

Intentional: How to Live, Love, Work and Play Meaningfully by David Amerland Excerpt

Because all this is serious I can afford to be flippant, though as you will see even my flippancy has a very serious intent. So, I will add here that the one ‘rule’ we all need to keep in mind is that favourite of William S. Burroughs’ from his *Naked Lunch* “Nothing is true; everything is permitted”. Burroughs, of course, borrowed this from Vladimir Bartol, who used it in his novel *Alamut*. Bartol, himself borrowed it, and slightly changed it in the process, from the teachings of Hassan-i Sabbah who was the founder of the Order of the Assassins, historically known as the Nizari Assassins. The tale, writings and doctrine of the Order was incorporated in the storyline of the popular video game *Assassin’s Creed* which is where I first came across it and filed it away for future reference which brings us to here and now. You reading what I’ve written.

What do we, what can we learn from this? That life is circuitous but the circuit has polygonal junctures with cultural jumps and bends that require an open mind and a thirst for cultural learning in order for the metaphorical dots to connect? Or, that nothing is truly original, that everything is borrowed from somewhere else and made to fit the moment and its time?

Both, I’d argue. If you are truly living and if you truly feel alive you are aware of both context and history. Moment and time. *Alamut* was written as an implied rebuke to Mussolini’s fascism. *Naked Lunch* is a chronicle of the messiness of life and its often unplanned trajectory where the brain makes sense of basically senseless moments of existence. This book is about learning to behave in ways that help you get more out of your life.