

What's the Problem?



How the World Will Look in the Next 50 Years?

People have always been intrigued of what the future will look like. Here are some things to consider:

How can we know what the future will look like?

To be able to understand the future, you must know the past. What has taken us to where we are today and what has changed along the way.

The world has changed a lot in the last 150 years, but we humans are driven by the same basic needs as we were 150 years ago, food, sleep, the feeling of being appreciated and loved. This won't change anytime soon.

What inventions have really made a difference in the last 150 years?

If you take away all gadgets that people in some part of the world are using for entertainment, the inventions that have affected most people around the world for everyday living are the telephone, electricity, radio, television, computer, the car and the ability to communicate through Internet. Then we of course have a lot of inventions that have made life easier, like new medicine, faster transports etc.

In general the inventions for the last 150 years have been a human strive for freedom and communication, to be able to get in control of the time and world. Since there is still much to do in this area, this will be the focus at least for the next 150 years.

But why do we need to predict the future?

Predicting the future is important for two reasons; first we need to start to think about what kind of future we would like for ourselves and to pass on to the next generation, and then we need to know what decisions we need to make today that will give the best result in the future.

Will we ever get those flying cars in the future I saw in pictures as a kid?

Flying cars is an example of a scenario that has been pictured for the future for a long time. It is a great and exciting concept, but is it realistic? To start with we must find out if there's a basic need for it, what are the pros and cons. Then we have to think about the system we have today, cars going on the ground, and the transition to a new system. To make it work in this example we need two parallel systems, with a road network for the flying cars simultaneously as the common road network. Even if the flying cars are improved to be suitable for city traffic, the investments would be huge for a city to implement this, as well as for households to get that extra vehicle. So even if all the pros are there the practical steps for such a new route is too hard to overcome, so I'm sorry, there will be no road network for flying cars in the next 50 years.

How about the virtual worlds, do I need to go on vacation in the future or just have all the cells in my body experience an artificial vacation?

It might be possible in the future to experience the sand between your toes, feel the salt from the ocean on your lips, hear the waves and smell the seaweed, just lying in your bed at home. But we will not be able to fool the mind in the way that no matter how real the experience will feel, you will always know that it haven't happen for real. That will make all the difference. You can tell people today that you have seen the pyramids in Egypt because you have seen a picture of them, but you will never get the feeling of being there. So, even if a great invention is there for an affordable price, it will never replace the common experience if it is not genuine.

Please tell me we will get in contact with some aliens in the near future...

It is most likely that there are other life in the Universe considered there are billion solar systems. In the aspect that our solar system is about 4.6 billion years, other civilizations could be 10 million or even 1 billion years ahead of us. With these numbers in mind there is no greater chance that they will make contact with us within the next 50 years than in 100,000 years, and with the size of the Universe we will not likely be able to make any contact with them during this time.

So what will the future look like then?

What we will see in the next 50 years is the transition from an oil-dependent society, new medicine, the first steps in the development of artificial intelligence, continued exploration of space, a better state for the poor people in the world, and new inventions that make life a little easier and entertaining for some.

How should I do then to make the future great?

Well, as you know the winner in life is not the one with the most money, the winner is the person who sleeps best at night. To feel good about yourself and the people around you, listen to them and show them the love and respect they deserve as fellow human beings and help those in need. That is what will matter when you go to bed at night in 50 years from now.