Chapter 3

Good News and Mixed Blessings

> There are two futures, the future of desire and the future of fate, and man s reason has never learnt to separate them.
>
> - J. D. Bernal (1929)[1]

We are entering a new stage of the Internet: high-capacity (including video) communications will become available and affordable on a global scale. The upgraded Internet will change the world s one-way flow of mass communications to passive audiences and permit a more democratic and participatory future. Earlier, direct communication with many people on a global scale was prohibitively expensive. Next, these technical and economic barriers will be mitigated. Ordinary individuals and institutions can create and send text and sound, and even television, from desktop PCs to global destinations; select their channels and linkups from thousands (or even millions) of options from around the world; and interact with other users.

What will be the social and political impact of these new capabilities?

- A first, broad, answer is that there is good news ahead. Communications is a part of almost every human activity: Technologies

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[1] Quoted in: Arthur C. Clarke, "Review: Imagined Worlds by Freeman Dyson (1997)," in *Greetings Carbon-Based Bipeds: Collected Essays 1934 - 1998*, ed. Athur C. Clarke (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 1999), 497.

that support it will be faster, cheaper, more powerful - all, by several orders of magnitude - and capable of a global range. Everybody (individuals and organizations) will benefit.

  - The second broad answer - to which part II of this book is devoted - is that, to a greater degree than before in history, the future will not be determined by impersonal forces carrying us to a prewired destination. These are technologies of (new) freedom: The future can be created by the visions and organizing of many individuals and organizations, not just the traditional major players, the national governments or large corporations.

  This chapter is divided into two parts (Table 3 -1). Part I concerns the good news. Part II discusses mixed blessings in four areas (e.g., mirroring of society; new organization and re-organization; political acceleration; and changes in the mass media, especially a changed role of television journalism in the democratic process.

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Table 3-1

Good News and Mixed Blessings

Benefits
- A cornucopia of new devices and applications
    - Small device Internet
    - Portable, walk-around Internet
    - Home entertainment Internet
    - Business and professional Internets
    - Home PC Internet
- A cornucopia of new services and data
- Increased productivity
- Improved markets, domestic and global
- Potential benefits for underdeveloped countries

Mixed Blessings
- A Reflection of society
- New Organization and re-organization
    - Niche markets
    - Contact nets and influence
- Acceleration
    - Accelerated politics and potential conflict
        - Organizing and human rights
        - Organization and counter-organization
        - Beyond liberation?
    - Unexpected meltdowns
- Effects of competition on the mass media
    - The competitive shift
    - The decline of national news
    - The special problem of local news/democracy
    - Beyond the water s edge?

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- Next steps?

<u>Part I - Benefits</u>

To review the good news, I will begin with an inventory of a.) new products and b.) large-scale applications that are being developed to use the new technologies. Next, I will discuss several larger effects (e.g., the improvement of competitive markets and leap-frog advantages for underdeveloped countries) that are likely to be widely beneficial.

A.) <u>A Cornucopia of New Devices and Applications</u>

We are likely to be surprised by some new applications, but their technical attributes can be predicted: they will become smaller, faster, cheaper, more powerful, and two-way. If desired, they can integrate all media (audio, sound, video, text). They will recognize simple spoken commands. They will link with larger, faster, wireless (if desired), and less expensive connections to a high-capacity global Internet. All devices - cellular telephones, cable television, the desktop Internet, radio, etc. - will be able to connect via the new Internet. Alongside human users, the assigned addresses on the Internet will expand rapidly to include devices and monitors (ranging downward in size to nanotechnology), each with their own online connections and independent interactions with each other.

The larger and faster Internet connections, which will support Internet television, will have their first uses in the nine-to-five working day of large organizations for videoconferencing (including international videoconferencing) and training; and also in home entertainment options.
They will become available on the home desktop PC Internet as reliable connections move upward to 2+ Mbps.

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Here are examples of new applications:[2]

1.) <u>Small Device Internet</u>

    - Small monitors that can be worn by children or pets and, via Global Positioning System (GPS) satellites, provide a parent or owner with instant information about whereabouts. Similar devices in upscale cars can be queried to report their locations in parking lots; if they are stolen; or if there are is a breakdown and they need to be located by a tow service in an unknown area.

    - Smart video cameras at intersections to detect automobiles that enter on red lights. Photographs of offenders will be sent automatically to a central office that will mail a copy of the evidence and ticket to the owner of the vehicle. (These applications already are being deployed.)[3]

    - Similar low-cost wireless cameras and monitors will provide the capacity for 100% surveillance of highways to catch speeders; of high-crime districts and neighborhoods (with micro-

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[2] Newspaper and magazine articles on these themes are frequent. For overviews see: Peter J. Denning, ed., *The Invisible Future: The Seamless Integration of Technology into Everyday Life* (New York: McGraw Hill, 2002). Frances Cairncross, *The Death of Distance: How the Communications Revolution Will Change Our Lives* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 1997) xi-xvi.

[3] Lisa Baertlein, *Techno-Battle Rages on American Highways* (Online) (Reuters, March 19, 2002, 3:36 PM 2002 [cited March 19 2002]).

phones and passive voice recognition monitoring that activates cameras and links to a police precinct when there is a cry for help.) And there can be continuous security surveillance of public spaces: England, a leader, is expanding to 2 million cameras.[4] (The new surveillance technologies may be benign in advanced democratic countries, but may be used with less restraint elsewhere in the world.)[5]

- Small security devices to scan, record, and check thumb prints for identification.

- Smart vending machines that communicate wirelessly over the Internet, transmitting their needs for restocking.

- Smart home heating oil tanks that communicate directly with the supplier to arrange refills.

- Household appliances and electronic devices will have built-in sensors for more effective maintenance and speedier repairs. Freezers, for example, will be equipped with sensors that sound alarms if the power fails or a door is left ajar, or send

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[4] Christina Ling, *D. C. Security Camera Plan Sparks Debate* [Online] (Reuters, March 22, 2002; 4:24 PM 2002 [cited March 22 2002]).
Julia Scheeres, *Some Camera to Watch over You* (Online) (Wired News, April 5, 2001 2001 [cited April 4 2002]).

[5] Re the growing use of remote surveillance cameras in nursing homes, by relatives of invalid patients, to monitor quality and deter mistreatment: Kelly Greene, "Support Grows for Cameras in Care Facilities," *Wall Street Journal*, March 7 2002.

email messages to a service center, so corrective action can be taken before food is lost.

- The modern automobile has about 60 sensors and 20 micro-processors, and for upscale cars, they will begin to report a summary of the vehicle s condition and any unusual mainte-nance needs to the dealer via Internet connections.[6]

- A new world of sensors and monitors for hospital patients, or patients with chronic health conditions, that use wireless links to transmit medical information and/or summon assistance.

- Wearable communications devices (Star Trek) and microphone-equipped rooms to enable the elderly to call for help in case of falls; and that can locate and call other family members (at higher volume for those who are hard of hearing), or leave voicemail messages.

- Monitors to assist living and safety of an increasingly aging population. Includes safety monitors for range-top burners, left-on by mistake, with abilities to call for help.

2.) Portable, Walk-around Internet: Cellular Telephone & Palm Pilots; New Toys[7]

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[6] Larry Smarr, "Q & A: Planet Internet," *Technology Review*, March 2002, 84.

[7] See also: Eric Bergman, ed., *Information Appliances and Beyond: Interaction Design for Consumer Products* (San Diego, CA: Academic Press, 2000).
Neil Gershenfeld, *When Things Start to Think* (New York: Henry Holt

- Cellular telephones will continue to improve (to third generation, 3G, and beyond) to provide multimedia Internet connections (including - on a very small screen - video). Options also will include Global Positioning System and digital radio. Cellular telephone technology will merge with personal data assistants (PDAs) like the Palm Pilot to become a wireless, walk-around Internet with its own economics and niche. Devices in this category, and other categories, will become capable of simple voice commands.

- Small personal items will be adapted for communications and information processing. New visual displays will be available as eyeglasses; components of voice-command cellular telephones can be included in jewelry.

- Positive-pressure feedback suits and similar training devices will be equipped with miniature monitoring devices to sense and adjust postures and lead golfers (for example) through slow-motion re-enactments of a Tiger Woods golf swing. Or through the bow and finger movements of Yo-Yo Ma playing the cello. (As a result, physical education may become more efficient.)

- By the end of the decade, most Americans (including family members over the age of 12) will have their own (smaller, wireless, low-cost) communications devices - cellular phones, or personal data assistants upgraded for communications.

- Cellular telephones will become smaller and wearable (wrist- or ring - size) with a small (wireless) earpiece/microphone

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and Company, 1999).

headset, and dialing by voice command.

- Toys will become smarter and interactive - e.g., Talking Barneys that can learn a child s name and respond to moods; and also will develop artificial intelligence via wireless Internet links to larger computers and databases.

- New navigational devices for automobiles. In addition to providing directions and map displays they can be linked to traffic centers that will know the destination, receive input from traffic flow monitors and cameras throughout the region, and provide optimal routes and continuing changes depending upon traffic conditions

3.) <u>Home Entertainment Internet</u>
- Standard (analog) broadcast television and cable television will become part of the (digital) entertainment Internet, with programming available as video-on-demand downloads.

- High Definition television that provides digital sound in a 360-degree circle, and a large, theater-size screen. And new surround sound headphone technology that offer similar audio effects without requiring five-six speakers.[8]

- Smart digital recorders to screen-out commercials; and that will be easy to use.

- Home music and theater systems will become smarter, and will adjust the performance of speakers to provide optimum

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[8] Eric Taub, "Surround Sound through Headphones," *The New York Times*, March 7 2002.

acoustics where-ever a listener is located. Digital quality radio, via cable or satellite, will begin to replace current FM radios.

- Hundreds of television channels, including video-on-demand capabilities to access archives on-line and watch any program or movie, at any time. And any sporting event.

- Virtual reality and holographic entertainment capability will begin to arrive via devices that provide tactile feedback and 3-D imaging. There will be online games and simulations that involve complex and created worlds and permit several players to share an adventure.[9] New Hollywood special effects user interfaces will permit travel through 3-D databases in cyber-space.

- Increased availability of online gambling. (AOL may offer each of its worldwide users a chance to win $10 million every morn-ing when they log-on. The cost of a mouse-click will be 25¢; the option will only be offered to users who are not offended by it.)

- Advanced tools for composers and graphic artists will in-crease productivity. Falling prices may produce a Renaissance as a wider universe of individuals experiment with developing their creative potential in their spare time.[10]

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[9] Nich Montfort, "From Playstation to PC," *Technology Review*, March 2002.

[10] For example: Matthew Mirapaul, "Arts Online: From a Few Colored Lines Come the Sounds of Music," *The New York Times*, May 27 2002.

- High-definition flat screens that can be hung on walls and that, wirelessly, will display any work of art by any artist, downloaded from on-line archives; the displays can be changed; and also modify the image so that the pictures will be brighter than framed reproductions (as if lit professionally); and (if desired) with subtle emphasis of brush-strokes and surface features so they appear to be original oils. Etc.

- Home entertainment options will extend to the automobile, which will become a traveling entertainment center. Special XM (digital satellite radio) service will provide commercial free music, of any type, anywhere in the country (& with good reception).

4.) <u>Business and Professional Internets</u>
Businesses will spend money for new, fast, glitch-free (private) Internet services throughout their company and with their principal customers and suppliers.

- Corporate mini-channels and intra-nets will be used extensively for coordination, e.g., to provide feedback with current measures of common goals and benchmark best practices.[11] And also for training. [This already is underway. Forty-five percent of the top 1,000 U.S. companies (ranked by revenue) have started to use internal Webcasting and will spend about $290 million on this application in 2001.[12]

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[11] Carla O'Dell, C. Jackson Grayson Jr., and Nilly Essaides, *If Only We Knew What We Know: The Transfer of Internal Knowledge and Best Practice* (New York: Free Press, 1998).

[12] Riva Richmond, "Video Streaming Is a Sleeper Hit with

- Desktop videoconferencing will become routine, domestically and internationally and will replace telephone conference calls as the preferred technology for group discussion.

- It will be a Golden Age for managers and workers who love to multi-task at their desks.

- New groupware systems will assist discussion and collaboration.[13]

- Professions will develop specialized Internet desktops or workstation interfaces (similar to the Bloomberg terminal for financial data). These will, for example, permit a medical specialist to access all of the relevant information on the Internet quickly through pull-down menus (which can be customized by the physician) rather than visit separate sites and drill-down several levels.

- Journalists will be equipped with portable one-man television broadcast stations, including their own satellite uplinks, usable anywhere in the world.[14]

Business Crowd," *Wall Street Journal*, August 20 2001.

[13] For basic papers: David Marca and Geoffrey Bock, eds., *Groupware: Software for Computer-Supported Cooperative Work* (Los Alamitos, CA: IEEE Computer Society Press, 1992).

[14] Broadcast quality video, from the current 128kbps to 400+kbps awaits launch of new INMARSAT satellites in 2004. Susan E. Reed, "Reporting Live, from Almost Anywhere," *The New York Times*, January 31 2002, E5.

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5.) <u>Desktop PC Internet</u>

The desktop PC will be able to control and use all of the new devices and capabilities (above) via the Internet including (once the online link passes 2 Mbps) all of the basic video and television capabilities of the entertainment Internet except the high end (e.g., virtual reality, high-definition television).

- Telephone service will be routinely available via the desktop PC and the Internet, steeply reducing domestic and international telephone bills.

- Desktop PCs will be routinely equipped for videophone and do-it-yourself Webcasts (television-quality transmission over the Internet.)

- Soon, to contact somebody, all you will need to remember is one telephone number, just like the old days. Smart agents will search online databases and present, in pop-up boxes on your screen, all of the new options: email, fax, home telephone, cellular telephone, business telephone, voicemail, etc. for a respondent without requiring that you learn and store all of the numbers on your own computer. If you enter a home telephone, your pop-up display will provide all of the contact options for each family member.

- Inexpensive, Linux-based operating systems that run Windows programs in Windows-like interfaces will be widely available and used, especially in developing countries.

- A greater portion of increased capacity will be allocated to make computers easier to use. For example, voice recognition capability will improve and there will be sufficient intelligence

to speak elements of a To Do list (Computer, remind me to buy a new printer cartridge when I go to the store on Tuesday) that will automatically be transcribed, linked to relevant applications (e.g., updates to a Palm Pilot).

For each of these Internets, and especially the desktop PC Internet, there also will be a new world of large-scale applications that increase their benefit:

B. A Cornucopia of New Services and Data

A new world of services and data will benefit many users. For example;

- Standard protocols will permit all geographically-based data collected by US governments to be accessed on-line, displayed on maps, and overlaid with other data sets. A new world of data will become widely available for visual display and analysis. Thus, for the first time, it will be possible for citizens or lawmakers to sit at a terminal and call-up all available data collected by federal or state agencies about health quality, air or water quality, and see the distributions overlaid on a map of the state. Or for newspapers to print weekly city maps showing types of crime, by location.

- Professions and consulting firms will develop benchmarking and best practices databases to accelerate learning and increase productivity in their areas of responsibility.[15] (One

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[15] For an example of visionary leadership by the International Benchmarking Clearinghouse, see: O'Dell, Grayson Jr., and Essaides, *If Only We Knew What We Know: The Transfer of Internal Knowledge and Best Practice.*

example, already underway to assist teachers in K-12 is www.learner.org, a Website and PBS channel underwritten by the Annenberg Foundation.)

- Scientific societies will develop Webcasting & archiving cooperatives to bring scientific conferences and lecture series to the desktops of all their members, worldwide, as quickly as possible. Each participating research institution will contribute x hours of its best material, receiving in return many times the value of this investment contributed by other research institutions in a field.

- A global virtual library for music that (for a monthly subscription) will allow you to listen to any piece of music, by any composer and performer, at any time; and to organize evening programs.

- A global virtual library for all of the performing arts that will perform the same function of plays (e.g., all versions of Hamlet available on commercial or private videotape) and motion pictures, opera and ballet.

- Public library systems will work together to begin a global virtual library available, without charge, to anyone with a library card. It will begin with reference books in all fields; and selected non-fiction work. (All local library systems can join, for an annual subscription, to provide access to their users.) The virtual library will be extended to classic works of fiction and poetry (in the public domain).

- The world s largest museums will go on-line as virtual museums, permitting users to visit, online, and to move through the

museum and see if as if they were there physically.

- Telephone companies will upgrade their services: the Yellow Pages will be available online. And new (online) telephone directories will be upgraded with all of the relevant contact information for an individual or business (telephone, fax, email addresses for each family member, etc.)

- There will be a Golden Age of technology to support creative artists - e.g., resources for graphic artists, including creators of Hollywood special effects. With an eye to its vastly increased need for programming, and anything that people will watch, the entertainment industry will begin to develop and under-write packages that permit high schools to offer basic courses in script-writing and video production; and also music compos-ing.

- Family doctors and specialists will be able to write informa-tion prescriptions that will allow patients to enter a code number and receive a fully-customized set of Web pages, presenting the best and latest medical information from the National Library of Medicine, and other information the physi-cian wants his patients to have (e..g, consumer information about purchasing or renting wheelchairs; information about side-effects of medications and when to call the physician; the name of a nurse or nurse-practitioner who can answer ques-tions). The customized information also can be provided online in different languages; or spoken (rather than written) for patients who are blind or illiterate; etc.

- New biomedical databases, integrating results of genome mapping, will help doctors to match new therapies to individ-

ual patients.

- As broadband expands, and new technology for Internet Webcasting and video archives becomes more widely used, there will be a wider range of high-quality programming for every area of interest. For example, alumni associations will underwrite their colleges and universities to put notable campus events - distinguished lectures, audio-slide tours of special shows at the college art gallery, concerts - online and in the public domain, for their alumni and public relations on behalf of recruitment. (Even 6 hours/year from 200 leading institutions in the US will create an additional 1,200 hours of high-quality viewing options.)

- Online access (although, not for credit) to state-of-the-art courses in sciences; and to state-of-the-art lectures and colloquia series in many areas of sciences. (This is getting underway: MIT has decided to raise $100 million and to put its 2,000 courses online, without charge.[16] And the National Institutes of Health is putting its crossroads lectures and conferences, online without charge at www.videocast.nih.gov.)

We also can forecast three additional areas of widespread benefit: c.) improved productivity; d.) improved markets; and e.) (potential) special benefits for underdeveloped countries.

C.) Improved Productivity

The new technologies will permit individuals and businesses to become more efficient. The changes will follow an S curve as the

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[16] Carey Goldberg, "Auditing Classes at MIT, on the Web and Free," *The New York Times*, April 4 2001.

success of leaders gives them sufficient competitive advantage that lagging competitors bestir themselves. The extent of these gains in economic productivity are likely to emerge in the long-term, when (as we saw in the last chapter) they are combined with changes in the organization of a firm, and its relations with other firms, that use the technology to its best advantage.[17]

The impact of Wal-Mart is a good example of the process. A recent study under the supervision of the economist Robert Solow found that the most important factor in productivity growth in the US economy from 1995 to 2000 was the leadership of Wal-Mart. They combined new technology with institutional innovation: economies of scale in warehouse logistics and purchasing; electronic data interchange with all stores and companies throughout their supply chain; and wireless bar code scanners. In 1987, Wal-Mart had a nine percent market share but was 40 percent more productive than its competitors. By the mid-1990s, the market share was 27 percent with a productivity advantage of 48 percent. Finally Wal-Mart s unprepared competitors woke-up; they began to imitate its innovations and increased their own productivity by 28 percent from 1995 to 1999, a period in which Wal-Mart added another 20% gain in

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[17] Paul Strassmann was an early leader in criticizing the tendency to buy new technology without integration into a strategic vision that would use it to good advantage. See: Charles Jonscher, *The Evolution of Wired Life: From the Alphabet to the Soul-Catcher Chip - How Information Technologies Change Our World* (New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1999) 187-209, 188. See also Manuel Castells, *The Internet Galaxy: Reflections on the Internet, Business, and Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001) 98.

productivity.[18] (By the end of 2001, Wal-Mart had passed General Motors to become the largest corporation in the world.)[19]

D. Improved Markets, Domestic and Global

History shows that new communications technology is used to organize and improve markets. The telegraph built the great commodity, futures, stock, and financial markets in America (and worldwide); and it made fortunes for the early buccaneers who could use the competitive advantage that an immediate access to distant information made possible.[20]

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[18]Michael Schrage, "Wal-Mart Trumps Moore's Law," *Technology Review*, March 2002. A report from the McKinsey Global Institute; the advisory committee was chaired by Robert Solow.

[19] Many other US industries that invested heavily in information technology during this same period showed no productivity growth. Whether there is a potential to increase productivity in these industries, via information technology, and/or what additional changes are needed, remains unclear. See: Gerard Berker and Paul Abrahams, "Forget It, It Was Wal-Mart Behind That US Miracle," *Financial Times*, October 17 2001. On the recent productivity debate see www.ft.com/productivity.

[20] William Nelson Parker, "Communication Techniques and Social Organization (1982)," in *Europe, America, and the Wider World: Essays on the Economic History of Western Capitalism*, ed. William Parker (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 155-59. Richard B. Du Boff, "The Telegraph and the Structure of Markets in the United States, 1845-1890," in *Research in Economic History*, ed. Paul Uselding (Greenwich, CT: JAI Publishers, 1982). Tom Standage, *The Victorian Internet: The Remarkable Story of the Telegraph and the Nineteenth Century's on-Line Pioneers* (New York:

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The Internet already is improving markets and redressing older imbalances. It has revitalized the auction, both for individuals and business-to-business purchases.[21] It has changed how new and used automobiles are bought and sold; travel reservations; new and used books; and life insurance.[22] The online sale of books by amazon.com and its competitors is a good example of the benefits: only a fraction of published books are available in even the largest book store. Amazon.com can improve efficiency, convenience, and add services.

The long-term impact of the Internet on markets remains unclear. In the earliest days of the Internet, when there was a period of hype for the New Economy. Jeff Bezos of amazon.com became <u>Time</u> magazine s Man of the Year well before his company showed a profit. There were predictions that amazon.com might acquire 80% of the market; and that any New Economy startup might wipe-out old economy competitors.[23] Now, with more than 50% of Americans on-line, the early media hype appears unrealistic: online book sales seem to have reached a plateau of about 7%; current estimates are that the buying habits of younger people might slowly raise this

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Walker and Company, 1998) 106-09. Re the NASDAQ electronic exchange as the first large electronic market: Robert E. Hall, *Digital Dealing: How E-Markets Are Transforming the Economy* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001) 105-24.

[21] Ibid.,, 9-104.

[22] Bill Gates, Nathan Myhrvold, and Peter Rinearson, *The Road Ahead*, Revised ed. (New York: Penguin, 1996).

[23] John Cassidy, *Dot.Con: The Greatest Story Ever Sold* (New York: Harper Collins, 2002).

share to 15%.[24] (Parallel claims that society was about to be trans-
formed into an Information Society also seem exaggerated. There
will be many changes ahead, but at the 50%+ adoption point, Ameri-
can society still closely resembles the American society of the 1990s
- i.e., a familiar kind of society with the addition of better communi-
cations.)[25]

   The largest impacts on markets may be in developing countries.
Sears Roebuck was the amazon.com of its day, mailing its large
catalog of farm implements, tools, and everything else to people
across small town and rural America. Today, most Americans can
get in their car and drive to their local shopping mall to see tens of
thousands of products. But in UDCs - with many rural areas, and
limited access to stores - the Internet is ideally suited for the equiva-
lent of a Sears Roebuck startup, with its catalog online.

E. Potential Benefits for Underdeveloped Countries
   Underdeveloped countries can be among the greatest beneficia-

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[24] David D. Kirkpatrick, "Sales Growth in Books Online Is
Leveling Off," *The New York Times*, September 16 2001.

[25] Frank Webster, *Theories of the Information Society*, ed. John
Urry, *International Library of Sociology* (New York: Routledge, 1995)
1-29, 215-20. There are more white collar knowledge workers. Yet
calling CEOs and middle managers knowledge managers, while it
may be helpful for them in thinking about their jobs, does not
inherently change their old job. Webster s conceptual question is
whether it is helpful to think of a continuity of society, with an
expansion of knowledge-based activities and some areas of
important change; or to claim that everything has changed so
profoundly that there is a new type of society.

ries in the new era if there is a basic investment to assure public access (chapter six). The world-changing economics of the Internet is anywhere = everywhere: anything that is online, anywhere in the world, can be a resource for people in UDCs, at a minimal cost, either through direct links or the development of regional or local Internet public libraries that mirror high-use Websites and contents. The impact on education may be dramatic, as the best curriculum materials from anywhere in the world become available online to students everywhere.

Users in UDCs also will benefit because the costs to invent new technologies are paid by early users in advanced countries.[26] A corollary to Moore s Law (chapter one) is the business requirement that each new generation of microprocessor must be priced to pay for itself and return its measure of profit within three years, when the next generation arrives. This means that the true, long-term cost of manufacture for consumer electronics is only about 15% - 25% of the retail price. Since all of the basic (56K) and broadband applica- tions we can envision for today s desktop PCs can be handled by microprocessors that came to the market in the late 1990s, this old technology will permit UDCs to participate fully in the Internet at only a fraction of the cost of computers in developed countries. And underdeveloped countries will not need to buy, and then scrap, such older technologies as copper wire telephone systems. (Africa already is the first continent where cellular telephones exceed wireline telephones.)[27]

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[26] Cairncross, *The Death of Distance: How the Communications Revolution Will Change Our Lives* 255.

[27] Mark Turner, "The Call of Africa Grows Louder," *Financial Times*, August 21 2001.

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Against this background, I will now turn to the mixed blessings the upgraded Internet will bring. With anticipation, it may be possible to monitor trends and partly mitigate adverse effects as they begin to develop.

II. Mixed Blessings

New technologies are mixed blessings. Visionaries often anticipate that new technologies will produce high-minded and uplifting results. (Radio would bring opera to the masses. The Internet will allow high school students across the country to access the transcripts of Presidential press conferences, download weather reports from Kenya, and browse the Library of Congress . . .)[28]

However new technologies - and especially these new technologies of freedom (chapter two) - offer no guarantee except choice. To give several examples:

- Low-cost, computer-assisted, long distance telephone systems permit the salesmen of telemarketing companies to dial several home telephone numbers at the same time, hanging-up as soon as the first call is connected (and while other home-

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[28] Utopian forecasts are often voiced for new, major technologies. See: Leo Marx, "Information Technology in Historical Perspective," in *High Technology and Low-Income Communities: Prospects for the Positive Use of Advanced Information Technology*, ed. Donald A. Schon, Bish Sanyal, and William J. Mitchell (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 131-148).. Typically a points of view industry develops, covering all options. Dis-utopian and paranoid forecasts also are typical.

owners are part-way to the telephone.) Consumers respond with their own new technologies - caller ID and answering machines.

- The audience for soap operas has grown more rapidly than for real operas.

- The same low-cost e-mail technology that permits easy citizen feedback (tens of millions of e-mail messages to their Congressmen and Senators each year - chapter seven) also permits telemarketers to send huge and growing numbers of low-cost junk email messages to individual in-boxes each day. (And creates large secondary markets for the selling of valid email addresses and black markets for the sale of pirated databases.)

- Teenage males visit XXXX sites alongside using the Internet for school work.

- One unanticipated cultural effect of a growth of cable television was to open the door for the World Wrestling Federation s <u>Smackdown</u>, which became the third favorite syndicated television show in the US (just behind Wheel of Fortune and Jeopardy). [29]

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[29] William A. McGeveran Jr., ed., *World Almanac and Book of Facts 2002* (New York: World Almanac Books, 2002) 280. Data for 2000-2001 from Nielsen Media Research. The following sections develop ideas from Lloyd S. Etheredge, "Human Rights Education and the New Telecommunications Technology," in *Human Rights Education for the Twenty-First Century*, ed. George J. Andreopoulos and Richard Pierre Claude, *Pennsylvania Studies in Human Rights* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997).

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Four Stories

To anticipate the world that competitive markets will create, and make thoughtful plans for leadership that can improve upon this future, this section will explore four emerging themes:

> 1.) the baseline of the Internet s effects will be a mirror of society, although tending to increase activities that previously had been regulated and tilting toward benefits for the wealthy;

> 2.) new organizing and re-organizing;

> 3.) acceleration and its effects (including the potential for increased political conflict as well as cooperation); and

> 4.) changes in traditional mass media, especially an unexpected change in the role of television journalism in the democratic process.

1.) Story 1: A Reflection of Society

> The influence of the righteous travels faster
> than a royal edict by post-station service.
> - Confucius

Our baseline expectation should be that the world of cyberspace simply will mirror the world that created it. And this is not surprising: It can be used by anybody, for their current purposes. Esther Dyson has a similar view: the Internet will change everything except human nature.[30]

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[30] Esther Dyson, *Release 2.1: A Design for Living in the Digital*

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Already, the headlines of objectionable Internet-based behavior (Internet Used For . . .) is a catalog of the criminal code: fraud (including credit card fraud), gambling, pornography (including child pornography), invasion of privacy, terrorism (including cyber-terrorism), hate sites and hate crimes.[31] As the Internet becomes part of the background of daily living, such stories will become as arcane as stories that begin Telephone Used For . . . .

However market forces, plus the freedom of the new technologies, will produce effects beyond mere mirroring. An excerpt from an interview by Larry Ellison, a founder of Oracle and one of the new multi-billionaires who will be bringing the future:

> "*[Gambling] is going to be huge. We are a bunch of sinners, as Pat Robertson might say. He will be able to come on and tell us about our sinning, and when we get tired of that we can go back to gambling. I don't think people are anxious to introduce this service right up front. I think we are all trying to be socially responsible and try to get the health care and education applications up before we get the pornography and gambling up.*"
>
> - Larry Ellison[32]

Prohibited activities create higher profits for a black market, and

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Age, Upgraded ed. (New York: Broadway Books, 1998) 8.

[31] Concerning international cyber-crime: Abraham D. Sofaer and Seymour E. Goodman, eds., *The Transnational Dimension of Cyber Crime and Terrorism* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 2001).

[32]Larry Ellison, "Interview with Larry Ellison," *Broadcasting and Cable*, January 17 1994, 84.

new (legitimate) markets will develop in a freer cyberspace to supply a greater quantity of previously restricted options. The commercial point was made candidly by Larry Ellison (in the quotation above): There is profit to be made by serving many people, with different agendas and tastes, and varying moods. When people want good preaching, it will be there. And he expects gambling and pornography to grow, although entrepreneurs will hold-off this future until civically virtuous uses are well-established.[33]

The benefits of the Internet, like any new communications technology, will tilt toward the powerful and wealthy. As Beninger notes in his historical study of the effects of new information processing and communication technology on organization:

> ... [T]he Control Revolution [is] a complex of rapid changes in the technological and economic arrangements by which information is collected, stored, processed, and communicated and through which formal or programmed decisions can effect societal control. From its origins in the last decades of the nineteenth century the Control Revolution has continued unabated to this day and in fact has accelerated recently with the development of microprocessing technologies. In terms of the magnitude and pervasiveness of its impact upon society, intellectual and cultural no less than material, the Control Revolution appears to be as important to the history of this century as the Industrial Revolution was to the last. Just as the

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[33] Ellison s comment underscores the global nature of the unregulated Internet: If it is anywhere, it can be everywhere. Amsterdam Web sites may dominate the world market in XXXX sites, or Caribbean nations (or Indian tribes) the on-line casinos.

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> Industrial Revolution marked an historical discontinuity in the ability to harness energy, the Control Revolution marks a similarly dramatic leap in our ability to exploit information.
>
> - James R. Beninger[34]

Beninger s prediction of increased social control may seem surprising. In the United States, the early micro-computer revolution and the Internet were powerfully shaped by the ethics and values of the 1960s counter-culture. Cyberspace was to be a new and open frontier.[35]

However, the historical record is that governments (especially the military), and the wealthy and powerful, always have wanted the best technology for fast and reliable communications. And they have been willing to pay for it. Confucius referred to the phenomenon in his analogy in the late 6th century BC (above: . . . travels faster than a royal edict by post-station service.).The network of imperial couriers of the Chou dynasty already was famous; by the late 3rd century BC, staging posts for imperial couriers provided fresh mounts every nine miles. The Roman Empire s famous <u>cursus publicus</u> provided a similar service along the great roads of the

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[34] James R. Beninger, *The Control Revolution: Technological and Economic Origins of the Information Society* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986) 426-27.

[35] Howard Rheingold, *Tools for Thought: The History and Future of Mind-Expanding Technology*, Reprint ed. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000).
Howard Rheingold, *The Virtual Community: Homesteading on the Electronic Frontier*, Revised ed. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000).

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Empire. Private courier services linked the Church and other power-
ful institutions during the Middle Ages: They were expanded by the
great Italian commercial centers in the mid-13th century, and then a
famous and extensive postal service, established by the Thurn and
Taxis family (with patronage from the Hapsburg emperors), grew in
the 16th century and was to provide links across most of Europe,
and serve the interests of the wealthy and powerful with 20,000
private couriers and a speedy, efficient, and highly profitable service
for 350 years.[36]

   Similarly, Samuel Morse patented his telegraph in 1844. His first
important customers were new railroad companies, who used the
invention to communicate company information along their tracks.
The first successful trans-Atlantic telegraph cable, laid in 1866,
charged $100 for 10 words, a rate that the wealthy would pay for
the competitive business advantages it provided.[37] The first depend-
able cable link between London and Bombay was completed in 1870
to enhance the British Empire s management of political, military,
economic ties and timely journalism.[38] Today, the US military -

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[36] For an overview: Encyclopedia Britannica, *Postal System*
(Online) (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2002 [cited March 4 2002]).

[37] By 1868 the rate had declined to $15.75 for 10 words. For
historical rates: U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics of
the United States: Colonial Times to 1970*, Bicentennial ed., 2 vols.,
vol. 2 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1975) 782. The
insulation on the first cable (1858) failed. News services that pooled
telegraph charges also formed quickly: the Associated Press (1848)
in the US and Paul Julius Reuters (1849) in Paris.

[38] Paul Kennedy, "Imperial Cable Communications and Strategy,
1870-1914," *English Historical Review* 86, no. 341 (1971).

which invented the Internet - has the best communications system in the world. The world s banks and financial institutions have been linked electronically, by secure lines and satellites, for decades; and SITA, the world s most extensive private data network (for airlines reservations) has operated since the 1950s.

Moreover, a principal use of new data and communications technology is to acquire information by which already-existing institutions (who provide financial support; or the political support for government data acquisition) can achieve their goals more effectively. (The sociologist Anthony Giddens refers to improved surveillance as a principle effect of the new technologies and information age.)[39]

I do not want to be discouraging to readers with reformist hopes. It <u>may</u> be that the Internet will be reformist. But, if so, such effects will have to be organized. What <u>is</u> predictable is that Establishments will serve their own interests; they already are underway.

2.) <u>Story 2: New Organization & Re-Organization</u>

Another story of mixed blessings is the use of new technology to create, organize, and re-organize new relationships. The first stage of the Internet primarily yielded an Information Age of library-like functions and reading Web pages. But the next (video, interactive) stage will create and sustain a global New Organization age of new relationships, both domestic and international. It will not substitute

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Sally Mitchell, *Daily Life in Victorian England* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996) 81.

[39] Webster, *Theories of the Information Society* 52-73, 216.

for the vital role of face-to-face relationships and meetings, but it will build upon them and become a tool for new organization and re-organization, new fragmentations, and new integration.

A.) Niche Markets

   The new economic, social, and political opportunities will be the organization of niche (rather than mass) markets. Soon, anybody can offer mini-channels or even single shows to viewers in all countries. The ventures can be commercial (a Fashion Show mini-CSPAN) or for hobbyists (a Chess mini-channel, online.) They could serve an organization s members: the American Association for the Advancement of Science, which has a substantial fraction of its members in other countries. might organize a Biotechnology Week in Review global roundtable of journalists and scientists, similar to Washington Week in Review. Or curators and chemists interested in art restoration could draw upon lectures at leading Centers for art restoration around the world to provide a shared monthly colloquium series that would cross-fertilize ideas and enrich the resources available to museum staffs worldwide.

   The new technologies also are ideally suited as a resource to organize geographically dispersed or marginalized groups into social and political movements. Just as, in the late 20th century, expanded cable television capacity in the US gave new audiences to televangelists. With charismatic leadership these new channels created flows of cash, organized the Christian Coalition, and changed national politics in the US.[40] The same processes can occur globally for any potential group; and organization is the basis of political power.

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   [40] See: Razelle Frankl, *Televangelism: The Marketing of Popular Religion* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1987). Quentin Schultze, *Televangelism and American Culture: The Business of Popular Religion* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1991).

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Who will organize, or reorganize, in new ways? By the technologies of freedom principle (chapter 2), the answer is Everybody who wants to. Thus, in a pluralist world, the effects of the Internet s evolution may seem logically contradictory: Some people may create applications for more inclusive, cosmopolitan, and tolerant cultures. And if other people decide they really do not like one another or the homogenizing inclusivity, pluralism, and other values of a cosmopolitan culture, they can begin to retribalize, reorganize, linkup in new ways, and live within separate and fragmented realities and neighborhoods surrounded by electronic walls.[41]

I will discuss two opposite effects of niche markets: cosmopolitan linkups and retribalization; and a new form of organization, personal networking:

- New linkups across national boundaries can foster new and wider identities and peaceful cooperation (chapter five). Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, the Voice of America, and the BBC helped to end the Cold War: Classic geopolitical theory might have predicted that, given the costs of the nuclear arms race, the Eastern bloc and the Western bloc would eventually seek detente. But the rapid dismantling of the Warsaw Pact went much further and showed the unexpected, cumulative effects, built steadily across several decades, of providing a more accurate image of the West.[42] The effects

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[41] I am endebted to the late Lewis Dexter for a discussion of this point.

[42] For overviews: Sig Mickelson, *America's Other Voice: The Story of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty* (New York: Praeger, 1983).
Ithiel de Sola Pool, "The Changing Soviet Union: The Mass Media as

still need to be understood, but they include wider definitions of identity as (for example) a creative artist or scientist rather than an ideological identity; or as a human being with an emotional life and engaged in self-expression and celebration (e.g., a bridge created by rock-and-roll and jazz, that was a political argument to generations of young people in societies with boring and uninspiring bureaucracies of Plastic People (the name of a music group in Czechoslovakia, critical of the Communist Party and the society it shaped.)[43]

Humanitarian politics also can become a global movement. In the case of Iran, exile politics has become global, beaming alternative messages from a studio in Los Angeles via satellite; and, soon, the upgraded (less expensive) global Internet will make the access of political exiles easier.[44]

Catalyst," *Current*, January 1966.
Timothy W. Ryback, *Rock around the Bloc: A History of Rock Music in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, 1954 - 1988* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990). Jazz and rock music were not merely cultural information but provided a political argument for freedom to generations of young people; the Rolling Stones were guests of state in Czechoslovakia after the Cold War. US efforts directed at Cuba and China did not have similar effects: Burton Paulu, *Radio and Television Broadcasting in Eastern Europe* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1974) 148-52.

[43] Manuel Castells, *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture. Volume II: The Power of Identity* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1997).
Ryback, *Rock around the Bloc: A History of Rock Music in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, 1954 - 1988.*

[44] Michael Lewis, "The Satellite Subversives," *New York Times*

- However, we should not be surprised to find - in the US or elsewhere in the world - Black channels, Jewish channels, Teenage channels (on the MTV model), Gay channels, Hispanic channels, Chinese/American channels, Islamic channels, regional channels, etc.. There may be admixtures: the political and religious Rights often have an affinity, especially in response to unwelcome change. The new tribes may have an electronic and global (rather than geographic) organization.

The potential for retribalization may be strongest in the Third World, where demagogic personalities can secure access to low-cost communications. And the demands for retribalization may grow: change toward a more secular and cosmopolitan world may, itself, induce anxiety, confusion, and a further defensive retreat to separate realities and/or familiar tradition.

These separate realities can develop even in advanced countries. A brand of anti-government talk radio in America led to the death of 168 people from a car bomb detonated at a federal building in Oklahoma City on April 19, 1995, an anti-government plot to avenge perceived government misdeeds two years earlier against the Branch Davidian sect in Waco, Texas.

Cosmopolitan users, viewing only cosmopolitan media, also are candidates to live in electronic ghettos. The PBS Evenings News has a 1.4 Nielsen Household rating (which means that, of 100.8 million television households, it is viewed by less than 1.5% of the popula-

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Magazine, February 24 2002.

tion.)[45] Only 3% of American households watch public televison during prime time.[46] PBS viewers may lose touch with reality; they may under-estimate, for example, how sensationalized and different the coverage of news, and the creation of national political culture, has become on the major commercial networks. Advanced nations like the United States also can live in an electronic ghetto: while CNN is a global television network, it offers one feed to Americans and another to the rest of the world.

Retribalization can, by comparison with an era of mass communications, increase political conflict. American profit-maximizing advertisers on national television have wanted common denominator, socially harmonious programming. The economic incentives of mass communications were to produce a homogenized and tolerant culture. There is an economic reason that most programming on mass television converges to a Wendys, Hardees, and McDonald s sameness and easy popularity. The vast wasteland of network television, criticized (without any observed effect) in a famous speech by FCC Commissioner Newton Minow in 1961, was unconflicted and undisturbed by many social problems and conflicts, whatever the reality.[47] And this partly arose from an economic

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[45] Sara Hope Franks, www.newshour.org (personal communication), March 7, 2002. This translates to 2.75 million people.

[46] John W. Wright, ed., *The New York Times Almanac 2002* (New York: Penguin, 2001) 396.

[47] Newton Minow, "Address to the National Association of Broadcasters, May 9, 1961 (Edited Reprint)," *Chicago Tribune*, April 24 2001.

logic.[48]

The tensions between inclusion and a new separatism already are emerging. In the 1990s, with a wider range of programs and casts, Black and White television audiences began to diverge into separate viewing habits. But, next, the major networks struck back and increased the number of shows with ethnically diverse casts from 13 in 1995 to 31 by the end of the decade.[49] (Thus, paradoxically, causation may be dialectical rather than linear: the expansion of new communications channels and the competition from niche marketers may spur the counter-growth of inclusive national and global cultures, just as Hollywood has dropped crude foreign/ethnic stereotypes of villains (who are now more apt to be characterized by their psychology) as the audiences of the American movie industry have become global. And just as the now-global music industry develops

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[48] The basic marketing analysis comes from the work of Hotelling. For an overview of applications in television marketing and advertising: W. Russell Neuman, *The Future of the Mass Audience* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991) 153-57.

[49] Lisa de Moraes, "Black and White Viewers Are More in Tune on Top 20," *The Washington Post*, February 13 2001. Also: Michael Freeman, "Fewer Series Feature Black-Dominant Casts. But Multiethnic Shows Have Increased by 59%, Study Says," *Electronic Media*, April 15 2002. Today, 70%+ of Black characters in the more highly rated TV entertainment shows have professional or management positions. See: Michael Okwu, "Familiar Role: Network Cop Show, Black Lieutenant," *CNN.com*, January 22; 2:19.48 PM EST 1999. and the broader research summary: Robert M. Entman and Andrew Rojecki, *The Black Image in the White Mind: Media and Race in America* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

universal teenage music and music videos on the MTV network in 160+ countries; and searches for world beat and other forms of music with universal appeal.)[50]

Niche markets, while they seem less profitable than mass (domestic) markets, can be larger than domestic markets in a global context; they will be the new future. A case in point: MTV began by serving a teenage market in the US. It now has become the largest channel in the world, reaching 375 million homes in 164 countries.[51] It joins a new league of global channels, which includes CNN, BBC (now available in the US in many satellite and cable upgrade packages), and (surprisingly enough) the US governments 24 x 7 WorldNet global television channel - which holds a virtually zero market share in every country, time slot, and demographic group. Other niche market channels in the US are moving to global status, including Discovery Channel/Animal Planet, Disney, and others.

2.) <u>Contact Nets and Influence</u>

Aside from niche markets, another new type of organization will be personal networks. To network already is becoming a verb with a global reach.

Traditionally, we have thought of society as composed of individuals, who are members of formal groups, and the interactions of these formal groups constitutes a nation s political life. And, then, the interactions among national governments constitute the core of

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[50] Timothy Dean Taylor, *Global Pop: World Music, World Markets* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1997).

[51] Todd S. Purdum, *With Candor, Powell Charms Global MTV Audience* (Online) (New York Times, 2002 [cited February 15 2002]).

global political life. Globalization of business and the new linkups supported by new communications technologies may allow people to relate more as individuals and develop wide networks of personal contacts. And these, especially in a world of democracies, can rewire processes of influence and political power.

The political scientist Ithiel de Sola Pool pioneered the new study of contact nets with the mathematician Manfred Kochen.[52] He began by asking the probability that any two people selected at random would have at least one friend in common; or how many steps, via friends of friends, it would take to establish a path. Another way to ask the question is how many steps it would take, via chains of personal contacts, to get a message to the President of the United States or another target person? (This so-called small world research inspired a movie, Six Degrees of Separation, and, more recently, a Website for the versatile actor Kevin Bacon.) One implication of Pool s research is that global contact nets may move ideas more quickly than we realize: already, in several fields of science (e.g., astronomy, theoretical physics) there are global contact nets. In democracies, social change begins as a change in discussion: it

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[52] Pool. Ithiel de Sola and Manfred Kochen, "Contacts and Influence (1978)," in *Humane Politics and Methods of Inquiry*, ed. Lloyd S. Etheredge (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2000). Manfred Kochen, ed., *The Small World: A Volume of Recent Research Advance Commemorating Ithiel de Sola Pool, Stanley MIgram, Theodore Newcomb* (Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Corp., 1989). See also two volumes of Castells s tour d horizon: Manuel Castells, *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture. Volume 1: The Rise of the Network Society* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1996). Castells, *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture. Volume II: The Power of Identity.*

should become easier to put new ideas into circulation, and to move agendas on behalf of, in Victor Hugo s phrase, ideas whose time has come. [53]

One expression of these new linkups is a growth of international humanitarian politics. In 1997 the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Jody Williams and the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, an initiative that had been opposed by the US government, but secured global support by using new communications technology to build upon networks of personal contacts.[54] Agendas for debt-forgiveness and more enlightened policies by the World Bank; new initiatives for childhood immunization and AIDS treatment in Africa; and a Relief-Web initiative to help NGOs and government organizations plan and collaborate in humanitarian emergencies are further examples of cooperative linkups that have used personal contacts nets plus email as part of building global agendas.

3. Story 3: Acceleration

> . . . [T]he printing press allowed the rapid dissemination
> of new and often revolutionary ideas throughout Europe.
> Without it the Reformation would have been limited to a

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[53] Malcolm Gladwell, *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 2000).
Emanuel Rosen, *The Anatomy of Buzz: How to Create Word-of-Mouth Advertising* (New York: Doubleday, 2000).

[54] Helena Cobban, *The Moral Architecture of World Peace: Nobel Laureates Discuss Our Global Future* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 2000) 203-22.

relatively minor theological dispute in a remote German province, and the Scientific Revolution, with its dependence on international communication among many scientists, would have been altogether impossible.

- Richard Tarnas[55]

Moreover this global process of social learning [of ideas about the environment] shows every sign of accelerating, taking place today at rates that may be an order of magnitude faster than those described by Richard Cooper for the global translation of ideas into action in the realm of infectious diseases and quarantine a century ago.

- William Clark [56]

The third story will be acceleration, including both cooperation (part II of this book) and conflict. There also will be an increased potential, in an interconnected world, for unexpected meltdowns.

a.) Accelerated politics and potential conflict

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[55] Richard Tarnas, *The Passion of the Western Mind : Understanding the Ideas That Have Shaped Our World View* (New York, NY: Harmony Books, 1991) 226.

[56] William Clark, "Environmental Globalization," in *Governance in a Globalizing World*, ed. Joseph S. Nye and John D. Donahue, *Visions of Governance for the 21st Century* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2000), 91. Original reference is to Richard N. Cooper, "International Cooperation in Public Health as a Prologue to Macroeconomic Cooperation," in *Can Nations Agree? Issues in International Economic Cooperation*, ed. Richard N. Cooper, et al. (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1989).

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> Should a Horse know as much as a Man, I would not desire to be his Rider
>
> > - Bernard de Mandeville [57]

> Societies change through conflict and are managed by politics. . . [S]ocial movements and the political process . . . will increasingly use the Internet as well, making it a privileged tool for acting, informing, recruiting, organizing, dominating and counter-dominating.
>
> > - Manuel Castells [58]

i. Organizing and Human Rights
- New communications technology will speed the flow of many ideas, for good and ill. The new printing presses of Europe took the 95 theses that an obscure monk posted on a door in Wittenburg in 1517, and ignited the Reformation and Counter-Reformation: between 1517 and 1520 Martin Luther s thirty publications sold over 300,000 copies.[59] In 1776 Thomas Paine s revolutionary pamphlet

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[57] From his Fable of the Bees, 1:290, quoted in: Richard D. Brown, *The Strength of a People: The Idea of an Informed Citizenry in America, 1650-1870* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1996) 83.

[58] Castells, *The Internet Galaxy: Reflections on the Internet, Business, and Society* 137.

[59] Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983) 148. See also the longer version: Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural*

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Common Sense was a best-seller even by today s standards: it sold more than 150,000 copies in its first year.[60]

   If new communications technology helps to organize people who are treated unfairly, and secure wider support for their cause, there is handwriting on the wall. At the beginning of the 21st century, discrimination is ubiquitous and only a minority of the world s people enjoy the rights in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The potential for worthwhile organizing (with a possibility of greater conflict) is obvious: Many of the world s political systems will face greater pressures for speedier change. Unless there are improvements in political capacities and responsiveness - violence may increase.

   We are in the early, unregulated phase of the Internet. But if history is a guide, this freedom will be challenged as expanding domestic and global Internets are used to organize politics, accelerate change, and increase political collisions. A counter-Reformation will seek to impose new controls; and there may be a prolonged battle to re-acquire freedom for the global Internet that we now take for granted.[61]

Transformations in Early-Modern Europe, Combined ed., 2 vols. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979)..

   [60] James W. Cortada, *Making the Information Society: Experience, Consequences, and Possibilities* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002) 2.

   [61] For initial evidence of the pattern concerning the Internet: Shanthi Kalathil and Taylor C. Boas, *The Internet and State Control in Authoritarian Regimes: China, Cuba, and the Counterrevolution*, *Working Papers: Information Revolution and World Politics Project*

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Since the invention of moveable type, there has been an early enthusiasm that each new communications technology will give greater voice, organizational resources, and power to the dispossessed; free citizens and society from traditional authority and all other constraints; and, thereby, provide a fundamental and permanent advance for human rights.[62] The Internet still appears primarily to be a source of economic prosperity and profit, benign and progressive. As its use becomes partly politicized, and groups with many conflicting agendas organize and use it to achieve (or prevent) political and economic change, counter-learning by other groups can make it a technology for, in the phrase of the sociologist Manuel Castells (above), dominating and counter-dominating. Brian Winston, the author of one of the most thoughtful studies of how (and when) new communication technologies receive support, take-off - and then face subsequent efforts to constrain any potential for too-radical change - has emphasized that the idea of technology-driven social, political, and economic revolution is misleading. New communication technologies often are adopted and promoted, shaped and accommodated, and constrained by interests (and, sometimes, battles) of different elements within existing societies.[63]

(Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2001).
Leonard R. Sussman, "The Internet in Flux," in *Press Freedom Survey 2001*, ed. Freedom House (Washington, DC: Freedom House, 2001).

[62] There is truth to these claims: the development of popular democracy can be seen as a political history of a free press and literacy.

[63] Brian Winston, *Media Technology and Society. A History: From the Telegraph to the Internet* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1998) 1-15. See also Gilpin s discussion of four stages, which correspond

For example, when Gutenberg invented movable type technology circa 1450, there was little early restriction. In its early decades the technology was used relatively freely, usually by the Establishment, to publish Bibles and other respectable texts for those who could afford them. But as printing became more widely used as a tool for religious, social, and political change, restrictions followed, although with a lag: in Germany, censorship of books was introduced in 1529; the British Crown promulgated a legal restriction on the right to publish in 1557; in 1559 the Catholic Church introduced its Index Expurgatorius.[64] A free and independent press helped to make democracy possible - but once the threat of democracy began to emerge, new restrictions were aggressively imposed and there ensued several centuries of battle, a history partly written in blood, to re-establish earlier freedom of the press in support of democracy and human rights. The liberationist impact of the Internet in authoritarian and semi-authoritarian regimes has the potential to become a similar story.[65]

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to the initial and saturation phases of the S curve; the long-run (Wal-Mart Effect) stage of changes of social organization; and a political response - although it is worth noting that the political response is not uniquely a public interest response but may be the use of government by other groups in society: Robert Gilpin, "The Computer and World Affairs," in *The Computer Age: A Twenty-Year View*, ed. Michael L. Dertouzos and Joel Moses (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1979), 231.

[64] Ithiel de Sola Pool, *Technologies of Freedom* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1983) 14-15.

[65] For emerging research: Kalathil and Boas, *The Internet and State Control in Authoritarian Regimes: China, Cuba, and the Counterrevolution.* Concerning the adaptability of nation-states:

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Nor does regulation of new technology belong to the distant past. Radio was invented in 1895 and (at first) could be used freely. Beginning in the 1920s, after the US Navy began to experience interference with its activities, the case for government regulation steadily grew.[66] In the US, broadcast television was regulated even more quickly, requiring a federal government license and a host of requirements, including at times a fairness doctrine and political and societal tests. Today, the Federal Communications Commission remains an intense battlefield of competing regulatory interests.[67]

Ii.) Organization and Counter-Organization

A history of organization, counter-organization and accelerated conflict is a recurring theme in the history of new communication technology, Earlier, we saw that the wealthy and powerful adopt new communication technologies for their interests, including (in Beningers term) a control revolution via wider organization. But dialectical effects can occur, and counter-organization, using the same technology, can lead to conflict and limit, change, dissolve, or replace patterns of control.

For example in the early days of what became the worlds major religions, literacy and handwritten texts (codices) created standard-

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Gaimpiero Giacomello and Fernando Mendez, "Cuius Regio, Eius Religio, Omnium Spatium? State Sovereignty in the Age of the Internet," *Information & Security* 7 (2001).

[66] Pool, *Technologies of Freedom* 111-13.

[67] National Science and Telecommunications Board, *Broadband: Bringing Home the Bits* (Washington, DC: National Research Council, 2002) 296-306.
Pool, *Technologies of Freedom* 112-35.

ized doctrine and training of clergy, top-down control, and supported the institutional growth of early Christianity and other religions. Yet literacy also allowed people to think and write interpretations of what they read, compare, disagree, identify other dissenters, and create contending schools of interpretation.[68] New communications technology began by serving Establishment orthodoxy - but then it also became a vehicle to create and organize heretics and schismatics.[69] And the same pattern occurs universally: in Buddhism, once the Pali texts are written, the religion became more institutionalized and spreads; but different schools began to develop their own canonical collections and interpretations, and the

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[68] Jack Goody, *The Interface between the Written and the Oral* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987).
James. J. O'Donnell, *Avatars of the Word: From Papyrus to Cyberspace* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998).

[69] For a wide-ranging exploration of the social and political effects of literacy, including battles over interpretation and the development of orthodoxy and schism in the history of the English Bible and its translations, see: Benson Bobrick, *Wide as the Waters: The Story of the English Bible and the Revolution It Inspired* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001). For a survey of the history of Christianity, see the works of Jaroslav Pelikan, for example: Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine: Christian Doctrine and Modern Culture since 1700.*, Reprint ed., vol. 5 (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991). For a broader study that also observes both centralization and fragmentation effects, see the work of the Canadian scholar Harold Innis: Harold Innis, *Empire and Communications* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1950).

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movement also fragments.[70]

  - Organizing people for common goals is the key to long-term political power, and the Internet is a tool for organizing. However, communication, by itself, seldom changes behavior.[71] Studies of social advocacy show that effective groups need more than mailing lists, they need membership and levels of organization above a local level, strategic planning, effective leadership, and (perhaps) a core of people willing to engage in public protest, possibly including civil disobedience.[72] But lower-cost communications technology can help, especially to build and sustain the relationships that make groups effective.

Iii. _Beyond Liberation_?
  However, liberation is not the only political goal. For well-educated people, change can be exciting. However a majority of the world s population may not yet possess such a self-assured and cosmopolitan consciousness.[73] Internet-accelerated change can

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[70] Karen Armstrong, _Buddha_, _Penguin Lives_ (New York: Penguin, 2000) xiii-xvi. For a broad theory of Establishment orthodoxy and schools of dissent in the age of print see: Randall Collins, _The Sociology of Philosophies: A Global Theory of Intellectual Change_ (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University/Belknap Press, 1998).

[71] Everett M. Rogers, _Diffusion of Innovations_, Fourth ed. (New York: Free Press, 1995).

[72] William Gamson, _The Strategy of Social Protest_, Reprint ed. (New York: Dorsey Press, 1986).

[73] Thomas L. Friedman, _The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization_ (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux,

produce anomie, confusion, a sense of chaos, and fear - against which the structure and strong anchor of ethnicity and traditional cultural values can provide a defense. Or structure and control can be restored by charismatic, demagogic personalities - who now will have ready and affordable access to global links unconstrained by licensing review.

We do not yet know how powerful the new video technologies will be, but they could make it easier to enroll people on all sides. Paradoxically, empowering a large number of people who have different views and agendas may produce collective paralysis, impotence, and political frustration.

b.) Unexpected Meltdowns

> Politicians, journalists, and market analysts have a tendency to extrapolate the immediate past into the indefinite future, and such thinking suggests that the world in irreversible headed toward ever greater levels of economic integration. The historical record suggests the contrary.

- O Rourke and Williamson (1999)[74]

1999).
Ken Wilber, *A Theory of Everything: An Integral Vision for Business, Politics, Science, and Spirituality* (Boston, MA: Shambhala, 2000) 108-35.

[74] Kevin H. O'Rourke and Jeffrey G. Williamson, *Globalization and History: The Evolution of a Nineteenth-Century Atlantic Economy* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999) 286.

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An interconnected world with faster action-reaction cycles can be an unstable world, with a potential for unexpected crises and melt-downs.

Thomas Friedman, a reporter and columnist for <u>The New York Times</u>, has written frequently about economic globalization: the abundance of capital and the three democratizations (of capital movement, new communication technology, and information) in the post Cold-War era. These have changed how we communicate, how we invest, and how we see the world. [75] And through their interactions in the new global capital markets, a set of common standards of investment has emerged - a Golden Straitjacket. It provides swift penalties to governments and economies that deviate: like a huge vise that takes the globalization system I have described . . . and keeps tightening and tightening that system around everyone. . . [76]

As Friedman describes the new global political reality enforced by the new communication technologies and better information:

> To fit into the Golden Straitjacket a country must either adopt, or be seen as moving toward, the following golden rules: making the private sector the primary engine of its economic growth, maintaining a low rate of inflation and price stability, shrinking the size of its state bureaucracy, maintaining as close to a balanced budget as possible, if not a surplus, eliminating and lowering tariffs on imported goods, removing restrictions on foreign investment, getting rid of quotas and domestic

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[75] Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization* 90.

[76] Ibid.,, 118.

monopolies, increasing exports, privatizing state-owned industries and utilities, deregulating capital markets, making its currency convertible, opening its industries, stock, and bond markets to direct foreign ownership and investment, deregulating its economy to promote as much domestic competition as possible, eliminating government corruption, subsidies, and kickbacks as much as possible, opening its banking and telecommunications systems to private ownership and competition, and allowing its citizens to chose from an array of competing pension options and foreign-run pension and mutual funds. [77]

The reward is investment, trade, and economic growth. But as your economy grows, your politics shrinks. [78] (If you want to resist these changes, that is your business. And it should be your business. But if you think that you can resist these changes without paying an increasingly steep price . . . then you are deluding yourself.)[79] And the pressures are not merely upon developing countries: major German corporations like DaimlerChrysler have been forced to break with tradition and open their books to outsiders; and the Japanese banking system and other aspects of the Japanese economy have been forced to become more open and to change.[80]

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[77] Ibid.,, 87.

[78] Ibid.

[79] Ibid.,, 90.

[80] Robert Gilpin, *Global Political Economy: Understanding the International Economic Order* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001) 187-92.

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History suggests that <u>if</u> globalization induces serious damage, the political costs can be too large to sustain political support for economic globalization. Two economists, O Rourke and Williamson, note that the Atlantic economy of the late nineteenth century already had achieved an astonishing degree of inter-connection, partly aided by new technologies that steadily reduced the costs of ocean transport.[81] Then the series of shocks, transmitted throughout the system between WWI and WWII, convinced powerful groups and the broader publics to withdraw and disconnect national fates. After the Great Depression and World War II, it required several decades for trade to be re-liberalized; and emigration may remain far below its earlier levels.

The world of the early 21st century is different than the 1920s and 1930s. But Friedman s analysis points to the new mechanisms of unexpected instability. (He writes that the Electronic Herd of the capital markets has a choice of feeding in 180 countries. [82] It is made up of all the faceless stock, bond and currency traders sitting behind computer screens all over the globe, moving their money around with the click of a mouse. [83] The interaction among the Electronic Herd, nation-states, and the Golden Straitjacket is at the center of today s globalization system.)[84]

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[81] O'Rourke and Williamson, *Globalization and History: The Evolution of a Nineteenth-Century Atlantic Economy* 35.

[82] Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization* 94.

[83] Ibid.,, 90-91.

[84] Ibid.,, 91. An early and useful framework to analyze the growing interdependence of economies and the (lagging) capacity of

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Today s potentials for destabilizing damage are large by historical standards. In 1931 a capital outflow of less than $1 billion (4 percent of GDP) brought down Germany. Beginning in 1997 in Thailand, a chain of economic collapses across Asia were accelerated by rapid withdrawals of international capital; over $100 billion (10 percent of GDP) flowing out of the Asian crisis economies.[85] The meltdown of Enron, one of America s largest companies, by a run on the bank in the fall of 2001 was another example of how swift and brutal the penalties of alert mouse-clickers can be.[86]

The final story of a mixed blessing will be the effects of new communications technology on the older mass technologies.

4. Story 4: Effects of Competition on the Mass Media

When you d ask [CBS founder] Bill Paley why he s put on money-losing things like documentaries - they were worried about getting their licenses renewed. . . . [These days] there isn t any sense that they have to fulfill an

governments for cooperation is: Richard N Cooper, *The Economics of Interdependence: Economic Policy in the Atlantic Community* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968).

[85] For a wider discussion: Jeffrey Frankel, "Globalization of the Economy," in *Governance in a Globalizing World*, ed. Joseph S. Nye and John D. Donahue, *Visions of Governance for the 21st Century* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2000), 62.

[86] For a policy discussion: Charles Wyplosz, "International Financial Instability," in *Global Public Goods: International Cooperation in the 21st Century*, ed. Inge Kaul, Isabelle Grunberg, and Marc A. Stern (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

> obligation to the public or else something may happen to
> them.
>
> <div align="right">- Daniel Schorr[87]</div>
>
> [T]he emergence of a global information society is a
> powerful democratizing force. On the other hand, televi-
> sion and the other media tend to destroy the very public
> space of dialogue they open up . . .
>
> <div align="right">- Anthony Giddens[88]</div>

The fourth story of mixed blessings will be the effects of compe-
tition on the older mass media. The effects will change the tradi-
tional role of television journalism in national, local, and interna-
tional civic life. And it may be wise to compensate for the loss and
avoid potential damage.

i.) The Competitive Shift

The growth of competition has changed the economics of the
three dinosaur mainstays (ABC, NBC, CBS), the broadcast television
networks. They once enjoyed near-monopoly status, drew 90%+ of
the viewing audience for entertainment programs in prime time,
shaped much of our national life, and still command about 45% of
the viewing audience during prime time.[89]

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[87] Howard Kurz, "Troubled Times for Network Evening News,"
Washington Post, March 10 2002.

[88] Anthony Giddens, *Runaway World: How Globalization Is
Reshaping Our Lives* (New York: Routledge, 2000) 96.

[89] Wright, ed., *The New York Times Almanac 2002* 396.

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Traditionally, the broadcast channels were under FCC decency rules from 6AM-10PM (when children might be watching). In their view, cable channels have been winning audiences because they are not restricted and offer more adult - raunchier, voyeuristic - programs, and shows similar to supermarket tabloids (e.g., Jerry Springer). The broadcast television networks have struck-back by inventing so-called reality television (sometimes, soft-porn), new. reality nature programming with more graphic violence; and other shows with manufactured dramas, tensions, and other devices to attract audiences.

(On all channels, viewers may be destined to watch Secrets of the Great Pyramids and similar programs forever.)

Broadcast television also has competed - lowered costs and raised revenues - in other ways that has changed the viewing experience. They show more commercials (discussed above, pp. xx - xx~). There are fewer original episodes and more repeats and reruns. The sit-com, with its required laugh-track, and the soap-opera are low-budget mainstays. Sexual content is being rushed into the competition: A sample of 1,100 broadcast and cable programs compared the 1997/98 television season to the 1999/2000 television season and found the percentage of shows with explicit sexual content rose from about half to 2/3 (and to 84% on sitcoms);[90] with references to

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[90] Kaiser Family Foundation, *Sex on TV: A Biennial Report of the Kaiser Family Foundation* (Menlo Park, CA: Kaiser Family Foundation, 2001) 2-3.

sexual intercourse becoming a common feature.[91] [92] Violence also was increased.[93]

These measures are sometimes cited to indicate cultural deterioration, but the conclusion does not necessarily follow. There is no judgment of the context in which the acts occur. (For example, the most violent shows reported in one study were reruns of Xena: Warrior Princess (with an average of 63 violent acts/episode), which is actually a camp action/ adventure show that includes warmth and friendship, good humor, defense of the helpless, etc.[94] And the worst bad language statistical indicator of cultural decline indicted an episode of South Park, a humor series on the Comedy Central cable channel, written by Canadians, that used a four-letter word, forbidden by the public decency standards for network broadcasts, 162 times in a show that was intended as a parody.[95]

Alarms aside, these changes do not inherently signify a cultural

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[91] Andrea Figler, "Operator Opposition to Adult Video Softens," *Cable World*, December 10 2001.

[92] Ibid.

[93] Louis Chunovic, "A Little Less Sex, a Lot More Violence," *Electronic Media*, June 25 2001. For alternative measures and claims of recent reductions in the rate/hour, see: Doug Halonen, "TV Losing Sex Appeal, Violent Ways, Study Finds," *Electronic Media*, March 25 2002.

[94] Ibid.

[95] Jim Rutenberg, "Hurt by Cable, Networks Spout Expletives," *The New York Times*, September 2 2001.

decline as much as they bring television to resemble other unregu-lated, commercial areas of life. Today, television programming more closely resembles the contours of print - with a large audience for Readers Digest (12,600,000) level of writing; Playboy is tied with Newsweek (3,100,000) for subscriptions; supermarket tabloids and the hobby, fan, and XXXX sections of full-service magazine stores.[96] But the democratic plurality of tastes can be a mixed blessing to people with an uplift agenda for democracy or what they want culture to be. (Explicit sexual content has risen to 84% in television sitcoms, but it is simply approaching the 90% for popular movies, which may be a natural level.)[97]

(The same point can be made about pornography on the Internet. The availability of XXXX sites is a reflection of American society (chapter two) and a plurality of interests. The XXXX video rental and sales business currently runs at about $4.2 billion/year, about 700 million rentals. The total XXXX business, including magazines, cable and satellite channels and pay-per-view, magazines, etc. runs at about $10 billion - $14 billion/year in the United States, more than is spent on movie tickets, or all performing arts combined; and it is bigger than professional football, basketball, and baseball put together. The Internet is about 20% of the XXXX business, and small fraction of the money that is made via sex in advertising and prime

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[96] With adjustments for demographics. For example, the two leading magazines (21,000,000) are published by the American Association of Retired Persons; and television advertisers prefer younger audiences.

[97] Kaiser Family Foundation, *Sex on TV: A Biennial Report of the Kaiser Family Foundation* 3.

time and daytime television.[98] Assuming Larry Ellison s business prediction (above) is correct, and that online gambling becomes more prominent, this should be seen in the context of the legal gambling business in the US that currently runs at $60 billion/year (i.e., the amount that operators win and the players lose.[99])

ii.) The Decline of National News

> [T]he cynicism that has undermined every social institution is undermining the institutions of news, which less than twenty-five years ago were the paragons of trust, even for those least trusting of the government.
>   - Cappella and Jamieson (1997)[100]

In the 1960s, the evening national news had a lock-in audience: they were one of the only viewing options in their time slots. In the 1970-71 season, with Walter Cronkite and David Brinkley, the

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[98] Frank Rich, "Naked Capitalists," *New York Times Magazine online*, May 20 2001.

[99] Harold L. Vogel, *Entertainment Industry Economics: A Guide for Financial Analysis*, Fifth ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 269. See also www.americangaming.org for more recent statistics. In 2000 the major components were: casinos ($26.3 billion), lotteries ($17,2 billion) and Indian reservations (($10.4 billion).

[100] Joseph N. Cappella and Kathleen Hall Jamieson, *Spiral of Cynicism: The Press and the Public Good* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997) 228.

national network news had 75% of the audience.[101] In 1990, the network nightly news shows of NBC, ABC, and CBS had a 57% audience share in their time slots.

Beginning in 1995, the expansion of cable options continued to erode these audiences and advertising revenues. Marketers experimented and counter-programmed with a new formula: more sensation and personality-centered news, less international politics, more infotainment & lifestyle. They quickened the pace, with rapid video cuts (e.g., every 2 seconds), increased sound bite journalism (favoring people with strong, simple, edgier, opinions), added splashier graphics, and (recently) new, pulsating, multi-sectioned screens.[102] And, in a 24-hour news cycle, they have been increasingly drawn to scandal and sensation, with a capacity for endless breathless reporting, even when little of substance is happening.[103]

By mid-2001, the audience share of the national evening news on the three major networks continued to drop to 30%-35% (about 30 to 31 million homes on a typical weekday evening). The decline of

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[101] Kurz, "Troubled Times for Network Evening News,".

[102] Prue Clark, "Frantic Search for Winning TV News Formula as Viewers Turn Off in Droves," *Financial Times*, August 14 2001. Jeffrey Scheuer, *The Sound Bite Society: Television and the American Mind* (New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 1999).

[103] Frank Rich, *Ding Dong: The Cultural Witch Hunt Is Dead* (Online) (The New York Times Magazine, 2002 [cited February 24. 2002 2002]). Also : David Brock, *Blinded by the Right: The Conscience of an Ex-Conservative* (New York: Crown, 2002). The right-wing attack machine of the 1990s exploited these new openings for sensationalism.

audiences meant reduced revenue and further shifts to infotainment, especially to attract younger audiences prized by advertisers and paid at a higher rate.[104]

Serious, well-budgeted reporting for news (including democratic processes, as well as international news) is less available to any major television news show in the new era. Russell Newman summarizes the trends: The 1990s have witnessed new limitations on international travel, the closing down of foreign bureaus, new pressures on reportorial efficiency, and less frequent support for long-term and high-cost investigative assignments. One might characterize the [departed] golden age of serious journalism as primarily a golden age of near-monopoly profits. [105]

The current evidence is that - for national-level democracy and for-profit television - this is about as good as it gets. People who

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[104] The expanded number of competing channels probably has reduced their sense of unique obligation to fulfill a responsible civic and national role, else their broadcast licenses be removed. Ironically, the existence of PBS may have accelerated the abandonment of a sense of civic responsibility, as PBS is seen to fulfill that role for audiences who desire this approach.

[105] Clark, "Frantic Search for Winning TV News Formula as Viewers Turn Off in Droves,".
Stanley E. Flink, *Sentinel under Siege: The Triumph and Troubles of America's Free Press* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997).
W. Russell Neuman, "The Global Impact of New Technologies," in *The Politics of News; the News of Politics*, ed. Doris Graber, Denis McQuail, and Pippa Norris (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly Press, 1998), 244.

want serious and extended news discussions watch PBS (1.5% households); almost everybody else prefers infotainment or some-thing else.

Does this mean that the American people are less well informed? Not necessarily. They can pick-up the headlines - more quickly and efficiently, and with far fewer commercials - from many sources. They may be making rational choices about how to spend their time: monitoring headlines, and pursuing relevant issues that interest them via print or the Internet.

The major national loss may be to a civic role: Cronkite et al. intended to brief viewers as citizens; and there were news reports, and even special programs, about social problems and victims, in the same spirit. Today (except for high visibility crime and scandals) many social problems have disappeared. As often is true, the most powerful effect is what is implicit: Television journalism engages Americans as faceless consumers.[106]

Given this spirit, even the coverage of a scandal can fail to engage a democratic process. The mass communications era of CBS, NBC, and ABC, of Cronkite and Brinkley, could bring a common framework and common experience to a nation - and created by a trusted and serious voice. Good national television journalism, done in their spirit, was a daily civic ritual that facilitated social and political change. The fact that everybody was watching, and known to watch, served an important political function, When Walter Cron-kite reported a scandal that was a fundamental violation of Ameri-

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[106] And spectators. See also Jurgen Habermas s standards and critique of a faked version of democratic discussion: Webster, *Theories of the Information Society* 101-34,03.

can values, there was an expectation that responsible and account-
able institutions - whose leaders also were watching - were aware of
the problem, as was the public, and it would be fixed. Today (as we
will see in chapter eight concerning health quality) scandals can be
reported, but they zip past on the news reports without time for
psychological engagement by a viewer.

Iii.) The Special Problem of Local News/Democracy
However, the same trends have produced a deeper problem at
the state and local levels of government - that we often overlook.
Traditional television news resources for democracy and public
discussion have been disappearing, and online resources do not
adequately substitute for what has been lost.

As with national news, increased options have led viewers to
change channels. A study by the Pew Research Center for the People
and the Press found that, while 77 percent of Americans watched a
local news show in 1993, by 2000 this had dropped to 56%.[107] And
there is little civically useful information (including in-depth reports
or exposés). A study (1999) of 590 local newscasts on fifty-nine
stations in nineteen cities across the country found that 90% of their
stories were formula coverages from the police blotters or from
fixed events (including weather, press conferences and announce-
ments, parades, etc.)[108] There are occasional experiments by young
Turks, with the rallying-call No More Water-Skiing Squirrels, but the

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[107] Leonard Downie Jr. and Robert G. Kaiser, *The News About
the News: American Journalism in Peril* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf,
2002) 172.

[108] Ibid.,, 170.

experiments lose the audience.[109]

For most Americans, serious coverage of candidates and issues for state and local office does not exist on local news television. A national study of the last thirty days of the 2000 election campaign covering seventy-four broadcast news stations in fifty-eight cities found an average of 74 seconds/day, between 5:30PM and 11:30 PM devoted to what any national or local candidate actually said or did during the campaign.[110] Leonard Downie Jr. and Robert Kaiser write that local news television is:

> a distorted caricature of their communities, a daily drama of crime, accidents, traffic tie-ups, stormy weather and other calamities, leavened by cheerful video of photo-genic events like parades, charity walks and county fairs. . . [They] can watch scenes that may resemble real life but actually depict a world that only exists on their television screens. [111] [112]

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[109] Neil Hickey, *Chicago Experiment - Why It Failed* (January/February) (Columbia Journalism Review, Online at www.chr.com 2001 [cited April 29 2002]).

[110] Downie Jr. and Kaiser, *The News About the News: American Journalism in Peril* 172.

[111]Ibid.

[112] The creation of the Public Broadcast System may, in reality, have weakened our national civic reporting and information by permitting the for-profit players to dump serious and depth reporting and discussions onto PBS, while they seek the larger market share.

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A leading textbook for the television business adds a sociological and cost/benefit insight:

> As a rule, television news, particularly on a local level, tries to be non-confrontational. Facing the choice of digging deeply into a murky story or introducing the possibility of legal problems, most stations will try to convince the reporter that the legal hassles are not worth the trouble. [113]

iv.) <u>Beyond the Water s Edge?</u>

The equivalent problems may be multiplied in political cultures beyond our water s edge. So far, international relations has been protected from the style of breathless reporting brought to reporting of domestic events. Yet we already know from our own history (e.g., the Yellow Journalism practiced by William Randolph Hearst) that US journalists have not always been immune to such temptations. We are in the uneasy position of hoping that the world s foreign newspapers and journalists, in dealing with international relations, will be more sober and responsible than our domestic news networks engaging internal scandal.

5. <u>Next Steps?</u>

There may be ways, with foresight, to compensate for these risks and gain further advantages for political processes, especially a new kind of civic engagement at the state and local level. I will turn to this question in part II.

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[113] Howard J. Blumenthal and Oliver R. Goodenough, *This Business of Television*, Second, revised and updated ed. (New York: Billboard Books, 1998) 226.

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