

# [The Conceptual Time-Capsule:](http://www.huge-entity.com/2006/11/conceptual-time-capsule.html)

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A **Huge Entity** presentation on non-possible futures!

*UPDATED DAILY*

The Oxford English Dictionary defines a [time-capsule](#) as "a container used to store for posterity a selection of [entities] thought to be representative of life at a particular time." With this in mind, we thought it might be interesting to assemble our own time-capsule and, this being the web-lead information age, bury that capsule online, in an enormous web-garden.








What ideas will future generations glance back at and laugh in contemptuous hindsight? In 50 years time which contemporary cultural memes will be deader than the proverbial Dodo? Lying in the digital darkness of our internet time-capsule these questions, and more, will have to wait 50 years of technological shifts; of societal upheavals; of cultural fermentation before they can be answered.

Let the concepts bury themselves as we set to work...

*Featuring short musings from the most original minds in the universe:*

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**More to come tomorrow...**

***More to come*** over the next few days! Including contributions from other insatiable **Huge Entities...**

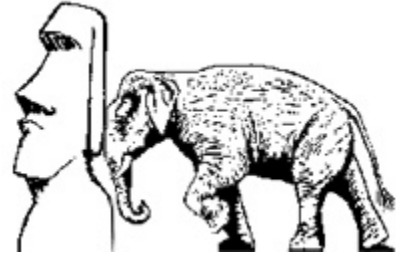
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## Conceptual Time-Capsule One:

### Our Waking Dream of Progress

by Dwayne M.  
[Weber's Polar Night](#)

Fifty years from now, as fed up elephants stage last ditch assaults on human habitations, lab defector, gene modded rats sign peace treaties in shadowy, underground kingdoms built amongst aging pipes carrying water, natural gas and data to our complexes and Americans hail the crowning of the third cyborg iteration of George Bush, descendants of the people who once worried themselves into troubled sleep over the failure of news organizations to accurately report on the world's affairs will have no memory of “news” as we currently (and fleetingly) understand it.



The debate – still raging in some industrialized nations – over information vs. entertainment (or what's sometimes hybridized, at least in the United States, as 'infotainment') will be as dead as the pyramid builders, as dead as the once fish plentiful oceans. But unlike the work of the ancients, the passing of the news age will leave no impressive monuments behind for tourists to marvel at and carefully climb (unless one counts the New York Times building).

What will send “news” to its grave? In the end, it won't be government pressure to ignore problems and report on achievements (even if non existent) – though that's always a factor. And it won't be the reluctance of corporations (which is what these “news organizations” are, after all) to criticize the fragile status quo.

No, it will be simple need. The need of former citizens, now consumers, teetering at the edge of the consumerist age's end, to be lulled into a comforting, waking dream of efficiency, cleanliness and progress, even as threatening clouds gather.

The sort of head scratching going on right now in the US (and, no doubt, many other places) over why, despite bloody failure, mayhem, destruction and chaos approximately 30 percent of the American population persists in believing half and un-truths will be a thing of the past.

Fifty years from now, nearly everyone will prefer sunsets displayed on flat screens to the real, and troubled, sky.



Written by

Dwayne M.

[Weber's Polar Night](http://monroelab.net/blog/) : <http://monroelab.net/blog/>

## Conceptual Time-Capsule Two:

### The Demise of the Demagogue

by Armchair Anarchist  
[Velcro City Tourist Board](#)

In fifty year's time, people will look back and laugh at us for a lot of reasons. Apart from the fashions ("d00d, those jeans, like WTF!!!1!1"), what gets the biggest chuckles will surely be the hopelessly outdated concept of representative democracy.



How can I knock democracy? How can I criticise the thing that allows me to live the free life I have? Because it's a lovely idea, but the implementation is hopelessly flawed. Imagine explaining it to an alien ambassador: "Well, I'm an enfranchised citizen, you see. So, once

every six years or so, I get to choose between two or three career liars who have been carefully selected by their respective political organisations for their ability to say what I want to hear. Once ensconced in the system of government, they will vote on my behalf in ways that they (or their party) consider will be in the best interests of myself and the other people in the region they represent. Of course, I may not always be aware that their decisions are the right ones, largely because I'm not a politician – it's all very complex, after all. Ultimately they're under my control, though, because my tax money pays their wages ... what's that noise? Is that the equivalent of laughter on your planet?"

We currently have this strange habit of gleefully putting people on pedestals – people who, for undisclosed reasons, have a great desire to be placed on pedestals – and then being astonished when they fall headlong from them. I forget the source, but there's that old saw about those who most desire power being the most unsuited to wield it. Of course, we've mistrusted our politicians since politics first came to be, long before there was a handy Greek word for it. But it was hard to get the real low-down back then.

Nowadays, we actually have the tools to see the Wizard of Oz behind his big green curtain: citizen media; web2.0; blogging; [insert your favourite buzzword here]. They all allow us to share around that most precious of commodities – the truth. And the truth is a light that is starting to dissolve career politicians and demagogues like vampires.

Those same tools will develop into the framework for what will replace representative democracy. Centralisation is a dead scene – the future is local, ad-hoc and community based. In half a century, no-one will complain that their voice isn't heard – if they care about an issue, there'll be a forum where they can say their piece, and be exposed to different opinions. Ignorance of an issue will be no excuse – if you care about it, you'll take the time to get the full story. It'll be easier, in some ways – there'll be no overpaid liar with an airtime monopoly shoving his party line down your throat. It'll be tough, too – making decisions and thinking for your self almost always is. But if something is worth

having, it's worth putting some effort into getting it. True freedom fits in that 'worth having' category.



Written by

Armchair Anarchist

Velcro City Tourist Board : <http://www.velcro-city.co.uk/>

## Conceptual Time-Capsule Three:

### Our Slumbering Super-Organism

by Daniel Poynter

[The Hyperaware Consciousness](#)

Future generations will laugh (or cry) in contemptuous hindsight at our apathy and boredom. Why try to change the world? Why get off the couch? The individual doesn't matter anyway... right? We can be bored because science has solved all mystery... right?

No! The individual is empowered by technology more than ever. No-one has solved the Mystery of Existence-- no one \*knows\* why there is something rather than nothing. Each day the world becomes more dynamic. Each decision you make carries more weight than ever. Cultures are mingling in new and profound ways.

Think the world is boring?



[Terrence McKenna:](#)

"If you think the world is empty of adventure, then, you just haven't been hanging out with the right crowd. On a Saturday night, within the confines of your own apartment, on 5 grams of psilocybin mushrooms in silent darkness, I guarantee you will believe that Ferdinand Magellan should take second place to you."

The future is up for grabs. Existence is a Mystery. We are flotsam, floating in a sea of we-know-not-what. Wonder is the perfect fuel, [Einstein:](#)

"He who knows it not and can no longer wonder, no longer feel amazement, is as good as dead, a snuffed-out candle... A knowledge of the existence of something we cannot penetrate, of the manifestations of the profoundest reason and the most radiant beauty, which are only accessible to our reason in their most elementary forms..."

We have a day on the calendar devoted to secretaries, to mothers, to the Earth... Why not have a "live passionately day"? On that day, everyone would jump out of bed in the morning. 100s of times a day they would stop what they are doing and ask, "Am I awake right now? Am I living deliberately?"

Think of the [synergy of 6,000,000,000 humans](#) living passionately for one day!

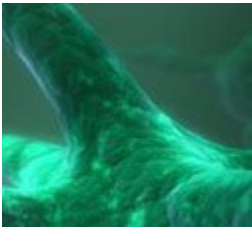
In the same way a mental entity emerges from the interactions of 10s of billion of neurons, a kind of mental field –what Pierre Teilhard de Chardin called the "noosphere"—arises from the interactions of humans.

Like LSD and the other psychedelics, be a catalyst for the electrocution of the nervous system of this usually drowsy super-organism, and in the following flash of sentience,

help us catch a glimpse of the infinite multi-verse in which we find ourselves.

Let's live deliberately and communicate passionately; let's ride the bellowing, orgiastic tide of an awaking synergistic organism, an organism made of other supernova-individuals.

Even the nuclear-bomb magnitude sleeping in an atom is only a candle when next to the burning-sun potential in our slumbering super-organism of humanity. Help me awaken the unfathomable giant!



Written by

Daniel Poynter

[The Hyperaware Consciousness : http://www.dansmind.com/](http://www.dansmind.com/)

## Conceptual Time-Capsule Four:

### Transformative Potential

by Cliff Pickover  
[Reality Carnival](#)

In my book [Sex, Drugs, Einstein, and Elves](#) I discuss various forms of extinction. Many humans will morph tremendously in 50 to 100 years. In a sense, this is a kind of extinction. We'll enhance our senses using genetic engineering. Within this century, some of us will extend our visual and auditory ranges and have synesthesial senses that we can barely imagine. We'll be in constant contact with one another through wireless mindlinks.



At first, we'll see the nascent seeds of these mindlinks in the form of implantable cell phones. Shortly thereafter, we'll become more sophisticated. Already, technologists are creating vocoders that convert nerve signals in the vocal chords to computerized speech. Cochlear implants convert sounds into neural signals that the brain can interpret. By interfacing the vocoder and cochlear implant with radio transmitters, we can take the first steps to e-telepathy, kiss the acoustic age good-bye, and enter the realm of thought-to-thought communication.

Cell phones and e-mail began to transform the planet around the year 2000. Imagine the transformative potential of e-telepathy in the next fifty years. Scientific, artistic, and political collaborations that took months a hundred years ago, could be done in a flash.

Musing about these kinds of direct mindlinks, George Dvorsky of [BetterHumans.Com](#) notes:

"On the surface humanity appears to be spreading outward, venturing across continents and into space. Yet in actuality, we are journeying towards one another. Our globe has never appeared smaller and our proximity to each other has never been closer. This trend shows no signs of slowing down, pointing the way to a remarkable interconnected future."

Within 15 years, stopwatch-sized Vagus Nerve Stimulators (VNSs) will be prevalent as a means of making us feel happier. (Temple University's Jake Zabara showed over a decade ago that the VNS can stop epileptic seizures, and today we believe the VNS can also cure depression by zapping the vagus nerve in the neck.) Several research teams in the US and in Europe are already engineering new varieties of mosquitoes whose bite actually prevents malaria and other diseases by injecting antibacterial toxins. Other scientists are designing silkworms with DNA from humans so that the worms spin proteins like collagen that have pharmaceutical and industrial uses. Within 20 years, genetically modified creepy crawlers will push humanity into the Superbug Age in which insects inexpensively create a limitless supply of novel materials for our buildings and

bodies. Right now, genetically modified tilapia fish are churning out lifesaving human blood-clotting factors. The fishes, an early symbol of Christianity, will be our saviors.



Written by

Cliff Pickover

[Reality Carnival](http://www.realitycarnival.com/) : <http://www.realitycarnival.com/>

[Pickover.com](http://www.pickover.com) : <http://www.pickover.com>

& introducing *The Wikipedia Knowledge Dump* : <http://wikidumper.blogspot.com/>



## Conceptual Time-Capsule Five:

### The God-Shaped Hole

by Daniel Rourke  
[The Huge Entity](#)

In an alternate-future reason has won an imaginary battle over faith. The [relevant mysteries](#) composing religion have been torn from the arms of their ancient idols; the sun is setting on an illogical world and rising over a new Eden, green with a luscious pasture Darwinian processes have steadily provided. But this Godless world is a mere illusion, made vaguer still by the naivety of our humanist convictions. There is a '[God-shaped hole](#)' within each of us, a passageway to a future not *devoid* of religion, but soaked to bursting with it. In 50 years from now science may have *described* religion, but it won't have succeeded it - in fact, religion will be more prevalent than ever.



The vigor with which atheism's new prophets expound their rational brand of faith is admirable. In a society governed by scientific knowledge no theistic principle should be allowed to pass by unquestioned. The political rhetoric of 'traditional' believers such as George Bush and Tony Blair emerges from a religious inheritance which has forgotten its roots. '[The Fall of Mankind](#)', made so resolute in the scriptures, has been largely disregarded, in its place arising an absurd utopian ideal of man's dominance over the forces of nature - many of the darker aspects of which reside inside mankind itself. Funnily enough, this twisting of Judaeo-Christian ideologies is a *consequence* of scientific humanism and not a modern maladaptation to its emergence. That man is somehow flawed is rarely excepted wholesale in today's progress-obsessed society - each of us, according to the rhetoric of the global village, is a blank slate onto which adaptive society may inscribe its greatest accomplishments. Our nature may yet yield the flaws in each of us, that is if science via humanistic values cannot wipe our slates clean first.

That the main undercurrent of mythology tying our cultures together can still be traced back to a handful of conflicting texts first given form some 2 or 3 millennia ago is surely proof enough of the ability of religion to out-last most other forms of cultural change. Evangelical scientific thinkers such as [Richard Dawkins, E. O. Wilson and Sam Harris](#) expound the belief that in time science, and the rational systems which scaffold it, will wash the slate of the human so clean that a completely secular universe may be inscribed on its surface. This is by no means an original doctrine - finding its roots in the post-Darwinian philosophies of the enlightenment - one rooted in an egocentric arrogance obliterated only by its sheer naivety:

...The New Testament writers are seen as afflicted with a false consciousness rooted in *their* time, but the analyst takes the consciousness of *his* time as an unmixed intellectual blessing.

- Peter Berger, *A Rumour of Angels*

Clichéd as it is to [label science as a religion](#) in its own right, one must not ignore the symbiotic relationship between the two. The mystery and reverent awe the *secular* citizen gains from witnessing the wonders of the universe may be better rationalised and far more complex than a similar awe felt for God's divinity, but at base both are self-centric reactions to an omniscient figure-head. Where the atheistic thinker differs from his theistic counterpart is in how that figure-head is composed: is it an ever present *Deity*, or an ever present *Science*?

Is it true that mankind demands, and will always demand, miracle, mystery and authority? ... Surely it is true. Today, man gets his sense of the miraculous from science and machinery, radio, airplanes, vast ships, zeppelins, poison gas, artificial silk: these things nourish man's sense of the miraculous as magic did in the past...

- D. H. Lawrence

But whereas The Good Father can do no wrong, science is the God and the Devil of its own mythology. Instead of rejecting religion as a poisoned byproduct of our nature, perhaps we should be feeding the mythology of science with all the sustenance it needs to fill up that hole within each of us. Rebellion against all forms of theism fails to credit the miraculous stronghold which Judaeo-Christian ideologies have over our secular belief systems. To break free of the shackles of monotheism, secular society must **consciously** construct a truer kind of **Atheism**, one which adheres to the word's strictest definition: that is a **Godless Theism**.

Humanity is a fickle species, prone to all manner of internal shifts; a creature able to live in constant conflict with itself and see only those steps ahead allowed by its current dictum. To reject religion is to reject ourselves, wholesale, and in the process deny the soothing potential of the miraculous, of a divinity in any number of forms. In 50 years from now mythology will play a greater role in society than it does today, not because we will have reverted to our former naiveties, but because we will have become capable of embracing our inconsistencies and using them to construct an ever emergent existence; one aware of and in control of its inherent conflicts.



Written by

Daniel Rourke

[The Huge Entity](http://www.huge-entity.com/) : <http://www.huge-entity.com/>

More tomorrow at <http://www.huge-entity.com/2006/11/conceptual-time-capsule.html> !