

These differing positions were presented at the February TED2013 Conference as a “pseudo-debate” between Robert Gordon and Erik Brynjolfsson.

[https://www.ted.com/talks/robert\\_gordon\\_the\\_death\\_of\\_innovation\\_the\\_end\\_of\\_growth](https://www.ted.com/talks/robert_gordon_the_death_of_innovation_the_end_of_growth)

[https://www.ted.com/talks/erik\\_brynjolfsson\\_the\\_key\\_to\\_growth\\_race\\_with\\_the\\_machines](https://www.ted.com/talks/erik_brynjolfsson_the_key_to_growth_race_with_the_machines)

Contemplation Questions to consider for EACH speaker:

- 1) Is the speaker's argument primarily *ethos*, *pathos*, or *logos*-based? Why?
  - a. Which appeal would have benefited from further attention?
  - b. What facts/evidence does the presenter offer?
  - c. Does the speaker cite sources?
- 2) What point(s) strikes you as particularly convincing? Why?
- 3) What point(s) strikes you as incorrect or unbelievable? Why?
- 4) Assess the speaker's nonverbal delivery:
  - a. Which nonverbal delivery element (eye contact, facial expression, gestures, proxemics, or vocals) was strongest, and why?
  - b. Which element would have benefited from further practice or attention?
- 5) Assess the speaker's organization:
  - a. How did the speaker introduce his content?
  - b. How did the speaker signal movement from one idea to the next?
  - c. How did the speaker conclude his presentation?
- 6) What did the speaker do to adapt his topic to this audience's needs?
- 7) How well did visual aids, if used, meet the audience's needs?

**After watching the two videos and considering the prompts above, which presentation did you find more effective and why? Email a two-paragraph summary to me by midnight.**

My Response to the TED Talks:

Between the two TED Talks, with Robert and Erik, I believe that Erik's TED talk was more effective. Erik's TED talk did an amazing job of backing up his initial claim throughout the entire speech. It was very logos-based, but it also had some pathos as well; his argument was to get humans to work with the computers rather than against the computers. The use of visual aids was done very well by giving easy-to-understand graphs and showing enough details to truly grasp what the point of the visual is about. Overall, Erik did a great job at keeping the audience engaged and telling them about this topic without steering away from the initial argument.

However, I cannot say the same about Robert's TED talk. Robert's TED talk was good, but it could have been a lot better if he had been more prepared. His speech felt more like any generic lecture and did not engage with the audience much. The use of visual aids was not done well due to the depressing colors and harder-to-understand graphs. He did a good job at using logos, but it also felt as if he was not fully addressing his point the entire time. His talk about our previous growth felt more like a red herring rather than addressing his point on why we can't achieve the same growth we had before. I believe that his mentioning of our past growth is good, he just needed to add on to that and give more solid proof as to why humans cannot grow further than we did before.

