



Transcultural Impacts on the Future

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Transcultural Impacts on the Future

Introduction and Summary

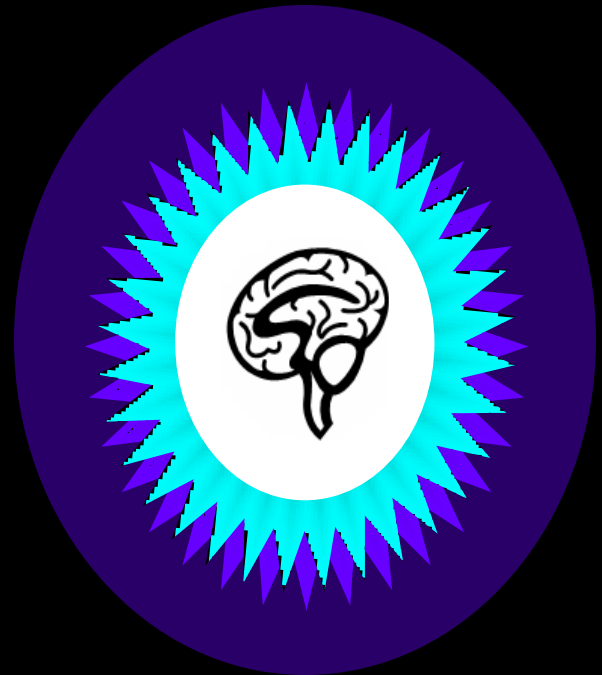
Dave Stein

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What will you gain from this panel discussion?

- Appreciation of diverse cultural perspectives
 - *Personal and career enrichment!*
- Ability to recognize and think beyond cultural “event horizons” that limit foresight thinking
 - *True diversity – the next frontier in education!*

Cultures of the present and past offer useful counterpoints that can uncover hidden assumptions and overlooked futures!



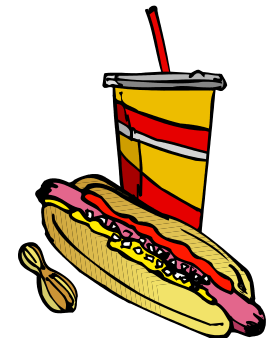
Introducing the Session

- Various regions and peoples of the world – e.g., Europe, Asia, North America, South America, and Native peoples – have evolved differing value systems and perspectives that influence nearly all aspects of everyday life:
 - work-leisure balance, disposable time, and leisure activities
 - the social contract
 - relationships with nature
 - the pace of life
 - sources of identity (individual or group)
 - notions of prosperity
 - notions of fulfillment, gratification, and happiness
 - business culture
 - the ways in which leaders emerge
 - *and yes, even planning horizons as well as perspectives on the “future” and approaches to meeting its challenges.*

What's different today is the growing pace and extent of cross-cultural interaction and its potential to “export” and “import” value systems and lifestyles, possibly at the expense of others.

Cultural “Exports” and “Imports”

- From Asia to US
 - Religion, philosophy – supporting individual enrichment
 - Health and wellness – leading to complementary therapies
- From US to other regions
 - Business culture, in general
 - Diversion and entertainment (e.g., TV game shows)
 - Fast-paced life, with fast food infrastructure to support
 - Capitalistic imprint on yoga
 - Educational practices



Other factors will also how people will live, work, and think; however, cultural factors can have a substantial impact.

Mandate

- Increased cross-flow among diverse cultures; “exports” and “imports”
 - *Impacts on how YOU will live, work, think, aspire, and interact!*
- Culture clashes, deculturation, and loss of ways of life
 - *Including contemporary ways of life!*
- The complex challenges presented by “the future”
 - *Challenges requiring answers that are beyond the capability of a single nation, people, or culture to provide*

Cultural Contrasts

- Work, family, leisure balance vs. “not-enough-hours-in-the-day”
 - Is the “chronologically challenged” society being exported?
- Vibrancy, liberty, opportunity, and self-reliance vs. security and the social contract?
 - Underpinning of various work cultures
- Holistic vs. reductionist thinking – healthcare, philosophy, religion, warfare, politics, ...
 - And basis of identity (group vs. individual)
- Time horizon – incremental, and/or quarterly earnings statement vs. long-term
 - Implications to foresight thinking and to education
- Sacrifice and long-range planning vs. instant gratification?
 - Impacts on business and politics

Cultural Contrasts (cont'd)

- Concepts of time – *and of the future!*
 - Linear vs. cyclic or “eternal now”
 - Alarm clock vs. “natural clocks”
- Relationship with nature
 - Dominion over, or co-existence with?
- Pace of life
- Consumerist societies vs. more traditional ones



Influences...well, confluences!

- Technology
 - Alarm clock, throwaway culture, assembly line
 - Social media
- Interplay of national / regional cultures with occupational ones
 - “Neotribes”
- Deculturation – loss of ways of life
 - Native and Aboriginal peoples
 - Occupations – manufacturing, family farming, customer service, etc.
- Recession – slowing the pace of globalization
 - Regional, national, and tribal identities reasserting themselves
- Resurgence of interest in ancient cultures and traditions

Key Questions

- Which present-day lifestyle options will continue to be possible, and what new ones will emerge?
 - Which lifestyle options will become extinct?
- And, what is the future of cultural diversity itself?
 - Choice of “operating systems” under which to live?
 - OR, monolithic world with “no place to hide” for those who cannot adapt?
- Who will be the “MVPs” – the most valued professions and personality types, in your part of the world?
- What new countercultures may arise in your part of the world, or elsewhere, and what will they value?
- In what ways do different peoples view “the future”?

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Pre-Conference Forum Participants

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panelist presentations

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WRAPUP

Thoughts for 2012

“Only as futurists soar above artificial “fences” that seem to separate cultures – and instead ... help in the transfer of good ideas across ‘fences’ – will futurists live up to their potential – and meet a profound responsibility to all.”

– Art Shostak, Professor Emeritus

“One should challenge present assumptions and ask the questions that no one had thought to ask.”

– Tim Mack, President, World Future Society

“To best prepare for the future, we must arm ourselves with the wisdom from diverse nations, peoples, and cultures of the present and past.”

– FUTURE*takes*

Resources and Contact Information

- Additional resources:
 - <http://www.futuretakes.org/Transcultural.html> and linked pages
- To be a 2012 panelist or for further information, write to
 - info@futuretakes.org



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