

"Science, Complexity and Capitalism"



Doing this week's reading, I was struck by the phrase "health problems of the future."

It had never occurred to me that health problems, both individual and societal, would be a part of the future and its imaginaries. I had also not considered that health problem projections, like so many of our future predictions, could be incorrect.

It is a classic trope that we continually predict our technological future and are continually incorrect. We haven't yet made flying cars, food pellets (maybe close with Soylent?) or teleporters. ~~But this is technology that doesn't exist.~~ Some of the technology that we have

created (years after its predicted arrival date) have been available only to the affluent and here, like health, capitalism's impacts are visible on every area of sociotechnical experience.

Levins writes, "[A]s life conditions change, so do opportunities for disease" to transform, and opportunities for new methods of healthcare. However, that care is not equitably distributed.

and this also is true of technology. Access to technology is also bracketed by class, and also has a direct impact on and individual (and community's) likelihood of success. Our class impacts

the age at which we are first exposed to computers, how much classroom computer training we have, whether or not we have a computer in our houses, how much free time we're able to spend experimenting. Our community's class impacts the quality of computers that are available at our neighborhood library (if any) and the number available. This lack of access is experienced most profoundly by the most marginalized communities.

implied in 1st sentence.

we're close!!

there is a poly professor who only drinks soy lent.

? what do you mean?

what do you mean?

Many individuals compensate for this by accessing the internet on their smartphones. Through their phones they are able to look for work and connect with opportunities, but are often limited by the model of phone they can afford, or they struggle to make the payments. As we develop newer and faster technology, we leave people further and further behind. → and

so, what are the inequities in health that are analogous?
Levins recounts some reactions to the health inequities caused by capitalism – environmental

justice movement, social determination of health, health care for all, alternative medicine (itself

a symbol of inequity and capitalism) – and seems to settle on a “Marxist approach to health”

and, by extension, a Marxist approach to the kinds of health care that people receive. What,

then, is a Marxist approach technology? And, by extension, a Marxist approach to the kinds of

technology that people can access. ?

In true Marxist fashion, Levins’s ultimate conclusion seems to be that equitable health care can be achieved through a destruction of the class system. However, I don’t believe that this same

approach would work for equitable technological access. An elimination of the class system,

would, in theory, eliminate the economic barriers to technology access, but would not create

an equitable society. We would still be living in a racist, sexist, ableist, hetero- and cis-

normative society, and those barriers would still be present as people tried to obtain

technology or health care.

Pragmatically and working within the present inequities, what can technology developers do

now to increase access?

to what technologies? all?
and why all?