

### The Keys

Oh for an editor! I am now certain—*editing's gonna be a never-ending process*. Originally, these installments were written with the idea that *Newsweek* just might step up to the challenge and run one per week. Well they didn't so off to the *Big www* they went. Never-ending editing is one thing; misplaced words and punctuations that never seem satisfied wherever I plant them, but whenever I return to check in on what's posted, only to find whole segments that should've been revised for a now viral audience still sneaking by, only to find whole other segments that I once thought tight now completely scattered, well—its plumass embarrassing!

I'm not some acclaimed writer and I'm saddled with a fickle ego that constantly whines about this fact. I'm just an average someone fumbling my way to try and reach you. To which, comes one more fact my fair weather companion is right about. I can write all I want about the need to steer clear of the calamitous abyss just ahead but—you hold the keys.

### Precious Time.

In 2002, former *National Security Adviser* Leon Fuerth said: "***The issues of superintelligence will be debated by the whole country.*** The majority of Americans will not simply sit still while some elite strips off their personalities and uploads them into their cyberspace paradise. There will be vehement debate about that." He concluded, "These guys act as though this government and the people are not a part of this." But 16 years later and all the while, technology has advanced and still—we aren't talking about this stuff. Why?

Left unmolested by self-serving ilk, it's been from the inception of human time that in a roundabout way, good ole' snooping and judging was mostly how this communal animal conditioned their society for what's acceptable. However, shoring up Societal Acceptance today as opposed to the inception of forever time now comes with one monumental difference. Newday technology. Up til now—***humanism was always the gauging factor.*** So wherever we've been, two steps back or a bounce forward—*was the for better or worse evolving maturation stage of The Human Experiment*. Nothing non-human about it. But now, humans are being bombarded by, monitored by, compared to and replaced by—a vastly intelligent, non-living it. In an explosive entrance, this invincible Teflon-coated partner burst onto our scene and caught us off guard; unprepared to deal with what is now gorging its way to Superintelligence. Basically, regarding biological adaptation snap-shots of time, our proof we adapt if rather slowly, means our 50-year immersion into a techno-infused existence hasn't been enough adapting time. Problem is time—we're running out of it.

Our acceptance of what we are *not* vehemently debating about, can be evidenced in today's commercials; acceptance sells like *iPhone's*. Here, we are depicted as absolutely reliant and completely enamored with—*our new best friend*. Other commercials depict how every technology will bring forth a better, safer, lasting future. Notice these ads no longer sell a specific product but rather—*integrity*. Yep: ***it would be fiscally imprudent to keep socking billions into futuristic technology if we decided to say whoa.*** So, their idea of prudence is to drench us with more billions to ensure we get their message. And, it's working.

It's nothing new for masses to be plied with integrity-laced powerhouse assurances but billion dollar slathering's to back them, and the means in which to bombard us with them—damn sure is. On the tail-dragging end comes sparsely funded high-caution warnings trying to counter techno acceptance onslaughts; memos that don't stand a chance without the weight of you and me backing them. Guess now's a good time to point out—no slathering here to back this series. I live a modest life. This endeavor has taken over 10 years to complete largely because I must squirrel away bits of time while putting in 60 hour work weeks. Nobody here to pay my bills—no isolated writers retreat.

## Communication's a Blowtorch.

Indeed, communication *is* raw power. Call it intelligence, data or information, but a bunch of words not communicated are just impotent labels. We've been relentlessly blasted at with such a profuse mountain-slide of information for this past quarter century—I think we've retreated. Yet, I keep reading about how complacent and disengaged today's American is. ***This assessment cuts us no slack regarding this onslaught.*** Rather, our critics conclude that because of easy-living, we've become a cynical me-me society that readily blames someone else for our tribulations. That even hardworking average us have become—unaccountable.

More than simply concluding decadence evoked a complacent, blame others state, it'd be more productive to question if that's the full monty. ***We are the first AI testing-ground era.*** We are still trying to accept the fact that our darling baby is actually a voracious ogre! So regardless of whether our dismal state has been influenced by easy-living or even conspiratorially manipulated, it's imperative we see how oh-so mighty communication's power has become. That indisputably: ***info overload is one huge, contributing culprit of a factor!*** Liken its influence over yesterday's mass to that of rubbing some sticks together. Along with a hope and a prayer—a whisper of a spark just might get coaxed into a flame. Today's communication-power is more like using a blowtorch and a gallon of petro to warm the chilly mountain air. After a hard rain douses the charred forest and a mountain of black sludge comes careening down—it's no wonder we scatter!

## Snap Crackle Pop Fads.

How can embracing full-fledged humanism be passé and transcending ourselves be the latest and greatest fad? This isn't some harmless whim that will just go away if we don't like it anymore. ***With each passing second, this whim falls into all that's entrenched; to all that's irreversible.*** Were we polled to see how we felt about self-replacement and I missed out? How did we get to be so inconsequential? Corp/industries are the ones providing the fuel to shove *The Human Experiment* beyond human but they aren't the only ones behind this push. Ray isn't alone in his eagerness to transcend our bio-selves either. Just run a web-search using the word transhumanism. *Humanity+* boasts about 6000 members eager to transcend.

There *is* opposition to this insanity. Highly prominent cultural commentators like bioethicist Leon Kass, political scientist Francis Fukuyama and environmentalist Bill McKibben are speaking up. Sun microsystems co-cofounder Bill Joy, who is also a professor of *International Political Economy* at John Hopkins, believes: ***"Transhumanism is the most dangerous idea to mankind."*** I suspect he sees the big picture which includes where consuming, breathing humans are right now. John Searle, a distinguished philosopher at Berkeley believes: ***"consciousness is an exclusive, biological bi-product. A gem not to be discarded or messed with."*** I sure hope Joy and Searle are right. Well actually, we'll need to do more than bank the future on a hope. We must believe pureform us are indeed ***worth keeping*** and then back that up with a fully concerted effort as to how we spell out what's acceptable in *our society!*

## Conditioning Grease.

It's a topic that makes me squeamish to scratch; probably because it's not that easy to see conditioning grease when standing in the muck of it. We see the grease being used on Muslims to create martyrs. We damn sure don't believe even one virgin awaits so what in the hell causes them to fervently believe 72 do? Well, here's a quip of a quote that helped me see the techno-grease being used on us. ***"Huge sums are being invested in the next generation of hardware and software."*** Now, when I think of techno-conditioning I see *The Blob*; the one that oozed onto a theatre full of moviegoers. Well, maybe that doesn't help you gain a more guarded appreciation as to how societies accept bizarre conditioning, so—just turn back a history page or two.

Visualize yourself standing in the Roman Coliseum during a gladiator game. Listen to those masses—*ecstatically shriek amidst all the endless gore*. See yourself crouched in the shadows during a Spanish Inquisition hunt—*hear that mass chant bloodlust demands*. Consider the perverse conditioning being played out on a rivers edge just a few hundred years ago. Hear your desperate plea to spare your daughter go unheeded; your good neighbor's compassion and logic, overrode by the executioners twisted assurance not to worry—*only the innocent drown*—not witches.

February 2013, Papua New Guinea. Onlookers watch, take pictures even, but nobody saves a 20 year old woman from being burned alive. A year has gone by and still, when I think of those graphic pictures—my stomach curdles. But when I think about the countless fathers who for years upon years, held their precious gifts' hand—*right up to the bloodletting alter*—my stomach curdles even without seeing graphic detail.

Using extreme conditioning examples isn't my brightest idea but in order to see what's currently being accepted—look backs make it easy. ***Those loving hands delivered the life of their precious gift to an executioner because those societies accepted that practice.*** Yet, humans are like any animal that protects their young so I'm certain those parents knew, recessed within—*there was something very wrong going on*. The New Guinea onlookers surely knew something very wrong was going on and I believe Muslim martyrs know something just doesn't add up. But, when standing in the muck of it—*perverse conditioning just aint that easy to see*.

So, is iPhone's sweet talkin' Siri harmless? Well, Siri is handy and entertaining but—*she* isn't real and yet we are being conditioned to see Siri as real and if we keep buying into this mega-sell, Siri will become the first in a long line of its talking to us and—that isn't harmless. Let's pick on any Smartphone. Smartphones are: *a downsized desktop with the added perk of being fully capable of keeping precise tabs on us*. Smartphones are: *a great example of the huge slathering behind our acceptance for every futuristic techno-design*. Smartphones are: *a primo food source for Baby-G; the starter kit that's got 10,000 fevered scientists hoping to win the cash cow race to transcendence unleashed*. Smartphones are: ***a mighty-mite getting small enough to lodge within***. This insanity is not harmless entertainment. Footnote: the value extracted from gladiator games went far beyond providing those masses—mere entertainment.

## **The Big Picture.**

In 1997, Oxford Professor Nick Bostrom; *The Director of the Institute for The Future of Humanity*, wrote—*How long Before Superintelligence?* "Given that Superintelligence will one day be technologically feasible—will people *choose* to develop it? This question can pretty confidently be answered in the affirmative. Associated with every step along the road to Superintelligence are enormous economic payoffs. ***The computer industry invests huge sums in the next generation of hardware and software and will continue to do so as long as there is competitive pressure and profits to be made.*** People want better computers, smarter software and they want the benefits these machines can help produce. ***Better medical drugs, entertainment—relief for humans from the need to perform boring or dangerous jobs.*** There is no end to the list of consumer benefits. There's also a strong military motive to develop artificial intelligence and nowhere on the path is there any natural stopping point where technophobics could plausibly argue—***hither but no further.***"

I now see technologies heady appeal 20 years ago included an overly-rosy assumption about job-absorption and still, I don't believe we've yet to fully connect technologies no end to consumer benefits, with the very fact that at some point—*replacement technologies will greatly impinge on those benefits when we're no longer consumers!* It would go without saying except I'm covering all bases—consumer's first need to wield paychecks dammit!

The date Bostrom wrote *hither but no further* was over 20 years ago. I could expound on his writing's more but I'm trying to get this series off without hiring a truck to load it in. For a more in-depth take, just visit his website [www.nickbostrom.com](http://www.nickbostrom.com). For now, this professor's had the same years to witness technology advance just like us so a brief update on his thoughts is only fair. After all, who wasn't enamored with all technology could do back then? Bostrom now says: "If we have overlooked even just one such crucial consideration, then all our best efforts might be for naught—or less. ***When headed the wrong way—the last thing needed is progress.***" Hallelujah Jake!

Bostrom goes on to say: "It is therefore important to pursue such lines of inquiry as to have some chance of disclosing any crucial consideration to which we might have hitherto been oblivious. Some of the relevant questions are about: ***moral philosophy and values.*** Others have to do with ***rationality and reasoning under uncertainty.*** Still others pertain to specific issues and possibilities such as the simulation hypothesis, infinite utilities, anthropic reasoning: ***information hazards, the future of machine intelligence, human enhancement, the Singularity hypothesis and—existential risks.***" Bostrom concludes: "These high-leverage questions deserve to be studied with at least the same level of scholarship that academics routinely apply to all manner of arcane trivia. This assumption might be wrong. Perhaps we are so irredeemably inept at thinking about the big picture, that it is good we usually don't."

For me: ***these excerpts highlight most every topic in this entire series.*** But, I write from the mass—for the mass. I absolutely don't believe this transcendence road is gonna be wide enough to include average us. Yep—I'm a technobiophobic. I don't believe, much less rationally think: *all humanity has evolved to such a mature and responsible state that we will gracefully, gorelessly, usher in yet another class of humans.* Period! Rich powerhouse transcending ones no less! Besides, I can't believe we're so dissolutioned with being human—***a purebred walking program miracle***—we truly want to morph into less; led to believe it's more. ***Feelin' good is good enough for me ~JJ.***

I'm not a scholar with too much information as to become inept at seeing the big picture, specifically the slide-show which depicts just how explosive consuming humans without paychecks will most certainly be! Do they actually believe we'll just sit idle and starve—wait for technology to bridge this fantastical gap? Perhaps we should all jar our sensibilities awake by first accepting we are where we are! We're still playing war games! We've barely advanced to a state of civility where war is waged to enforce world peace—not to conquer, rape, pillage and plunder! ***Soldiers you've got to soldier on – even a right is wrong ~CP.*** Now, we plan to give ourselves over to Bad Boy Goliath as toy soldiers to play with and we're gonna call that insanity progress?

Regardless of how many ian or ist tags someone sports, *nobody* has a crystal ball to assure us just how bright a future immersed in all-things techno will shine. So, here's a two for one question: what are we thinking? ***They are turning my head out to see what I'm all about ~CP.*** You see, the very ingredient Super-sized AI must have is just that—***how we think.*** So while it still matters, other than *how* I actually derive at this, here's what I think: ***I think we are utterly unprepared to open the lid to this Pandora's Box!*** But—you hold the keys. What do you think?

## **Ceding Knowledge.**

Machines are becoming our undeniable replacements because we have undesirable tendencies. Hardly would this be our reality if most of our work outputs still outmatched machine ones. *This trend is now irreversible.* It won't ever fade away but we can slow it down and it starts by raising awareness. This really long rally is like a baseplate start to find some of that vehement debate ammo. It bloated for several reasons, one of which is the many ways our voice stays silent. It seems that every once and awhile; buoyed upon sound reasoning, we meld some unity together to reverberate our voice—***right up until one misinformation or miscommunicated trinket comes along and trips us.*** Once we falter, damage control and damage wreaking demagogues move in, blaring hammered confusion at us until we again—retreat. A *Newsweek* quip from Evan Thomas sharpens this point. ***"Politics is becoming so polarized—neither side credits or even hears the other."***

Guess now's a good time to mention that if you are reading this series hoping to find I back a particular side—you'll be disappointed. Then I'll be disappointed as we will end back at stuck. I know. I quit asking friends and family to help edit because this lone polarization has the means to fully trip us. It would serve us best to agree that both republican and democrat platforms evolved into powerfully distinct ideologies for several reasons but primarily: ***because both have had years to hone their platforms with feasible principals.***

Engaging in directional steering includes more than casting the occasional vote. First, we chat about issues and generally agree—*all of us want responsible governing*. It feels good to engage and we become hopeful...right up until someone starts stumping for—*the side that is right*. It's at this first step juncture that we lose before we begin. Besides, we've learned a bit about speaking up. Flippant labels like ignorant pacifist or raging fanatic come like punches when we do so we don't. We're unengaged alright, but not just because we're me-me unconcerned.

Recently, I've awakened to the idea that I'll survive being labeled a technobiophobic as I've discovered my own passive state is as distasteful as any raging fanatic one. Simply put, we can't effectively grapple with today's defugilities so long as we trudge along tuned-out or as a team rife in political and religious division. And I should point out, in what I see as one more twisted greasing, the heady appeal of transcendence for some springs from religion. They see the exasperating squabbling over what God said or is to be our ultimate downfall. Now I'm not sure how transcending ourselves because of this solves this, but I am sure that life as we know it is quickly boiling down to two stark choices. ***One is fully bio—the other hardly not.***

*Newsweek* had asked—*How Ignorant Are We?* I've added more excerpts from this segment down the road because these articles are a sober accounting—***we have room for improvement.*** Today's excerpt is from Douglas Schoen: "This country's founders understood the need to bridge the passions of divergent philosophies. Thomas Jefferson said: I see the necessity of sacrificing our opinions sometimes to the opinions of others for the sake of harmony. Whenever the people are well-informed, when things get so far wrong as to attract their notice, they may be relied on to set them right." Schoen points out: "Jefferson's vision of compromise was built on an underlying assumption—an informed electorate." Schoen concludes: ***"Those positioned to set things right have ceded the knowledge advantage to those who have little interest in doing so."***

Informed or not, this dreary snapshot is of us and I'm not finger-pointing. Other than a few societal contributions and that dutiful vote-casting, I've spent the better part of my life disengaged from democratic processes. So, at some point—we must assess ourselves. Besides, I'm tired of trying to sleuth-out whose slathering runs behind every poll being used to slice and dice us.

## **Choices.**

Ruling elites aren't eagerly awaiting a dark future any more than we are so why are we allowing full-on monitored-entrenchment to invade our very freedoms, machines to usurp our very lifelines or transcendence to even enter the picture? If these grave realities don't jar you, then at least think about the trillions sinking our ship and the unleashed Oligarchy scrapping over our helm! ***To set things right begins by first asking how things got so far wrong. Life—it's about choice.***

A.) *Monitoring is just fine cuz only good guys monitor us and replacement of humans is simply absurd—we're just too valuable.* If we believe this, then I'd say our ignorance runs recklessly deep.

B.) *It's all inevitable. A free humanity is a pipe dream and it's truly amazing we've made it this far. Besides, we are but mere pawns in a power game that's not ours to dictate how it gets played and besides that—it's inevitable. Great societies always collapse.* So if we believe all this crap, than we believe we have no purpose but rather, we've somehow been plopped on a ride we didn't choose and we're merely hanging on til it ends. *To hell with tomorrow! Get what you can out of today!*

C.) *We deserve to be monitored and replaced because we're hopeless.* This, is simply one fatalistic, copout of a choice.

D.) *We don't like the invasive monitoring going on. We do know there's something scary about the future of technology. We see it replacing us in a slow but sure fashion and we are wary. However, feeling overwhelmed and powerless to alter some unstoppable course is senseless so we go on about our busy lives.* I believe this best describes how most of us see our watch going down and if this is where we're at, then we're not hopeless and it's a great place to start.

### **Dance Partners.**

The mass has buoyed the egos of elites probably since the dawning and ironically, when we compare ourselves to machines and concede how much smarter these are—we are now bolstering inanimate its! *Its have no egos!*

Past rulers must have seemed God-like and all-knowing for most of The Human Experiment simply because by comparison—*they were to uneducated and unworldly masses.* Well, this aint the case no more. ***We are not yesterday's uneducated, subjugated mass.*** Schoen is right. We have ceded the knowledge advantage to those who have little interest in setting things right. We've become lax but we can fix this—*so long as we keep the rat-pack of Schoen's statement in full view.* But what about our scientific brethren? Do you suppose we aren't questioning their fevered desire to covet superintelligence because we're under some science is all-knowing spell? The folks that aren't; the ones who call for restraint, cause us to shudder so we call 'em backwards thinkers but now's a good time to wonder: ***when will it be okay to acknowledge scientific progress can actually be—devastatingly backwards?***

Yeah we get it. Powerhouse course-setters indeed set the pace. Non-human entities look exceedingly attractive by a skewed way of comparison so replacing us is the order of the day. *Baby-G won't ever need healthcare or a paycheck and will never once—sue.* But aside from fat-assed rats, what about the other half of our ruling duo? The folks much like the good citizen-selves we are; *our own contemporaries that we elect to implement policies for the betterment of mankind?* Our job is to pay for such—that's the deal! So question loudly: *if the Washington gang truly has our best interest at heart—then just why are we being monitored and replaced?* And using inanimate its that won't ever buy a home, groceries or even a car! Ten years ago this commerce connect-a-dot wasn't getting hammered. Ten years later—it still isn't! Why?

Recently, I watched a news clip about a TV series called *House of Cards*. It's a show gaining momentum and the anchor questioned why to which the respondent surmised it was because we are finally fed up with all the self-serving power ploys going on. If so, this is great news! If finally, via a TV series, we are ready to face inconvenient truths as to why things have gotten so far wrong, then maybe we'll tackle a slow-read meant to help us figure out how to set things right!

Truly, other than voting themselves more perks, pork and stocks, what else is our ruling-duo thinking? Must our disengaged state bear the full weight for their regressive ways? Does their restraint-meter not ping anymore because we've hosted their free-for-all orgy for so long now, we've warped their sensibilities and now—they know not what they do? Surely, all powerheads are still cognizant enough to realize: this era, the one that's managed to bungle its watch to a \$21 trillion and rising by the minute debt, can't possibly bridge the gap between now and transhuman tomorrow without catastrophic consequences! Mere common sense dictates—*teenagers should first learn how to steer before taking the car for a spin!*

### **Finding Forward.**

I wish I could say the original motivation to write this series was derived from some altruistic pull but alas, I'm just another ordinary human. Personal indignation is a great motivator and is what originally fueled this endeavor. However—choices. I enjoy life. I believe life provides each of us signs; indignation curveballs included, when it's our turn to put forth the occasional but requisite, societal contribution. Otherwise, I would be out there *doing* life right now instead of sitting in here plucking away. Now had I known I was signing up for a 10 year and still counting stint...

Before I delve into that curveball, I want to try and connect me to you. I, think I'm you. Average, skilled middle-class laborer. Other labels may work better. Good and decent person. Law-abiding, tax-paying citizen. Business owner, corporate worker. How 'bout someone old enough to have adult progeny. Any progeny. American, one of millions. Human, one of billions. As you busily buzz a life away peppered with should and could have's, so do I. Basically, you and I work, others rule, and we're okay with that. Our lives are busy because we pay the bulk of this country's taxes, lubricate the big commerce wheels, parent the future and snatch bits of happiness along the way. Add it all up and it's clear: most of us don't have ian or ist tags but one thing's for sure—*we are as qualified as anyone to weigh-in on the current road our ruling cadre have set us on!*

Okay. After catching that curveball, I started to see just how many topics I'd need to scratch in order to help jolt us into gear and the sheer magnitude caused me to procrastinate a great deal. I rationed that knowing how and where to even begin would stall most anyone so I stalled some more. Finally, my thoughts took an uplifting turn when I began to see what was right in front of me. ***I wasn't the only worker venting about today's monitoring and replacement technologies being shoved in our face. I wasn't the only person feeling overwhelmed and powerless to affect how our watch goes down.*** When I began to see my coworkers, writers, TV and radio commentators, musicians, my family and friends—all as one; all wondering about the same stuff I was, I then knew that no matter how daunting: *the starting point of any favorable path taken in The Entire Human Experiment began with a few breathes of courage—that wondered aloud.*

And so I began—qualified or not. I wasn't even out of the damn starting gate when I hit my first roadblock; should have been my first clue—*this was gonna take a while.* You see, I hadn't planned to shove the darksides of technology and power-control first out because I figured once you suspected this was just another story about all that's overwhelming—you'd quit reading. I would. My idea was to sneak up on the guts of this story except my editing friends' persistence prevailed so I caved and took the dive. But, since you've made it this far, please stay. Yes, technology is now an indisputable encounter in The Human Experiment and therefore an indisputable part of our lives, but this story is really the same one it's always been. The story is always about us. Newday technology just happens to be making its debut—all on our watch.

Liken today's bottled message as one from a battlefront friend who writes about the dreary weather—just before the storm. You see, it's senseless to peer any closer into mighty power chambers without first—shoring up the weak spot.

### **A Story for The Home Team.**

About 12 years ago, disgust forced me to seriously consider just where the techno-future was headed. My eyes opened to these ponderances when the industry I work for began to monitor us with machines to gather data, enabling them to replace us with machines—not upgrade us. So, I wrote a considerate plea to my company's CEO, a man I fairly admired. My plea didn't ask for a reversal of where our industry's technology was taking us but rather—*I wondered how we would get there.* It seemed the more we integrated technology into our industry, the more ethical decencies diminished. Already, our company had grown to a size where we were just another number long ago so it was obvious—*these undercurrents were coming from something new.* At least we used to feel valued. Now, our feel was a stifling gloom that came with a flagrant deflation of our values and without a doubt, rode in on the wings of the new and improved techno-age of monitoring and replacement schemes. These ominous wafts of change rolled in with evidence: *aggressive and intimidating edicts were being zealously implemented.*

During the past 20 years, compliments of technology, I'm guessing our industry's workforce has been whittled down by half. It's hard to put a number to because industries don't readily divulge just how many workers they've replaced with machines. Also, while auto-repetitive technology culled or upgraded the lower end of every industry—the middle grew. So during the first half of the last few

decades, technology still needed folks to work it, program it—monitor with it. There were still jobs to be had. But during this past decade, industry workers started witnessing mid-level outgrading. ***Technology needs less and less of us to assist it and workers can't help but see a dire pattern emerging.*** Lately, because technology has improved just enough to finally justify its current billion dollar expense rounds—*unscrupulous culling-schemes are being brazenly shoved in our face.* So if our jobs were being usurped by other folks, then I'd guess that's the way it goes in a dog-eat-dog world. But, but job-shuffling isn't here anymore—at least for humans who need paychecks.

Industries should be able to make sound business cuts where they see fit but to use well-mastered conditioning ploys to facilitate the insertion of reckless monitoring and replacement schemes; schemes that would otherwise falter under ethical scrutiny—*is inexcusable.* Now, I've learned to equate an ominous feel that slaps me in the face as my cue. Now, I head straight to puzzle-out why our decency ethos are being undermined with a vigilance tuned into questioning just what's to be gained. And now, I've come to realize, indeed passionately believe: ***regardless of what's up ahead, we must always require ethics remain our guiding beacon.***

Basically, I'm afflicted with optimism. I don't believe every bad company policy is due to corporate greed so I wanted to afford my CEO the benefit of doubt. I wanted to be certain he wasn't ignorant to the full price-tag his agendas came with but also, I couldn't shake a growing wariness and needed to discern for myself if his regressive policies were *intentionally* meant to devalue us and also—if his policies were *intentionally* meant to strip away what's become standard ethical norms in today's work arenas.

By making an effort to respectfully convey what I'd come to see as regressive and backwards, I had hoped to spare myself and home team coworkers the pat—*we don't see the big picture response.* I figured maybe rights from wrongs are deceptively grayer at the top so I ended my plea by saying: ***"We need to ask ourselves, just because we can—should we?"*** I figured a new twist on the enduring adage *do unto others*—just might clear out some of the gray. Smugly certain this should do the trick, I drove to the post office humming to a great Pearl Jam song about how corporations rule the day. Well, like an old LP that's lost power and the song slowly droops, so drooped my smug-smile. By the time my nifty letter settled—I knew my effort was futile.

It was on this drive back home, annoyed with this song wrapping about my thoughts, that a slow-mo dawning began. I then knew—there would be no easy end to this wondering. Slow-mo dawning, that's me. I used to think this was probably an accurate *average* human assessment but after watching on C-span, a bunch of incredibly intelligent bankers bumble in front of a bunch of incredibly intelligent bumbling politicians, I revised my assessment. I concluded Bostrom's ***Information Hazards*** are having unglamorous symptomatic effects on everyone. We are all being affected. All of us need to look in the mirror—*political, corporate and brainiac elites as well.*

After sending my CEO that letter, several more years of wondering, learning, and of course stalling, came and went and still I had yet to share what I passionately believed and still believe needs our full-on attention. But by then, I also had to accept how senseless it would be to go up against the big boys without an equally formidable strength; a refresher course delivered to me in a sucker-punch way. I'm guessing my boss didn't like my letter so much as it's only been by sheer luck that I still have my job. Ultimately though, I had to accept one more inglorious truth—*the one about us.* It's also senseless to implore us to require responsible steering if we have no intention to allow that communication to compel us to demand such. We vote, well half of us vote, and we want to believe this should be enough to indicate the direction we want to head but it's not. That's how it's supposed to go in the governed world but what about the corporate one? Corporations really do rule the day and Wall Street really is in dire need of repair. Though many edicts forced industries to find decency: ***their cumulative might is still a forbidding force that only the scrutiny of a more discerning, consuming mass—can counter.***

A single ponderance begs for company. If corporations rule our day, then who rules their day? This question is where things got complicated. *This fun little writing project* has taken me years to try and bring full-circle to you so if you'd be so kind, please indulge me when I refer to this series as—***Our Story***.

### **Dropped Balls, Silent Cracks.**

Why did workers and mid-management allow Baby-G to gain a foothold through our industry doors? Well, I'd guess a dozen years ago, all of us saw the techno-future shining as brightly as anyone. After all, new job-markets and millionaires were sprouting up daily. Now though, mid-management sees what's been staring down workers for some time. *They too, are being replaced in a slow but sure fashion. They too—must now look over their shoulder.*

Mid-management is fully aware that the culling tactics being used to make room for machines are pathetically devoid of ethics. Getting hard to overlook what's regressive as the skewed assessments on their own pink-slips hardly reflects their values either. All of us are getting a firsthand taste of rank disregard. Mid-management would like to get out too; find a company to work for that still values human outputs, but the job-shuffling game isn't alive anymore. Besides, a dozen years later, mid-level at mid-age means there's really no place to go. We're all stuck in some ever-growing dysfunctional void. Stuck, where the only thing that grows is flagrant transgressions and Baby-G. ***Stuck, because we all know our very lifelines rest in the hand that feeds us.***

For all of us, I believe the past 20 years came fast but the dawning came slowly. So swept-away in the fun techno-pace, so immersed in all that life deals us, the solid steps Baby-G was taking snuck up on us and when we should have united to sound the alarm—we didn't. We dropped the ball into the crack of silence.

While monitoring and replacement schemes continue to become evermore entrenched, so does corporate power. Now galvanized; armed with machines and a defunct job-shuffle game, it's become finger-tip easy to target any opposition silly enough to speak-out against their recklessness. ***They only want more & more & more ~CCR.*** Feeding hands will continue to use oppressive, intimidating tactics to facilitate greed-schemes, and we'll be forced to accept more of it all for a whole lot less right up until everyone remembers: ***there is not one, but two—feeding hands.***

### **Still Finding Forward.**

My editing friends gave me some tips. They felt certain the average readership attention span wouldn't stay focused unless I shortened these—allot! Suggested I needed to decide if I was writing a thesis or novelette and get rid of so many damn hyphens. Concluded I should stick to the 1<sup>st</sup> person, just tell my story and forget about attempting to speak for us—much less try to engage us. And there was a side-note about power politics. All sound advice and observations. So, I tried to rewrite this like a thesis which is why another year flew before this writing did when it finally occurred to me—I don't know how to write a damn thesis! And yes, I like hyphens—you should see the pile I've cut! As for the length—***we aren't an easy study.*** *The Human Experiment* encompasses many topics, weary ones too, but I truly believe it's how this story must roll if it's gonna help give us a focused start.

The power politics side-note bothered me enough to throw this effort away—now for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time, but as the weeks lulled by, this side-note pinged. Obviously I was hoping my lonely voice could possibly gain some unity, ergo—power politics. This is the biggest reason why my confidence wavers so. *Who do I think I am to write a mass unity rah-rah?* But as time kept a' ticking, I'd go to work, come home and catch up on life's daily news and yet all the while, whether it was comments read or heard, I continued to notice just how often we make the same observations; ones that enflame our passions even but still—we don't pull together to affect change. All these whys kept gnawing at me and I kept wondering just who should be writing this story for us but isn't? Just who should be engaging us but is not? *Just who is supposed to be putting forth a real solid effort to alter*

*how we head off into our techno-sunset?* These questions drain me—especially when I already know the answers to them. So, the only valid question left that’s worth asking is: ***how in the hell do we find forward?***

You see, I’ve thought a great deal about the many years we’ve been alerted to the drawbacks of being a disengaged free mass. I’ve thought about the many techno-infused years that have already come and gone taking with them the many essays, documentaries and Hollywood techno-thrillers spelling-out the perilousness ahead. We have now been fully warned: ***the road to Superintelligence runs high in near total or total, human annihilation.*** Yet, we spiral towards it. Our ponderances and concerns are starkly similar and yet, our spiral looks as though it’s one without thought. Something’s not working.

### **Bottled Messages.**

Maybe it’s just the optimist in me but I keep hoping our ruling cadre will get a grip on things. Although, I now make myself snap-to when I find I’ve taken solace in this notion—again. Even an optimist can’t overlook today’s techno-encroachments. Even I know our debt of trillions can’t keep growing. Even I can see we’re scattered and our forward is stalled. It’s obvious—*the challenges we face are bigger than our ruling-duo can handle without our unified help.* In the end, it was a few humanistic traits which pulled me away from sound advice and put me on this road with faith. Fueled by hopeful passion—*I know there’s hardly one single thing any single human does if not for purpose.* Vaclav Havel captures the essence to this. ***Hope is not the conviction that things will turn out well. Hope is doing what makes sense—no matter how things turn out.***

As democracies go—the majority speaks. There are over 300 million Americans and 7 billion humans. ***Is anybody out there? ~PF.*** Hell, let’s try something—anything! We only have ourselves to lose if we don’t! I’m trying to rally the home team and never was a cheerleader. Yeah, I need help. It wasn’t until I’d nearly finished this daunting endeavor that I realized I’d left doing-unity hanging. Basically, my energies were expended reiterating what I’d learned. So, like a body that lays inert without a blood-infused backbone—so was this mission. Finally, after what’s become habitual stalling, came another scratched surface. For better or worse—I’m now a cheerleader. ***I’m asking you to engage. You are the lifeblood. You hold the keys.***

I know we’re up against some nearly insurmountable obstacles and although these installments are long—time isn’t. Nobody knows how long it’s gonna take for humans to adapt to the deluge of so much information careening down on us but if we keep steering like we’re ***asleep at the wheel***—we won’t adapt fast enough. Technology now works our clock. We need a shortcut. This mission would take one helluva shortcut if anyone and everyone reading these words simply professed to writing them so don’t be shy! ***Take this bottle from my hand ~KBB.*** This might not be the brightest idea but basically, my self-administered pep-talks drive home the idea that I didn’t go through raising kids just so they wouldn’t get the chance to do the same and if you see the logic behind this—the shortcut will easily come into view.

Publius & Co were clever enough to write for a cynical audience. Please remember to cut me some slack—I’m not that clever. I have more to share from Ray as well as other Manna that kept raining down. And yes, cheerleader extraordinaire now, I have a few more things to say about faith and belief because I’m certain these key humanistic traits walk hand in hand—*purposefully.*

*Sincerely yours, Publius*