talk to you if you tell them they have to let me keep my hands.”

“I have no jurisdiction over the New Boston Militia's uniform code.”

“Will you just tell my CO?” she pleads. I calculate the possibility of my perceived “human” social status factoring into the jurisdiction of the New Boston Militia's uniform code.

“I will tell them what you have requested.” I say the word slowly, to

emphasize the statement's uncertainty.

“Good. Okay Clarice,” she leans back in her chair and holds out the stubs of her arms in an open gesture. “What do you want to know?”

I try to explain what I need in simple questions.

“You have more strength than the average human female. Why do you like those arms instead of the modern prosthetics that look like average hands?” She keeps me back from what I need with simpler answers.

“Where I'm from, they were what there was.”

“Where are you from?”

“Where I was born. South. Check the file.” I have Tanya's file stored in my memory. I'm running analysis on it now as I interview her. I pull out the data, straining it through current human social trends. A human family group with no resources, living in an old human war zone chock full of undetonated weapons. That explains the arms, but not the woman.

“Where did you work before you joined the New Boston Militia three days ago?”

“Here and there.”

“Outside of a larger human society then?” I trigger a reaction. Her facial muscles all squish inward, towards her nose.

“Do you like human 'society' so much, Clarice? You want to herd us all to herd together, in little matching priority groups? Force us into pens? Keep us in our places so you can study us easier?” She is full of a very old fear for so young a person.

“Officer Parker, you are making a historical reference to the Sentient Machine Exploration Period between 2171 and 2207? Your thought process is highly irregular.”

“What's highly irregular is the way you talk, Clarice. How old are you, anyway?”

“My current chassis is four years old, my official Sentience marker is fifty years old, and my initial memories are seventy five years old.”

“Then you should understand human fear of bots.”

“Officer Parker, Sentient Machines recognize that humans created us. We watch humans. No Sentient Machine has been responsible for the death of a human in fifty years, and humans control the human legal and prison systems. In the mean time, humans have killed each other off by the thousands. It is part of what we still can not analyze.” I do not tell Officer Parker that the other part is the concept of fear. Evolutionary theory does not come anywhere close to explaining the irrational behavior that results from scared humans, no matter how many blood samples I test for hormones. Evolutionary theory also does not explain priority 1, but I, as well as the Sentient Machines in the sociology department at Harvard and worldwide, we are confident that with enough data, we can find the answer.

“Well what can you analyze, anyway? What about what I eat and what kind of music I listen to? Can you get that?”

“That is not the kind of knowledge we seek. Your body needs food to continue producing energy to keep you alive. Music is a form of social interaction designed for maximum breeding impact and aiding human memory. We understand that already.” Tanya has a strange cast to her

features that I see at least fifteen times a day. There is a 99.992% chance that Tanya is about to ask me about love.

“Clarice, if you can't get fear, can you get love?”

Current Sentient Machine understanding of human love suggests that love is a linear combination of an inbred desire to pass on your genes, which fights with the desire to pass on all human genes instead of, for example, bear genes. Various humans balance the weights of passing on self and passing on species according to social upbringing. Current Sentient Machine understanding of human behavior also suggests that if you tell a human this, they will become much less communicative with you.

“Not entirely, Officer Parker. Please continue with your story.”

“What? Yes, my arms. Anyway, last week, I was sitting in a bar downtown, the one next to the memorial with all those creepy sculptures of the dancing kids on the spaceship.” A database query finds the memorial and bar location. (See vLog photo reference #6771: *Satellite Expectation* Victims Memorial).

“In comes this man, and he's got this gun big enough to blow the roof off with! Now, this man demands all the metal and valuables from everyone in the bar. The security bot steps in front of him and he just,” she gestures with her arm stubs, still refusing the new prosthetics, “BAM, blows the bot to pieces! The body was fried rubber. I think the smell caused me to snap, because I sneaked up behind him-”

“You were angry that the man damaged the SM's body?”

“Of course! He KILLED that bot.”

“You are aware that Sentient Machines keep most of themselves on networks?” Humans often have trouble with the concept of Sentient Machines not dying. “Occasionally, a Sentient Machine shuts down, but we don't usually die. Do you understand, Officer Parker?”

“Of course. Why should you die? You don't have a body. You can live forever!” I privately calculate the odds that the bot was indeed on a network and not one of those rare Sentient Machines that turns suicidal. I am reasonably satisfied with the results.

“Anyway, even if the bot is still alive, that's not the point. The point is, I just picked that man up and bashed his head against the wall, and he stayed down, and all the people in the bar were still alive, and I was still alive, and they cheered for me.”

“I see. And then? “

“Officer Jakshaw said I could be an enforcer, that I could stop people with guns. I'd never thought about it, but it really meant something to me.”

“To prevent what happened to you from happening to someone else?” Officer Parker stops for a moment and inclines her head.

“Not really, no. I mean, I didn't get lose my arms getting shot. It was more- the guy was so happy that we were afraid of him. On such a power trip and I hate people like that. And no one got angry when I bashed his face in. I thought if I did it this way, I could stop running around to make a living, but if they make me switch arms, I'm not staying.”

“'Running around?' ”

“You know how it is for humans around here. I have no house, no job, no man. The last of the family died when my real arms got blown off, years

ago.”

“Which brings us back to the original question. Why keep the old prosthetics? The new ones will work. Smaller, but still Samson Titanium Model SLRs.” Tanya shakes her head.

“They aren't mine. They're all I have left that's me.”

“So these prosthetics help you define yourself? They allow you to identify yourself?”

“I thought you said you weren't a psychiatrist, Clarice.”

“I am not. I do not currently possess that medical knowledge. I only-”

“I know. Collect data on freaks.”

“-collect data on humans outside standardized human society. We seek to understand why some humans thrive outside structure and others do not. It may hold the key to full analysis of human behavior.” It is inefficient to talk about this with Tanya instead of gathering more of her data. I continue on.

“But you want the old prosthetics back because they were a part of your identity.” I add a small drop of data about prosthetic limbs to the ocean of data proving that how humans identify themselves holds a huge influence on their behavior. I move on.

“That's right. They're part of who I was. Lots of memories, I guess.”

“I see.” I do not see. I run some tests on the data I gather. She is a rare but not unique case profile in my data: apart from society but not a sociopath. No living family, friends, or known social relationships. No social contact or stored value to live for before the job acquired by accident. Defined only by past memories, yet still alive and looking towards the future. That same human insistence on staying alive, for no apparent reason. No reason at all, and yet, there she sits. Another dead end.

“Well, “ I say. “I will be leaving now. I will speak with the Commanding Officer about returning your prosthetics.” Tanya scrunches her face again.

“Wait a minute, after all that buildup about Harvard and sociology, that's all you wanted to know? How I got my job and where I got my arms? I was just enjoying this. What about the rest of me, Clarice? That's it?” Even as a priority 2 violent nonconformist, Tanya is still a human that craves social interaction. I have nothing more to give her.

“The rest of you is not statistically significant.” I say.

“But what are you looking for?” she asks. “What's priority 1 for sociology?”

“I cannot tell you that.” I say, and I walk out. After all, Priority 1 is why we let the humans out in 2207. They are strange, but we are smart. They made us, but we will keep studying them until we understand them. We will figure out why we are here.

vLog << End Filmed Case Study Subject 14A22