

## THE FUTURE LIES BEHIND! Thirty years of teaching futures studies

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*Since futures studies has been a serious academic and consulting activity for more than thirty years, worldwide, why have YOU never heard of it--or at least know so little about it? Dator briefly outlines his own teaching and consulting experiences in futures studies since 1967, and then introduces each of the twenty six authors whose essays follow.*

Amazing isn't it?

Here is a collection of essays written by 27 people from 10 different countries describing the theories and methods underlying the courses they teach in futures studies at the university level. And yet the chances are very good that, if you are a typical subscriber to or regular reader of *American Behavioral Scientist*, you have never taken a course in futures studies; never met a person who taught it at the university level; teach or study on a campus where futures studies is not offered; and probably associate "futures studies" (if the term means anything to you at all) either with astrology and charlatans or with Alvin Toffler, John Naisbitt, or Faith Popcorn (or, alternatively, with the late Herman Kahn and the late Julian Simon vs. the Meadows and the *Limits to Growth / Beyond the Limits*) (Toffler, 1970; Toffler 1980; Naisbitt, 1984; Popcorn, 1992; Kahn and Weiner, 1967; Kahn and Simon, 1984; Simon, 1996; Meadows et al, 1972; Meadows et al., 1992) Of these, only Simons and the Meadows were university professors, and they were more nearly arguing for or against one particular future than primarily concerned with the study of the future, or beliefs about the future, per se.

Given the readership of and contributors to this journal, however, it is also likely that "futures studies" might conjure up images of computer-based mathematical models (such as those of the econometricians or those who would provide disaster early warnings) which attempt or pretend to predict the future with such precision that policy can be confidentially guided by the prediction.

Your own reading about the future is, in all probability, restricted to *Brave New World* and *1984* (if you are of a certain age-cohort), and/or to varieties of science fiction and comic books (*Flash Gordon* among a host of others). Your most fundamental images of the future are almost certainly shaped primarily by films and videos you have seen in theaters or on television sets: *The Twilight Zone*, *The Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, *It*, *On the Beach*, *2001-A Space Odyssey*, the *Planet of the Apes* series, *Star Trek*, *Star Wars*, *Back to the Future*, *Blade Runner*, *Brazil*, *Total Recall*, *Robocop*, the *Terminator* series and the various *Mad Max* flixs (perhaps *Buck Rogers*--if you are old enough--more recently *Twelve Monkeys*, *Gattaca*, *Strange Days*, *Johnny Mnemonic*), or by visits to Disneyland or the Seattle World's Fair (or the 1939-40 New York World's Fair, if--can I say it again?--you are old enough).

Some few of you (though many among the population at large) have images of the future shaped by Armageddon and other visions derived from the Book Of Revelations--perhaps as depicted in the film *The Late Great Planet Earth*.

Statistically speaking, you are unaware of the existence of the World Futures Studies Federation (WFSF), the World Future Society (WFS), or Futuribles International, all of which were created in the mid 1960s, whose members unfliningly read *Future Survey* (a monthly survey--compiled yearly into an indispensable annual--of books, articles, and reports, in English, about or important

for the future, superbly edited by Michael Marien) and routinely publish in such journals as *Futures*, *Futures Research Quarterly*, *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *Futuribles*, *Futuribili*, *Futura*, *Papers de Prospectiva*, and *the Manoa Journal of Fried and Half Fried Ideas (...about the future)* (journals also of whose existence you are unaware--you might have seen *The Futurist*, published by the World Future Society, in a library), and which have held world futures conferences (in the case of the World Futures Studies Federation) in Oslo, Norway (1967), Kyoto, Japan (1970), Bucharest, Romania (1972), Rome, Italy (1973), Berlin, West Germany (1975), Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia (1976), Warsaw, Poland (1977), Cairo, Egypt (1978), Stockholm, Sweden (1982), San Jose, Costa Rica (1984), Honolulu, Hawaii (1986), Beijing, China (1988), Budapest, Hungary (1990), Barcelona, Spain (1991), Turku, Finland (1993), Nairobi, Kenya (1995), and Brisbane, Australia (1997) with the next world conference planned for Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 1999 (See: WFSF Conference Publications)

During the 1970s and 80s--until the forceful disintegration of Yugoslavia--WFSF offered futures courses every spring through the InterUniversity Centre at Dubrovnik, attracting university students from East and West Europe, as well as North America, Africa, and Asia. With the cooperation of the Center Catala de Prospectiva, the Unesco Centre of Catalunya, the Ministry of Education of Andorra, and the Municipality of Encamp, the WFSF has also more recently offered futures courses in Andorra. Unesco has been a major supporter of many of the activities of the WFSF and has sponsored Asia-Pacific Futures Courses in Fiji, Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines since 1992.

Presidents of the WFSF have been such highly-regarded scholars as Bertrand de Jouvenel (France), Johan Galtung (Norway), Mahdi Elmandjra (Morocco), Eleonora Masini (Italy) and Pentti Malaska (Finland). Tony Stevenson of Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane is currently President. I was first Secretary General and then President of the WFSF during much of the 1980s and early 90s.

Indeed, I have been teaching futures courses since 1967 when I introduced what is sometimes said to be the first undergraduate course on the future which went through the normal channels of faculty/administrative approval, when I did so while I was teaching for three years in the Department of Political Science at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia (Dator, 1971). I had more or less "invented" futures studies during the previous six years (1960-66) while I was teaching in the College of Law and Politics of Rikkyo University in Tokyo, Japan. But I am thankful to Joseph Bernd, chair of the Department, and Leslie Malpass, Dean of the College of Arts and Science of VPI for their active support of my embryonic futures work.

Shortly after I arrived in Blacksburg in 1966, David Greene, a member of the British Archigram Group who was a Visiting Professor in the School of Architecture and with whom I shared a duplex house near the campus, told me that I "sounded like Buckminster Fuller," who I had never heard of, and showed me a flyer announcing the creation of the World Future Society by Ed Cornish in Washington, DC. I immediately joined. Shortly thereafter, I published my first futures article in *The Futurist* (Dator, 1967). It was an excerpt of a much longer, and never fully published, essay titled, "Oh, we belong to a cybernetic, post-money, situational ethics society, my baby and me." Recently the journal *Futures*, in its "Second Thoughts" series, re-published the old *Futurist* article, with four commentaries by futurists of different age-cohorts and cultures (Dator, 1997; Jones, 1997; Nordberg, 1997; Serra 1997; and Slaughter, 1997).

Also while I was at Virginia Tech, I compiled an extensive bibliography of books and articles relevant to the study of the future, which the WFS published in the *WFS Bulletin* (the predecessor to the *Futures Research Quarterly*). This brought me to the attention of John and Magda McHale (then working with Fuller at Southern Illinois University) and Eleonora Masini who headed the Italian futures group, IRADES, which published a quarterly newsletter on the development of futures

studies globally reflective in part of their role in the 1967 Oslo conference convened by Robert Jungk of Austria and Johan Galtung of Norway, through Mankind 2000. I thus also was drawn into the circle of futurists who eventually formally established the WFSF in Paris in 1973 (See: Some Additional Early Futures Classics).

In 1969 I went to the Department of Political Science at the University of Hawaii specifically to teach graduate and undergraduate futures courses, and also to participate in the activities called "Hawaii 2000" which, under the inspiration of Daniel Bell's US initiative (Bell, D, 1968), were beginning under the sponsorship of then Governor John Burns, President of the Senate David McClung, and Speaker of the House Tadao Beppu, and under the main guidance of the Editor in Chief of the Honolulu *Advertiser*, George Chaplin, and Glenn Paige, a colleague in the Department of Political Science. Chaplin, Paige and myself attended the 1970 Kyoto Conference of the WFSF in part to recruit people from the WFSF to participate in the Hawaii 2000 Conference held in 1970 which was, I believe, still the best example of "anticipatory democracy" ever experienced (Chaplin and Paige, 1971; Dator, 1973).

In 1972, the Hawaii State Legislature created the Hawaii Research Center for Futures Studies within the University of Hawaii (eventually within the Social Science Research Institute), which I still direct. The Center does contract and pro bono futures work for public and private groups in Hawaii and the Pacific island region, as well as throughout the United States, the Asia-Pacific region, and indeed, worldwide. The Center is best known for work in judicial foresight, which began with the Hawaii State Judiciary in 1971 (under the encouragement of Chief Justice William Richardson and Chief Court Administrator Lester Cingcade). Especially because of funding (1987-1997) from the State Justice Institute (SJI--a federal funding agency), the Center has worked directly and extensively with eleven other American state/territorial judiciaries (Arizona, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Florida, Massachusetts, Nevada, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Tennessee and most notably, since 1987, with the judiciary of Virginia which, under the leadership of Chief Justice Harry L. Carrico, Court Administrator Rob Baldwin, and Court Planner Kathy Mays, has elevated judicial foresight to exceptional heights).

The Center has also worked indirectly with all American state judiciaries though futures conferences and workshops sponsored by the SJI, the American Judicature Society, the American Bar Association, and a wide variety of international, national, state, and local judicial, bar, and legal organizations such as the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, in Tokyo; the Supreme Court of South Korea; the judiciary of the Federated States of Micronesia and of the State of Pohnpei; the Subordinate Courts of Singapore; the US Federal Judicial Center; the Fifth Federal Judicial Circuit; the Congress of State Court Justices; the Conference of State Court Administrators; the Council of Chief Judges; the American Judges Association; the National Association for Court Management, the annual conference of the American Bar Association, the Western States Bar Association, and many more (See: Judicial Foresight).

In 1977, the Department of Political Science instituted a MA degree specialization in Alternative Futures which has been pumping consulting futurists into the world, at a modest rate, ever since. One of the features of that specialization is a year's paid internship in a futures consulting firm so that students learn how futures studies can usefully be applied in public and private organizations. Students of the Hawaii program have interned at many places, but we have our closest relationship with the Institute for Alternative Futures, in Alexandria, Virginia, which was founded in 1976 by Clem Bezold (still the President), Alvin Toffler, Jonas Salk, and myself, among many others (including Newt Gingrich who was then a future-oriented professor at West Georgia College).

It would be a big mistake to assume that I am alone in the futures field, as all of the other essays in this issue of ABS will make abundantly clear. It has been an

extensive, worldwide activity from the beginning through the present. The national academy of sciences of Finland, China, Russia, Hungary, Bulgaria and perhaps others have futures studies departments.

And yet you, average reader of ABS, say you have never heard of any of this?

It is truly amazing indeed, and I am very grateful that a journal of the standing of the ABS has volunteered, with no coaxing from me or anyone else involved in this process, to lift the veil of unawareness from the eyes of the global academic community, and help, I hope, lure you, and all your colleagues, into this exciting and important area of intellectual and practical endeavor.

### WHAT IS FUTURES STUDIES?

So what is futures studies? What are the theories and methods underlying the field? What are its basic concepts and metaphors? How is it related to other academic and practical fields? What is the relationship between teaching and consulting?

These are questions that I asked the authors of the papers in this issue of ABS to address. While each responded to them in different ways, and some spent more time discussing some issues and less time on others, an amazing unity emerged within the overall breadth and diversity.

Everyone agreed that futures studies does not try to "predict" the future, in the sense of saying precisely what will happen to an individual, organization or country before it actually happens. However, many of the authors admit that they were originally drawn into futures studies in the hope that--indeed, often in the firm belief that--it would be possible to predict the future if one just had the correct theory, methods, data, and, of course, enough funding.

I, too, had entered futures studies with this belief, having been very much influenced by the 1950s-60s "behavioral revolution" in political science with its emphasis on quantitative methods and formal modeling. Indeed, it was because I attended Joe Bernd's NSF summer course in Mathematical Applications in Political Science, offered at Southern Methodist University, in Dallas, Texas during the summer of 1965 (Bernd, 1966) that I returned from Japan in 1966 and went with Bernd to VPI to start the new Department of Political Science there.

It was fascinating for me, then, to see that at the same time, in a completely different part of the world, operating under a completely different ideological system, two Hungarian futurists report in their contributions to this Journal that they were similarly beginning their work confident that they, too, had (or could soon have) the methodological keys which would unlock the ability precisely to predict the future.

Not one of the authors of the papers collected here believe in prediction in that sense any more. Though some, more than others, feel they have theoretical understandings and rigorous methodologies which enable them to forecast strong tendencies (or even soft predictabilities) with considerable confidence, most of the authors insist (as I do) on the reality of "alternative futures" rather than a single "THE future." We have concluded (at least I have), that the future is fundamentally plural and open--an arena of possibilities (which is what the French term, "Futuribles" is intended to capture), and not of discernible inevitabilities.

Most futurists therefore *forecast* a wide variety of "alternative futures" rather than *predicting* "the future." They also seek to help people (students, clients, community groups, even entire nations) invent and try to move effectively towards their "preferred future", all the time monitoring their progress towards it, and reconsidering their preference in the light of new information and experience gained as time goes by.

As Bell and Mau put it, quoting Robert Brumbaugh: "There are no future facts, but there are no past possibilities." (Bell and Mau, 1971, p. 9) These are still among the wisest words a futurist can utter.

Since the future is the arena of the possible and of the preferred, rather than of the foregone and predetermined, it is also the arena of dreams and of values. Ethical considerations are central to futures teaching and futures research. There is no pretense of separating considerations of good and bad, right and wrong, beauty and ugliness and other core values from academic inquiry into (or professional consulting concerning) the future. Values are central, and must be clearly discussed up front and in every stage of futures study and consulting.

One of the continuing debates in futures studies (as everywhere) centers on some kind of ethical and moral absolutism vs. various kinds of ethical and moral relativism. Some futurists believe that there is a set of core values underlying all human action across all cultures which must be the basis of all good futures studies and futures consulting. In this collection, the paper by Wendell Bell comes closest to representing this perspective. Other futurists believe that there is no such common set of values--at least none which rises beyond vague generalities and which can be used to require or outlaw specific actions (much less specific beliefs). I hold to that view.

Nonetheless, Bell and I (and all other futurists) believe that ethical discussion--and the professional ethics of the consulting futurist--are extremely important issues which are central to all teaching and consulting in futures studies. There can be no pretense to "truth," "objectivity," or "universality" on the part of anyone teaching or applying futures studies, though each futurist will and should hold certain views and actions to be better than others, and should not only constantly re-examine their own most deeply held values but also challenge the values of their clients as well as their students as a normal part of their futures work.

At the same time there is a distinction between what is often called "futurism" or "the futures movement" on the one hand, and futures studies or futures research on the other. "Futurism" is clearly concerned about the achievement (or avoidance) of one particular kind of future. People who speak of "the futures movement" or "futurism" know from the outset what kind of future they want. They seek a Green, sustainable future; or else they favor continued, unrestrained "free market" economic growth. Or perhaps it is their dream to plunge us all into mining the moon, terraforming Mars and expanding quickly into the cosmos. Or alternatively they are focused on creating nonviolent, nonkilling local communities. Or in forecasting who the next enemy might be and in developing the most effective, efficient, and lethal weapons against it. Perhaps they wish to create global governance. Or libertarian anarchy, or...well, the number of preferred images of the future is endless. And so, thus, is futurism and the futures movement.

Futures studies, on the other hand, is interested not in itself furthering any particular view of the future, but rather in furthering both narrowly professional as well as broadly participative inquiry into the future--understanding the roots and consequences of each of the manifold images of the future which exist in people's minds and in support of people's actions. We are interested in identifying and understanding the many different images of the future which exist, understanding why certain people have certain images rather than others, how their different images of the future lead to specific actions, or inactions, in the present, and how present actions or inactions themselves create certain aspects of the future.

Thus, for many of the authors of this issue, just as futures studies does not seek to predict things to come, so also futures studies does not try to study "the future" since "the future" does not exist to be studied. What does exist, and what futurists can and often do study, are "images of the future" in people's minds. These images differ between individuals, cultures, men and women, social classes, age groups. One job for futurists is to identify and study these varying images, to understand their origins and history, to see how they animate individual and group action, and then to anticipate how people, acting on the basis of an image of the future, "push" society

into one future or another, just as their images can be said to "pull" them forward.

As various authors will make clear, these images can be optimistic or pessimistic, frightening or ennobling, paralyzing or motivating, weak or robust, unexamined and naive, or fully researched, articulated, tested, and developed. But these images (from the point of view of futures studies) are not "right" or "wrong". They simply *are*; they exist; they are the empirical "facts" that the futurist studies. I would say that the concept "images of the future" and its corollaries, "forecasting alternative futures" and "inventing preferred futures" in contrast to "predicting The future" is key to understanding futures studies (Boulding, K., 1956; Polak, 1961; Mau, 1967; Boulding, E., 1971, Bell and Mau, 1971).

But the future is not completely open. As important as images and dreams are, you cannot do anything merely by dreaming and wishing it were so. While nothing, good or bad, will happen without your dreams, "appropriate action" is also necessary to make your dreams come true, and what "appropriate action" is depends not upon your (or even the collective) will alone, but also upon environmental factors over which you may have little or no control, but which you must understand and deal with successfully.

The metaphor I use to illuminate this dynamic interactive relationship between subjective and objective factors is "surfing the tsunamis of change" (Dator, 1992).

The objective factors are a variety of environmental forces with which any image of the future (and struggle towards a preferred future) must contend. These factors cannot be ignored or wished away. They must themselves be identified and studied. Strategies for coping with them must be developed, tested and used.

Now, what those environmental forces are (or are believed to be) depends on one's theory of social change--one's understanding of what "society" is, what causes it to change and what prevents change; what aspects of society change "easily" and what aspects resist change.

Different futurists have different theories of social change. One thing I asked each contributor to this issue of ABS to do was to spell out their theory of social change. Each did, in varying degrees of detail.

For me, I have concluded that technology is a major agent of social change, contributing significantly to the creation of all of the other "tsunamis" (demographics, global environmental change, political-economic instabilities, cultural transformation, etc.) upon which we all must "surf" (or drown). While it is too long a story for me fully to explicate here, my understanding is captured best by the aphorism of Marshall McLuhan: "We shape our tools and thereafter our tools shape us" (McLuhan, 1967).

Humans become human, and change their understanding of what it means to be human, by interacting with their environment and themselves through technology. Values, ethics, mores, religious beliefs and laws are all made in relation to how humans can behave (and what they then come to believe about themselves as a consequence of their behavior). When technology changes, behavior changes, and thus, eventually, self- and social-consciousness changes. New behavior (and new self-awareness), permitted (and/or constrained) by new technology challenges values and rules engendered by the behavior (and consciousness) permitted by old technologies, and thus society changes.

Learning how past technologies (and the environments they created) helped shape behavior and beliefs, as well as how then-new technologies changed that behavior, challenged prior institutions and beliefs and thus precipitated social change is a major source of my understanding by analogy how new and emerging technologies might serve as agents of social change for the future. Thus not only is the study of history extremely important to me as a futurist, but so also are anthropology, cultural studies, and evolutionary systems theories--indeed, they are even more important because those disciplines cover longer and wider stretches of

human (and prehuman) experience than does "history."

It is a very complex interrelation about which I continue to learn, unlearn, and relearn more and more. (See: Technology & Social Change) In the essays that follow, some authors share some of my focus on technology, while others develop their theories of social change on entirely other bases.

In addition to technology, I believe the tsunamis upon which the surfer of human agency must ride are also shaped by cycles (especially the Kondratieff Long Waves which are themselves influenced by the life-cycles of technologies) and age-cohort analysis--the movement of what is sometimes called "generations" through their own life cycle.

Thus, for example, I see considerable value in the perspective of those (partly informed by Wallersteinian World Systems theory and partly by Jantschian/Prigoginean evolutionary systems theory) who maintain that (in the American case) we members of the Silent and Boomer Generations (the dynamism of the G. I. Generation, which coincided with the peak of the "4th Kondratieff Wave," now completely gone) are more or less "inevitably" wallowing helplessly within the flaccid trough of the most recent Kondratieff Long Wave, while rushing towards us is a new wave of growth and possibility, fueled by emerging technologies, which will swell during the first several decades of the 21st Century and be surfed, well or poorly, by the cohorts of what are now sometimes called the "Millennial" and "Cyber" generations who will live in the 21st Century long after the last "Silents" and "Boomers" are gone (Berry, 1991; Berry and Kim, 1994; Jantsch, 1976; Kleinknecht, 1992; Prigogine, 1997; Schlesinger, 1986; Strauss and Howe, 1995; Strauss and Howe, 1997; Wallerstein, 1979).

My teaching of futures studies through the Political Science Department of the University of Hawaii takes place on all levels. I teach an introductory freshman level course, an advanced undergraduate course, two graduate courses, (one an introduction to the Alternative Futures MA Option, and the other a specialized course within it) and chair or sit on future-oriented PhD dissertation committees within the Department and elsewhere.

The freshman course and the introductory graduate course are both similar in basic purpose and design, but quite different in execution. Both are oriented around what I call the "basic paradigm" in futures studies:

	Theory		
	Trends	Images	Events
	Methods		

As I hope I have made it clear by now, I consider "images of the future" to be the key focus of futures studies. So I begin my class by discussing the concept and presenting a wide variety of different images of the future from different cultures, classes, and periods of time. I also expect each of my beginning graduate students to get to know the ideas of two different futurists very well, through all of their writing, and personal contact where possible (Coates & Jarratt, 1989; Inayatullah, 1996; Marien and Jennings, 1987). I stress that all knowledge, including that about "the future," is personal, and so I want them to try to discover why certain futurists believe some things to be true about the future, while others believe something quite different, but with equal fervor and certainty. Also, when and why did "their" futurists become futurists? And have they substantially changed their views of the future as they have matured, or not, and why?

While I admit that any attempt to categorize the rich array of images of the future which actually exist does violence to the richness of that array, and while I know that other futurists have come up with different categorization schemes, I have concluded that all images in all cultures that I have encountered can be lumped into one of four major (generic) images of the future:

*Continuation* (usually "continued economic growth")

*Collapse* (from [usually] one of a variety of different reasons such as environmental overload and/or resource exhaustion, economic instability, moral degeneration, external or internal military attack, meteor impact, etc.)

*Disciplined Society* (in which society in the future is seen as organized around some set of overarching values or another--usually considered to be ancient, traditional, natural, ideologically-correct, or God-given.)

*Transformational Society* (usually either of a "high tech" or a "high spirit" variety, which sees the end of current forms, and the emergence of new (rather than the return to older traditional) forms of beliefs, behavior, organization and--perhaps--intelligent lifeforms (Dator, 1979).

In my teaching and consulting, I try not to favor one category or image over any of the others, nor to assume that one (or more) is "good" or "the most likely" or "the best (or worst) case scenario"--terms which I think are irrelevant here. While I certainly do have my own "vision" of what I call a "Transformational Society" (Dator, 1973; Dator, 1982, pp. 38-45), my interest is primarily in helping students (and clients) understand that there are a wide variety of different (more or less firmly- and reasonably-held) images of the future in existence; for them to reflect on what their own image is--where it came from, how "robust" it is--and to test and exercise their image by comparing and contrasting it to the images of their classmates, fellow workers, other people in their community, and the broader world.

In addition, I have found that these four generic alternative futures can serve as the basis for a futures technique I call "deductive forecasting." That is to say, I can forecast the general characteristics, in each of the four alternative futures, of any present role or institution by deducing it from each of these four generic societal images.

So, for example, I can say something useful and coherent about the future of, say, "the family," *if* the future is one of "continued growth", while "the family" will have certain other characteristics if the future is one of "collapse"--or a "disciplined society," or a "transformational society." And so on for *any* role, institution, or value (Dator, 1981). One of the methods I encourage my students (especially in the Alternative Futures M A Option) to learn and then to use in their consulting, as I do in mine, is deductive forecasting

Another method (among the many which futurists use) which I especially feature in my teaching and consulting is emerging issue analysis." This derives from early work done by Graham T. T. Molitor (Molitor, 1977). He observed that all "problems" of the present at one time did not exist (the same is true of all "opportunities" in the present). They each go through a more or less regular life cycle ("S" curve) of earliest (usually totally unnoticed) emergence, through slow (and barely noticed) growth, then rapid (and more frequently noticed) growth, until they burst, as a full blown (and brimming with popular acclaim or disdain) problem (or opportunity) in the present, whereupon a great deal of time and attention is spent on the problem (or opportunity) until it eventually fades away, either to nothingness, or, more likely until it re-emerges yet again, unnoticed, at some point in the future.

Most futurists work, not with "emerging issues," but with "trends"--at the point where the growth of the problem/opportunity is most obvious to those who are looking ahead though still not part of the contemporary policy and popular discourse. Futurists often try to get decision makers and/or the public to be

concerned about these "trends," pointing out that they will become problems (or opportunities) in the near future, so why don't we deal with them (or take advantage of them) now, while they are more malleable?

Emerging issue analysis is interested in identifying future problem/possibilities at their earliest possible emergence, rather than waiting until they are fully formed and powerful trends. Identifying trends is important, but seeing things in their first emergence is more useful. There are specific techniques involved in learning how to spot emerging issues and then to present them to decision makers usefully, that are important parts of how we teach (and use) futures studies in what Chris Jones calls "the Manoa School of futures studies" (Jones, C. B., 1992).

Returning now to the content of my introductory undergraduate and graduate futures classes, after discussing various "images of the future" introduce various theories of social stability and change, and then various methods for forecasting, inventing, and creating preferred futures (in part as I have indicated them above). I focus more deeply and comprehensively on both theories and methods in the introductory graduate course than I do in the introductory undergraduate course, but it is important that students at all levels get a sense of the theoretical and methodological perspectives underlying futures studies (Fowles, 1978; Godet, 1991; Kurian and Molitor, 1996; Slaughter, 1996a; World Futures Studies Federation, 1986).

I then identify and discuss certain forces ("trends") which seem to be looming (or declining, as the case may be) in the future, and also how unexpected "events" often interrupt and redirect the trends. It is here where I introduce things like demographic change; arguments pro and con about "the limits to growth" and "sustainability;" changing and persisting gender and age roles; new and renewed economic and political systems, developments in telecommunications, artificial intelligence and life, genetic engineering, space settlement; new and renewed cultural forms and beliefs, and the like. I try to consider each of these "trends and events" in the generic four "alternative futures" perspective. Examination of these trends and events one-by-one is a more prominent feature of my undergraduate than of my graduate introductory courses.

In both courses, I expect students to develop a comprehensive statement of their "preferred future". This is the major focus of both introductory classes. In recent years I have asked students to do this not in terms of their own personal preferences but in terms of what they have determined to be the needs and desires of future generations. "Future generations" are defined as the unborn, not immediately related to you, whose lives you will impact by the way you live your life now, but who you can never know and who can never know you and so can never thank you or criticize you for the world you have given them. "The unborn" can include nonhuman, as well as human life (Busutil, 1990; Kim and Tough, 1994; Kim and Dator, 1995).

Since I am a political scientist, I also teach two courses, one undergraduate and one graduate, which focus on the future of political systems--specifically the *design* of new political systems. Proceeding from the realization that society, in sum and in all its parts, is a human invention, I seek to have my students become inventors of new political systems. To do this they must first understand how various political systems were invented and evolved, beginning with the earliest human organizations--hence the importance of anthropology again--and moving quickly through to the present, focusing especially on the design problems encountered and overcome in the invention of the American federal Constitution. At this point we discuss the concept of "constitutionalism" which underlies virtually all government-building attempts even today. Then I problematize "constitutionalism" by contrasting the "Newtonian" cosmology of the American Founding Fathers with "quantum politics" on the one hand (Becker, 1991, Dator, 1984) and the cosmologies of

Confucian, Islamic and Hawaiian cultures, on the other, as perhaps resulting in different political "design problems" to be overcome, as well as different notions of what are acceptable "solutions". Finally, I ask the students to consider five of the many "complaints" people often have about all current governments, and challenge them to design a political system that overcomes those specific complaints (plus any others that might be of particular concern to themselves), and to do so not only singly but also in relation to the other four (or more) complaints raised against existing systems of governance.

Students can focus on any level of analysis they want, from the individual to the cosmos, and they can either focus deeply on one or two subsystems, or broadly on an entire system.

Several years ago, in order to help my undergraduates rise above their own narrow view of "history", the baggage of which they seemed inevitably to carry with them in their political designs, I required that they design their political community on Mars, and not on Earth. This turned out to be a fortuitous decision, since very few people in the national or international space community have thought about issues of governance beyond those of the very first explorers and pioneers (who will almost certainly be under a kind of military command system) and of "space law" (which is simply the extension of Earth law into space). Who actual settlers on Mars might be, what their governance preferences might be, how the very different environment of Mars might evoke a different kind of "natural law" for governance, and many other matters unique to extra-terrestrial communities somewhat frees their minds to think more creatively and yet seriously in ways that might also be helpful not only for future space settlements but also for new forms of terrestrial governance.

As a consequence of my "Mars politics" course, I have since 1993 been co-director (with Prof. Ben Finney of the Department of Anthropology of the University of Hawaii at Manoa) of the "Space and Society" division of the International Space University (ISU). ISU is headquartered in Strasbourg, France, where it offers a Masters in Space Studies degree. Also, since 1987, ISU has offered a ten week summer session in interdisciplinary space studies, each summer at a different location somewhere on Earth (so far). At ISU, I lecture on futures studies, space governance, and social science and space studies in both the MSS and summer sessions.

Finally, to return to the Alternative Futures MA in the Department of Political Science of the University of Hawaii, students are also expected to take two methods courses, choose among several electives, and, as mentioned before, have a year's paid intern experience in a futures consulting firm. I direct the intern graduate seminar that is the academic part of that intern experience.

Both graduate and undergraduate students work on a voluntary or paid basis in the Hawaii Research Center for Futures Studies, which I also direct, and also have access to the Resource Room of the Center which has one of the most extensive libraries on the history of futures in existence. Magda McHale's Center for Integrative Studies at the State University of New York, Buffalo, also has a rich collection of futures material. In Europe the Robert Jungk Library in Salzburg, Austria is also exceptional. Additional materials are in the collections of Eleonora Masini in Rome and Pentti Malaska in Turku, Finland.

The following professors within the Department of Political Science of the University of Hawaii also have taught or still teach required or elective courses within the Alternative Futures Option: Ted Becker (democratic theory), Doug Bwy (methods), Dick Chadwick (computer modeling), Kathy Ferguson (administration/feminist theory), Manfred Henningsen (political theory), Deane Neubauer (public policy), Neal Milner (judicial politics), Glenn Paige (nonviolent politics), Fred Riggs (governmental organization), Ira Rohter (Green politics), Rudolph Rummel (peace and conflict studies), Glen Schubert (political behavior), Michael Shapiro (political theory), Carolyn Stephenson (peace studies), Kate Zhou

(comparative politics). Outside the Department, Dan Wedemeyer (Communications Department), teaches one of the two required methods courses. Ben Finney (Anthropology), Majid Tehranian (Communications), David Swift (Sociology), and Pat Takahashi (Engineering) also teach frequently-chosen courses.

### THE ARTICLES IN THIS ISSUE

As I have said repeatedly, I am by no means alone in the area of futures studies. Twenty six people responded to my invitation to describe how they teach futures studies and engage in futures consulting. I have arranged the contributions to this issue in the following order.

Following this introductory essay is a brief piece by Immanuel Wallerstein which I believe stands as a splendid challenge of certain aspects of the future to all who would try to help students or clients prepare for it.

This is followed by six articles which each and together serve as a kind of overview to and history of futures studies. The first is by Wendell Bell, of the Department of Sociology of Yale University. Prof. Bell has been involved in futures studies for as long as I have (Bell & Mau, 1971), and his story of the struggle to introduce the perspective at Yale is informative, to say the least. Prof. Bell has also recently written what is surely the most comprehensive attempt ever made to explain futures studies (Bell, 1996). Anyone interested in finding out more about futures studies should read Bell's two volumes--after finishing reading all of the essays in this issue of ABS first.

Bell's essay is followed by an article by Eleonora Masini, Professor of Futures Studies and of Human Ecology at the Gregorian University of Rome. Dr. Masini is the major academic figure in European futures studies, in my judgement, important not only for her long and influential work at the Gregorian University but also--and perhaps even more importantly--for her work which led to (Masini, 1971), and then within, the World Futures Studies Federation as Secretary General, President, and then Chair of the Executive Council at various crucial stages in the growth and development of the WFSF. Without her, the WFSF would not exist today, certainly not at its high level of international prominence and influence. Several years ago she also wrote a much-needed overview to futures studies (Masini, 1993). In her contribution here she discusses why most conventional academics have ignored and sometimes ridiculed futures studies--and why some futurists have ignored conventional academia to their peril and our embarrassment.

Reed Riner is Professor of Anthropology at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff and brings a perspective on futures studies which contrasts nicely with that of Bell and Masini. This is partly because he is an anthropologist, and they are sociologists. But it is also because of his different pedagogical modes (using MUDs, telecommunities, and simulations as well as regular classroom techniques) and his interest in simulated space settlements as sources for anthropological research and theory-making. The narrative of his various activities is informative and illuminating. Prof. Riner acknowledges the contribution of another anthropologist to futures studies--Prof. Robert Textor of Stanford whose Ethnographic Futures Research technique Riner discusses (Textor, 1990). Prof. Ben Finney in the Department of Anthropology of the University of Hawaii (and of ISU) is another who should be mentioned again because of his work in future space settlements (and what he calls "the cosmicization of humanity and the humanization of the cosmos").

W. Warren Wagar, our next contributor, is especially important because as an historian, at Binghamton University of the State University of New York, he views futures studies as a natural part of the discipline of History--being simply the history of the futures instead of the past. He very clearly points out that if the past is an acceptable academic endeavor then so must be the futures. The past is as "unknowable" by empirical methods as are the futures. The past is also as contestable

and re-interpretable as are the futures. What one believes about the futures, as about the past, strongly influences what one believes about herself, and how she acts, today.

From my point of view (and here also combining a point that Jordi Serra discusses in his paper), one of the key academic concerns of futures studies is the conception of time. My introductory undergraduate course always opens with a unit titled, "It's about time!" Here both history and anthropology have much to contribute. Futurists should not naively accept their own culture's notions of time, but should problematize the very notion of time itself. Not all cultures speak of "past, present, and future" and it is by no means clear that they--much less only those three categories--"really" exist. The boundary between each is extremely fuzzy. "The future" is far too vague a term--stretching from here to eternity--without obvious demarcation. Futurists need be clear what they are talking about when they refer to "the future(s)." Generally speaking, I mean (for a variety of reasons I will not discuss now) "the next 20-50 years, and usually the next 20-30." When I mean a longer or shorter time period--or when I mean "from NOW to some period in the future," as I sometimes do, then I must indicate what that is, and why.

And what does one mean by saying--as so many commencement speakers do say--that "we must face the future with confidence?" What does it mean to "face the future?" Does the future *really* "lie ahead," and the past "behind" us? Some early Greeks believed the reason the future sometimes was so surprising is because we face the past (which we can "see" well until it, too, fades in the distance and over the horizon). But the future "suddenly" appears in our view from in back of us. Could it be that, in fact, "the future lies behind?"

Thus, from one perspective, history (and anthropology) and futures studies should combine into a single discipline called, perhaps, "chronology"--the study of human ideas about time, and of the beliefs about and interpretation of the evidence of the movement of humans through time, from the earliest emergence of human communities through to the end of "time." In any event, it is quite a mistake to assume that futures studies is opposed to, uninterested in, or ignorant of "history."

Alternatively, just as some historians become experts in some past time and place, so might futurists become experts in one or another future time and place. For several decades, because of George Orwell's famous book, the year "1984" served as a symbol of the future--in this case of a thoroughly dystopic future. Then 1984 finally arrived, with considerable fanfare and discussions--is 1984 "1984" or not?--and then passed, with scarcely a subsequent mention. Presently "The Year 2000" seems to many to represent all that needs to be said about "the future," though it too will become the past (even if the "Year 2000 [Computer] Problem" brings our civilization, if not to its end, then perhaps to its knees for a while).

My idea is that some futurists might choose some date (day, year, decade, or era) in the future, collecting all the information they can find beforehand about it, and all the information about the date when it actually happens, and then serving as a source of information about the date when it recedes into the past.

Why not? That way history and futures studies become more obviously joined, as they should be (Fletcher, 1996, Heilbroner, 1960).

Richard Slaughter, a Britisher living in Sydney, Australia, has done more than any single person to describe and develop what he calls "The Knowledge Base of Futures Studies." He has recently edited four important volumes on this issue, and written several books and numerous articles describing what futures studies is in its totality. His contribution to this volume is especially important because it draws upon this impressive body of work (Slaughter 1992; Slaughter 1993; Slaughter 1995a; Slaughter 1995b; Slaughter, 1996a; Slaughter, 1996b; Slaughter 1996c; Slaughter 1996d; Slaughter and Tough, 1997).

Sohail Inayatullah, from Pakistan, but currently affiliated with the

Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane, Australia, makes it abundantly clear in his contribution that there are many different kinds of futures studies--all legitimate, but some perhaps more valuable in the long run than others. Dr. Inayatullah (like Dr. Masini), focuses especially on the cultural dimension on the one hand and (like Dr. Slaughter) on the critical dimension of futures studies on the other.

Dr. Inayatullah, one of the most prolific, learned, creative, and active scholars in the field, also represents a "new generation" of futurists--at least in comparison with myself and the five previous futurists. Other younger futurists featured here include Huston, Jones, Rubin, and Serra, with the rest of the contributors falling somewhere in between the old timers and the new blood. But futurists younger still (representing the views of "Generation X" perhaps) are emerging from graduate schools everywhere and will be represented in a reprise of this issue of ABS, should there be one, ten years from now.

The next section of this issue I labeled "Laws, Chaos, Evolution" because the essays in it come the closest to reflecting the scholarly lines typically found in this Journal. Peter Manicas, a philosopher of social science (Manicas, 1987) and head of the Liberal Studies Program of the University of Hawaii, discusses the philosophical and theoretical differences between (and similarities in) "explaining" the past and "predicting" the future.

Peter Bishop of the Studies of the Future Department of the University of Houston, Clear Lake, outlines his understanding of social stability and social change concluding that both "transformational change" (so popular among certain futurists) and slow incremental change (the way most non-futurist seem to feel) are rare. In contrast to both, Bishop says, change is "sticky"--like plate tectonics--with stability lasting longer than it should, and transformation rarely happening, though "jolting" when it does occur.

The next two articles are especially interesting. The first is written by Erzsébet Novaky and the second by Eva Hideg, both affiliated with the Futures Research Department of the Budapest University of Economic Sciences. They each in their own way describe the evolution of futures research from its optimistic and positivistic roots and assumptions in the 1960s and 70s through the days of opening and excitement in the 1980s (when I first met the two scholars at what was then called the "Karl Marx University" of Budapest) through the collapse of the socialist systems and the revitalization of futures research within a Hungary which is now part of the global capitalist world.

These two Hungarian scholars show the importance of evolutionary systems theory to their current work. Dr. Mika Mannermaa, who held the chair in futures research of the Finnish Academy of Science and has been for some time a major theorist as well as futures activist, develops that perspective in somewhat more detail, while Jan Huston of the University of Hawaii makes the strongest case of any contributor to this issue that evolutionary systems theory permits--indeed requires--futurists to understand both the general direction of society and also the general process through which all social change occurs. Thus, while "alternative futures" play an important part for Prof. Huston, the feasible alternatives are not nearly as numerous and open as many futurists seem to assume. They are carefully bounded and identified by the logic and reality of the theory, he maintains.

A similar statement of a more rigorous and guiding theory and methodology is presented by Dr. Kaoru Yamaguchi. His perspective, which he designates "FOCAS" ("Future-oriented complexity and adaptive studies"), emerged from discussions which he has had over the past several summers with a global network of scholars he has brought to Awaji Island, on the Inland Sea of Japan. Prof. Yamaguchi's article is interesting not only because of the areas of the future it presently explains, but also because it identifies what new areas of research are most pressingly needed.

The next eight articles, grouped under the heading "Courses and Methods," tend to be more or less explicit descriptions of how the authors teach futures studies at the university level. This, of course, is what I asked all the contributors to this issue of ABS to do, and all did this. These eight however did so in a bit more detail, and thus are, I believe, unusually helpful for people interested in knowing how to get started in teaching futures themselves. It is especially important to note that the authors come from a variety of academic disciplines.

Markku Sotarauta describes how he teaches "Futures-seeking communicative policy processes" within the Department of Regional Studies and Environmental Policy of the University of Tampere, Finland. In a way reminiscent of the story told by Profs. Novaky and Hideg in Hungary, Prof. Sotarauta contrasts the assumptions about teaching planning and engaging in planning consulting under the old concept of "the government of uncertainty" (which characterized planning in the 1960s and 70s) with "the governance of ambiguity" which is the concept which best describes the paradigm of planning in the present, he believes.

Professor Graham May, Principle Lecturer in Futures Research at Leeds Metropolitan University in the UK, next tells a hauntingly similar story of his odyssey from Geography, to Planning, and thence to futures studies, as well. By now we are beginning to see that this is a familiar tale, told by most of the early futurists.

The next four contributors in the "Courses and Methods" section--Christopher Jones (Eastern Oregon University), Jordi Serra del Pino (Centre Catala de Prospectiva, Barcelona), Anita Rubin (Futures Research Centre, Turku, Finland), and Paul Wildman (Southern Cross University, Lismore, Australia)--represent the younger generation of scholars for whom overcoming positivism (and modernity) was never an issue. They live in the postmodern, de/reconstructed world--and understand that their students live there even more intensively. They each show how it is necessary to connect to their students (as well as to understand the dynamics of their world) through images of the future in popular culture (a point also made by Huston). While all of the four stress the key role of "images of the future", this is especially the focus of Anita Rubin in her teaching, consulting, and research.

Paul Wildman's article is of special importance because it describes how he designed and taught a futures course on the web. He also indicates that he uses the web in his consulting in order to involve his clients more directly in the creative process. They (just as his students) are no longer passive "consumers" of futures, but even more clearly active imaginers and creators of their future.

David Hicks is Professor of Futures Education at Bath Spa University College in the UK, responsible primarily for teaching future teachers how and why to include futures studies into their curricula. Like Rubin and Gidley, he too believes that it is extremely important for the future itself that students at all levels become familiar with the theories, methods and substantive ideas about the future which futures studies brings. He, as many others in this issue, point out the continued serious social consequences of an educational system and a popular culture both of which are either mindless of the future or else project negative, indeed paralyzingly apocalyptic, images of it.

This section concludes with a fascinating article by Oliver Markley, also of the University of Houston at Clear Lake. He shows the ways in which he uses visionary techniques--"guided cognitive imagery" such as "virtual space travel" and "depth intuition"--to aid his students and his business clients to gain positive control over their future. He concludes by pointing out that these methods have much in common with those with which most behavioral scientist feel comfortable, however strange they might initially appear to be.

I have titled the final section "Concerns" because these four articles come closest to reflecting those of academics who are passionately committed to the achievement of a specific kind of future and/or who focus on a specific kind of

student/client in their work and teaching.

Ian Lowe, of Griffith University, Nathan, Australia, is especially concerned about sustainability and countering the pathologies of blindly continued economic growth. He is, of course, by no means unique among the contributors to this issue in that respect. It is just that his contribution here is more clearly focused on that concern. It is also important to know that Dr. Lowe was executive director of the Commission on the Future which the Australian Federal Government created, under the championship of The Hon. Barry O. Jones, a decade or so ago, who is an exceptional futurist, as well as politician, in his own right (Jones, B, 1995).

Jennifer Gidley is another Australian who (like Anita Rubin and others) is especially concerned about the fact that so many young people have negative images of the future (and of themselves in the future) which often lead to profoundly anti-social behavior and sometimes suicide. She shows that futures visioning workshops conducted with young people in Australia have helped them develop more responsibly positive images of their future, and to begin to act more appropriately to achieve them.

Arthur Shostak, Professor in the Department of Psychology, Sociology and Anthropology, Drexel University (Pennsylvania), is probably unique among all futurists in that he works primarily with organized laborers helping them develop positive images and understandings of the future. He describes here his experiences teaching futures at the AFL-CIO's George Meany Center for Labor Studies in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Finally, William Halal, Professor of Management at the George Washington University in Washington, DC argues that futurists today are the "high-tech equivalent of the ancient prophets" and that it is our job both to announce the end of the old world and to give heart by proclaiming the better world to come. Prof. Halal outlines what he believes can and should be the major contours of this better future.

### FINAL WORDS

A few final words before I let you loose to savor the ideas that follow. One is that futures studies is, or should become, a specific academic discipline, with its own theories, methods, journals, conferences, courses, professors, students, funding, and the like. This is both proper and unfortunate. It is proper that futures studies become a normal, widely accepted part of the each university everywhere on the planet and beyond. I hope all the readers of this issue of ABS will help it become so.

It is equally unfortunate if this should happen because futures studies is and must be a profoundly cross-disciplinary (and cross-cultural) activity. A futures-orientation should be a specific part of all academic endeavors, and not become a separate discipline. Each academic discipline should become future-oriented--as should all other aspects of society, most certainly governance (Kim and Dator, 1998).

Futures studies should not be relegated to some academic departmental ghetto, and should not become just one discipline among many. Indeed, one of the major problems of contemporary academia is clearly its segmentation into departments and specialties which not only no longer make any sense, if they once did, but which are also contributing to the demise of the modern university because of the inability of any one discipline to address the pan-disciplinary, future-oriented problems of the world (Wallerstein, 1996). That a certain school of economics is now privileged by decision makers over other social sciences--and that there is no fully-integrated applied as well as theoretical future-oriented social science anywhere--is one of the more serious problems of the present, itself contributing to an increasingly unsustainable future.

Secondly, for futures studies now to become a normal and well-integrated part of modern universities is like it becoming just one more proverbial deck chair on the Titanic.

The 19th and 20th Century public university of mass education does not have a bright future. While a handful of largely private elite universities will almost certainly survive into the 21st Century to serve the children of the rich and powerful, and while a myriad "convenience store" virtual, distance, corporate and campusless training opportunities for the poor and powerless will certainly flourish, the old public, moderately open, "land grant," brick-and-mortar university for which the United States is especially famous (and which finds its counterparts in contributors to this issue especially in Australia and Finland) is about to go the way of the dodo bird--as in many ways it should (Inayatullah, 1998).

Futures studies--which is not a product of this intellectual heritage, but is rather is a harbinger of intellectual perspectives still to come (Dator, 1986; Dator, 1996)--should thus not go down with it. That would be the greatest irony of all.

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