

# The Human Condition - Year 2120

The one thing certain about a forecast of the future is that it will not be accurate ... especially the future in 100 and more years. We won't be around to experience it, but considering the distant future can be interesting.

Our children's children and their children will experience it. How shall they live?

Think back only a hundred years. In 1920 in the U.S.

- average life expectancy was 55 years (today it's 80 years, a quarter century more)
- the Model T was just making automobiles more common
- common commercial air travel had not begun
- one third of households in the U.S. had a telephone, most multi-party lines
- the first commercial radio broadcast occurred
- the first commercial TV broadcast was still 25 years and the Internet 75 years away
- eugenics practices were widely accepted in academic and social communities
- the stock market crash and World War II were still years away

People in 1920 may have had a glimmer of life today but they hardly could imagine the technological, social, economic and other change since 1920.

As we move toward a future of super capable robots and a world managed by artificial intelligence systems, however, it is not unrealistic to contemplate an environment in which humans have little involvement in activities of manual labor. And, much non-manual work (e.g., tax preparation, medical diagnoses and treatments, writing books and music) also mostly may be done by these advanced technologies.

In a world where most work (including housework) no longer is performed by humans, what will be their existence? What will be the purpose of an individual?

Possible activities for humans in this future may be more self-directed interests including travel, learning, entertainment, social activities, sports, physical and mental challenges, and creative arts.

A question is how individuals will create value that in turn can be exchanged for other value. They may oversee the design and building of new systems by existing systems, the results of highly automated systems production, and create highly original art that even very advanced machine systems cannot create. Will individuals own, and offer in exchange for other value, specialized robots much as technicians and craftsman today have specialized tools they use in providing their products and services?

In any case, humans will evolve and adapt this future world as we have always. Whatever the future, we can hope and expect that humankind will continue its uneven but steady progress toward liberty and justice, better health and increased prosperity for more people.

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