

George Gilder: Google Does Not Believe in Life After Google

<https://mindmatters.ai/podcast/ep143>

Austin Egbert:

Greetings. I'm Austin Egbert, director for Mind Matters News. George Gilder, co-founder of Discovery Institute, an icon of business and economics, has made uncannily accurate forecasts about technology of the future. This week we listen to George Gilder speaking at the launch of the Walter Bradley Center for Natural and Artificial Intelligence in Dallas, Texas. Enjoy.

George Gilder:

You know, will there be life after Google? It almost sounds like a joke. But seriously, the Google people do not believe that there will be life after Google. Their vision of AI usurping human minds really represents what I call an eschaton, a final thing, an eschatological vision. They believe that AI will achieve what my friend, Ray Kurzweil calls a singularity, when it will attain capabilities far beyond human minds, and thus be able to reproduce itself and project itself into the universe and seed the universe with a cascade of evermore intelligent machines, thus kind of propagating human life throughout the universe.

George Gilder:

Since many of the people at Google, most of them probably, believe in multiple parallel universes, infinite multiple parallel universes, which Bob debunked beautifully earlier today... Maybe he'll want to tell us how he... But infinite... Which is preposterous view, that these AI machines will multiply on into the universe.

George Gilder:

Larry Page and Sergey Brin and Ray Kurzweil and all these singularitarians can fly off to a nearby planet with Elon Musk, leaving the rest of us back on beaches in the United States collecting a guaranteed annual income, and thus this is sort of the eschaton of the Google era.

George Gilder:

I think this mistake is - really exactly parallels the mistake of Karl Marx. What Karl Marx essentially said was that the great machines of the industrial era, the turbines and looms and the beginnings of electricity, all these railroads that characterize the industrial era, was an eschaton. It was a final thing. It represented the human solution for all time of the productivity problem. And as a result of that in the future, and this is Marxism, that the only issue will not be creating new wealth, but distributing existing wealth verily to all of the various classes in the society.

George Gilder:

He actually had the retire to the beach image too. He wrote a sort of dream about how this productivity problem having been solved, people will be able to follow the life of a country squire in Britain. Early in the morning they can raise their goats if they want, and in the middle of the morning they can write poems, and in the afternoon they can go fishing. He had this whole idyllic life of the country squire in England that would be accessible to everybody as a result of the industrial revolution.

George Gilder:

This is exactly what Google is saying. Google is saying that now that we have machine learning and artificial intelligence and robotics and biotech and search galore and solutions, all these new technologies are a final thing and they permanently solve the problem of human productivity, and we all can retire while a few elite people rule the world. It's a winner take all technology for a winner take all universe, because these machines reproducing themselves see the whole new intelligent universe.

George Gilder:

Isn't it ridiculous? I mean it really is ridiculous. I at times get impatient hearing people respond to these arguments. I mean they really are completely absurd. Do human beings get employed because they're unproductive? Is that why you guys hire people? AI will make human beings more productive. That will make human beings more employable, and AI will generate profits, will generate the very capital that can endow new work.

George Gilder:

This is what technology has always done, and it's no different today at all. It may be slowing down a bit. I may disagree with some of the projections that technology has accelerated massively. I don't believe it has. I think that the gains of computer science today are not more impressive than the gains of computer science when I started writing about Bob Noyce and Gordon Moore and Carver Mead at Intel in my book, *Microcosm*, years ago. The Quantum Era in Economics and Technology was the subtitle of *Microcosm*.

George Gilder:

It was already the quantum era. What the microchip did was show it was possible to manipulate matter from the inside using the insights of quantum theory, that matter wasn't something that you pushed and pulled from outside or bore on your back like Atlas up the mountain or Sisyphus pushing the boulder up the mountain, whatever it is.

George Gilder:

Matter could be manipulated from internally according to the rules of quantum theory, and amazing, magical micro-machines and nano-machines could be engineered. This was the great breakthrough, and I don't think it's being exceeded by what I see in artificial intelligence. I'm delighted to hear that millions of jobs are being destroyed. That is terrific. But the fact is that the destruction-

Steve Buri:

What do you mean by that?

George Gilder:

- of jobs has slowed down. It's slowed down and we actually have quite a stagnant economy in many ways today. We're all pleased with the stock market rise, but we've failed to mention that the stock market is only half the size in the number of public companies as it was 20 years ago.

George Gilder:

The number of IPOs, initial public offerings, has dropped 90%. Students across the country laboring under the burdens of an idiotic student loan program are opting out of enterprise, opting out of entrepreneurship and adopting new Marxist fantasies.

George Gilder:

So I think that almost everything in the Google philosophy is wrong. And my book also addresses the Google business strategy, which is to give away most of its products for free to collect data and then pay for it with advertisements that nobody wants to see, that are value subtracted, that aren't ads. They're minuses, or even mimes.

George Gilder:

So I think that a lot of things you read aren't exactly true, and I think the Walter Bradley Center here... And it was great here, and Walter has just an inspiring speech and story of how actually understanding science gives you new hope and new vision and a new understanding of the universe, where human beings are created in the image of their creator, and the materialist superstition that we're just random products of an evolutionary process is completely misconceived and obtuse.

George Gilder:

I think this is a hierarchical universe, and I think the Bradley Center is a great way to illuminate this hierarchical universe.

Announcer:

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