

Summary/Bullets: What I've Come/Am Coming to Believe/01 January 2013

*The power to invent (*and* execute) is switching/flipping rapidly/inexorably to the network. “Me” is transitioning to “We”—as consumers and producers. Nouns are giving way to gerunds—it’s an “ing”/shapeshifting world!

*The Internet *must* stay open and significantly unregulated to enable, among other things, the entrepreneurial spurt that will significantly underpin world economic growth.

*Entrepreneurial behavior and upstart entrepreneurial enterprises have underpinned every monster shift in the past, such as farm to factory. This time will likely be no different.

*An obsession with a “Fortune 500” of more or less stable giants dictating “the way we do things” will likely become an artifact of the past. (Though big companies/“utilities” will not disappear.)

*There is simply no limit to invention or entrepreneurial opportunities! (Please read twice.)

*The new star bosses will be “wizards”/“maestros.”

*Sources of sustained profitability will often be elusive in a “soft-services world.”

*Control and accountability will be a delicate dance. Now you see it, now you don't ...

*Trial and error, *many many many* trials and *many many many* errors *very very very* rapidly will be the rule; tolerance for and delight in rapid learning—and unlearning—will be a/the most valued skill.

*“Gamers” instinctively “get” the idea of lots of trials, lots of errors, as fast as possible; for this reason among many, “the revolution” is/will be to a very significant degree led by youth.

*Women may well flourish to the point of domination in new leadership roles in these emergent/ethereal settings that dominate the landscape—power will be exercised almost entirely indirectly, which is business-as-usual for most women.

*The “Brand You”/“Me, Inc.” idea is alive and well and getting healthier every day and is ... not optional. Fact is, we mostly all will have to behave as/be entrepreneurial tapdancers to survive, let alone thrive. (Again, the under-35 set already seem mostly to get this; besides, this was the norm until 90 years ago.)

*Individual performance and accountability will be more important than ever, but will be measured by one’s peers along dimensions such as reliability, trustworthiness, engagement, flexibility, willingness to spend a majority of one’s time helping others with no immediate expected return.

*AI is ripping through traditional jobs at an accelerating pace. Virtually no job, circa 2000, no matter how “high end,” will remain in a recognizable way within 15-25 years. It’s as simple—and as traumatic—as that.

*3-D printing is likely a gamechanger.

*Wholesale/continuous/intense re-education (forgetting as well as learning) is a lifelong pursuit/imperative; parent Goal #1: Don’t kill the curiosity with which the child is born!

*STEM/Science-Technology-Engineering-Math excellence is essential in a world buffeted by technology—but it has severe limitations. I favor the more robust formulation labeled STEAM/steAm. The “A” is for Art, or the arts. “The arts” are to some extent “what’s left” in terms of value creation as AI/robotics vacuum up traditional high-end occupations—think Apple.

*The surprisingly good news: Education is busily re-inventing itself and leaving the ed establishment in the dust! The idea of and shape of education per se are erasing all that’s come before.

*GRIN/Genetics-Robotics-Informatics-Nanotech: Overwhelming transformation is hardly just the provenance of AI/Robotics. Change, entrepreneurial activities and early adoption in the “G”/genetics and the “N”/nanotech arenas are accelerating. In fact, our 25 year horizon may border on the unrecognizable.

*Government has a large role to play. E.g., government-funded BASIC-research and development is a major-league necessity—which is growing rather than diminishing. Acknowledging the limits, at times severe, of markets is imperative!

*Governance: It is hard to imagine that fundamental systems of human arrangement-governance will remain unchanged.

*Downside? I have during my months of forced re-education moved from a position of deep pessimism to one of guarded optimism. Will “everything be different” in 10-25 years? Perhaps. Will we adapt individually and organizationally; history says yes, but common sense says there are no sure bets, and frightful issues (from genetics to war-and-peace) can readily be imagined. Stay tuned.