

FUTURE *takes*

Your international platform for future related issues

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As a member of the World Future Society US National Capital Chapter, you will receive **FUTUREtakes**, announcements of all chapter activities, and discounts at chapter-sponsored events. If you would like to join us, please contact:

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The (Political) Party is Over?

SOUTH KOREA *Leader in E-Democracy*

Youngsook Park, President, South Korea Chapter

Since the end of World War II, Korean society has been characterized by rapid changes, especially in the area of governance. Like democracy in other countries, Korean democracy is messy and inefficient, more so than in other countries because of its short time span, about 18 years. However, democracy in South Korea has changed tremendously since the 1987 election.

An Information Technology (IT) stronghold, South Korea is becoming a testing ground for newly developed IT equipment and with it, IT-driven political polling that heralds the Neo-Direct

Democracy and the end of powerful and influential political parties. We take it for granted that political parties are vital to modern political life since they have shaped representative democracies since the end of the nineteenth century. But political parties as powerful political machines may soon disappear, due to mass Internet use that easily delivers popular opinions to the government. Korea will be the model for this, due to its highest usage of the Internet in the world. Korean people will use mobile phones, digital multimedia broadcasting (DMB) phones,

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Globality and Futurity: Innovation Frameworks for 21st Century Training

Irving H. Buchen, Capella University and IMPAC University
Albert John Cacace, Multimedia Republic

Of all the descriptors that might be applied to the initial decades of the 21st century, surely that of fierce competition will at the top of the list.

1+1=3

Globality and futurity define and extend each other. Together, they generate the math of one plus one equals three.

Moreover, today's hyper-competitive economy is historically unprecedented. Survival

has replaced growth as the first order of business. But why now? What is so special and urgent about the current and near term?

Companies are beset. Everything is a challenge. Nothing is assured. Unexpectedly, the sources of competition are not only worldwide but also accompanied by often unbridgeable wage and price differentials. Nor is the traditional consolation of superior domestic quality available. Toyota is surpassing GM; and from US plants! Indeed, the proverbial enemy is no longer outside but inside the gates. Superior American technology and

See Innovation, continued on page 2

from the CHAPTER PRESIDENT

Dear Members of the WFS US National Capital Chapter and friends from around the world,

Welcome to our latest edition of **FUTUREtakes**. I recently returned from World Future 2006: Creating Global Strategies for Humanity's Future in Toronto, which was attended by more than 1,000 people [see Toronto report by Jay Herson elsewhere in this issue]. I thoroughly enjoyed myself there and met many new and interesting people. The networking was extremely valuable for all of us at the conference. The tracks and talks were all impressive. I also attended a two day pre-conference workshop, which was personally very valuable. The only frustration, and this is certainly only an indication of how valuable the conference was as a whole, was that there were too many interesting concurrent talks at all the sessions. We were all saying, "I'm going to this talk, but I would also like to see these two or three others that are the same time." This is actually a realistic metric of conference value.

I have talked to a few of the pre-conference workshop presenters and asked them to consider providing us with some insight to their workshops. I am hoping to publish this information in upcoming **FUTUREtakes** issues. I'm already looking forward to next year and the World Future 2007: Fostering Hope and Vision for the 21st Century. This conference will be from July 29 through July 31, 2007 and is at the Hilton Minneapolis and Towers in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Dave Stein, Editor-in-Chief of **FUTUREtakes**, and I met with many of our international **FUTUREtakes** editors at the conference. This has now become a tradition. Additionally, Dave, Ken Harris, Jay Herson, and I participated in a short but extremely productive workshop for local chapters.

By the way, Ken Harris is our

chapter's retiring Treasurer and also Secretary for the parent World Future Society. Ken has done a create job over the years for our chapter. Ken and I worked together to update our chapter's constitution and by-laws. Additionally, with Ken doing almost all the work, we have completed our incorporation and are now working on attaining a 501 (c) status. We will all miss Ken but are happy for him as he and his wife, Carolyn, start the next part of their lives together.

Our chapter is already in the process of planning our upcoming year of events. Eric Garland, our Program Chair, is finishing up the final details on our September and October evening events as well as for the rest of the year. Ken Harris, also our Book Club Lead, has our September, October and November book selections already confirmed and listed on our chapter's website. For additional information please go to

<http://www.natcapwfs.org/events.htm>.

We plan to hold an election for



Russell Wooten

new officers at our first evening program. There will be information about this posted on our website in addition to mailing to our chapter's membership. We are also looking for a few more great folks to help us out. A number of our current board members are retiring. At this point we have four new board members to officially elect.

Until our next edition of **FUTUREtakes**, I wish you all well and successful futures.

Russell Wooten
President, WFS US National Capital Chapter

Innovation

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process have not only been copied abroad but also exported there by our own American multi-nationals. Indeed, outsourcing has reached the point where it has spawned a new consulting American enterprise – that of human resources outsourcing (HRO).

The impacts are dramatic. The long range has been replaced by contingency plans. We are backing into the future. We are involved in piecemeal tradeoffs to survive. We downsize incessantly. Employees are asked to take salary cuts to offset global wage differentials. Pension support is being abandoned and replaced by federal bail-outs. In essence, what is taking place is an economic version and replay of all the ecological trade-offs in the past. Workers are now in the same category as air or water. They

are grist for the mill of survival. The only difference is that this time the tragedy of the commons is not abstract and limited to Nature but applies directly to Nurture itself. The immediate impacts of this new situation are loss of employee loyalty, talent shortages, and an obsession with innovation. Although all are symptomatic of a radical divide, the last one drives home and perhaps best defines our current dilemma as well as points to some ways out.

WHAT'S NEW?

Not surprisingly the literature about innovation is growing at an almost exponential rate. Indeed, in volume and dominance it is matched only by its training versions. But all the current analyses of innovation are surprisingly familiar. Innovation is

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FUTUREtakes

FUTUREtakes is a publication of the World Future Society US National Capital Chapter, based in Washington DC, USA. In addition to the local chapter, **FUTUREtakes** serves other interested professional societies in the greater Washington DC metropolitan area as well as other chapters of the World Future Society worldwide.

FUTUREtakes welcomes contributed articles that serve one or more of the following objectives:

- a. Contribute to a reasoned awareness of the future and the importance of its study,
- b. Advance serious and responsible investigation of the future,
- c. Promote the development of methods for the study of the future,
- d. Increase public understanding of future-oriented studies,
- e. Facilitate communication and cooperation among organizations and individuals in studying or planning for the future.

In addition, **FUTUREtakes** publishes book reviews, future studies exercises, discussion threads, letters to the editor or equivalent correspondence, and summaries of chapter programs. All published material will normally follow the guidelines delineated herein for contributed articles.

To promote free dialog and the exchange of ideas on matters concerning the future, **FUTUREtakes** does not align itself with political entities including but not limited to political parties, political action committees, or political platforms. In addition, **FUTUREtakes** does not advocate particular ideologies or political positions.

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Give Us Your Perspective on the Future



We are looking for people with vision in any area of interest or expertise to write a future-oriented article for **FUTUREtakes**. Your vision may come from personal experience, reading, lecture notes, or a topic that in your view is important for the future. Please share your thoughts with our chapter members, preferably in 1000 words or less. Send your contribution to futuretakes@cs.com

Innovation

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essentially defined as the production of the new. The most recent advocates apply it to the behaviors of organizational cultures. But what defines the new? Is there only one kind? And is the new enough to be a magic bullet?

Because training interventions on behalf of innovation have to be targeted, the new needs definition. But innovation is not singular. It exhibits differences not only of degree but also

of kind. Its basic and most familiar version is the incremental. The Japanese, schooled in Deming, are particularly adept at such continuous improvements. Technology itself obsessively links novelty to obsolescence. All the current enhancements of cell phones are in the final analysis only add-ons. But

when cell phones first appeared they exhibited a different version of innovation – they were disruptively new. They signaled such a totally new version of communication that they changed the market itself. Many abandoned their land lines altogether. Communications became totally mobile. Ties to local connections were no longer necessary. In short, innovation was not only newly disruptive but also now defined by its being world-wide – sometimes in origins but always in application. In other words, one test of the innovatively new is that it is not only a product of but also defines the range of a global market.

Disruption has a twin – discontinuity. Different in both degree and kind, it is ahead of its time. It has future power. It is a time leap or a time warp. Discovered it has the power to grant current businesses new leases on life. Neglected it can be a death blow.

All exhortations to cutting edge advantage or thinking outside the box are really calls for finding next generation products and services. They are in fact time creations and more resemble science fiction scenarios than strategic planning projections.

Thus, three versions of the new operate. The incremental alters the market, the disruptive creates new markets, and the discontinuous leaps ahead to future markets. Past-oriented companies constantly benchmark and

define the new as the incremental.

Present-directed companies focus on what is newly emerging and sufficiently different to disrupt the current market and position themselves accordingly. Future-driven companies seek to be ahead of existing markets and identify what in effect will either put them out of business or eliminate their competitors; and thereby

grant the temporary illusion of a monopoly. Which one to pursue? The augment here is to embrace not only all three, but also the two frameworks that in fact preside over their emergence.

To survive and to flourish, company cultures and training agendas have to exist at the intersection of globality and futures. These are the new contexts for innovation. But embedding innovation in globality requires going beyond conventional factoring in of international markets, stationing representatives abroad or even establishing plants or offices there. It involves a total policy shift and repositioning.

Current company policy follows national policy. Both pursue national advantage. Both brand their operations with the signage of “Made in the USA.” Basically they are self-directed and self-benefiting, gain is unidirec-

tional. The company and the country remain at the center. Globality is peripheral and serves only as its operational market arena. But the new nature of world-wide competition requires placing globality at the center. Such repositioning immediately defines exchange as multiply reciprocal. It is the proverbial win-win, plus one more win. Three players benefit: initiators, receivers and the interdependent global context. Indeed, the sign of a true global policy is that it redefines the bottom line as interoperable gain-sharing.

To date, such a global perspective has largely been advanced by the green movement. It places Nature at the center and argues for respecting its laws of design and conservation. It calls for enlightened self-interest and stewardship: the need to husband limited ecological resources or they will not be around very long to husband us. To enlist corporate support, the notion of sustainable or green products and processes has been introduced. And many companies have routinely added ecological considerations to the development of the new and innovative. But in many instances it remains an add-on to satisfy or pacify EPA requirements. Ecology remains an object not a subject, a factor not a partner.

CHARLES DARWIN & ADAM SMITH

What is missing is the fusing of competitions: Darwin with Adam Smith, evolution with capitalism, survival of the fittest with survival of the most innovative. Nature as a design model has value only when it is paired with that of economic evolution. Happily, such interoperability is to be found in the dynamics of current globality. The historical convergence of ecology and economics has created such a new level and scale of competition that only an equally comprehensive global framework has the ability to accommodate and hopefully integrate all into a new whole.

But putting globality in the driver’s seat is not easy. It is not a familiar or comfortable operating assumption.

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Futurity focuses on the disruptive and discontinuous. It involves time travel. Thinking out of the box is really thinking beyond the limits of time and space. It requires imagining new companies and countries with little or no previous baggage approaching challenges with new assumptions and beginning with the state of the art.

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tion. The customary notion is that reality is located here not abroad; it is self-possessed not shared. The world is a stage not a player. To build a global case, its impacts have to be tallied and a case made. The slogan – “Think globally, act locally” – needs the alignment of details. Specifically, global frameworks of all existing operations have to be developed and applied as overlays. Spelling out in detail the impacts on company operations and its workforce would establish the credibility of globality as the dominant driver of convergence in the 21st century.

The training version requires a total review of all programs to determine the extent to which they support a global perspective. Not everything need be scrapped. Cross cultural communications and leadership styles may with adjustment be retained. But all must display the new content of globality by spelling out how it affects and colors every aspect of company operations. Indeed, all training needs to supplement its e-designation with a g-prefix. The net result is the gradual emergence of a new collective company identity now guided by new global vision-mission statements.

There now remains including the other partner – futures. Happily, just as all globalists have also to be ecologists so they also must be futurists. It has to be that way because extrapolation and projection are the allies of both Nature and History. Together they function as early warning and/or opportunity systems. They alert us to abysses ahead of time to prevent demise or collapse. But “futures” does not just buy time for turnaround. It also is a problem solver in its own right, often an innovative one.

Futurity focuses on the disruptive and discontinuous. It involves time travel. Thinking out of the box is really thinking beyond the limits of time and space. It requires imagining new companies and countries with little or no previous baggage approaching challenges with new assumptions and beginning with the state of the art. It

requires simulating new starts, with no predetermined preconceptions of limits or constraints. Not only is the entire world available for such reflection but all outer space and depths of the oceans. World-class design would carry new meaning – that of global testing and application.

1 + 1 = 3

The net result is that globality and futurity define and extend each other. Together, they generate the math of one plus one equals three. The only way to save the world is to embrace and respect its totality; the only way to preserve the future is to operate as its ally; and the only way to stir innovation is to require it to be worldwide and ahead of its time. That way competition serves a double-edged sword, expanding the arena and time-lines of operations, and challenging innovation to perform newly in its new frameworks.

Such aspirational training goals may be the only way fierce competition can be met and managed; and innovation stirred to new levels of mastery. The training goal is thus to persuade every employee to be a globalist and a futurist: to be not only a national but a global citizen, no longer time and space bound; and to supplement the declaration of independence with a declaration of interdependence.

Discussion points (send comments to futuretakes@cs.com):

- * The article states that employees have become “grist for the mill.” This has potential implications for human life and dignity. Is there a countertrend?
- * As the article notes, some employees are asked to take salary cuts to offset global wage differentials. Will the differentials close or widen, and why?
- * Is there a general trend toward innovation that is incremental – or toward innovation that is radical – and why? Or will incremental innovation characterize some industries and radical innovation characterize others?
- * Will new utility functions (used in economics) characterize the different

levels of innovation and investment therein?

- * The article proposes a training goal of persuading every employee to be not only a national but also a global citizen. What will be the primary sources of one’s identity in 2025 – humanity, one’s nation-state, one’s occupation or profession, one’s socioeconomic group, or one’s “tribe” (ethnicity)?

Dr. Irving H. Buchen has taught and served as an academic administrator at Cal State, University of Wisconsin, and Penn State. He is currently a member of the doctoral business faculty for Capella and associate vice president for IMPAC University. An author of six books and nearly 200 articles, he has appeared often in *The Futurist and Foresight* and writes a monthly column called “What’s New/Next?” for the journal *Workforce Performance*. He is completing a book entitled *Doing Whatever It Takes: The New 21st Century American Work Ethic*. His latest project with his co-author Al Cacace is to develop a change kit to empower citizens, communities, and companies to create a Plan B eco-economy by 2031.

Albert John Cacace is a computer systems specialist who holds an MBA in Information Management. Previously employed by Systems Engineering Labs (SEL), he currently serves as a consultant to companies involved in producing data-communications devices for commercial and military applications. He also has created and serves as executive producer of *Rewind* (www.rewindpbs.org) which produces documentaries and is founder and president of *Multimedia Republic* (www.multimediarpublic.org) focused on creating global awareness projects. Currently, he and Irving Buchen are seeking funding to create a documentary spelling out the action agenda of thinking globally but acting locally and the action options of creating an alternative and sustainable eco-economy.

World Future 2006: July 28–30, Toronto

By Jay Herson

This year's annual meeting included a celebration of the 40th anniversary of the World Future Society. The conference theme "Creating Global Strategies for Humanity's Future" attracted 1050 registrants from 34 countries. The largest country contingent outside of North America was South Korea. There were 111 separate sessions divided among nine issue areas as well as 11 pre-conference courses. All sessions / courses were well attended and there was much informal small-group discussion between attendees outside of the meetings.

As usual the plenary sessions were very stimulating. There were three speakers at the opening session.

David M. Walker, comptroller general U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) and author of *Retirement Security: Understanding and Planning Your Financial Future*, spoke on the topic of "Global Challenges in the 21st Century." Although Theodore Roosevelt said "we must exercise foresight and not be consumed with the here and now," the United States has never had a strategic plan. Over the past several decades the US has enjoyed economic growth, low inflation and interest rates while maintaining superpower status. This gives the impression of good times. Yet there are new challenges such as the threat of global pandemic influenza, disaster preparedness, fiscal imbalance, energy, health care, environment, and tax reform / entitlements. Many programs that are called upon to deal with these problems are inadequate and have outlived their usefulness. Australia and New Zealand are doing long range planning 40-50 years out. These countries are looking at the implications of



an aging society and are dealing with entitlement programs both public and private. The sophisticated methods being used are scenario creation, trend monitoring and fiscal projections. Said Walker, the US needs grounded foresight and a strate-

gic plan in order to set priorities and manage change. Also, many of our problems require global action, and the US must take the lead to create global indices needed for solutions to the common problems such as aging populations, entitlements, fiscal crisis and environmental concerns as well as those based on interdependence—e.g. health and commerce. For further information he urged attendees to visit www.gao.gov and read the GAO report on 21st Century Challenges.

Joel Garreau, reporter and editor, *The Washington Post* and author of *Radical Evolution: The Promise and Peril of Enhancing our Minds and Bodies: What it Means to be Human* said that we are at an inflection point in history in the interpretation of what it means to be human. Technology is now aimed inward affecting mind and body and offspring. The first human to live to age 150 is probably alive today. Children in school are competing with classmates who have body and mind enhancements. Memory pills are being developed for treating dementia and Alzheimer's disease but can be used by the wealthy to buy their children 20 additional points on the SAT. By the 2012 Olympics we should see the first gene-altered athlete. Recent research in the emerging science of telekinetics has developed methods to train a monkey to move objects with his mind.

This has important implications for dealing with cerebral palsy victims and paraplegics. In development are artificial eyes and language translation implants, but in this man-machine interaction where does man end and machine begin? Three scenarios emerge—Heaven—our inventions conquer pain, suffering, stupidity, ignorance and even death; Hell—creations wipe out the human race or all of life on earth within a generation and Prevail—the first two scenarios are technodeterministic, i.e. they will both occur. Garreau believes in Prevail.

Lance Secretan, founder, The Secretan Center, Erin, Ontario, Canada and author of *One: The Art and Practice of Conscious Leadership*. Six thousand years ago, human civilization was a single homogeneous entity—we shared the same stories and myths, mysteries and magic. It was the classical Greek philosophers who began the process of separate thinking by introducing rational thought. Renaissance thinkers picked up the pace and modern-day scientists and technocrats have further unraveled the global cohesion that once existed. Conscious leadership brings people, countries, corporations and communities together. The qualities needed for leadership are summarized as: courage, authenticity, service, truthfulness, love and effectiveness.

The closing session featured **Ray Kurzweil**, award-winning inventor and high-tech entrepreneur whose latest book is *The Singularity is Near: When Humans Transcend Biology*. He opened by giving many examples that the rate of technological change is doubling every decade. In the 21st Century we will see 20,000 years of progress at today's rate of advancement. Before the year 2030 there will be computers

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CHAPTERS' CORNER

Summary of the Chapter Activities Session 2006, by Youngsook Park, José Cordeiro, Christy Dugger, Ken Harris, and Dave Stein.

The purpose of "CAS2006," co-chaired by Tim Mack and Dave Stein, was to exchange chapter success stories, and the "winning ways" that made these success stories possible, so that all chapters can be winners in all areas – for example, membership growth, activity participation, activity diversity, sponsorship, and stature. A related purpose was for chapters that are facing challenges to seek the advice and counsel of other chapters that had faced these challenges previously.

It was emphasized that various chapters have different strengths and success stories. For example, some chapters offer impressive, well-attended luncheon programs or dinner programs, in some cases with big-name speakers, while other chapters are struggling with program attendance and activity participation. Some chapters offer short courses or workshops. Some have special interest groups (SIGs) for members who want to focus on particular areas – the future of living and working patterns, for example, or the future of biotech or nanotech and how that will impact our lives, or the future of healthcare, education, privacy, leadership, religion and spirituality, governance – or perhaps even the future of volunteerism, on which our chapters themselves so critically depend. Some chapters offer publications. Then there are chapters that command respect and stature through their involvement with various ministries of their respective national governments. At the same time, there are chapters that are struggling to put themselves on the proverbial map, that is, to position themselves to be noticed by prospective members and activity participants. Some chapters are experiencing modest to excellent membership growth, while other chapters struggle with member retention and high mem-

Chapter Activities Session 2006

bership turnover. Finally, there are chapters that have pipelines of eager volunteers ready to step up to leadership posts from which they can evolve their respective chapters ever onward, upward, and forward. Other chapters barely have enough volunteers to staff key positions.

SOUTH KOREA CHAPTER

Accompanied by several students whom she introduced, **Youngsook Park**, President of the South Korea Chapter, gave the first presentation, together with her chapter's junior



From South Korea (left to right): Kim Dae Ho, Lee Jung Min, Jang Woong Jo, Youngsook Park, Hwang Hyun Jung (presenter)

forum leader, **Whang Hyun-jung**. This highly active chapter is registered in South Korea as a non-government organization (NGO) with the Ministry of Finance to act as a leading regional, national, and international R&D, training, and consulting organization in the field of future studies. In addition, the chapter functions as the Korean node of the American Council for United Nations University (ACUNU). "Korea 2050" core programs include research, analysis, and formulations of various strategies for alternative futures of Korea, both for government ministries and for businesses. Professional services include establishment of futures research institutes in universities as well as research centers in business. International collaboration extends to the European Union, the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The Web site,

www.korea2050.net, is becoming an internationally-recognized database for futures research.

Additional activities include a training program for government officials on foresight and strategic prospective studies, with training to be provided by internationally prominent futurists, and seminars, workshops, and lectures to promote public awareness.

More than 500 futurists, CEOs, and government officials, including former US Vice President Al Gore, have spoken at chapter-sponsored conferences and workshops. These events

have included the Seoul Digital Forum in 2005, co-sponsored by the Ministry of Information and Communications, and the First Futures Workshop, also in 2005. Another major event, the conference on the future of culture

and tourism, was sponsored by the chapter in cooperation with the Ministries of Culture and Tourism. This conference examined trends that will impact culture and tourism for the purpose of developing effective national strategies. Other ministries with which the South Korea Chapter has worked include the Ministries of Education, Science and Technology, Construction and Transportation, Youth, Environment, and Education.

VENEZUELA CHAPTER

Another highly successful chapter, the Venezuela Chapter, was represented by its President, **José Cordeiro**. The Venezuela Chapter has been instrumental in establishing future studies courses at four universities. Monthly events include programs on "The Future of ___ (topic of the month)," and internationally prominent speakers are invited to a yearly confer-

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Activities

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ence. A recent conference speaker was Arthur C. Clarke, a well-known science fiction writer. Another major activity is the national university contest, which the chapter sponsors in collaboration with the Millennium Project of the ACUNU.

The Venezuela Chapter's achievements are all the more remarkable considering their challenging financial and political environment. The chapter relies primarily on member dues for its revenues, and exchange controls make it difficult for members to maintain membership in the parent WFS. For this reason, the chapter is interested in attracting corporate sponsorship. An additional interest is obtaining funds to bring students to the annual WFS convention, although Mr. Cordeiro was able to bring three students to WFS 2006 and introduced them at CAS2006.

BAYSIDE CHAPTER (USA)

Christy Dugger, President of the Northern California (Bayside) Chapter discussed the student futurist clubs situation – specifically, the challenges in linking her students with other students around the globe who are interested in the future, even the students from Mexico and South Korea who have contacted her chapter. Noting that US chapters receive no government support, she proposed that an umbrella 501 (C) (3) organization with its own board of directors be established that would enable all US chapters to receive funding that is tax deductible to the donors. She said that it is prohibitively expensive for individual chapters to get this 501 (C) (3) status. **Russell Wooten**, President of the US National Capital Chapter, said that his chapter was only one signature away from incorporation and will seek its own 501 (C) (3) status once incorporation is complete. To this end, Christy further proposed that we pursue pro bono legal services. [This is a brilliant and long-needed idea for the US chapters! Let's identify similar measures that can help chapters in other nations. – Dave]



José Cordeiro (presenting), Ken Harris, Youngsook Park

OTHER SUGGESTIONS

Arthur Shostak, Emeritus Professor of Sociology, said that High School of the Future in Philadelphia, USA, would welcome speakers from WFS chapters.

Another suggestion was partnering between chapters in affluent nations and chapters in nations that are less affluent, such partnering to include limited financial support where possible.

Julio Millán, coordinator of the Mexico chapter, distributed copies of an 11-point proposal for strengthening local WFS chapters.

ADDITIONAL AREAS FOR FURTHER DIALOG AMONG CHAPTERS

Both during and prior to the session, several other topics for constructive dialog among chapters were proposed:

1. Web linkage and other viable alternatives to physical meetings, for chapters whose members are geographically dispersed (proposed by **Mohan K. Tikku**, India),
2. ways for chapters to pursue corporate sponsorship (proposed by **Tonia McDonald**, Los Angeles, USA),
3. ways to make chapter activity participation and membership a high priority in large metropolitan areas, where many other activities com-

Carlos Rodriguez-Ruiz, Venezuela Chapter (not shown: Francisco Javier D'Jesús and Guido David Núñez, also from Venezuela Chapter)



pete for people's time (proposed by **Dave Stein**),
4. ways to maximize "chapter appeal" to members and prospective members who do not have cross-cutting interests – that is, who may be interested in this month's topic but not next month's topic (proposed by **Dave Stein**).

NEXT STEPS

As several participants acknowledged, this constructive dialog among all chapters needs to continue throughout the year. It is too important to defer to CAS2007! Group e-mail was identified as the fastest available means for now. Let's help one another so that all chapters win!

Your chapter has its own success story and winning ideas to share with other chapters! Or perhaps your chapter is facing challenges and can benefit from the wisdom of other chapters that have successfully met these challenges. Let's continue this exchange of ideas that can benefit all WFS chapters! Write to "Chapters' Corner" at futuretakes@cs.com.

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and direct electronic ballot systems to vote directly on issues, bypassing political parties and politicians as they are inefficient, self-centered, corrupt, and no longer represent the views of their districts or the public. The “hurry, hurry” culture of Korea will have no need of inefficient and corrupt Korean politicians and political parties. Citizens will submit the bills in the name of non-government organizations (NGOs) or civic groups in order to have national referendums and electronic polls that deliver their opinions on various issues.

WESTERN DEMOCRACY ON THE MARCH

A majority of people in the world now live in democratic countries or countries that have begun to implement some democratic and political reforms. Western nation-states indicate a historical pattern: first democracy, then stable, prosperous and secure democracies, then neoliberal market democracies.

At the dawn of the new millennium, democracy and freedom continue as dominant trends in Western and East-Central Europe, in the Americas, and increasingly in the Asian-Pacific region. In the former Soviet Union the picture remains mixed, with progress toward freedom stalled and a number of countries consolidating into dictatorships. In Africa, free societies and electoral democracies remain a distinct minority. While there are no true democracies or free countries within the Arab world, and a low proportion of free and democratic Muslim states, 1999 was a year of democratic ferment in the Islamic world. Democracy has never been a finished thing but has instead been continually renewed, redefined and reinvented, drawing on political struggles in many places. And in this reinvention, the interaction of social movements and elite power holders has been crucial.

DEMOCRACY DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH KOREA

No longer a backward society, South Korea today is an educated,

urban, industrial, middle-class nation. Social and economic changes have occurred much faster than political changes. This imbalance between advanced society and political backwardness has been a major cause of political instability and has enabled Korean radicalism to dramatize the contradictions within the Korean polity. Furthermore, South Korea’s modern political institutions – the executive branch, the National Assembly, the Supreme Court, political parties, and interest groups – still lack two crucial cultural ingredients for rapid institutionalization of democracy. These ingredients are a democratic tradition and democratic attitude. Indeed, until recently South Korea was a politically backward nation relying on repression to cope with the problems

stemming from rapid social and economic changes. During the past forty years, a very short time span, these rapid and dramatic changes

have forced Korea to join the ranks of advanced societies. The urban population has increased exponentially. In the 1940s, nearly 75 percent of the people lived in rural areas. Today, South Korea has a population of over 46 million, and 80 percent of the people live in urban or metropolitan areas.

In 2004, South Korea went through a constitutional crisis through the impeachment of the President. However, President Roh was saved by the young generation who organized gatherings and demonstrations in his support through the Internet. Upon his return to office, President Roh continued to ignore politics and his own ruling party by dealing with citizens directly through the government’s Information Office Internet newspapers and various department-owned websites to persuade the public directly, bypassing the political parties. He is the first president to put little weight on party politics and to even ignore them in favor of efforts to deal the public directly.

CHALLENGES AND “FORCING FUNCTIONS”

1. The limitations of representative democracy

Voting via representatives is problematic. The majority sometimes does not recognize the rights of the minority or individual liberty. Majority rule is the tyranny of democracy. There still are exclusions from voting that may be based on age, gender, mental capacity, criminal record, literacy, ethnicity, citizenship, etc. The larger the number of exclusions, the lesser the degree of democracy. Furthermore, the Will of the People is not always motivated by the highest and best moral values; power and self interest are far better predictors of who wins elections. John Stuart Mill’s “Tyranny of the Majority” can easily be seen in budding democracies.

No longer a backward society, South Korea today is an educated, urban, industrial, middle-class nation. Social and economic changes have occurred much faster than political changes.

2. Apathy among young voters

The key tool of modern representative democracy is elections. The legitimacy of the authority of representatives in a democratic society comes from the approval they receive from the citizens through elections. However, in some democracies, a majority of the people do not vote, as illustrated by the 2005 elections in Texas in which the city council members were elected by the 10% of the voters who turned out. People do not vote because 90% of them are alienated and believe that their votes do not make any difference.

In South Korea, turnouts for polls and elections are at an all time low, less than 20% for local and bi-elections, and less than 50% for general elections. In the latest National Assembly bi-elections, only 21 percent of voters in their twenties participated, compared to 61.2 percent of voters in their sixties. Political apathy among young people is not new, but when there is such a disparity between age groups it is too serious.

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E-Democracy

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ous to ignore. A drop in voting rates is a crisis in participation in the process and a crisis in legitimate representation. The results of the bi-elections have only half the representative legitimacy they should have. When elections that choose the people's representatives become events for middle-aged and elderly voters, it is a crisis for Korean democracy as a whole, regardless of comments about advantages for certain political parties.

3. Corruption and distrust

Most Korean citizens believe the country is tainted due to the scandals involving leaders including politicians. According to a research survey in December 2005, more than 95 percent of respondents answered that they have heard of corruption scandals from someone they know or from media reports. The poll of 2,000 citizens and 300 leading figures was conducted at the request of the Council for the Korean Pact on Anti-Corruption and Transparency to mark the International Anti-Corruption Day, which fell on Dec. 9.

Similarly, another recent survey, this one of 1,500 adults regarding their perceptions of the "uprightness" of leading figures in Korean society, showed that four out of five Koreans deeply distrust political and economic leaders because of their lack of moral integrity. Concerning questions about their commitment to basic duties such as mandatory military service and tax payments, 82 percent of those surveyed said that the leaders fail to uphold their duties due to their own social and economic power. About 66 percent of the respondents showed an "extreme" distrust in the leaders. In addition, the survey showed that the public's distrust about the moral status of the upper class in society has reached a serious level. About 22 percent of the respondents cited a lack of responsibility as the most serious problem, followed by unfair actions with 19 percent, arrogance with 17 percent, and the lack of moral integrity

with 14 percent. However, 88 percent said most corrupt leaders end up with a lighter punishment than the gravity of their wrongdoing warranted.

In public confidence and trust in the political system to build effectiveness and sustainability, Korea's experience is especially interesting as a young and vigorous democracy. Democratization is not a linear process that moves from an authoritarian to a democratic regime. Democracies may remain fragile long after multiparty elections are established. They may be mismanaged or may be unable to maintain peace and security, deliver public welfare, or assist economic growth. Expectations of democracy may be higher in newly established democracies, and checks and balances against abuse may be lower, meaning disillusionment and reversals may be more frequent, but weaknesses in the political process can exist also in long-established multiparty systems.

Corrupt business-government relations have been a major problem in Korea. But while government intervention in the financial sector may have fed the economic growth of the 1960s and 1970s, it left banks in a precarious position when economic conditions later worsened. The main lubricant of the old system, money politics, has worsened, not improved, under democracy because politicians now have an even greater need for campaign funds from the businesses. Candidates still need to spend huge sums to motivate voters through various means, including vote buying. Most official political party income comes from private business "support groups" (huwonhoe) and from state subsidies.

Corruption has always been a fundamental threat to the quality of democracy. Opinion polls data in other transitional countries show a serious decline in support for democracy when citizens see politicians as corrupt and aloof from their concerns. This is a serious threat for the survival of democracy in many countries.

However, recent reforms in South Korea will lessen the influence of

large corporations and the media. Large corporations typically used to make large contributions to the governing party, but this is prohibited by law as of March 2006, and this prohibition will change the political power in Korea. If the politicians cannot receive enough funds from the companies, the advantages of becoming politicians will diminish. Companies that cannot pay funds to politicians will not approach politicians and therefore will not face corruption charges with politicians. Instead, they will have a transparent business process without political influence in various business decisions. Therefore, the media, which are owned by or obtain advertisements from large corporations, will not cover much of political affairs, and their political power will drastically diminish to the level of the Western world.

4. The obsolescence of political parties

Political parties no longer have a lock on legitimacy and are no longer required for voting. In the West, political parties are losing their grip as more civil rights groups and NGOs are bypassing political parties and going directly to the administration. Furthermore, political parties have based their platforms on ideological and class divides that are becoming less important, especially in more advanced societies. The labels "left" and "right" have less and less meaning. Citizens have developed multiple interests, diverse senses of belonging, and overlapping identities.

Some political parties have managed to adapt, for example, the British Labour party or Brazil's Workers Party whose economic policies have very little to do with their union origins. Yet, political dislocation exists alongside a growing fatigue with traditional forms of political representation. People no longer trust the political establishment. They want a greater say in public matters and usually prefer to voice their own interests directly or through interest groups. The debate on genetically modified food in

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E-Democracy

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Europe, for example, can hardly be understood without reference to NGOs such as Greenpeace. Likewise, the rejection of the European constitution in France and the Netherlands demonstrates that major political parties have little leverage once an issue is posed to the people.

ENTER "IT"

Korea's Internet usage rate is the top in the world, and Internet users, i.e., netizens, are more powerful in political or opinion moulding than ever before. With the recent lowering of the voting age to 18 years, the next political elections are unpredictable while netizen power is increasing dramatically. Seventy percent of South Koreans go online periodically, reaffirming the nation's status as an Internet powerhouse, according to a government survey. The Ministry of Information and Communication (MIC) said in 2005 that Korea had 31.6 million Internet users at the end of 2004, up 2.4 million from a year earlier. Internet users, defined as those who access the Web for one hour or more a month, made up 70.2 percent of the nation's 45 million people aged six or above. This puts Korea in the higher echelon of the world ranking.

Despite the substantial increase in the number of middle-aged users, the survey revealed that a digital divide by sex, age and region is still a grim reality. Among them, the age demographic is most serious as the gap in usage rate between teenagers and 50+ year-olds amounts to 65.2 percentage points. Around 17.06 million men (75.9 percent) accessed the Internet regularly last year compared to 14.52 million women (64.6 percent), for an 11.3 percentage point difference.

Yet, there is the growing trend of get-your-information-anytime-anywhere in Korea. By late 2006, a majority of wireless users will be equipped with smart phones capable of unlimited connection to the Net. Then, Korea's mobile Internet market will start to explode.

E-DEMOCRACY

Direct democracy is not new. Historically, its voting systems have included direct vote on issues by means of tribal governance and at town hall meetings. There were also California's "Propositions." However, through the rapid expansion of technology, this whole idea of direct democracy is revived. Whereas in the old days, direct voting was restricted by place, distance, time and cost of election, true direct democracy through the Internet, mobile phones, and electronic balloting equipment is now developing. Polling is done before the people actually vote in elections. People vote on large TV screens, and this is the return of direct democracy. Federal, state and city level direct pollings are common now.

An IT stronghold, South Korea ranked fifth in 2005 in the United Nations' evaluation of e-government readiness among 191 countries, thanks to its advanced IT and nationwide broadband network. The Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs stated on Dec. 18, 2005 that the country's e-government standing has remained at fifth place for two years in a row, the highest among Asian countries.

People no longer read conventional newspapers, and as a result, political parties and the government find new ways to attract public attention, through portal sites. People express their opinions through blogs and Internet comments. As South Korea ranks fifth in the UN evaluation of e-government, there are many phenome-

na of new generations breeding activities that may lead to a complete change in the political aspects. Korea is the first country to encounter the new high-tech society's illness and new shaping of political appetites. Internet portals are elbowing out newspapers in the online news service market, as a growing number of people get their news information through the online portals, not through newspaper homepages. According to KoreanClick, an Internet usage analyzer, the number of page views (hits) of the portals' new services skyrocketed by as many as 35 times for the past three years, while that of the newspapers' homepages leveled off or declined. In the case of the major portal www.daum.net, its news service's page views stood at around 110 million in July 2002 but soared to nearly 3.8 billion in June 2005, a 34.5-fold increase. Another major portal, www.naver.com, saw its news page views surge by a factor of 12 to 2.82 billion for the corresponding period.

Representative political systems are dying due to the direct democracy demonstrated in Korea recently. Starting from Roh's presidential election where many young voters were mobilized by the Internet to support him, and World Cup Cheerings and Candle Light Demonstrations where smart mobs mobilized instantly to show their opinions, direct participation in direct expression of their opinions becomes a new way of democracy in Korea. The top Internet and mobile phone usage enable Korea to lead a new direct democracy.

CONCLUSIONS

South Korea will change to an Internet-driven democracy to eliminate politics, political parties, and politicians in 10-20 years and will be a model for Western countries to follow. Individuals will have more power than politicians, and with their collective intelligence or collective powers to inspire people on the spot to send messages or to revolt, conventional democracy will certainly change such that representatives are no longer required for intelligent agents who live in

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There is the growing trend of get-your-information-anytime-anywhere in Korea. By late 2006, a majority of wireless users will be equipped with smart phones capable of unlimited connection to the Net.

From Walt Disney Imagineering! Storytelling the Future

Synopsis of the June 2006 chapter dinner program presented by Joseph Tankersley of Walt Disney Imagineering; summarized by Lindan Johnson.

*"The era we are living in today is a dream of coming true."
—Walt Disney*

You know the story. A man and his wife take their two daughters to an amusement park and ride the carousel. This story has occurred thousands of times and gone no further. But what if that man were a futurist... a dreamer and knew that dreams really do come true?

As Walt Disney tells the story... he could imagine the horses on the carousel coming to life. Instead of a dingy amusement park in great need of paint and repair he could envision another world filled with color and excitement... a place where the family could go together for entertainment. Children who saw his movies often asked him where Mickey Mouse and Cinderella lived and he seriously considered their questions. He spent another 20 years building his movie business and occasionally jotting down ideas for his theme park. In 1953 when he finally bought the land for his project it was all flat land—no rivers, no mountains, no castles or rocket ships—just orange groves and a few acres of walnut trees. More than 50 years later we all know the story of Disneyland and most of us have taken our own children to ride the rides and visit Mickey Mouse and Cinderella.

Joe Tankersley knows the power of story. He is a senior show writer for Walt Disney Imagineering, a futurist and a storyteller. He explains how Walt Disney saw the connection between entertaining people about the future (Tomorrowland) and being able to make it come true.

"Futurists are storytellers. We are agents of change. We can help people accommodate change through the way we tell our stories... I think it's critical

to remember the important role that fantasy and the imagination play in our world. Futurists are in a field that floats between science and imagination and lately I think we have become overwhelmed with the scientific viewpoint," said Tankersley.

"Story can offer us a symbolic domain. For example, the maps of the old world were completely inaccurate, but without them the explorers would never have found The New World. Stories help us work on complexity. Everyone needs to broaden their perspectives and engage in futures thinking. However, as management expert Peter Senge reminds us, 'People do not focus on the long term because they have to but because they want to...'"

Stories tell us where we came from, where we are going and why. A good story is a great way to engage people. According to Tankersley, *"Stories are what we buy and sell. When you stand at the dairy counter trying to decide which eggs to buy... do you choose the cheapest ones or the brown ones that are personally recommended by the lady at the organic farm?"* We need metaphorical stories that embrace the complexity of our world. Stories go beyond the printed page... paper can hold us back.

Tankersley says that stories are a way to see patterns in the vast amount of information that can otherwise overwhelm us. "Right now... I think we're in between stories... futurists need to be telling the tales instead of fundamentalists," said Tankersley, "...we need to trust the power of story... to put ourselves on the line to tell the story. Most people write 'travelogues' to take people on a little 'trip' but not really invited them to join the adventure."

Walt Disney said, "People look at you and me to see what they are supposed to be. And, if we don't disappoint them, maybe, just maybe, they

"If you can dream it, you can do it. Always remember that this whole thing was started with a dream and a mouse."

—Walt Disney

won't disappoint us." Tankersley reinforces that belief when he reminds us that stories need a hero and emphatically states that technology is not the hero. We must create characters that people can relate to and then the stories go far beyond the printed page.

Stories tell us where we came from, where we are going and why. Story starts in the "now" in the known and takes you to the unknown—where you would like to be. "Start where you are," said Joe Tankersley.

*"If you can dream it, you can do it. Always remember that this whole thing was started with a dream and a mouse."
—Walt Disney*

Joe Tankersley is a storyteller, futurist and senior show writer for Walt Disney Imagineering.

Special Thematic Issue Announcement

Readers around the world – you are invited to contribute an article to the special thematic issue of **FUTUREtakes**, "International and Cross-Cultural Perspectives on the Future," that is scheduled for publication in late 2006. The issue will provide a forum for diverse perspectives on the future and will also focus on lifestyles and cultural values – that is, which ones are likely to survive in 2025 and which ones will become marginalized or extinct. In addition to promoting constructive dialog among ethnicities and cultures, the issue will help readers identify hidden culture-based assumptions that tend to limit futurist thinking.

We are planning to distribute the issue to embassies and to various international and ethnic organizations, both in Washington DC and in other national capitals.

Share your perspectives on the world stage! Send your articles to futuretakes@cs.com or contact us for further information.

Meet a Member *Ken Harris*

A Labor of Love

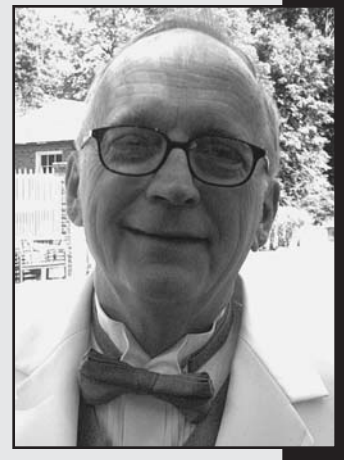
“A labor of love” is how **Ken Harris** describes his nearly nine years of service to the chapter as **FUTUREtakes** contributor and editor, secretary, president, and most recently treasurer and book discussion leader. In the not-too-distant future, Ken plans to live part time, most likely during the colder months, in the Los Angeles area with his wife Carolyn. He is leaving his position as treasurer, but he will continue as book discussion leader when he is in Washington.

Although Ken had read *On Thermonuclear War* and *Thinking About the Unthinkable* by pioneering futurist Herman Kahn in college in the early 60’s, he didn’t know that the field of futures studies existed until the early 70’s. In 1973, he had just started his long career with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) when a re-organization placed him in the Systems Concepts Branch of the agency’s Office of Aviation Policy. The agency established that group in response to the first energy crisis, which rocked the airline industry. With strong contractor help, over the next few years, the branch studied how the US and its aviation industry might evolve over the remainder of the 20th century. The experience gave Ken a love of the futures field, in which he has again been deeply involved since retiring from government service in 1997.

Soon after his retirement, Ken was serving as chapter secretary, when then-president Andy Hines announced he was leaving the Washington area to accept a new job. The chapter board then elected Ken president – a post he held for the ’97-’98 and ’98-’99 program years. Unlike many organizational presidents who

become inactive after their terms of office expire, Ken went on to serve as treasurer beginning in 2001 and as discussion leader of the chapter’s Futurist Book Group, which he founded, beginning in July ’04. Ken is only the third person to hold the treasurer post since re-activation of the chapter in 1993, a period during which the chapter has had nine presidents. Ken has also served on the board of the World Future Society (parent organization) since 2000.

Back in 2000, Ken decided to “turn pro.” He founded his own futurist consultancy, The Consilience Group, LLC. His most important past consulting assignments have been reviewing books and articles on technology for Coates and Jarratt and for Social Technologies, studying the impact of new federal security regulations on commuter airlines, and serving on a Northrop Grumman TASC team assessing unconventional threats to homeland security. In 2005, he teamed with Sports Business Research Network, Inc. of Princeton, New Jersey, to write a series of reports on the future of sports. The first in the series “Improving Public Health with Leisure Physical Activity Trends: Business and Policy Implications” is available at www.sbrnet.com. Ken is currently working on the second in the series with the working title “Global Aging and Sports” with a goal of publication in the fall of 2006.



Toronto

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that think, reason and act at the same level as humans. The computer will cease to exist as a separate object. It will be part of us—controlling our vision and reality. Teleportation and virtual reality will allow for new experiences with all senses present. It is important to realize that all science is information science. We all carry about 30,000 software programs around with us every day. These programs are also known as genes. We are on the verge of developing artificial red blood cells, neural implants as a treatment for



Parkinson’s disease, and reverse engineering the brain as a treatment for Alzheimer’s disease. Humans will some day be able to download their brains and this download can be uploaded over time in a newborn after a parent dies. Kurzweil demonstrated a digital camera that could take a photo of a printed page and then read the page in synthetic voice that sounded human as well as a telephone that directly translates languages. Kurzweil did not speak of any ethical issues or problems created by these advances.

Jay Herson is Managing Editor and a frequent contributor to FUTUREtakes.

Book Discussion

Futurist Book Group Discusses *Future Washington*

By Ernest Lilley (ed.)
Wsfa Press, 2005
ISBN: 0962172545

Synopsis of the Futurist Book Group April 2006 meeting; summarized by Ken Harris

On April 5, the chapter's Futurist Book Group for the first time deviated from its practice of discussing non-fiction books about the future and had a very lively discussion of a collection of short science fiction stories, *Future Washington*. Two of the authors, Brenda Clough and Nancy Jane Moore, joined us for the discussion. The book's editor, Ernest Lilley, is a trustee and former secretary of the Washington Science Fiction Association (see <http://www.wsfa.org>). He and their current president Sam Lubell often attend our monthly meetings the first Wednesday evening of the month at **Politics and Prose**. (See the latest schedule on the chapter website <http://www.natcapwfs.org>.)

FUTUREtakes readers will find this collection of 16 stories about future possibilities for our capital city very thought provoking and entertaining. Indeed, I suggest you and your significant other each buy a copy and take them on vacation with you. The stories will give you a lot to talk about at the beach or a long plane ride or cruise. My general comments, shared in large measure by the other attendees, are as follows:

- All the stories have at least an obscure connection to Washington by being set in Washington or describing things that happen here. You may not see the Washington connection in "Ignition" by Jack McDevitt unless you have been a Washington tour guide or paid close attention to the monuments downtown. (Hint: See if you can find it in one of the

other stories!)

- There is hardly any gee-whiz sci fi. "Agenda" by Travis Taylor mentions a quantum membrane transportation system. "The Lone and Level Sands" by Travis Taylor talks about transport by space elevator. Only a couple of the stories involve interaction with alien races.
- There are several recurring themes, mostly involving bad or partly bad futures – Washington is no longer the capital city, global warming has caused flooding or other dire consequences, over dependence on technology has caused disastrous problems, homeland security has been taken to excess, the President commits treason, and religious fundamentalism triumphs.
- Most of the stories are written in the first person. This gives them a feeling of reality they wouldn't otherwise have.

My favorite, having attended many a Washington party where the conversation turns to "real estate is more valuable than gold," is Brenda Clough's "Indiana Wants Me." It's sometime after 2009. The scare caused by a pocket nuke in a Department of Agriculture men's room caused the federal government to move out of town. The legislative branch was moved to Indiana, and a new White House was built at Fargo, North Dakota. Thus the Washington real estate market has tanked. The narrator Susan is both a hedge witch and a real estate agent. Lynn, an Indiana realtor, drops in on her and asks her to help implement a plan to move clients' houses from Washington to Indiana, to take advantage of the booming real estate market there. Susan agrees and Lynn has to run off to a meeting, but leaves her pink bag in Susan's office. Susan drives home easily. There is no rush hour traffic now. She greets her coven of cats. One of the cats makes her recall that Lynn's bag is in the car. She looks in the bag and finds papers showing that the Indiana real estate agents conspired to have the pocket nuke placed in the Agriculture Department men's room and then turned in the terrorist who did it. Lynn calls and not only finds out Susan has the bag, but

that she knows about the plot. Susan faxes the papers to Solomon, a sorcerer in Delaware to whom she is selling kittens two of her cats are pregnant with. Indiana real estate agents come to Susan's house in the night and try to get her to let them in, so they can retrieve the bag. Susan does her best to stall them while her old, slow fax machine faxes the papers to Solomon. She calls the police, and they take the Indiana realtors away.

If you like satire on bureaucracy, you will love Sean McMullen's "Empire of the Willing." The narrator, Labarrvien-18-1 of the Administrat, visits Washington in the mind of an Australian businessman to study the American governance system in order to take over the planet. The more he studies it the more he realizes how complex it is to understand. Americans can understand it, but he and his people cannot without the aid of a hyper-associative computer, which earthlings do not have. He keeps asking for and getting more and more mindfarers to come to Washington to gather data for their computer model, and they find 5,947 variables are needed to model the system. While in Washington, he meets a mindlord from Oligarron, who is living in a garbage skip behind the Smithsonian along with two cats. They get acquainted and he gives him a kitten Petronius. Labar wonders why the Oligarron have not taken over earth as they are a superior race. Eventually Labar takes him to meet Valentina, a Beaurician, who has come to try to accomplish the same thing. The Administrat is much pleased with Labar and concludes that the Washington system is the perfect one to pacify client worlds because it so convoluted nothing can get done.

Finally, **FUTUREtakes** readers who have lived in Washington for any length of time and received one of those invitations giving directions from all points of the compass will chuckle when they read Nancy Jane Moore's "Hallowe'en Party." (*Out-of-town readers, Maryland suburbanites easily get lost in the Virginia suburbs, and vice versa, while DC residents may not leave the city very often.*) A scenario in the form of direc-
See Book Discussion, continued on page 15

**Joint WFS
Chapter –
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Activities!**

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The “discussion points” appended to the articles and program synopses published in **FUTUREtakes** are excellent launch pads for articles, commentary, and joint WFS-classroom research projects. Designed to encourage original, interdisciplinary, futurist thinking in the classroom, these discussion points instill an awareness of the pervasive impacts that often result from social, policy, and technology developments, including unforeseen consequences.

Now circulated to various other professional societies in the greater Washington DC area and to other WFS chapters worldwide, **FUTUREtakes** (futuretakes@cs.com) invites you to join with us to facilitate publication opportunities for forward-thinking students and faculty in your geographic area. Help us grow the next generation of futurists!

Book Discussion

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tions to a Halloween party in 2015 in the part of Northeast Washington bordering Takoma Park, Maryland, tells us what awful things have happened in greater Washington and the country. Internal passports are needed to cross state lines. There is open hostility between the states. The Sousa Bridge has been washed out by floods and not repaired. A bridge on I-95 has been blown up in a terrorist attack and not repaired. Terrorist attacks, apparently by domestic terrorists, are common. Citizen patrols enforce law and order, etc. In a way, I found the story optimistic because, despite multiple disasters, in this scenario ordinary citizens cope very well. If all these things really happened once, would they?

I hope these three summaries encourage our readers to read all 16 stories. Enjoy!

FUTURIST LINK *of* THE QUARTER

<http://www.josephcoates.com>

This Web site lists almost 300 articles authored by internationally-acclaimed futurist Joe Coates. More than 50 of the most recent articles, listed in reverse chronological order, are downloadable in .pdf format. These articles include

- 283: Looking Ahead Anticipating Disaster
- 282: A Visible End to Innovation? I Think Not
- 281: Looking Ahead: 14 Technology Trends
- 279: The Future of Clothing
- 278: Keeping Up with the Future
- 277: Coming to Grips with the Future
- 276: A Radical Solution to Rising Health Care Costs
- 271 is the complement piece to 281. It is Where Science is Headed—16 trends.
- 265: Sleeping on the Job: Some Considerations for HR

In addition, Joe’s book, *2025: Scenarios of U.S. and Global Society Reshaped by Science and Technology*,

co-authored with John Mahaffie and Andy Hines, is also available on the Web site in .pdf. Except for the first chapter, the book is written in 2025. A set of integrated scenarios that are extensive in scope, the book also provides a list of indicators one can use to determine whether the developments forecast are developing. Joe can be contacted personally at joe@josephcoates.com.

Who is your favorite futurist? Please send your nomination and reasons you chose this individual to futuretakes@cs.com.

Visiting Washington DC?

The WFS US National Capital Chapter invites you to visit us! Our schedule of dinner programs, luncheons, book discussion group meetings, workshops, and other chapter activities is available on our Web site: www.natcapwfs.org.

For information on other World Future Society chapters, visit www.wfs.org, then navigate to "chapters."



E-Democracy

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Cyberspace. In order to cope with these new emerging generations, people may have to invent totally different methods and means for popular leadership, forms of parliament, and forms of government.

Young generations, who do not pay much attention to old traditions and majority ideas, will continue expressing themselves through notes and article contributions to government websites and various portal sites, even though they generally do not vote in large numbers. They will act quickly and will vote if they want to change the situation. Their changes of values and ideas in politics are being facilitated by the Internet and mobile phones. Furthermore, as they are multiples, they have to be approached in their own languages and own interests. They are interested in globalization and mixing cultures, and they tend to worry about their job futures and their wellbeing in early ages. Policies for globalization, diverse cultural activities and promises, and job possibilities will bring them into politics. They will not vote for their regional heroes or for their academic backgrounds, nor will they otherwise choose their representatives like the older generations. Instead, they will choose candidates with ideas of rapidly changing futures and future strategies.

The futurists here foresee that political parties have had their prosperity and are ending their lifespans as major players in more than 200 years of Representative Democracy. They are at a critical junction and are becoming irrelevant. In shaping public policy, they can be bypassed by modern communications, the Internet, and citizens' groups. Political parties will have to either recapture the public imagination or accept that others deserve a seat at the political table. Otherwise, the "party" may be over. Leadership without leaders is expected in the near future.

One of the most important challenges for the next century will be to achieve local, national and world democratic governance based on principles

that are freely agreed upon by the social actors involved (both state and non-state players). The democratization of the world beyond the states has yet to begin. We appear to stand at another such epochal moment of redeployment of power, away from national states and toward transnational actors. The unrivalled democratization of the states is now challenged by a new redeployment of world power. It remains to be seen whether the construction of the world order of the twenty-first century continues as a nearly exclusively elite project or whether social movements can inject a more democratic element into the emerging structures of global governance.

Discussion points (send your comments to futuretakes@cs.com):

- Will e-democracy (IT-enabled democracy) impact the role and relevance of the nation-state, and if so, how? Conversely, will the (otherwise) changing role of the nation-state impact voting?
- Is voter apathy a characteristic of a mature democracy? What other factors may account for voter apathy? A perceived lack of real choices? Fatalism? Complacency? Higher priorities in one's life – and limited time? A perception that politicians are not addressing the most fundamental or important issues such as "making ends meet" or "not having enough hours in the day"?
- To what extent do youth inherently make better "futurists" than other generations, given their imagination and the fact that their thinking is less "contaminated" by conventional wisdom and popular assumptions?
- If Western nations adopt e-democracy, how will that change the near-term focus of many elected officials – who make decisions based on near-term gain and are safely re-elected, or out of office, when the consequences occur (that is, "buy now, pay later")?
- Polls can be fickle (that is, change rapidly) – and while some politicians are driven by near-term public sentiment, others do not. Will e-government be equally fickle, or can it commit itself to courses of action for the long-term, especially on highly polarizing issues?
- How will e-democracy impact the balance of power among the branches of government – the legislative, the executive, and the judicial?
- What kinds of people will be attracted to public service in an e-democracy?
- In an e-democracy in which one can "feast" on customized information and close himself/herself off from opposing views – will voters take the time to read opposing views on an issue? Or will limited time reinforce the phenomenon of "sound byte politics"? Related question: will information overload limit e-democracy?
- In consideration of issues that are highly polarizing – and recent close elections in the US, Mexico, and elsewhere – will "tyranny of the (close) majority" be the norm in an e-democracy?
- Will the "digital divide" impact e-democracy – and if so, how? Or, will there be a closing of the digital divide so as not to be a factor?
- How will IT impact leisure time and "down time"? Will people choose to be "unplugged," at least for short periods? Conversely, is IT addiction (now in several countries) a creation of, or a result of, a stimulation-oriented society and/or an instant gratification culture such as the US?
- The US is also a "hurry, hurry" culture. Is such a culture an inevitable result of IT and/or high-tech in general, or are other factors involved?
- In other countries, will "netocracy" (direct voting by citizens) impact the role of money in politics? Why or why not?
- Hurricane Katrina, which hit the US Gulf Coast in September 2005, resulted in a partial localized breakdown of civilization. Will IT mitigate similar breakdowns in the future, or will it leave civilization more vulnerable to breakdowns?
- The article characterizes the emerging younger generation as "multiple selves" and further states that "Citizens have developed multiple interests, diverse senses of belonging, and overlapping identities." Will IT help citizens pursue several interests and thereby facilitate the return of the "Renaissance Man / Woman"?

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