

Editorial

For futurists it is always a challenging task to stretch their imagination and try to predict how the globe will look like two or even five decades from now. I was intrigued and fascinated by an article written by Hazel Henderson entitled “Education for the Third Millennium: Looking back from 2050”, which was presented at the Education for the Third Millennium Conference held in Catamarca, Argentina in April 2002. The interested reader is strongly recommended a visit to <http://www.newhorizons.org> for a detailed account of this fascinating paper. Suffice it to say that her outlook for the global village is highly positive fifty years for now, but not before things get somewhat worse for a decade or two. Among some of her visionary but interesting predictions are:

- Our understanding of human psychology and spirituality will match our knowledge of material science
- Visioning of a world of peace, equity, cooperation and ecological sustainability will be taught in schools; education will be holistic
- Haphazard globalization of present times will become more systematic;
- Technological and social innovations will become more consistent with global interests rather than only national and regional interests
- Improvements in technologies and ecological awareness worldwide will restore the ozone layer
- More renewable energy utilization will reduce use of fossil fuels; hydrogen will be used extensively in transportation
- Oil will be too valuable to burn; it will be used for production of more value-added products
- World population will stabilize at 8 billion; energy needs will be halved
- Overall quality-of-life measures will given policy decisions etc etc

Clearly, significant changes must occur in the education sector, from elementary to tertiary levels (university). Cooperation and collaboration will be preferred to competition as differences between levels of economic, scientific, social conditions amongst various nations are obliterated by the global economy. What is taught and how it is delivered at the university level must change as well. The role of academic research will likely focus on excellence rather than on narrow areas of science and technology which have short shelf life since technologies developed anywhere in the world will be freely available to all in the global village. Collaborative research effort will enhance the pace of progress and utilization of the outcomes for the betterment of the global population.

Indeed, the scenario is very heartening and optimistic but too far in the future to be of direct interest to this author!

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