# TECHVOLUTION: A NEW PHILOSOPHY

by Johnny Majic October 2019

## Quote

*We are really the revolutionaries in the world today—not the kids with long hair and beards who were wrecking the schools a few years ago.*

Gordon Moore, co-founder of Intel, 1973.

## Dedication

For the people in the open-source community. For the unspoken philosophy you handed down to me. For caring so unconditionally when updating Wikipedia, writing free software, and building cool new tech for us all. For showing me who the protagonists are. It’s the best education a political guy can get. I hope I learned enough.

For the antagonists, the self-entitled delegators keeping Blockbuster alive, thanks for causing history to repeat itself yet again. I hope you learn something.

To the extras. When it’s time for you to act, I pray you pick the right side.

# Prologue

I wrote this for the people on GitHub, Wikipedia, Dribbble, Udemy, Stackoverflow, Unsplash, Slack and wherever else you open-source Jedi like to gather. Learning your ecosystem of digital tools was cool. Learning your philosophy was even cooler.

You’ve change the world. The world just doesn’t know it yet. Most people still think stuff like news, manufacturing, and education are only for government or big business. Yet because of you, there’s countless tools for *the people* to control their own products, identity, and lives. It’s truly a new world. One where Cinderella goes to the ball simply because… everyone can.

You’re like Yoda! I’m being serious. Whether its parents educating their own children on Khan Academy, moms learning from YouTube videos to repair iPads for extra cash, or laid off workers using Rails to make their own app, you’ve empowered regular people used to being extras hoping for a better life to become protagonists making a better life.

I’m one of them. I’m a lone politics, history, and philosophy geek who spends his days thinking about what’s coming up next for our civilization. With your tools I can research, write, and host my own work. Even better I can find and collaborate with world-class writers and illustrators to make it better. A few decades ago I’d be in a library dreaming up ways to get a professor, publisher, or news cast to look my way.

These are impediments are gates. And some people like holding their keys.

As a kid I helped my family clean office buildings. I picked up the garbages and blue-bins because it was so easy. Years later when working at a big office, the cleaners were short staffed for a few weeks. Management spent hours meeting about the “garbage problem” instead of just wrapping it up (pun intended) and moving on.

These people are gatekeepers. They love to hold tickets and manage who’ll “get access” to big companies, universities, and bureaucracies. An entire class of middleman, consultants, managers, and executives whose skill isn’t nursing, teaching, and (definitely not) cleaning, but delegating “down” while looking to “rise up” a corporate heirarchy whose power comes from controlling the gates of old technology.

It’s night and day comparing this world to open-source. It’s members are peers who manage each other because there’s no positions, copyrights, or patents to fight over. It’s open-source! The more the marrier, whether it’s elite genius programmers or thoughtful feedback from an average user. And since the final product is shared, everyone has incentive to defer to the better answer. Gates are the enemy to the future you want to build.

Not that open source can run the world. Some people are rude, project die off, politics gets involved. In *The Innovators* and Walker Isaacson explains how the trifecta of academia, corporations, and militaries were perfect to create the digital revolution. Likewise, it was government, enterprise, and open-source organizing structures that worked to keep it going. Open-source is only a piece of the puzzle.

But its the vital piece. The next step in human evolution because no one can own it. Society’s natural problems solvers can’t fall victim to the garbage delegators who antagonize new technology; whether a simple list of people to take out the garbage, or advanced software to combat Darth Blockbuster when he tried to keep us all buying and borrowing his DVDs.

Thus, open-source are the modern minuteman. The guardians of the people’s interest and betterment who should be self-sufficient and well funded. But so many of you who write articles, answer forum questions, and make programs as a hobby, not a job. Even your leading organizations need donations to keep going. All while old tools like universities, television broadcasters, and insurance companies get massive subsidies, tax credits, and bailouts.

This huge difference signifies our society’s great divide. Open-source heroes working against the odds to topple the gates antagonists are paid to maintain.

At first I only wanted to learn about open-source fight. Now I want to empower it. Telecommuting, right to repair, home power generation, real internet privacy; a better world is waiting once open-source has the resources to not only *make* new tools but to *replace* old tools too. Because the today’s battle is new vs. old tools. Protagonists vs. antagonists. Jedi vs. Sith.

But the people don’t know about you. They’re stuck on “red/blue” politics. No one should be. These philosphies are very outdated. Their believers march and yell like its Woodstock in 1969, because they love the technological of 1969. It’s no wonder regular people still suffer with outsourcing, micro-managing, and climate change. The potential of digital tools is as lost to him as books, guns, and telescopes were to Darth King.

You don’t march for change. You force it because you know digital tools will improve our lives. But it’s hard to explain why. We don’t yet understand how our “cyborgology” changes us as we pick up a radio, a smartphone, or a ticket to Mars. That’s why I was so fascinated by your unspoken philosophy. You naturally feel the “majic” of digital tools, and want to distribute them to the hands of the people feeling the pain of inaction because who’s better placed to evole humanity past our problems.

I worked hard to turn your mindset into a new political philosophy called Techvolution. It’s custom made for open-source and digital tools. It works like a web framework. Terms like “Darth Blockbuster”, “Death Star rule book”, “Jedi vs Sith” make it easier for the people to ask themselves the biggest political question of our time.

It’s not the worn out and drab “Am I for red, or blue, politics?”. But something that reaches for the future “Am I going to step up and use digital tools to transform and vastly improve my society’s way of life?”.

The people don’t see this question. They’re too distracted by the “dark majic show” of fantasy football stats, fancy car commercials, and bombastic political rhetoric to realize how empowered they are.

Our job is to make the people look up from main street and realize their responsibility.

Our opportunity comes when a regular person has yet another problem with their tax forms, car radiator, ashphalt shingles, or the countless other tools antagonists keep alive. This is when the pain of living on the frontline makes regular people search for a better way to live.

And this moment is where I want to contribute back to open-source. Because this is where all its members can swell our ranks by saying;

That sucks. You don’t have to live like this. Waiting on hold, getting caught by the fine-print, being micro-managed by eight different bosses. All that’s bullshit. We can fight back. My friends and I invent new tools so we can live a simpler, fairer, healthier, greener, life. And we need your help… because it’s our own ruling philosophy holding us back.

And when the regular person asks what they heck you’re talking about, you can tell them to read Techvolution. A new political philosophy to help the world realize how you’ve empowered workers, creators, contributors, i.e. *the people* willing to step up, and not be left behind in a world you’ve only started to change.

## Cutscene 1

Currently, when you phone a call-centre everything is recorded. The company has access to the recording, you don’t. Likewise, when the employee starts and ends their workday is also recorded. Management automaticaly has access to these timesheets, the employee doesn’t.

Access to things like phone recordings and timesheets are “gates”. They give power to one person over the other; customers can’t confirm what was agreed to on the last phone call, and employees can be grilled for a long lunch, while unpaid overtime is easily forgotten by the same manager.

Lopsided balance of power lets customers and employees be taken advantage of.

The greatness of open-source is two fold. First it sets a great example because it trusts everyone with all information; why restrict anything from persons involved? And second, since open-source technology is owned by *the people*, we can empower ourselves with tools that we wrongly think only big companies can have, like phone transcriptions and timesheets.

Busting open these “gates” advances the world. It equalizes the balance of power and fosters collaboration. We have the technology to do this now. We just need the people to demand it.

old philosophy in a new world

old philosophy in a new world

## The Beginning

It all started with a door in my face. I few more actually. I’m either too stubborn or too hopeful. Either way, I eventually learned my lesson. I was selling a web app upper management were never going to buy.

Before you wonder, it wasn’t the price, there was no price. It wasn’t the competition. None of that either. And I can promise it worked, because I had spent years in a cubicle doing the frontline job it worked for.

After years of working on political and economic theory, I’d written (another) book about the untapped possibilities of new tech like smartphone apps, bio-monitors, and bitcoin. I only made this simple web app (using open-source technologies) to validate some of my ideas.

I was right to. They were good ideas. I figured out how to solve a problem—and save 100 million dollars, 300,000 hours of worker productivity, and even dozens of lives—all for virtually no costs. Why wouldn’t I want to tell people about the theory behind it?

But I was a fool. I wasn’t even knocking on doors. I was knocking on gates. See, I wasn’t talking to the frontline workers suffering through the problem I solved, but the bureaucrats, lawyers, managers, and executives who were paid to “meet” about such garbage; solving their problems was asking them to fire themselves. They they put up gates to shut out, not promote, innovation.

In fact, they never said *no* to me. *No* needs a reason. Instead, they said it was against the rules to say yes. Obscure rules, hidden inside regulations and contracts. They believed in these rules, especially the one against frontline workers taking matters into their own hands.

Like anyone, I knew bringing new products to market is hard. I knew sales was difficult. I even knew antagonists existed. But I didn’t realize how insulted they were in their self-righteous excuses.

But I’m not going to talk about my experience too much. All that’s important is there was a problem, a big one wasting millions of your dollars, weeks of workers’ time (lots of it unpaid overtime), and maybe even your life, and it was against the rules to solve it.

Even if I won this battle, it would be a tiny victory. So here’s when I decided to contribute back to open-source. Despite already having the technology to transform our way of life, to actually connect with the people and solve things like traffic and climate change requires the people having a new ruling philosophy.

One that that says improving their society is the only rule that matters.

## The Power Of Stories

Do you love stories? I think it’s a safe bet to say that you do. Who doesn’t? They entertain us after a hard day of work, bring us together to share our joys, and (my favorite) open our minds to the different rules and philosophies of foreign cities, mythical worlds, and galaxies far, far away.

Stories are so powerful because they’re so simple. Protagonists are good because they want to fix a problem. Antagonists are bad because they don’t. Stories aren’t debates. We take the protagonist’s side. Thus, Romeo and Juliet’s love is beautiful and worth dying for, while their families’ feud is ignorant and stupid. Luke Skywalker’s rebellion is good and worth fighting for, while Darth Vader’s empire is wicked and should be destroyed.

Our moral clarity about a problem turns the protagonists into our heroes and the antagonists into our villains. We thus follow their story with strong emotions, which burst out at the climax, where we find out who wins.

Our hero fights hard to defeat the story’s problem, but his superior morality, justice, and heroism aren’t enough. He’s often too weak or unskilled, and the villain beats him bloody. On the verge of failure, the hero needs to find something, something that’ll turn the tide. He searches, sees, and reaches for his salvation: a tool or a weapon—whether it’s a gun, magic book, or lightsaber.

Will our hero reach it first, or will the enemy? We in the audience, like extras in the story, hold our breath because the story’s society is controlled not by desires, opinions, or rules, but by which character holds the tools. The wielder is the victor. The victor writes the rules. It’s a lesson the people need to learn for ourselves.

## A New Empowering Philosophy Called Techvolution

The rules. We think they control us. They don’t. I’ll show you why.

Talk to any political junkie, no matter when, and they’ll say there’s a big election coming up. They’ll say something like “if the red team wins this one, then education, healthcare, infrastructure, and everything else will go to shit.” What he means is elections decide the rule makers, and that blue rules are good while red rules are evil.

If you buy it—and most of us have at some point—you watch blue cable news, read blue blogs, listen to blue talk radio. You fill your head with blue’s philosophy. Soon enough, your car has blue bumper stickers, you’re waving blue bristol boards while screaming blue chants at rallies, marches, and protests. You feel like a hero! You’re fighting against the evil red philosophy!

Let me ask you, if you’re a regular middle-class person, and you ignored the election, how much would you bet that you would know who won, just by living your life?

I mean when team blue wins, does traffic suddenly disappear? When team red wins, does everyone suddenly eat healthy? Do you breathe fresher air or see fitter neighbors? Do your real-life problems get solved when one color’s philosophy writes the rules?

If you think regulations, laws, and marches change the world, and if you think the red vs blue storyline decides the future of our society, you can stop reading. There’s lots of blogs, shows, and books waiting to sing to their choir, telling you to fight the enemy until you’re blue in the face.

If you don’t like the choir, or you’re starting to realize the “other side” are workers like you; and a part of the same struggling middle class, you’d probably like to keep reading. I wrote this book to empower you.

Whichever color wins an election today and re-writes the rules, regular people will still pay taxes, have a huge mortgage, waste hours in traffic, pay increasing energy bills, sleep less than they’re supposed to, buy unhealthy food, watch climate change, overpay for questionable education, get confused by their health insurance, endure customer abuse, work unpaid overtime, get micro-managed by an increasing number of managers, be told by ignorant consultants how to do their job, and hope their job (which they likely hate) isn’t downsized or outsourced.

Under blue or red rules, the struggling middle class lifestyle stays the same, because the tools in which we live our lives, like suburban homes, gas cars, call centres, centralized power stations, paper-based tax forms, mass-produced unhealthy food, movie remakes and sequels, occasional doctor check-ups, television for entertainment, an insatiable education industry, company controlled work timesheets, and everything else in suburban America and Canada stays the same.

The rules, no matter the color, don’t control us. Our tools determine our way of life. And nothing changes between red and blue, because neither’s philosophy—from conservatism to progressivism, capitalism to Marxism—is about putting new tools into the peoples hands. What’s really going to change if we don’t add more options to our toolboxes?

It’s not our politicians’ fault. The philosophies they follow were created when we only had a few hand tools. Red/blue philosophical fathers like Adam Smith, Edmund Burke, John Stuart Mill, and Karl Marx never had running water, listened to music, read an eBook, made a phone call, opened a fridge, took penicillin, knew about electricity, started a motor, had GPS, learned about evolution, had automated timestamps, or typed on a keyboard.

Instead red/blue’s philosophical fathers had mud roads, thatched roofs, and abacus calculators. Heck, when one saw a doctor, he might be prescribed leeches. Red/blue philosophers dreamed to improve this primitive world with better tools. And they did! Our ancestors used their dreamy philosophies to come together and build the first rudimentary steam engines, sanitation systems, broadcast televisions, and computers the size of rooms.

During this massive industrialization the people needed to be extras, regulated and managed inside simplistic color-coded parties, because someone needed to be on the factory floors and filling the desk jobs using primitive tools to make better ones. To their credit, blue and red philosophies at least gave extras a voice in how our tools’ factories, regulations, and profits were controlled.

Today however, we live inside the world old philosophies dreamed to make. Mass industrialization is over. It’s time to de-industrialize and free the extras using the tools they worked so hard to create.

Wonderfully powerful digital tools like iPhones, Tesla Solar Roofs, Lyft, WhatsApp, Kickstarter, YouTube, 23 and Me, Snapmaker, Khan Academy, Basecamp, Nano Membrane Toilets, SquareSpace, Onnit, AirBnB, and Firefox are so incredible versatile, influential, and easy to make that we can customize every person’s toolbox to help the people work better at home and at work. Thus, we don’t need to fight to control our tools; instead, the fight must be to spread them. Sharing doesn’t come naturally to us, however, because we’re used to the rules of old philosophies based on competing over tools.

Techvolution is a new philosophy about making regular people the hero of their own story. It does so by empowering them with new tools—and a new philosophy that dreams of a new and better future.

With Techvolution, you won’t by an extra fighting political battles with bristol boards or painted faces. You’ll be a hero economically exercising your right to vote, by deciding which tools best solve your problem at home, work, and play. Unlike me, you’ll never need to deal with any gatekeepers, because you won’t have to knock on anyone’s door asking permission to do what’s best for you.

I’m not talking about an idealist world from story time. This place of sharing tools already exists. We’ve already met it, and you likely used it too. Wikipedia, YouTube, StackOverflow, VS Code, Firefox, GitHub, Linux, and Chrome are only a few examples of the wonderful world of cooperation that exists today. It’s called the open-source community because software and ideas are “openly shared” to help create new tools. Millions of creators and contributors, designers and coders, who don’t care about a person’s title but only how well they solve problems, are already working and living inside a fundamentally new story that’s responsible for our online world.

These people have changed the world. They are strongly bent on solving real-world problems with technology. They hate the “busy work” of aimless marketing meetings, useless PowerPoint presentations about the “garbage problem”, and confinements within outdated technology because “that’s what the boss knows.” My goal is to help rid our society of old philosophies holding back the vision of these creators and contributors, to let these protagonists prosper.

People often say we’re addicted to our phones. We aren’t. Checking news feeds, downloading ping-pong games, and taking endless photos are the acts of regular people learning what their new tools can do. Our ancestors did the same the last time they were extras, learning about printed books, telescopes, and muskets. Those were simply addictive toys until new philosophies turned them into lightsabers. Despite the rules, these new tools empowered people to read unknown history, see the universe for themselves, and revolt against royalty as the opened the gates to the ball.

Just so, we can stop using our tools as toys and start wielding them as lightsabers to fight for a better way of life. We’ve just been waiting for a new philosophy to turn them on. This energy is called Techvolution.

## Cutscene 2

Space travel isn’t just cool. Getting to the stars means better satelittes, worldwide internet accessibility, and insuring intelligent life doesn’t put all its eggs in the Earth basket.

To get off planet needs a cheap lift-off. A private company called SpaceX answered the call and made cheap rockets. To make them even cheaper they had reuse it.

No small feat, the rocket was 10 stories high and falling down from near space.

SpaceX tried to land launched rockets several times and kept failing. They kept going. On November 15 2015 they actually did it! It was a human achievement. A time to say holy shit we can do amazng stuff.

But when you’re obessed with old philosophies you’re also confined within its tools. Today red/blue obsessed about tax cuts, government regulations, and old media soundbites because that’s their era. SpaceX is just a novelty act.

That’s the power of philosphy. It filters good and bad. We need a new one that harnesses our new and superpowerful tools to change the world, rather than yelling about old battles.

old philosophy in a new world

old philosophy in a new world

# ACT ONE

## Your Place in the Struggle

Fighting to spread the power of new tools is an archetypal human story. Galileo fought a religious institution with a telescope, George Washington fought a political establishment with a musket, and Steve Jobs fought an economic establishment with an iPod.

In light of that, I believe the right tools in the right hands truly have the potential to change the world. I want to empower you with these tools. Note that this is not a book about how to invent tools. Amazing books like *Rework* and *Zero to One* already do that. Nor is this a book about the history of invention; *The Innovators* does that better than I could dream. If you want brilliant critiques of our society, *The Incerto* and *The Great Degeneration* are waiting for you. Instead, this is a book about how new tools empower society, and how we can distribute their power to improve the lives of regular people today.

It all comes down to changing the rules of our society with a new philosophy. Today’s philosophies don’t mix well with modern technology. They consider us, the middle class, as extras: people to man the machines of government and businesses, not use them for ourselves. Even if we watch our problems pile up at home and at work, we’re not supposed to solve them until we pass through the gatekeepers of old tools in government bureaucracies, bloated corporations, high-end lawyer offices, or endless consultant meetings. This is the equivalent of Blockbuster writing rules to keep us renting DVDs instead of saving time and money with YouTube and Netflix; basically, the opposite of evolution.

Techvolution is inspired by Nature. Notice that gatekeepers don’t exist there. Evolution doesn’t have anyone telling a cheetah she’s running too fast, that the ants are too cooperative, or that a camel is too water-efficient. Lifeforms adapt as best they can to their own problems, and the winners survive. There are no middlemen and no gatekeepers, just problem solvers. And the problem solvers live on.

Human biological adaptions take so long, however, that ours have effectively stopped. We’ll never biologically evolve to fly, do advanced calculations, or breathe Martian air. Humanity continues life’s evolution with tools. We’re basically cyborgs who adapt and solve problems by upgrading our tools to the latest problem in transportation, calculation, and breathing. Hold a pen, calculator, smartphone, plane joystick, or space suit, and you’re a different cyborg each time.

Nonetheless, our problem solving is held back by old philosophies that empower gatekeepers. Middleman in control of old tools, like garbage managers or Blockbuster, get to decide when—and if—the rest of humanity will upgrade their tools. The creation of each new tool poses a climactic and political question: who controls it? After all, whoever does, is more powerful. While civilization is a struggle to overcome problems by upgrading technology and inventing new tools, it’s also a battle to control them. The people wielding the old tool typically want to retain their power; inventors and innovators instead imagine a new society that shares it. The eternal story of civilization consists of protagonists making new tools, antagonists attacking new tools, and many extras watching the fight. Our politics is an ongoing history of technological change, with inventor and gatekeeper both reaching for the tool to make themselves the winner.

This struggle between using power for personal gain versus for the common good seems to be as old as time, and it’s certainly been echoed in countless stories. One such story is *Star Wars*, which introduces us to a galaxy where the Force exists as an all-powerful energy field. Luke Skywalker’s Jedi warriors harness “the light side” to help others. Darth Vader’s evil Sith lords harness “the dark side” to help themselves and hurt all who oppose them.

In our world, we like to call our technological protagonists “trailblazers”. Like Jedi knights, they empower us cyborgs with new tools. But we don’t have a political name for the antagonists. Gatekeepers are often bad, but sometimes they’re just doing their job. Thus, I call the antagonists to our technological evolution Darth Blockbuster: people who actively and knowingly prevent human evolution for the sake of their self-interest.

Since biological adaptions and upgrades are evolution, I have termed human technological evolution Techvolution. This book is about inventing Techvolution, the philosophy to re-write the rules of society, to kill Darth Blockbuster, so regular people can solve problems with technological upgrades as smoothly in human society as evolution does in Nature.

To make Techvolution a reality, you, the current extra, must join the fight. Human evolution depends on you picking the right side between an old ruling philosophy filled with rules to keep your frontline problems alive, and this new one that says you should get involved by using digital tools to solve your own problems and become your own hero.

## Cast of Ideas and Characters

Before we go any further, I want to lay out the philosophy of Techvolution more clearly. To do so, here are a few terms that will enable us to all be on the same page:

===

**Philosophy:** the largely unspoken ideals that tell members of society what’s right and wrong, good and bad, in science, art, morals, politics, and economics. Philosophy is a civilization’s collective consciousness used by members to make rules around questions like: what is scientific truth? Who should govern? How should resources be organized?

**Ruling philospophy**: a civilization’s chosen philosophy. One that all factions agree on. Examples include the “Divine Rights of Kings,” derived from Christian theology and used in royalist Europe; “Marxist-Leninism” of the Soviet Union; and the combination of “red/blue” philosophies of the western world today.

**Rule book**: the written and unwritten social, workplace, and legal rules that govern everyday life. The rule book is interpreted from the ruling philosophy.

**Technology**: a catchall term for things we make tools from, like concrete, lumber, nails, shingles, insulation, and bricks.

**Tool**: a catchall term for things we create with technology to solve a problem, like guns to kill bad guys, books to record and pass on knowledge, and houses to seek shelter in.

**Frontline**: The point of contact between a tool and the problem. Nurses giving vaccines, cleaners cleaning a city bus, and soldiers on the battlefield are all examples of frontline settings. People on the frontline have jobs to solve specific problems with a demonstrable skillset.

**Hierarchy**: A power structure that is developed in order to manage every tool’s use by society. Kings and queens with the keys to the castle, for example. People in the hierarchy have titles like *prince* and *executive*, *baron* and *supervisor* to mark their position—and, in a sense, their territory and “rights”—in the power structure.

**The story of civilization**: The invention of new technology and the creation of new tools to overcome whatever problem troubles us. We use tools to evolve.

**Protagonists**: people who invent, spread, and use new technology and new tools for the greater good. Usually close to the problems on the frontline, they individually struggle, but their continued self-sacrifice slowly and collectively improves life on Earth. I call them this world’s Jedi knights. We call their leaders trailblazers who often skirt the rules; Nikola Tesla, Steve Jobs, Michael S. Hart, Bill Gates, Linus Torvalds, Elon Musk are among their number.

**Antagonists**: people who selfishly resist new tools in order to defend their wealth, power, and prestige a top a hierarchy. Often called establishment or elites, antagonists usually manage companies or institutions based on dated technologies and think working on the frontline is beneath them. They work to control the rule book so they can hide behind it. We don’t often individually identify them. I coined the term “Darth Blockbuster” so we can.

**Extras**: everybody in the middle of a battle between antagonists and protagonists. Because they have no direct loyalty to either side or their tools, extras can pick winners and losers. Usually extras are in the middle class; not so poor as to be desperate, but not so powerful they want to keep the world the same. Sadly, extras don’t realize their power.

**The Death Star**: the rule book when its controlled by Darth Blockbuster. Today it exists inside countless regulations, contracts, laws, and manuals that prevent new tools being used by people.

**Techvolution**: a new philosophy empowering seamless human technological evolution by ridding Darth Blockbuster of his power, by empowering extras to decide when society should upgrade our tools.

**Plot**: getting regular people to see politics as work they themselves do to improve society. If someone says that’s wrong, you should ask “how are new tools that are more efficient against the rules, and whose signing off on that?”.

## Nice to Meet You, Stargazer

The story of the journey to master human technological evolutions begins now. It begins here. And it begins with you. You won’t be transported to a foreign city, mythical world, or galaxy far far away. Right here and now, wherever you are on this Earth—that’s exactly where you need to be. The time has come to change our ruling philosophy to take advantage of digital tools. Whether you’ve realized it or not, the truth is that you have the power to ignite this journey. You will be given the tools. Do you have the will?

And who am I to tell you all this? I’m nobody special. I haven’t led the country and you haven’t seen me on the news. In my youth, I was a cleaner, drywaller, movie usher/projectionist, and die-hard ideologue. After dropping the latter bad habit, I studied political philosophy and innovation at the University of Toronto, usually while working full-time. The truth is, however, I learned far more about innovation by working at the frontline as a line worker, an account manager, and a claims adjuster. Making an app and meeting my personal Darth Blockbuster was an education unto itself.

My life’s experience begant to teach me Techvolution. Watching my friends struggle with owning, maintaining, and working with the old tools—and knowing that open-source was showing is a different way, a collectively better and more liberating way—ultimately motivated me to sit at the keyboard and uncover the political philosophy that could connect the people with amazingly empowering digital tools.

But this book is not about me. It’s about you. You in a position where you wield a diversity of incredible and cutting-edge tools, even if you’re unaware of it right now. From hospital cleaners to internet technical support, from nursing to adjusting, the bottom line is that you are at the frontline. Only workers on the frontline know the tools our society needs to keep us healthy and evolving in the story of civilization.

If you choose to be so, you are the hero of Techvolution. It’s not surprising. Average Joes are always the heroes. Luke Skywalker, Princess Leia, Neo, and Cinderella were all regular people. Heroes aren’t born. They’re stargazers, dreamers, believers, achievers. They became heroes when called upon to defeat the bad guys.

Now you’re called upon.

You are not alone. There are many like you, myriads of regular people on the frontlines who haven’t seized their potential or realized that their destiny is in their own hands. I’m like Obi-Wan Kenobi, Morpheus, or the fairy godmother; merely a guide who exists to teach you how to defeat the villains. So, the time is now, Stargazer, to leave the farm and join the rebellion.

The rebellion I speak of might be different than what automatically comes to mind. It is not a physical revolt. It does not involve rallies, marches, or protests. It’s a rebellion of the mind. We must change our ruling philosophy. Darth Blockbuster and his Death Star stagnate progress and evolution by retaining old tools and preventing us from using new tools to solve frontline problems efficiently and effectively. We must defy him and destroy it. Only when Darth Blockbuster is gone will the middle class have the breathing space to flourish once again.

## Cutscene 3

Do you want to fight climate change, increase government accountability, or anything else. Remember, open-source gives you access to amazingly powerful digital tools and old philosophies will fight over regulation and soundbites until forever.

So if you want to fight climate change. Rally up some friends and go door to door sealing up your neighbor’s windows for free. Don’t know how, learn on YouTube and buy the equipment on Amazon.

Too shy? Okay, go plant trees on public land and share your story on Instagram. Not impactful enough? Make a device that let’s anyone test pollutant levels. So when a politicans breaks out they’re amazing new Climate Action Plan with huge hoopla, you can say “I don’t care how you do it, what’s the carbon PPM levels going to be in Springfield during your term?”

Remember open-source brings strangers together around a common goal. It doesn’t replace business or government, it just checks their power. You don’t need to work on every problem. Pick your preference and contribute what you can.

Cinderella doesn’t need a fairy godmother to get into the party. It makes the old gatekeepers keep up with us as we dance the night away to progress instead of campaign promises.

# ACT TWO - BLOWING UP THE DEATH STAR

## The Magic of Evolution

Before you face Darth Blockbuster with your questions aimed to blow up his Death Star, Stargazer, you must learn what weapons you have at your disposal. The most formidable? The all-powerful energy field inside every lifeform. No, not the Force. I’m talking about evolution.

Evolution empowers life by giving every new lifeform a slightly different variation. With variations, life can constantly test for environmental changes in things like water levels, temperature, and food supply. The variations unfit for the changed frontline die off and the fittest survive. This natural selection finds which lifeforms best represent life on Earth.

Evolutions works so well because its constant variation production creates biodiversity. The more lifeforms there are, the more life can probe and better adapt to environmental changes. When temperatures increase or rain patterns change, the more lifeforms there are that feel the pain, the sooner life can adapte a solution to the frontline problem.

However, if the environment is stable, lifeforms need a caretaker. Someone to keep them in shape, ready to act when the environment does change. That’s why Nature put in a system of checks and balances called ecosystems. Within ecosystems, lifeforms form communities and cooperate to keep each other on their toes.

Ecosystems can be described as a cyclical food chain of many different plants, herbivores, carnivores, and decomposers, with each resource feeding the next resource. To keep an ecosystem sustainable, each species must reciprocate. Grass turns light, water, nutrients, into biomass, eaten by the grazer, whose kept in check by the predator, who itself eventually dies, returning all the nutrients back into the soil for the grass to keep growing. Each lifeforms checks the other to be sure no one hoards or freeloads. Reciprocation inside ecosystems is what keep lifeforms adaptable in the face of environments that could change slowly or suddenly.

Evolution may not be the Force, but it’s certainly magical. In tune to Nature’s own special rhyme and reason, evolution turned a lifeless planet into an oasis. The big drawback is time. Biological variations can take millions of years to respond to environmental changes. Think of the poor polar bears. They’ll never understand why Artic ice isn’t reforming as massively each year. And even if they could, no lifeform can proactively change their biology.

In contrast, humanity can change—not our biology, but our “cyborgology,” if you will (and hopefully in time to help the polar bears). We have the power to feel frontline pain, reflect on the problems causing it, and create a new tool to overcome the problem.

Techvolution is therefore intentional evolution. It’s a more advanced and quicker form of evolution that isn’t a magical mystery, as natural evolution is to polar bears, but is instead something we can fathom and understand. The question is, what drives us to evolve, when Darth Blockbuster’s Death Star often say it’s wrong?

genius-innovation

genius-innovation

## The Majic of Techvolution

We call someone a *genius* when he or she uses existing technology to make a new tool. Happily, these trailblazers are self-motivated and we already celebrate their intellect and innovations. But innovation isn’t the only step toward Techvolution. We truly evolve only when the *extras* choose to accept and use a new tool.

It’s like learning to type. Computers could be everywhere, but if people refused to type, then they’d be useless. Only when individuals decide learn how to use a tool, does it enter into our ecosystem and change the world.

So, what trick does Nature play on extras to reach for new tools and risk Darth Blockbuster’s wrath? The answer is a force found within us all.

Unlike evolution, the trick is not actually akin to magic we won’t ever be able to fully decipher or replicate. The different is that we humans understand they’re dropping one tool and familiarizing themselves with another, like when swapping out the DVD player for Netflix. Yet there’s still something wonderfully mystical about choosing to leave one’s comfort zone to learn a new cyborgolgy. I call it majic; it’s pronounced like magic, but spelled differently to note the key difference to its homonym: it’s the free choice of a regular person to proactively and intentionally evolve, even if they don’t know exactly how they will when they make the decision to do so. Majic encompasses our yearning to explore, to learn, to evolve, to live to our fullest potential; all of which require new tools to empower us to make real the dreams that exist in our minds. It’s the first step to a different tomorrow.

Typically, we underappreciate how cool it is to learn new tools. But every time we try, we’re like a drowning desert fox wearing fins and goggles and yelling “I’m getting better!” as he flounders in the water. Pushing our boundaries is what life is all about. It’s majic that keeps us jumping back into the water and out of our comfort zone.

Techvolution is the ruling philosophy that encourages extras to “majically” bond with any tool they want so they can solve frontline problems.

Yet what do we do when the Death Star say it’s wrong?

**Majic**: The natural inclination of a person learn, use, and hold new tools to increase their natural abilities.

New Tool/majic

New Tool/majic

===

* Note: Majić is my family name. I lucked out because it reads like “magic” in English, and most people have to ask me twice because they think they misheard it the first time. It may seem egotistical to coin it as a term here, but I couldn’t think of a better work. Primarily, the use of “majic” pays tribute to my parents. They’ve been overworked all their lives yet still always cleaned and built stuff for other people with compassion and authenticity. When I consider the act by which a regular person improves humanity, the example of my parents always comes to mind.
* Sticking it to my personal Darth Blockbuster makes me smile too.

## Using Majic to Filter the Rules

Despite our problems with our current philosophy, society always needs one philosophy that reigns above the rest. We use it to create the ground rules that glue society together. Without a ruling philosophy, the story of mankind would be a story of chaos. There would be no such thing as civilization.

Darth Blockbuster fights to control the ruling philosophy. When he succeeds, he writes rules to keep the tools he controls, and therefore himself, in power. Corporate manuals, university guidelines, social justice blogs are among the pages of his Death Star rule book. These rules interfere with regular people majically bonding with new tools. But how can you tell if a rule is good or bad? How can you pinpoint a rule book as a Death Star? Darth Blockbuster doesn’t tell people he’s Darth Blockbuster. Instead he says he’s an Executive Vice President, Human Resources Representative, or expert lawyer. Are these people genuine authority figures in the story of civilization, or Darth Blockbusters protecting their paychecks?

It’s essential to filter out the good from the bad rules throughout our everyday lives. It takes practice and it demands cultivating our integrity and inner truths. Yet it’s a struggle that’s been taking place for centuries. As an example, you needn’t look further than this story of a Maryland farm boy named Frederick, who was born approximately two centuries ago.

Our story is about a Maryland farm boy named Frederick using tools to overcome ignorance. His farm is one of those you might have seen on shows like Little House on the Prairie. Salt of the earth farmers raising crops and families in 19th century rural America. No internet, no school systems, no much to learn by how to survive.

Frederick worked the fields with his mother. It was hard labor of course, there weren’t many machines around, so he had to work hard, for himself and his mother.

In a few years, Frederick was sent to work with a relative in Baltimore. The house was large and the young family could use a hand cleaning, shopping, doing chores. It made his mother happy he wouldn’t sweat so much, yet Frederick was a farmer and unsure of the big city.

The patriarch of the house was named Hugh. He wasn’t around much. His new wife Sophia was. She was a foreigner used to colder climates who didn’t know many people yet, so she stayed in a lot. Sophia was nice and treated Frederick nicely too. Not as a farmer, but as an interesting person. She made Frederick feel at ease.

One day, Sophia handed Frederick a list of items to pick up from the store. Frederick’s eyes looked down, his shoulders slouched, like a dog who disappointed its masters. Frederick mumbled “I can’t read.”

“My God, well that won’t do!” Sophia responded, then continued “Reading is good. How else can a person give and receive information from… from… the world! I’ll teach you; we’ll do it together.” So, Sophia taught Frederick to read. Just a few weeks, and he got the basics. Sophia performed majic and was overjoyed.

Frederick even more so! Finally, all those markings in the store, on street corners, in books, in newspapers, in the Holy Bible, mean something, a new world! Go left, turn right, open, closed, discounted, welcome, and Salvation, all a door to a new world.

Now Frederick danced to the store, he whisked himself to do his chores, because he was learning to read a little more every day. He loved how the world kept getting bigger, and information kept pouring in.

One day Hugh came home early. He saw Sophia and Frederick reading at the dinner table. Hugh walked into the room. “Boy, get out, and wait in the hallway. Face the wall.”

Frederick got out, went outside, and faced the wall. Seconds turned to minutes. Frederick rolled the newspaper in his hands tighter. He didn’t want to go back to the farm. But even more, he didn’t want his angel to get in trouble.

Inside the room, Sophia was curious “What is it?”. Hugh responded “This isn’t Ohio…Darling you can’t do that. We could get in a lot of trouble. You can’t teach them to read.”

Sophia responded “everyone learns to read in Ohio.”

Hugh takes a seat. “This isn’t a free State. He is a slave. What do you think happens when slaves read? Don’t you think they’ll start thinking?” Sophia’s eyes went wide. Hugh continued “It’s against the rules to teach a slave to read… now teach the boy.”

As Frederick heard the hallway door open, he straightens up, and grips his newspaper.

Sophia says “Turn around.”

Frederick does, and looks at his angel, the one who talked with him like he was a person. And she looked back and only saw *her boy*.

Sophia slapped the newspaper from her boy’s hand. He didn’t let go. She slapped again, and again and again. Each slap hurt more than a dozen whips on his scarred back.

She slapped, and slapped, and slapped, and slapped. She will not do evil. Sophia was clicked by society’s rule book. Now she was a demon protector of vile racism to justify human slavery.

Frederick’s world shutdown again. The one white person ignorant enough to treat him like a person, was now an educated convert to the rules that put him into chains. Physical chains if needed, but evil prefers mental chains of ignorance; they stay on so much easier.

Weeks later Frederick was in despair. His daily routine was the same. Yet, working under demonic masters is just different. He didn’t dance to the store, he didn’t whisk to do his chores, and he never saw Sophia smile again. Demons are always on guard.

One day while doing his chores, Frederick saw a newspaper, the avenue to knowledge whose path Frederick was once on. He looked at the markings, saw some words he knew, and one word he didn’t. Yet he still stared at it. Why?

The answer slapped him harder than the demon ever did, he read the words “The Free States in the North”. He heard the word freedom before, but he didn’t know freedom was a real place.

A shockwave went through him when he realized if slavery was a place, then so must freedom be a place too. Frederick realized he could break chains. Because ignorance was always his demon, and knowledge was always his angel. And he fought ignorance, and received knowledge, whenever he read.

So, Frederick taught himself to read. He practiced with ignorant white kids on the streets. He practiced reading items at the grocery store. He practiced on every street sign. And he practiced every time he was at the Baltimore dock; the dock I said, you know the place, where ships will take you anywhere in the world. If you can read the schedule.

One day Sophia waited for her boy to return. But the boy died when the man Frederick Douglass walked onto the ship headed north to freedom. The man knew the exact time, place, and fare he needed to get on. He read it, himself, on the schedule. Reading opened the world to Frederick, and now the free world was opened to him.

The story gets better. Frederick Douglass becomes a brilliant orator and writer. In a world with no radio, video, or telephones, he travels the Northern States and Europe telling everyone the truth about slavery. When the American Civil War (1861-1865) broke out, his books helped Britain reject recognizing the South, and thus deprived it of much needed support. The irony of a slave educating people about slavery, and thereby helping to end slavery, is the cherry on top of this great story.

*Story adapted from A Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass. Free on Project Gutenberg.*

Frederick Douglass was a true Jedi Master. His great bravery, persistence, and intelligence helped to showcase humanity’s endless potential. The big lesson we need to learn here, Stargazer, is how to use majic to tell the difference between good and bad rules.

Sophia taught Douglass to read. She wasn’t told to. She did it because we love teaching our chosen tools. It’s as natural to spread our tools, as it is for a species to propagate.

When a magician makes a playing card disappear, we smile in awe and childish wonder. That’s cool, but nothing new was created, so we soon lose our joy. However, when a majician connects someone with typing, building, or reading, they’ve similarly performed something awesome, but it’s not a temporary trick to be enjoyed in the moment; they’ve upgraded someone’s cyborgology and effectively created a new and improved person. This makes us smile for a long time. Majic is Nature’s long-lasting dopamine fix.

Yet human made rules *sometimes* say upgrading to a new tool is wrong. Upgrades aren’t “allowed”—and this decree may be issued either directly or indirectly. Medieval parishioners couldn’t read a science book, French peasant farmers couldn’t have a musket, a 1990’s kid couldn’t download a digital song. Today millions of tired mothers can’t telecommute.

Rather… they can, but they don’t.

The question is: why not?

There is no easy answer. Remember in no story does anyone ever say they’re evil. Society’s rule book will never call itself a Death Star. The lesson Stargazer is it’ll never be easy to know the difference between good and bad rules. Anyone can proclaim rules. Even kids on the playground can say “only tall kids can play” and others, based on personality, will obey or not.

Majic is thus our best judge of the rules. Majic feels right. It naturally makes us smile. It improves us and our way of life. From teaching a kid to walk, to teaching a grandmother to “Skype in” and watch her grandkids first steps; teaching and learning new tools opens our hearts because it solves problems and enhances our existence.

So, when you’re teaching or learning a new tool and someone steps in your way with a rule, ask yourself if you feel wonderfully inspiring majic, and if you do, ask the rule maker why he doesn’t. Perhaps there’s a good reason. But keep Sophia in mind. Performing majic made her feel good, while following the rules only made her feel safe.

And safety is fleeting Stargazer. No ruling philosophy lasts forever, thus all rule books eventually expire. Majic never will. It always was, and always will be, in our souls. It’s how we naturally test our rule book. Electricity, the microchip, the iPhone were all made by people who skirted the rules. Yet we celebrate their innovators today because they invented new tools that let us feel and spread majic.

Ignore majic at your peril. Look at Sophia, she gave one of our greatest writers and orators his start, yet she lived a miserable life watching him achieve greatness because she broke the rules. The inevitable punishment to everyone who ignores their soul.

## A World Without Majic

Stargazer, the story of civilization is stalling. We already have Jedi in the open-source community creating new tools to solve frontline problems. We already have extras feeling the pain of frontline problems. What we don’t have is the freedom of extras to majically bond with new tools. For that we need Techvolution.

But let’s talk about the good news. There’s always good news and it’s vital to mention to fend off negativity and despair. In most of the world, it’s safer to live now than in any other point in human history. The amount of us dying violent deaths has consistently decreased.

Think about this, in the Stone Age, about 10-20% of people died violently, most often by murder. In Rome’s peak civilization it was around 2-5%. In the Dark Ages it was above 5%. But by the 18th century, when the Industrial Revolution started, it went well under 5%. Now, less than 1% of us die violently. All those figures are worldwide and include wars.

More good news. We have enormously powerful digital tools that keep getting better. Look at microchips, the “brains” of a computer. In 1972, we could put 3,000 transistors on a microchip. In 2018 we put 10 billion. In 46 years, we’ve increase computer power by three million percent. Digital tools thus hit their stride in the 1970’s, when protagonists like Grace Hopper, Vint Cerf, and Al Alcorn used microchips to created personal computers, the internet, and email.

This is why digital tools hit their stride in the 1970’s. That’s when protagonists like Grace Hopper, Vint Cerf, and Al Alcorn used microchips to created personal computers, the internet, and email.

And now for the bad news. Digital tools were a threat. It was in the 1970’s Darth Blockbuster showed up and started making his Death Star. The transition from an industrializing economy mass producing primitive tools, to a knowledge economy making customized digital tools that could liberate the extras didn’t sit well with him. He couldn’t control digital tools.

So, he started writing contracts nobody can understand, regulations nobody can find, and enforced politically correctness nobody likes. All to keep his primitive tools like gas cars, call-centres, endless PowerPoint meetings, and company manuals made with Word instead of websites, in use and himself in power. This defines many of eople’s lives, either directly stuck in another meeting, or on the outside. This malaise is Darth Blockbuster’s Death Star shooting it’s victims. A delay tactic to forestall admitting society should move on to new tools, controlled by new leaders.

Moore’s Law - transistor count Moore’s Law - Transistor’s power electronics. They amount in a microchip can roughly double every two years. Although this will be ending soon, it’s still given us lightsabres waiting to be turned on with Techvolution.

Red Tape monitor Red Tape Monitor The Code of Federal Regulations is the rule book of the federal government’s department and agencies. The number of total pages published provides a sense of the volume of existing regulations with which American businesses, workers, consumers, and other regulated entities must comply.

Social capital - USA Social capital is the trust people have in each other. The more people socialize, the more trust they’ll have with each other. It’s often called “Bowling Alone”. Technology has distracted us for sure, but our suburban, 9-5, car lifestyle is by far more responsible.

Blue red hatred - Congress Since the 1970’s red and blue increasingly hate each other. Note, the red and blue color code for progressives and conservaties changes in USA, Canada, Austrialia, United Kingdom, but the trend is the same.

US - trust in DC Attached to old philosophies, government is inable to solve frontline problems. The public’s trust in their own government declines as a result.

Miles driven Miles driven The number of miles Americans must drive each year.

CO2 - 1801

Our society’s biggest problems are wounds of the Death Star’s many attacks. But stay positive. We can solve them all once we liberate digital uses with Techvolution.

## Things Won’t Get Better, Until

Most of our problems started in the 1970s for a reason. That’s when protagonists created digital tools, and Darth Blockbuster showed up with his Death Star to keep our car driving, suburban living, broadcast television watching, 9-5 working, two car garage home living, unhealthy food eating, central power station buying, university admission test taking, shopping too much lifestyle going past its expiration date. Despite a plethora of new tools, the average American way of life hasn’t changed. It’s still the “American Dream” to live in a post-World War II baby boomer suburb.

Using old philosophies, our politics agrees with the antagonists. For example, because university libraries and lecture halls are still considered “formal education” (and the goal of every suburban parent), red/blue endlessly debate who should get into university and how the massive expense should be paid. Endless battles over affirmative action, student loan rates, and state education subsidies are the result.

All the while, better tools are ignored. Digital tools are available which can educate anyone willing to learn. Wikipedia, YouTube, Khan Academy, Udemy, Skillshare, Curiosity Stream, Brilliant, Project Gutenberg, The Great Courses, are merely the first new digital education tools. They do wonderful jobs while costing a tiny fraction of formal education and getting no official support. Yet, we don’t teach kids to read or update Wikipedia in schools. We don’t track student progress in Khan Academy’s micro-lessons. We don’t recognize “degrees” from Udemy, or YouTube, even though most computer programmers and designers learn far more there than in any college classroom. I used these resources to write this book, and never once looked back at my university lecture notes. Not out of malice, there’s much knowledge there, but it’s simply easier to use digital tools then notes scribbled on paper.

Our society suffers keeping the baby-boomer suburban dream alive. Despite way too much carbon in the atmosphere, gridlocked roads, housing bubble bursts, massive student debt, and horrible individual health, our politics keeps us using gas cars, mass produced homes with no solar panels, super-expensive college education, and very confusing health insurance. Our entire frickin climate is changing because our ruling philosophy is not.

Things like middle class quality of life, political cooperation, and climate change, won’t get better until the extras join the protagonists, step-up to the antagonists, and freely use digital tools to solve frontline problems. To change our cyborgology, we need Techvolution. Without it, we’ll basically be polar bears trying to survive in the Amazon.

But don’t despair. Never despair, Stargazer. The good news is, we can majically adapt our cyborgology. We need the help of our most powerful allies. And to attain their help, and help them in turn, we need to first wake them up.

Extras were never meant to be mere extras.

# A TECHVOLUTION BATTLE SCENE

In the 1970’s the transistor, internet, computer monitors, microchips, and other digital technology, started to leave labs and research centres and make new tools. Finally, society had new tools again, powerful enough to change our way of life empowering the middle class to leave the one-sided factory and office jobs, and become more self-sufficient again. Of course, that’s when Darth Blockbuster starting firing Death Star blasts defending his way of life.

Some examples. In the 1970’s AT&T defended the telephone communications by successfully lobbying government to ban Americans from using internet modems. In 1984, the entertainment industry defended broadcast television by suing home video cassette recorders (VCRs) (and only losing by one vote in the Supreme Court). In 2001, the music industry defended music compact discs (CDs) by successfully suing digital songs. Likewise, Tesla, Uber, AirBnB biggest competition has been in the courtroom. Throughout society the antagonists found ways to keep digital tools from the people.

This was wrong. Inside the ruling philosophy of Techvolution, the extras would have fought back, because they’d understand it was their cyborgology being held back.

The antagonists even resisted help. As Napster was introducing digital songs to America-and being sued for it- Steve Jobs wanted to improve digital songs with iTunes. Music executives had already tried and failed horribly to make their own platform. Despite the supposed crisis of Napster, Jobs said he’d “never spent so much of my time trying to convince people [music executives] to do the right thing for themselves”.

The problem wasn’t Napster. It was Darth Blockbuster. To be fair, he knew how to manage a huge corporation, make a product people (had) wanted to buy, and got his employees paid. Yet he didn’t know anything about new technology and so fought against losing his position with rules, not tools.

From Galileo to Washington, Tesla to Jobs, the battle between antagonist, protagonists, and extras has always been the same. We’re living the same story now because digital tools are fundamentally different, one that distributes established powers to the people. Content broadcasters have to compete with Vimeo and Netflix. Professors have to compete with online libraries and YouTube lectures. Radio has to compete with podcasts. Yet the vast majority of our economy, from insurance to taxes, regulations to savings accounts, use old technologies.

How can we upgrade them? Let’s see how the fight starts and ends.

## How New Tools Ignite the Fight

In biological evolution there are continual adaptations of existing lifeforms, and then sometimes fully new lifeforms. In Techvolution this is the difference between upgraded technology, and an entirely new tool.

Upgrading any technology is an iterative change, like going from sedan’s to SUV’s, VHS to DVD’s, tube TV’s to LCD’s. Each is different technologically, but they do the same job, so no new majic is needed to attract users. As a result, no political battles are started.

But when we’ve upgraded enough technologies, like microchips, touchscreens, batteries, and Wi-Fi, a genius can unlock a new tool like smartphones. And this requires new majic and thus is a big deal.

New Tool Creation

New Tool Creation

Why? Well, because creating a new tool asks a climactic and political question: who controls it? After all, whoever does, is more powerful. The weilder of the new tool can let extras connect with it to solve their problems. Or withold it and convince the extras to keep using old tools. Like muscle cars trying to keep customers away from Tesla with techniques like mass advertising, car culture, and spectacular chromes platedd V8 power! I call these techniques to keep people away from new tools “dark majic”.

Thus, while the story of civilization can be described as the struggle to overcome problems by upgrading technology and inventing new tools, it’s also about the battle to control them. The people with the old tool fight to retain their power, while inventors and innovators imagine a new society that shares it.

The eternal story of civilization is thus protagonists like Steve Jobs making new tools, antagonists like music company executives attacking new tools, and many extras watching them fight. Our politics is an ongoing history of technological change, with protagonist and antagonist both reaching to control the tool and make themselves the winner.

Today the extras lack self-awareness regarding their power to decide the battle’s outcome. I’ll show you, Stargazer, how important they are. They can change the world just by being curious and loving majic. Not too long ago, extras killed Wikipedia’s evil twin.

**Dark Majic**: Methods and techniques to keep a person using a tool for the benefit of the tool’s controller and not the user.

Dist-vs-retention

Dist-vs-retention

## The Extras’ Extraordinary Potential

The environment keeps changing. Life needs to know how and uses its lifeforms to probe for answers. Similarly, people always have questions; like why are the movies so expensive, or more importantly what are proven techniques to stop malaria infections. Constant questions are a problem and we need a tool to solve it. True to ourselves, we tackle this challenge by wielding our available technology to create a reference tool and upgrade it when possible.

Our first reference tool was the wisdom of our elders. The first technological upgrades were papyrus scrolls and ink (around 2300 BC) and books (around 300 BC), which turned some elders into experts like Hippocrates and Aristotle. When wood-pulp paper (1200) and the printing press (1456) were invented, humanity unleashed mass-produced books. Now experts could share knowledge between themselves and educate the masses. We called the reference books encyclopedias.

Encyclopedias were a massive hit; up until a generation or so ago, practically all well-read households proudly included a physical collection of such volumes in their library. *The Encyclopedia Britannica* (1878) was the standard. It went into continuous publication (1933) to keep people updated to the latest facts. In the following decades, the computer, digital printer, and telecommunications meant encyclopedias were written and stored digitally. But they remained a set of printed books and CD’s controlled by experts.

Then came the world wide web (1991), a new technology that unlocked many new tools like websites, forums, blogs, and something called “wikis”. Wiki software lets anyone write or edit a webpage by pressing “edit now”. All changes are saved, so anyone can erase errors or vandalism by pressing “undo now”. For years programmers used wikis to collaboratively write technical manuals.

As web tools boomed in the late ’90’s, protagonist Jimmy Wales wondered if the web could upgrade encyclopedias. Today, most of us who were curious about things like the movies or malaria know this story ends with a free online encyclopedia anyone can edit called Wikipedia. But it didn’t start out that way.

Wikipedia started as Nupedia (2000). Nupedia was a free online copycat of Encyclopedia Britannica where only “expert” professors made articles. Wikipedia (2001) was a side project. Only programmers knew “community content creation” would work.

Everyone else assumed regular people would only read the work of professors. The first issue with this theory was that the professors didn’t like to share their knowledge. In its first year, Nupedia had 12 articles. Wikipedia had 40,000, which most professors loved to belittle as rubbish. Professors even disallowed students from referencing Wikipedia’s articles in their school work. Yet professors refused to improve, or to assign students to improve, Wikipedia.

The second issue was that it turned out “expert” answers and “regular” answers are the same. The movies are expensive because of a 1948 government rule banning studio’s from owning or collaborating with theatres-so they can’t vary ticket prices regardless of movie budgets- and mosquito nets are a simple and effective tool against malaria infections.

Thirdly, Wikipedia was so easy to use many extras became protagonists! A huge community of non-academics voluntarily shared their knowledge one “edit now” at a time and fiercely protected their common knowledge with “undo now”. Nobody told them, paid them, or made a rule to force it. Because performing majic, and expanding someone else’s cyborgolgy with things like millions of Wikipedia articles, is Nature’s dopamine rush.

And lastly, so many people loved the performance and flocked to Wikipedia’s answers. The extra’s mass support quickly made Wikipedia king, while giving Nupedia and Encyclopedia Britannica quick deaths.

That’s the story of Wikipedia. Made by new protagonists, made the standard reference tool by extras. Few believed it was possible, because even professors don’t understand new tools always unpower the few, to empower the rest. Interestingly, after I finally conceded temporary defeat to my personal Darth Blockbuster, I uploaded a few pages to Wikipedia instead. Not as helpful as my app, but it took just a few weeks of work, and one “edit now” button, to make it real. It felt majical to bypass the rules.

Wikipedia development

Wikipedia development

### You Can Win

Wikipedia’s victory is another example of the archetypal Techvolution story. Like Galileo and his telescope, George Washington and his musket, and Steve Jobs and his iTunes, Wikipedia was a victory for protagonists. What makes this era especially interesting—and what makes preparation for this battle all the more urgent—is the ease with which extras can seize and command digital tools if they would so desire, empowering and evolving themselves.

Now imagine a world in which digital tools are set free! Stargazer, that’s the story you must jump into with lightsabers a-blazin’, dicing up old evil storm-trooping tools, to smooth out humanity’s natural evolution. The open-source community are making new tools. But they are facing down Darth Blockbuster on their own. They need as much support as Wikipedia received.

Note however, our lives cut across thousands to millions of problems. Thus, our villains are not in a massive group like “the rich” or the “the unions” as old philosophies label. Our villains reveal themselves inside thousands of companies, institutions, and organizations, and they fight back by suppressing new tools to keep their version of the DVD alive.

Together, protagonists and extras can end all these Darth Blockbusters. I know this is possible because history has proven it. Our battle today was fought generations ago with Darth Blockbuster’s master: Darth King.

Darth King lived inside palaces, using society’s money to host splendid banquets and balls. His absolute power was hidden inside a ruling philosophy of the nobility’s “divine right” to rule. Slowly, as protagonists invented scientific instruments, books, and guns, a new philosophy was born. A philosophy of science, enlightenment, equality, and democracy, made real when the protagonists and extras fought as one in the American and French Revolutions. These revolutionaries were inspired by the new philosophy of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

Battle Scene

Battle Scene

# ROUSSEAU’S EXTRAS

## Freeing Cinderella

“Extras are born free; and everywhere they are in chains.” Actually, he didn’t. But he would have, if he’d thought to label the people he was describing as “extras” in a play. Rousseau was neither the king of France nor the richest man in England. Instead, he was a poor writer who copied sheets of music to make the rent. More than 300 years later, he is at last recognized as being a great philosopher, a political visionary, and a protagonist who helped free the world with his new philosophy.

Rousseau lived when kings and queens, dukes and duchesses ruled civilization. A time when Mozart played inside exquisite palaces during the nobility’s many banquets and balls. This was the opulence that had Cinderella dreaming her days away as she cleaned a dirty chateau. Sadly, unlike the fairy tale, the extras didn’t have a fairy Godmother to make their dreams come true. Instead, the commoners cleaned the nobles’ vast libraries, used guns while dying in their wars, and were told to ignore what scientific instruments revealed. The extras were excluded from the power of new tools because they believed their beloved Holy Bible said only Darth King had the “divine right to rule”.

Rousseau called bullshit. In truth, Jesus was a carpenter, a commoner just like any other extra—you could argue—who rose to become the ultimate protagonist. Who is anyone to say other extras can’t live up to their own potential? Rousseau believed that books, guns, and scientific instruments should liberate the extras who were only in chains for the happiness of con artists. The self-proclaimed “divine nobility” didn’t like hearing that. This powerful self-protecting community declared Rousseau a banquet-pooper, and chased him out of Switzerland, France, and England. Maybe that’s why Rousseau rented instead of owned.

Starting in 1776, within Rousseau’s lifetime, Darth King started to face the music when the American people started a revolution. One year after Rousseau died, the French had their own revolution in 1789. And on it went from country to country because Rousseau, and others like him, make the extras realize they should become protagonists with a ruling philosophy “of the people, for the people, by the people”. Cinderella soon forgot about the fancy ball, and instead sung the music of freedom in a choir of equals, that sounded something like this:

France that Europe admires Has regained Liberty And every citizen breathes Under the laws of equality, One day its beloved image Will extend throughout the universe. Peoples, you will break your chains And you will have a homeland!

Revolutionary songs like this spread the people’s liberty, equality, and fraternity throughout the world. In a few years, civilization changed its ruling philosophy from knowing the nobles were divine, to knowing they were villains who resorted to hiring mercenaries for doing their dirty work. And the nobles, in turn, failed to realize that “their” people didn’t need them anymore.

When the people took control of books, guns, and science, they put presidents and senators, judges and sheriffs in power, who ruled at the request of the people who built a civilization of democracy, equality, and checks and balances, because no one was divine. A change empowered by tools, thought of in philosophy, yet made real with the bloodshed of revolutions on the frontline.

Rousseau died never having found a home. After they won their revolutions, a population of heroes put him to rest inside the glorious Panthéon, heralding him as a renowned breaker of chains, in a free world he helped build. Where any guy can be the prince, and any girl can be Cinderella.

The question for us is, how did Rousseau make an entire people change their ruling philosophy, and how can we do it better, because I’d really like to skip horrible revolutions.

Revolutions!

Revolutions!

## ~~Revolution~~ Techvolution

Stargazer, you look disappointed. You think revolutions are fun. You want to follow *Les Misérables* and march in the streets. Maybe we should. You get the bristol boards, I’ll get the paint, and we’ll change the world! Free college education! Less bank regulations! Affordable health insurance! Continuous tax cuts! We’ll save the planet and the government’s credit rating!

Listen to me. When your cars breaks down, you call a mechanic for help, right? If he showed up with no tools, you’d get mad. You wouldn’t ask his reasons for not brining tools, nor would you discuss the weather with him. You needed “Mike the mechanic” to show up and solve your problem with his car fixing tools and the majical cyborology know how to use them. Without the tools he’s just “Mike the person”, and frankly useless to you.

Middle class people have a host of problems like increasing insurance, prescription drug, and tutoring bills. You need solutions. When someone says they can help, you must ask what tool they have, or will give you, that will help. Anything else is smoke and mirrors. You don’t need to see regulations, laws, or blog posts anymore then you need to see the mechanic’s favorite car repair manual. You need tools.

Red/blue philosophies show up with no tools. Not because red/blue leaders and supporters don’t care. But because their philosophies don’t know better. Stuck on old tools, they tell the middle class to walk to the nearest gas station and hope for help, and they promptly blame the opposing political party when we complain.

That’s not horrible, until you consider that with a new digital car, like a Tesla, our broken cars can now call the mechanic, give him a diagnostic to his smartphone immediately, and he’d be able to tell what the problem is, and most importantly, tell the scared person the side of the road, what to do next.

Now consider it’s often against the rules to solve our problems so simply. Patent laws, insurance regulations, nondisclosure agreements, non-compete clauses; a mountain of rules any antagonist can search through so he can force us to keep walking to gas stations.

We must realize how much new digital tools help. Here’s an exercise to do it. Every time you want to watch a Netflix show or YouTube video, get in your car, drive five miles, wait 10 minutes, throw away six bucks, drive back home, and then press play. Easy to forget, but that’s what renting videocassettes and DVDs was like.

Netflix was a big victory. But a rare one. Today, how we pay taxes, recognize education, repair electronics, transfer home ownership, decide our investments, sign sales contracts, get hired, fire someone, use warranties, access medical records, and so much more, works like a DVD. An unnecessary and expensive pain in the ass enforced by a Death Star of rules. It echoes the philosophy that preached to our ancestors that voting, reading science books, and owning a musket were all against the rules.

It doesn’t have to be politicians’ job to create, make, market new tools. Just get the Death Star out of the way. Until it’s gone, the power of internet connected digital cars, solar panel roofs, air quality testers, EKG monitors, repairable laptops, safe nuclear reactors, easy to manufacture vaccines, waterless toilets, online education, is impossible to harness with old philosophies obsessed with protecting limited tools, and holding us back in the story of civilization.

Ignore red/blue’s romaticism of revolutions! Use Techvolution to truly change the world. Let the people choose whichever tools best solve your problem. Digital tools and their many Jedi innovators, coders, technicians, designers, repair shops, are ready and waiting to solve real-life problems; it’s intoxicating to them. We just need a new philosophy, giving us the freedom to choose the best tools to solve our problems at home, work, and leisure. The people majically bonding with whatever tool they want, is the ultimate revolution.

## Society’s Three Stories

In light of the above, Rousseau’s words echo this sentiment: let the people prosper with new tools. Let the nobility return to their natural equality inside a democracy. Rousseau made the people realize the society they lived in, the one filled with tools, was reality, while the ruling philosophy was behind the times. This required change invoked a revolution, a sudden questioning of a civilization’s ruling philosophy. The American, French and all other such ensuing revolutions were so violent because the divide between ruling philosophy and frontline society was so wide.

What can we learn from Rousseau’s success—and from his weak points? How do we avoid violent revolutions and instead favor efficient Techvolutions? Rousseau had many enemies, including most nobles and some extras.

A *Techvolution* is different in the sense that it doesn’t require bloodshed or abrupt change; it mirrors evolutions, which tend to be more gradual and natural. Thus, to enable techvolution, and rid the world of revolutions, we need a road map of tool development. Roadmaps can be sketched from the teachings of history, handed down to us through stories. It shouldn’t come as a big surprise that Rousseau was also a novelist.

Thus, Rousseau understood stories—not just fictional ones, but real-world ones, such as the fabrication and inner workings of his society. He understood, too, that there are good and bad stories… and that each stems from a storyteller who has a very particular purpose. These stories are especially appealing to extras. And for that, if nothing else, you really should sit up and pay attention.

Every story contains a plot: a sequence of events where a protagonist fights an antagonist to overcome a problem. The fight to change reality happens in three parts. The first is the introduction of the problem and characters. The second is protagonist and antagonist thinking up plans and attacking each other. The third part is the conclusion, where we find out which side wins. Although it’s easier to see in some more than in others, all stories have this structure.

The difference between good and bad stories is how much it mixes things up to keep you in guessing what’s going to happen next. While some bad stories are non stop action scenes, and and stories are non stop talking scenes, good stories mix the two up to tell a logical and surprisng story with a thick plot.

**Classic movies:** are good stories with fights over real-life problems. Protagonist leave their typical day and personality, and challenge themselves to rise to the occasion and overcome a new found problem on behalf of humanity.

Protagonist and antagonist repeatedly think of new ideas and act on them in a back and forth battle. Both characters fight to create and control tools to make themselves the winner.

Mixing logical problem solving, with new ideas, gives classic stories “logical surprises”. These plot twists make what’s going to happen next unknown and keeps audiences glued to their seats. The conclusion can anything from a big victory for the good or bad guys, or anywhere in between.

There’s no way to know which stories will resonate with audiences, but only good stories can resonate with audiences and become classics like *Cinderella*, *Romeo and Juliette*, *The Matrix*, and *Star Wars*. These stories are often archetypes like “Rags to Riches” or “Forbidden Love”. They exist in all cultures and religions in some way, and hence why they reasonate so well for people living life on the frontline.

**Art films:**- are not about any specific problem. The film is more of a personal journal about not overcoming problems like tyranny, hunger, or loneliness. The main character is thus selfish and self-important. Not because they do not take on a problem, but because they want to be the protagonist even though they aren’t leading the way for others to follow.

Because they don’t take on problems, art stories dislike new tools that could solve a problem force the protagonist to either step up or step away from the limelight.

The result is surprising idiosyncratic behavior, but storylines with no problem solving to logically tie events together. Without action, these stories are surprising to the point of being weird, with conclusion that never change the reality because the hero didn’t even try to. Which is why the audience can’t question their own lives after watching the the film either.

Without logical surprises, art films need to get weirder and weirder to maintain interest. To insulate themselves from criticism art filmmakers usually give themselves awards, grandeur, and titles and end up-like their protagonists-on stages talking about themselves in a bout of self-gratification. Film festivals like Cannes, Sundance, Toronto mainly show art films.

**Spectacle movies:**- are about an obvious problem, i.e. Godzilla is here, so run like hell and keep running until the movie is over. Spectacle movies are thus very logical because the problem is very simple; survive or die. However, since the action is so instinctual, there’s no time for the protagonist to think of new ideas. The result is very logical but unsurprising stories that can’t change reality because no new ideas were introduced.

Tools are fought over, but since the problems are everyday life problems, they merely add to the spectacle.

To maintain interest, spectacle movies have to keep reusing successful stories and characters while ramping up special effects, gore, and raunchiness. It doesn’t work for too long, so spectacle producers look for new customers with hype-filled mass marketing campaigns. Most franchise movies, sequels, and remakes are spectacle movies.

All three stories!

All three stories!

===

In storytelling, logic and surprises counter-balance each other. Withholding logic makes self-important art films, and withholding surprise makes simple spectacle movies. Classic stories are good because they mix the two and create “logical surprises” that open our minds and change things. This is why art/spectacle stories don’t have “spoilers”, while we want to “go in fresh” for classic stories.

You can see the difference in your favorite sitcom such as *The Office, Seinfeld, Friends, HIMYM, The Big Bang Theory*. They start off as classic stories, with characters who deal with relatable problems like not liking their jobs or being tired of dating. We see ourselves in these characters, which is why we cry, laugh, and all that when regular everyday stuff happens to them, because we know it could also happen to us.

However, in later seasons, to keep their now popular characters alive, the sitcoms keep them living the same stories. Kramer can’t get a job, Raj can’t get a girl, Dwight can’t get self-aware. Here sitcoms become art and spectacle stories. Art, as in these characters don’t learn to overcome their personal problems. And, spectacle, because we the audience keep watching even though we already know what’s going to happen. We watch our favorite actors, characters, sets, catch-phrases, instead of waiting for logical surprises. You keep watching only because you’ve grown accustomed to them.

Rousseau noticed society has these classic, art, and spectacle stories, and that human society’s travel through them as they do in long-running sitcoms. Rousseau also noticed how one story works for equality and democracy, and the other two work to enrich the artists and distract the masses.

Classic heroes

Classic heroes

## The Politics of Stories

So these are the three categories in a nutshell. Classic stories tackle real-life problems. Art stories talk about themselves. Spectacle stories are a distraction.

Their purpose and meaning do not end there. In the world of politics, this means the ruling philosophy of classic stories are about equality and democracy, while a ruling philosophy art and spectacle stories are about maintaining a hierarchy.

In which category would you classify The Matrix? This story depicts a dystopian future in which most of humanity is unknowingly trapped inside a simulated 1990’s reality called the matrix. It’s created by machines to distract humans while using their bodies as an energy source. Neo, the protagonist who was once a mere extra, is recruited to help the few untapped humans’ rebel against the machines. His job is to make the sleeping masses inside the matrix realize their reality is fake.

This story is basically majic vs. the rules. Neo wants the masses to realize the matrix’s rules are bullshit. When they do, they can remove the plug, and re-learn the majic of using their own tools to live a free life.

The machines antagonist, Agent Smith, can control much of the matrix, but not all of it. Enforcing the rules of the ruling philosophy of slavery, makes “the agents” bound to its rules too. Neo has a new ruling philosophy of freedom. Thus, he isn’t bound by the matrix’s rule book. A freedom he wants to teach others.

Neo takes on the machines. Unbound by its ruling philosophy, he learns to manipulate the matrix better and better. He jumps higher, runs faster, and soon dodged bullets. The machines, unable to match his wisdom, fight back with dark majic.

They get one of the freed humans to turn on Neo and his supporters. Not with the allure of power, but with the allure of going back into the comfortable matrix. The familiar spectacle of Rolling Stone concerts, television sitcoms, and V8 engines is all this modern Judas wants. The traitor knows its fake, but will accept it because “ignorance is bliss”. The machines agree to give this to him, so they can forever stay on top.

The traitor losses. Neo is too powerful. In the final battle with Agent Smith, he not only can dodge bullets, but stop them in mid-air. He completely sees past the “spectacle” of items that the traitor said was “bliss”, and only sees the matrix’s code, and can thus rewrite it as he wants. Neo soon kills the agents, calls the machines, and says:

I came here to tell you how this is going to begin. I’m going to hang up this phone. And then I’m going to show these people what you don’t want them to see. I’m going to show them a world without you. A world without rules and controls, without border or boundaries A world where anything is possible. Where we go from there, is a choice I leave to you.

Since this is a classic story, once Nero’s done showing the people, him and his friends return to being equal members of the free community. Neo’s hierarchy of support was temporary, being based on solving a frontline problem. Perhaps he’ll be the hero of the next story, but maybe not. It depends on the problem and who the people want to be their problem solving hero to be. Regardless by stepping up, Neo can continue being the protagonist of his own life, by deciding who he’ll follow, not letting the agents decide for him.

Spectacle and art stories do not solve frontline problems. Thus, their hierarchies can go on for as long as their storytellers can convince people to watch them, or live inside them. These storytellers, who are the leaders, are self-important, self-involved, who can’t solve problems, and the masses are just like the people stuck inside the matrix; distracted from the truth with a world of spectacle like shiny cars, copyrighted music, 9-5 work days, and sitcom re-runs, which people stay attached to via dark majic of advertisements, marketing, and loyalty to an old culture.

This is the harsh reality of majic. The real-world in the matrix is cold, dark, and damp. Neo must convince the people living in freedom inside this unpleasant reality is better than the tyranny of a pleasant fiction full of the spectacle and dark majic.

The longer the spectacle lasts, the longer the self-important artists, like Darth King, and Darth Blockbuster, can go on talking about themselves. They’re happy with the way things are. They want to be heroes atop the hierarchy forever.

But like an aging sitcom, it never lasts. Eventually the people’s problems pile up, and they soon need a true hero again.

* have to include who new tools are welcomed in good stories (because they get to achieve victory), while disliked in art (because they force a story) and spectacle idk.

**Good ruling philosophy**: Meant to facilitate the creation and distribution of new tools. It’s lead by individuals selected by the people, who rise to the occasion to become protagonists. Once the story is over, leaders willfully returns to being an equal member of the community.

**Bad ruling philosophy**: Meant to withhold the creation and especially distribution of new tools. Led by leaders who don’t want to empower the people or and return to equality. Instead hey distract the masses from their undeserved, and increasingly self-serving leadership, with spectacle.

## Neo Douglass

The story of the matrix is a common one. Most oppressed peoples could sympathize with it. Frederick Douglass certainly could. Mister Auld was the agent of slavery, Douglass the hero responsible for waking himself and everyone else up. And Sophia is the masses, the extras, who must choose between majic and the rules.

Dougless and Rousseau were each the Neos of their times. They both woke people up to the reality that self-indulgent art and distracting spectacle, when used to enrich the rich and distract the masses, are bullshit, and society should focus on solving real-life problems by empowering people with tools. Real heroes fight for this individual empowerment, and when done let their hierarchies melt away into the free soil of equality.

Telling the difference between a true hero like Douglass, whose given political power from the people so he can win them greater freedom, and selfish heroes, who simply take political power and keep it for themselves is hard. To most easily tell the difference, we need to analyze the story we’re in. Is it a classic one, or a art and spectacle one. For his part, Rousseau defeated Darth King, by making the people realize they were watching spectcular re-runs while the nobility was in exquisite banquets and balls.

Classic heroes

Classic heroes

## Protagonist Kings

Not all kings are con artists. We remember Medieval Time fondly in childhood stories of gallant knights for good reason. These kings were the heroes of a classic story because they defeated monsters to create a peaceful country for people to live in.

In Rousseau’s time “holy” noble families ruled every European country. But they were in power because of their ancestors. After western Rome fell in 476 western Europe entered the Dark Ages (500-1000). So called because there was no books, ink, or literate people to write anything down. Nor was there much else, like sanitation, military, judicial systems. Civilization was gone. Anarchy ruled. The Dark Ages sucked.

People like Clovis I, Charles Martel, and Alfred the Great took charge. They were master warriors who uses swords, bows, armor, and cavalry to fight off invaders. Even better, they headed large families who kept some peace. They built castles to protect the newly remade wells, hospitals, and markets.

This was a classic story because a hero saw a real-life problem, was determined to change it, rallied supporters, and fought the evil villains. Fittingly, a hierarchy formed around society’s use of Medieval’s Europe primitive tools. We call it feudalism. You’ve probably seen it in Robin Hood, Monty Python, or Game of Thrones. Feudalism was a rigid hierarchy of kings, bishops, dukes, sheriffs, knights, priests, tradesman, and peasants. In return for loyalty, the people got what was called the “King’s peace”, which slowly let the people update their cyborgolgy with shovels, oxen, thatched houses, buckets, sickles, and other tools.

The people happily declared the leaders holy, because the country’s stability was vested into the heroes own person. They were basically like mafia bosses. These kings didn’t rule inside a official parliament or bureucracy. Like a Odysseus, Robin Hood, or Neo they were themselves were protagonists; making them Protagonist Kings. This was the start of the “noble divine right to rule”.

Since society had political institutions like dependable judicial systems and government, the personal rule of the nobility was definitely holy, for if they disappeared, so did the political peace keeping millions of peasants safe.

Western Civilization rebuilt poltical instituions like court systems, town councils, sanitation departmnets. But it was slow going. By the time Western Europe had a fully functioning civilization again, (around the Renaissance depending on how you define it) nobody could remember why the story of divine nobility started..

As Europe went through the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, the invaders were increasingly gone, the water was running, the roads were clean, the markets were busy. The once Protagoinst Kings, were now merely executives of a very large, bureaucractic governments. The only thing that didn’t change was the culture of noble divinity. The leaders had the title of king, but were not protagonists. They instead were villians protecting their privledge, who refused to let society grow out of the “nobles divine right to rule”.

## Antagonist Kings

At that point in history, nobility was established as a divine right or a hereditary gift. The nobles were no longer military leaders fighting off Vandals, Vikings, and brigands, but simply born with “noble blood”. They only waged war against each other, and usually only for personal glory. But otherwise they sat atop a hierarchy who paid no taxes, did no work, and answered to no one. The nobles used relative peace and prosperity to replace armor with dresses, castles with palaces, and battlefields with banquets and balls.

Loving life, and without opposition, these nobles conned the people, and themselves, with art and spectacle. They lived inside an art culture, where ever more self-importance, eccentricity, gossip, and titles, was the norm. And they distracted the people with spectacle to watch. Brilliant cathedrals, palaces, and wars against other kingdoms to keep the masses occupied. Like franchise movies, these got more intense to keep the story interesting.

Visit European classic castles and extravagant palaces, modest churches and brilliant cathedrals, and you’ll see the transformation from function to spectacle in Europe’s buildings. Compare the clothes of armored clad Charles Martel, and the dress wearing Louis XIV, and you’ll see the transformation from function to art.

Frontline problems piled up. The people’s situation barely changed, and arguably got worse, from 1000 to 1778. Their houses were still thatched. Their still used hand tools. They still paid most the taxes. They were still banned from advancing in official society. Feudalism became a caste system controlled by con artists who are rightfully called Darth King for fought against natural equality and distributing the power of new tools to the people.

Darth King used art to tell themselves the the rules were sent from God, and should thus never end. The practical reason for noble divinity, fighting off anarchy, was ignored. The nobles lost the plot of their own stories. They held their people back from learning and adopting new tools. It sent Darth King’s civilizations into revolutions, and cost him his head.

Revolutions!

Revolutions!

## Our Story

The Devil was once an angel. Named Lucifer he lived with God up in the clouds. But once he grew vain he challenged God and was punished by being thrown down from Heaven to be the dark lord. That’s not all. He can assume and form, and be anyone, for all humanity is tainted with the greed to be aasu,e they can be gods. At least that’s the Christian tale. But there are many other stories of fallen angels. Lord Voldermort, Lord Sauron, and Lord Vader were all once heroes; each unwilling to give back their power when corrupted by evil ambitions of lifelong supremacy. It’s probably so common in literature because it’s so common in humanity; power often corrupts.

This same story sadly happened to kings of Europe and it’s repeating itself in our modern times as well. Our antagonists are also fallen heroes.

It’s important to note, while Rousseau’s followers may have been political free, they were economically poor. Hunger, disease, unemployment, illiteracy, were all rampant. The time was basically one of “economic anarchy”.

Like how society loved the original kings for winning the “King’s peace”, the original economic kings were heroes for winning massive economic growth that won the "Executive’s prosperity. They said follow me, recognize my property rights, let me run the economy, my company’s will keep you employed and improve your life with new tools like lightbulbs, stoves, and telephones.

Slowly but surely, they did. They told a good story during the Industrial Revolutions. The people were again an audience who watched fiction become reality as we overcame economic anarchy. And we did that with many of the primitive tools of today. Schools, colleges, and universities educated the masses. Gas trucks and cars moved resources and products much faster. Oil and coal powered everything.

Darth Blockbuster’s forebears like Andrew Carnegie, Cornelius Vanderbilt, Louis B. Mayer, did what Clovis I and the rest did. And like how Darth King was only exposed when new tools empowered the extras so they didn’t need to be peasants anymore, Darth Blockbuster was only revealed when digital tools were so powerful, the extras didn’t need to be 9-5 working consumers anymore.

To defend today’s primitive tools, Darth Blockbuster surrounds himself with story of self-importance, and distracts the people with spectacle. John Wayne noticed this started, not surprisingly, in the 1970’s for movies:

Now the goddamned stock manipulators have taken over. They don’t know a goddamned thing about making movies. They make something dirty, and it makes money, and they say, ‘Jesus, let’s make one a little dirtier, maybe it’ll make more money.’ And now even the bankers are getting their noses into it.

This same story happened throughout the suburban “American Dream”. Detached homes got ever more specular, bigger sizes, designer fashion. Cars got bigger, more size, more chrome, more horsepower. Televisions increase in size. Rather than transform society to the capabilties of digital tools, Darth Gas Cars, Darth Telephone, Darth Suburban Home, made their tools more spectular.

These antagonists to new tools thus distracted the mases, while they lived in an increasingly self-important lifesystle like a performance actor in an art film, where the main character is selected by the people to overcome a problem, before returning to equality, but is just the main character because he wants to be…

And, if we’re going to change that, we need to realize all bad stories eventually end badly.

But before we get to that, there’s something else. Something that’s gone very wrong…”

# THE BIG FIGHT

## Breaking News

I’m not perfect. Far from it. Johnny Majic is just a regular guy. For whatever reason I’ve always been pretty good at retaining knowledge and analyzing history and politics. But other than working to hone that skill, I’m just a regular guy who likes to see the world getting better.

What I’m basically saying in this book is many people in positions of “power” are like Blockbuster in 2009, living on borrowed time. They don’t know it because, like characters in an art film, are stuck in a role of self-importance, which is like what happened to the late kings of Europe. And Self-important living at the top, comes with spectacle of fancy cathedrals or car shows to distract the bottom.

Art film culture insulate themselves from pleas for a classic stories with a culture. This culture gets weirder and weirder to non-fans, but make more and more sense to people inside. After all, it’s all singing to the choir, recycle old ideas dengenerates like photocopies.

That’s why “Breaking News” is always on the cable news shows. They are finding new examples for the choir to keep singing. It’s pretty telling that the two impeacements since living memory are over a sex life and phone call, meanwhile American has been gutted because red/blue philosophies wont let her upgrade everyday life to digital tools.

The point is this. When someone says it’s time to move on; its time to end the story of red/blue philosophies and start to upgrade our ruling philosophy to the possibilities of new tools, they fight back with personal attacks.

To to get it over with, I’ll shame myself with their rules. Among the many rules I’ve broken, like driving a shit car, not having (or wanting) much money, maybe even being a closet socialist progressive, or intolerant conservative!

But those are boring. What both sides truly hate is their choir watching YouTube or Netflix instead. So what the rule I broke? I downloaded a movie from the pirate bay. You think that was that wrong?

### Stargazer Turns on His Lightsaber

It’s amazing to think about, but think about this everytime two hours of today’s Netflix today, was once watched after driving to pickup a DVD.

DVD’s were a major revenue stream for movies. Heck people were filling their basements of DVD’s. In 2008, hackers put together BitTorrents. A technology that spliced files into tiny bits, and let people share their content. It was an amazing new tool, that was most often used to distribute songs and movies. The studio’s saw the record companies fall to Napster and adopt iTunes, but didn’t learn from the lesson.

I don’t want to actually personalize “Darth Blockbuster”. But it might be a good idea for you to take a minute and visit YouTube and search around for “movie piracy” videos. It was once a hot topic and news broadcasters did lots of reports about the impending doom to society’s movies because of BitTorrents.

Hollywood is of course still around. Although, like Blockbuster, they’re living on fumes. It’s problem was and is, it’s product suck, and it only survived because it had a monopoly on storytelling technology. BitTorrents only exposed that problem.

Anyone could see it on the frontline. People don’t just like classic stories, we need them. People will buy them if they’re reasonably priced and most important, good.

When I was a projectionist I (and any other) could tell which movies were good or bad without ever seeing them. We just watched the audience’s reactions. If they scream, cry, laugh, yell, it’s a good story. Even more telling was listening to moviegoers walk out. If they marvelled about twists, turns, and cool lines, you know the story was really good because it turned fiction into reality.

Most movies at the theatre got hum reactions. Here’s why that was and why people ended up flocking to internet streaming.

### Technological History of the Movies

Assuming you tried, it’s funny how easy it was to find Darth Blockbuster on YouTube. Now, I need to know how movies and television technologically evolved. This would take weeks at a library. But I have Wikipedia so it’ll take a few hours. Rubbish indeed professors.

So let’s go.

The first thing to understand, is movies didn’t invent stories. We’ve always, and always will, tell stories. They help us understand our lives and societies. Religious sermons, epic poetry, and stage plays have filled our need of stories throughout the years.

The movies, and later television, are merely tools that help tell stories. Each is a creation of three pieces of technology. Data transmission, data storage, and data viewing. Movies started in 1894 when Thomas Edison’s laboratory invented the kinetoscope; the first machine that moved pictures through a light source fast enough to give the impression of seamless movement. Hence the name “moving pictures”, simplified as “movies”.

The kinetoscope was like a vending machine for movies. Customers looked through a peep hole to see clips of boxing matches or dance routines. It was a popular novelty, kind of like GIFs on Instagram. Edison owned the patents and created the New Jersey based Motion Picture Patent Corporation (MPPC) to make sure everyone in the young movie industry paid their dues.

After a few years of MPPC’s interference and legal threats, in what amounted to shakedowns, movie companies moved to Los Angeles to get away. As new projector technology came, MPPC lost its patent monopoly anyway. The movie industry was free to grow in LA’s good weather, cheap land, and no stifling East Coast corporate hierarchies.

And best yet technology kept improving. New projectors could show movies on huge screens. Although reels weren’t long enough yet to show long movies. With the new projectors, movie theaters called Nickelodeons (because admission cost a nickel) opened up across the country. The movies were still novelties, showing exotic animals, news reels, or sports highlights, but getting better, like Instagram stories, instead of GIFs.

By the 1920’s film reels were long enough to show three act stories. Although sound still wasn’t synched with film, so movies had subtitled dialogue and theatres used live music bands to communicate emotions.

In 1927 film was finally synchronized with sound, giving movies dialogue and music. For the first time in history, full stories were not limited to a physical theatre. Any movie theatre in the world could show any story. A new storytelling tool was thus created.

Like Instagram or Netflix popularity today, the people certainly felt the magic of good storytelling, and the majic of needing the theatre. No longer a novelty, the movies attracted millions every week. American industry rushed to control the booming industry. American culture was told on the silver screen. Leading actors became cultural icons. The industry exploded with profits. Although the people controlled none of it, their interest and loyalty made it happen one movie ticket at a time.

Of course, all the technology that made the movie industry so rich and powerful was physical. Data storage, transport, and viewing was physical film, light projectors, and delivery trucks.

This didn’t change until a new tool was born in 1948. Televisions used a different mixture of technologies. Huge magnetic tape reels stored content. Radio transmitted content over the airwaves. And televisions received the transmissions, and displayed the content on tube televisions.

Broadcasts television companies like NBC, ABC, and CBS, now competed with movie theatres. TV story quality wasn’t as good, but the convenience was huge; especially as Americans slowly moved away from the cities packed with movie theatres into the suburbs packed with TV’s.

From the 1950’s to the early 1980’s nothing much changed in the entertainment industry. Movies and television got better technologies. Film reels got clearer, color, and widescreen. Likewise, televisions got bigger and bandwidth improved with cable. But no new tools were created. The people still couldn’t choose or produce their own content.

Then came new tools. The magnetic tapes databases that stored TV broadcasters’ content, got small enough to make home video cassette recorder (VCR). VCR’s cut out the broadcaster, who of course sued the manufacturer Sony for letting people break the rules and “time shift” television shows. The case ended up in the Supreme Court in 1984.

In a 5-4 vote the power to record and watch videos was distributed to the people; the extras were free to add the VCR to their cyborgology. VCRs, home cameras, and renting movies became very popular in the late 1980’s. The most successful video rental company took the name “Blockbuster”, the common term for popular movies. The entertainment industry quickly forgot about its VCR objections, and gladly put its content on Blockbuster’s busy shelves.

Home entertainment tools kept getting better. In the late 1990’s came DVD’s and flat screen televisions. DVD’s were more advanced CD’s, and worked like videotapes, except they were digital. Meaning data was stored as “1 or 0”. Plasma or LCD flat screens televisions were much bigger than tube televisions, and since they were digital too, they were High Definition.

Even more people rushed to upgrade their cyborgology with DVD’s and home theatres. Blockbuster rental stores were even busier, especially as people started buying hundreds of DVD’s for home libraries. The entertainment industry loved it. They didn’t even care movie theatre attendance dropped heavily and many went bankrupt. In fact, they started to use theatres as marketing hype. The money was in DVD sales.

Yet they didn’t notice, that the data transmission, data storage, and data viewing technologies of the movie industry was now almost entirely digital.

Except movie distribution. People still had to drive to pick up their DVD’s or visit a movie theatre. Hence, people still needed to concentrate around movie theatres, rental stores, or TV guides (i.e. the castles with gatekeepers), to access their digital data.

Until they didn’t.

The internet, the transfer of digital information that was used for email and webpages since the 1970’s, had kept getting better and faster. And in the early 2000’s the internet got High Speed, and could finally transfer 1’s and 0’s of a DVD faster then someone driving to pick one up.

And here enters The Pirate Bay (2003). Like Napster, it introduced digital movies to people first. Although the entertainment industry used digital cameras, film projectors, email, webpages, YouTube for years, they didn’t want people using a new tool, but to keep using their profitable DVD technology; they even made two new ones called Blu-Ray (2006) and HD-DVD (2006).

The people wanted the better tool. The one that made their life more profitable. After all the countless hours invented new digital tools was mostly done on their tax dollars in government labs and military funding and university institutions. Pirate Bay was the first to offer the new technoogy as a new tool to the people. It was a pain, it was hard to learn, but it was better than driving.

Remember the 60 Minutes report! Customers are pirates! People are evil, people are cheap, people are thieves! Really? Then explain the graph below, the one what shows how the evil people responded with protagonist Reed Hastings in 2005 made a new internet tool and gave internet movies to the people. What we call Netflix, by 2009, when Hollywood was panicking about BitTorrents, the people were finally given internet streaming. This was the same fucking time as Darth Blockbuster and the industry was complaining about human evolution.

<script type="text/javascript" src="https://ssl.gstatic.com/trends\_nrtr/1605\_RC01/embed\_loader.js"></script>  
<script type="text/javascript">  
 trends.embed.renderExploreWidget("TIMESERIES", {"comparisonItem":[{"keyword":"Torrent","geo":"US","time":"2004-01-01 2018-11-04"},{"keyword":"Netflix","geo":"US","time":"2004-01-01 2018-11-04"}],"category":0,"property":""}, {"exploreQuery":"date=all&geo=US&q=Torrent,Netflix&hl=en-US","guestPath":"https://trends.google.com:443/trends/embed/"});  
</script>

If middle class Americans and Canadians are pirates, why didn’t Blockbuster stores have steel bars? The same reason why we don’t steal Netflix. Blockbuster was a fair deal, until data streaming movies was possible. Then Netflix was.

The people elected to download movies from pirate bay because it was an upgrade available to their cyborgology. The only natural rule is natural selection. When people choose the best tool, they evolve into better cyborgs. It’s not the people’s job to wait for an industry to catch up to Nature. It should be the other way around.

Maybe the industry would have noticed that. Instead, they were too busy surrounding themselves with art and wanted people to being distracted with spectacle (Blu-Ray, HD-DVD). While calling their own customer’s thieves, the movie industry held countless banquets and balls on the people’s DVD dollars; movie premieres, talk shows, award shows, and launch parties. Read books like Hollywood Interrupted and the revelation of the #MeToo movement, and these parties were, never mind self-congratulatory, but often even evil.

The Oscars, Correspondence Dinners, Emmy’s, Golden Globes, Cannes Film Festival, Sundance Film Festival, Toronto International Film Festival, and so many others. All modern version of banquets and balls, with gates to keep you out, and rules put in place to make the good times of the DVD going. Party loving, profit loving, foresight lacking is a recipe for antagonism, hence Darth Blockbuster rose up.

While the spectacle of Blu-Ray and HD-DVD tricked some extras, like with Wikipedia attracting people despite the supposed experts objections, the vast majority followed the natural majic of online movie streaming instead, even when it was against the rules to improve society.

Digital tools empowered the extras to fight back, and check his self-important art story. Techvolution tells them its right to do it. As for it being against the rules, it was, and maybe it should be, I was naive back then and never downloaded any movies. I was the sucker buying DVD’s.

Hey, do you think Darth Blockbuster will buy back all those DVDs, Blu-Rays, and HD-DVDs he told me, and us, was better than downloading? I wonder did those go up, or down, in value?

### Decision Time

Your Darth—in whatever industry and in whatever outfit he may be—is a Sith Lord. While he may be a great person, nice to you and his employees, wears nice clothing, tips well, whoever he is doesn’t matter. He is an antagonist to the progress of society. He fought against video tapes, interest songs, and internet streaming. If society was up to Darth Blockbuster, we’d all be paying for long distance, writing directions on napkins, waving down cabs, paying for late charges, and putting quarters into pay phones.

What’s going to happen when 3D printing threatens his merchandising. Or when Virtual Reality let’s people live their own stories. Or whatever! We shouldn’t have to argue for new tools!

But since the 1970’s our society, our politics, has been falling apart because of Darth Blockbuster. We try to fix things with red/blue politics, but they don’t understand real politics is the control of new tools.

So we the people work two jobs to pay the bills. While our climate is changing. Why our roads are traffic jammed. Because we as digital tools are invented, the Sith keep writing laws, regulations, and fighting lawsuits to try and made us live like it’s 1970 forever.

# A SURE VICTORY

Can’t make up your mind. This will help. The force is strong with whoever holds digital tools. And that by design. The thousands of protagonists who built digital tools wanted to empower individual people like you.

The very foundation of the internet is based on the rock-solid value of individual empowerment. And this fact means Darth Blockbuster never did, and never will, stand a chance against today’s internet Jedi.

## Jedi Paul Baran

The internet has many protagonists. Paul Baran is one of the big ones. Here’s why.

The internet is a network. There are many ways of sending data through a network. The simplest is how phone systems do it with a direct circuit link between two phones. A call’s connection only stops when someone hangs up.

Alexander Graham Bell invented “direct circuit links” in 1876 and put it into action when he co-founded the American Telephone & Telegraph (AT&T) in 1885. For generations direct links was how all telecommunications worked. But when the Soviets tested a hydrogen bomb in 1955, Paul Baran took it upon himself to make a new tool to help prevent a nuclear holocaust.

Baran realized to prevent nuclear war, the world needed a communications network that would survive an atomic attack. Only robust and reliable communications would ease American and Soviet trigger fingers during tense times.

Baran worked alone after work. By 1960 he came up with the two ideas he needed. The first was that his network should have no hubs or organizations (like telephone’s have) to control the flow of information. Central hubs make systems vulnerable to attack or failure. Instead data flow should be completely distributed so every node can send and receive information equally. Baran’s nodes network looks like a fishnet. When each node has three or four links, the network can survive any attack.

Next Baran had to figure out how to send information across the network. This led to his second idea, which was to break up the data into standard-size little packets. Each message would be broken into many packets, each of which would scurry along different paths through the network’s nodes and be reassembled when they got to their destination. If one packet didn’t get there in time, it was quickly resent. This way there’d be no “dropped calls” and communication would always stay open. Baran published his ideas into very detailed technical specs and made sure everyone, especially the Soviets, could copy his work.

Baran then walked into a nest of villains in America. When Baran’s employer RAND recommended his “node-packet data network” idea to the Air Force (in control of America’s nuclear missiles) they wanted to build it. But when the Department of Defense got itself and the Defense Communications Agency involved Baran soon found out working with so many bureaucrats was hopeless.

So Baran tried to convince AT&T, in control of America’s telephone network, to supplement their system with his node-packet data network. “They fought it tooth and nail,” he recalled. “They tried all sorts of things to stop it.” They would not even let RAND use the maps of its circuits, so Baran had to use a pirated set. He made several trips to AT&T headquarters in lower Manhattan. On one of them, a senior executive who was an old engineer looked stunned when Baran explained that his system would mean that data could go back and forth without a dedicated link remaining open. “He looked at his colleagues in the room while his eyeballs rolled up sending a signal of his utter disbelief,” according to Baran. After a pause, the executive said, “Son, here’s how a telephone works,” and explained a patronizing and simplistic description.

The metaphorical Death Star rule book became real! It was against the rules to make a reliable communication network that might help prevent a nuclear holocaust. Good thing Jedi’s don’t give up. Baran continued to push. AT&T finally had him and other outsiders to a series of seminars explaining how its telephone system really worked. “It took ninety-four separate speakers to describe the entire system,” Baran marveled. When it was over, the AT&T executives asked Baran, “Now do you see why packet switching wouldn’t work?” To their great disappointment, Baran simply replied, “No.”

To heck with Darth Telephone!

A decade later Baran’s network was built when the US government’s Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) saw the wisdom in a node-packet distributed communications network. In 1969 ARPA used Baran’s technical specs to build ARPAnet, the first version of the internet. The people who made it were hellbent on empowering individuals, and the made sure the internet could not be controlled by any government or corporation.

Baran’s network is why our smartphones, websites, Wikipedia, any digital tool connected to the internet empower individuals. In the DNA of the internet is a distributed node network that nobody can control or shutdown. An individual has the exact same access as any corporation or government.

That’s why the internet is majical. Whoever uses it, is automatically empowered.

*Paul Baran’s story was adapted from Walter Isaacson’s awesome book* The Innovators, *Chapter 7.*

# DARTH KING CHARLES

Antagonists may be well intentioned, but they’ll never change their minds. Indeed, the problems we’re having in our world right now, new powerful tools being witheld from the people’s hands by the leaders of old ruling philosophies, has happened before. Let’s go back the ruling philosophy of the noble’s divine right, see how it all worked out for Darth King Charles.

## Place in Line

When Rousseau was being chased around Europe in the 1760-70’s, King Louis XVI rule France and King George III ruled England. Both faced revolutions inspired by the pain on the frontline their high-spending lifestyles and government mismanagement caused. However, these weren’t the first kings to face revolts.

Before Rousseau explained frontline problems to the people, the people still revolted against noble’s excesses and incompetent leadership. Among the first to face the people’s wrath was King Charles I, who ruled England from 1625-1649.

Charles ruled as an absolute monarch under the “nobles right to rule” ruling philosophy. England had a Parliament but it was supposed to advise the king and not tell him what to do. After some revolts in the Middle Ages, parliament did however earn the power to approve taxes.

After years of his forebears mismanaging government finances and overspending himself, Charles needed money. The people and their parliament refused to say yes until they got more political powers. Charles refused to talk to them. Instead he sent parliament home, and ruled by himself for 10 years. He raised taxes by using some very old feudal rules. One retroactively fined some men for not showing up to Charles’ coronation 10 years earlier. Charles’ version of the fine print didn’t endear him to the people.

Parliament eventually got sick of this subversion, raised an army, and fought the English Civil War (1642–1646). The army was local men devoted to their parliament. Its officers were chosen by merit, while Charles’s men were mostly nobles who hired mercenaries to fight for them. The war between “parliamentarians” and “loyalists” was so bad it inspired the saying that life without a working government is “nasty, brutish, and short”.

After four years Charles lost. He was held under arrest, while rules for a “constitutional monarchy” were being made by the Parliamentarians. But then Charles escaped, hired a new army, and fought the Second English Civil War (1648–1649).

Charles lost again. The victorious Parliamentarians were now enraged. They forgot about a constitutional monarch and charged Charles for crimes against the English people. While they didn’t have a new ruling philosophy, the people were at least questioning the one in power.

Charles didn’t budge. The rules were on his side. The Bible said he was God’s representative on Earth. He was the natural leader the same way a father is the leader of his children. Which is why Charles refused to speak the court; a father doesn’t answer to his children.

But then Darth King Charles did speak, and that fact, showcases how set the Sith are in their stories.

### Charles Speaks

Charles had a speech impediment. Often called a stammer or studder. No one then, or even now, understands what causes it. It’s a piece of biological cyborgology that doesn’t work properly. A person can talk fine when alone or with pets, there’s sometimes a mental block in the mind when people are around.

That’s because for a stutterer, talking is like playing guitar with music notes written on the fly by a gremlin. Some words are easy to say, some are difficult hard, and some decide which at the last mili-mili-mili-second. The stutterer must jump around the words in real time. Fail and you miss a — beat.

But a stutter isn’t just about pauses, repetitions, or missing beats in a sentence. Stuttering is like having a mini-seizure. Your body seizes. Your neck tenses. You stop breathing. It’s horrible. I should know, because I suffer from the same affliction as Charles did.

The physical pain isn’t even the worst. Getting that look from people is. The “what the fuck is wrong with you?” look.

*“Hello, my ~~name~~ I’m Charles. I wa-want can want to ~~help~~ discuss, the situation with the, ~~Parliament~~ House of Commons…”*

The prospect of talking, except to yourself and a dog, which Charles had two of, causes huge anxiety. The idea of never conversing with anyone causes huge loneliness and depression. The King’s Speech showed it well. Stuttering usually forces a person to be shy, passive, eager to please, and come up with weird reasons for their erratic speaking like hand gestures, random silence, binge drinking, and swear words (which, like talking to yourself or dogs, for some reason never cause a stutter). It’s entirely possible Charles’ relationship with Parliament was so bad because he simply didn’t want to talk with them. Not that he would ever admit he had an impediment. After all, he was a king!

My speech impediment was the reason I got a job in a car insurance claim department. After a vice president at an old company secretly told my supervisor I wasn’t allowed to talk to customers, for fear of embarrassing the company, I was like shit I guess I don’t have this damn gremlin under control. I wasn’t even that mad about it (although I was that it was an open secret for over a year). I never told anyone I had the impediment, so despite therapy as a kid, it was obviously still a problem.

So, fuck it. I decided to jump in the ocean and sink or swim. A car insurance claim call-center for a stutterer is like swimming the open ocean. A daily workout of all-day phone calls, angry drivers, customer service expectations, no “outs” like swear words, drinking games, or wonky behavior to hide behind. I was like that drowning desert fox learning to swim telling myself; “I’m getting better!”.

And it was far worse than I thought. The insurance company wanted adjusters to answer ever more phone calls. To incentive us, they’d ring a monotone “bell” because… I don’t know. They never said why, we employees learned questioning “the bell” was a bad idea. Management used it as punishment; “answer more phone calls or we’ll make the bell faster and louder!”.

I’m being serious by the way. We were often more stressed then the person who just had a car crash. Whatever the reason, DING-DING-DING-DING almost all day, which gave people who weren’t stutterers huge anxiety, breakdowns, and stress leaves.

Super-shock speech therapy! After about a year I didn’t have to massage my jaws at night to release it from all the teeth shattering jaw-clenches I did to divert vocal stuttering. I was cured!

The point is this. That’s what it took for me to mostly never stutter (except when people try to limit my word choices in pretentious situations). It’s like night and day. The anxiety washed away. A hidden outgoing personality was brought out and frankly is fun, although still surreal, to be.

Yet Charles never had this lesson. Despite being adamant he was God’s chosen leader (or perhaps because of it), he was famously shy and quiet his whole life because that’s the gremlin likes it. Even when fighting for 16 years defending his ruling philosophy, Charles still probably had to massage his strained jaws every night. I can sympathize. The gremlin is an asshole.

Charles would have to talk. He was accused of being “a Tyrant, A Traitor, Murderer, and a public enemy to the Commonwealth of England”. The people weren’t replacing one king for another, and therefore staying loyal to the ruling philosophy of divie nobility. They were saying the leader of their country was a bad ruler, supposing they had a say who rules them. This idea is the origin of the king in the title image, the one the Jedi and Darth Vader are fighting over. That king represents the “state” which is exists from a social contract with the people, not because of divine right to rule.

Because a ruler of a state can be a king, a consul, a prime minister, or a president. Thus, Charles wasn’t only defending his life, but the ruling philosophy that says the nobles are above the people.

The prosecutors didn’t have Rousseau’s new ruling philosophy to replace the “divine rights of nobles”. They simply said Charles was a tyrant and asked for the death penalty. Charles still wouldn’t speak. He didn’t believe his life was on the chopping block. Kings don’t answer to children.

Charles wasn’t pretending or bluffing. He wasn’t proud, or stubborn. He psychologically couldn’t understand even the idea of being wrong. Like an antagonist, he lived in a different story with a different ruling philosophy. One that made him the hero.

The judges convicted Charles anyway. He was sentenced to death by removing the head from the body. Charles was flabbergasted and now wanted to speak in his defense. The next chance would be standing at his own chopping block.

Fuck the ringing bell of a claims department, imagine that stress of a stutterer minutes from execution, having to say something to justify 16 years of civil war.

Charles only had words to justify himself, and the ruling philosophy of the English throne to his (supposed) subjects and to history. And… and… no stutter. Not once!

He didn’t just speak, he spoke so eloquently many people, even those who hated him, were impressed. Fuck… I’m happy for him. I can say beyond a reasonable doubt it felt like God killed the gremlin. What vindication! Indeed, Charles’s last words were a clearly spoken:

Truly I desire their (the people’s) liberty and freedom as much as anybody whomsoever; but I must tell you their liberty and freedom consist in having of government, those laws by which their life and their goods may be most their own. It is not for having a share in government, Sir, that is nothing pertaining to them. A subject and a ruler are clear different things…therefore I tell you that I am the Martyr of the people. I die a Christian according to the profession of the Church of England, as I found it left me by my father… I have a good Cause and I have a gracious God. I will say no more.

Clearly spoken words about being totally behind the times. I’m still happy for his moment, but he gave England 16 of civil war because he thought he was a living god. The truth was, kings were no longer needed. The people could rule themselves. Charles should have been happy his children grew up. He could have helped them grow up by conceding powers to Parliament and avoiding 16 years of war. But he never comprehended that. He never tried to step beyond his comfort zone and expand his mindset or evolve. Instead he lived in splendor, hide behind spectacle, and used the people’s money to hire foreigners to kill them.

Later kings still didn’t learn. Even more distanced from the frontline inside their palaces, banquets and balls, their heads filled with different gremlins that said the rules are just, good, and will never end. France, Spain, Russia had country wide bankruptcies, food shortages, and revolutions, and it didn’t matter. The ultimate gremlin is isolation from the frontline. Many more Darth Kings faced the chopping block with the voice of God calling them martyrs.

So the question now is… why did you think Darth Blockbuster would ever admit he was wrong and change his ways?

# ACT THREE

## A Fight Over No Tools

* stories can be big, or small, but each is structured the same….

So do you think Darth Blockbuster is dead? Do you think he’ll ever die?

Do you feel the weight of the questin on your shoulders, Stargazer. Do you feel it—the weight of the world? The mantle of fate? As we create a new philosophy to rule our society’s deepest definitions of right and wrong in all areas from politics to economics?

You shouldn’t.

At the start of this journey, I told you characters fight over tools. In every story from The Illiad to Star Wars, the character who holds the tools is the victor who writes the rules.

So what tool have I given you to defeat the Sith?

Sure it’s easy to mock Darth King Charles. It’s easy to mock Darth Blockbuster. We have the cyborgology of history books and news articles to see their stupidity.

But who is the Darth in your life that’ll you’ll stand up to and saw “Hey listen asshole, clean out the garbage can and let someone else take command”.

For Techvolution to be real, that has to happen.

The ruling philosophy hasn’t been updated since America ran on dirt roads. It assumes unexplored horizons filled with wilderness that needs to be tamed in a land rush. Economic growth was paramount, hallowed in our culture protected in our rule book.

That’s not the world we live in. We know America is 330,000,000 square miles. We know what resources there are. Growth has stopped. Now we need efficiency. Yet without a new ruling philosophy the salesman, the brokers, the spenders, are prioritized over the makers, the savers.

In 1973, when Gordon Moore said “We are really the revolutionaries in the world today—not the kids with long hair and beards who were wrecking the schools a few years ago.” Most of the world’s electronics was researched, designed, and made in America. Within twenty years that was barely the case.

That was the watershed moment in Western societies. The digital revolution didn’t come with a political one. Rather than using digital tools to transform American, we exported America to keep old philosophies alive. We should have changed to obess about efficiency.

But that wasn’t what corporate aristocracy knew how to do. Without a new ruling philosophy they went for the self-importance of performance art and the spectacle to distract the masses. That’s why gas car brands multiplied, models were “redesigned” every year, all so the marketers, salesman and brokers had ever more ammo for their garbage meetings.

They rejected digital tools for the same reason kings rejected science books and people owning muskets. It meant there was nothing left to manage.

* success of the ruling philosophy, jumlbes the definition of success. it is serving hte heirarchy of the new tools, or making even newer tools? when does a story jump the shark?

All the while American should have been making Tesla’s, and even better, started to build communities were digital tools like telecommunications over jam packed roads and mental illness inducing traffic.

When the spectacle would wear off on frontline people suffering in the “rust belt”, the answer was always to bring in new people. Hence why I was cleaning office buildings as a kid. It was always easier to clean up after blue collar workers, they took pride in their workstations and stuff. Office workers had positions, so didn’t like working “down”.

They used a Death Star rule book to help themselves have meetings, and keep the workers away.

So how can the workers on the frontline fight back?

Techvolution in their hearts, but that still needs tool. So what’s a tool to help the workers?

## The Anti-Death Star

Political philosophy is often called “visions of the just and good society”. Every political philosophy imagines a world “classic stories” where the leaders are selfless and use their powers to benefit the community.

Socrates and Plato called these heroes the “philosopher kings”, Aristotle called them "“. Machiavelli called them a”educated prince". They each in their own way admonished selfish leaders, people who I called the Sith. None, not even my favorite Rousseau, could make a political philosophy that, when applied inside a rule book, killed the Sith forever.

The repeating story of civilization has been a society that embraces a ruling philosophy lead by true heroes using new tools to better their societies like Clovis I and George Washington. But eventually the story shifts. The leaders become self-important like Darth King Charles, and Darth Blockbuster and use spectacle to distract the masses.

Thus, even after the Jedi won, it wasn’t long before the protagonists and antagonists again fought over tools, and the extras are stuck in between trying to figure out who the bad guys were.

So asking you to pick the right side? How can the people ever get it right.

That’s why I never planned on writing this book. I only wrote this book to wipe all old philosophies and their rule books away. The people who don’t understand the SpaceX landing a rocket is more important than any regulation reforms. That health-insurance doesn’t mean a healthy population. That to advance humanity we need to let us majically advance our cyborgology any way we want.

Because the truth is, the Sith only survive because we have “visions” of a just and good society. Digital tools let’s use actual see these visions and apply them to common senses.

Techvolution is the next ruling philosophy. It empowers seamless human technological evolution by ridding Darth Blockbuster of his power, by empowering extras to decide when society should upgrade our tools.

But it does so not with a rule book written by me, you, a manager, or a president. It does so with what I said at the very start every story is about. A new tool that changes the game. The only thing that can forever kill the Sith is a tool. A tool I say.

And what is this tool?

* i wrote this book to tell you what this new tool will do, and how it will be designed. It’s a tool of perpetual stories, with heroes who overcome problems and return to equality without a fight.
* The political question of every time period was the same, are we going to change society to make the best use of new tools. And for use today, we’re faced with the same question.
* the differetn stories, of classic, art/spectcle never understand each other. There’s no common sense, sense as in the actual sense pain or smell, because their cyborgology is different. Not until the selfish rulers cause so many problems on the frontline, did enough people ignore the spectacle to demand change in the name of a new ruling philosophy designed to distribute the powers of new tools and thereby upgrade human’s cyrborgology to solve back log of problems. Sometimes this huge outburts as in France, or small as in England.
* The point is, it’s not possible to cross these stories. Power corrupts. Not everyone, but once it finds a host in human greed and short sightedness, getting it out is very hard, because the Death Star really exists. Its mountains of theology, or families bloodlines or inheritances and jurisprudence.
* The key then is give everyone a common sense to feel the pains of society, so the extras are not distracted by spectacle as the leaders ramp up the spectacle to mask their selfishness.

So come Stargazer, with your mind wipe clean up old philosophies and human written rule books, we can now find true answers to the human condition as we tear the mask of Nature, and stare into the face of God. While the Sith survive from their Death Star, we will kill them by a tool the Jedi can control, the Life Star.

* we’ve used stories to understand these ideas, and here’s another, the please join us next week for the sequel, Life Star.

# EPILOGUE

## My App

My app. Using modern web development, it took just a few months of work. Take some free code from GitHub, an inexpensive cloud computing account, and the design skills of a novice. It was simple. Might not even get me a job in “tech”.

The tool wasn’t polished because new tools never are. But it was, and would have been, so effective because it came directly from the frontline. A place far away from today’s ruling philosophy.

Here’s how it worked. Today’s car insurance claim system depends on drivers exchanging information like names or insurance policy numbers after a car accident. Drivers are frazzled so they usually don’t. My adjusting job was talking to these drivers to process their insurance claims. The one supposed to return drivers back to normal; at least as best to normal as money can get them. A big problem was simply knowing who the other driver and adjuster were. Since we often didn’t know, we had to search for it; literally calling around or hoping someone calls you. Delays piled up like crazy.

Adjusting sucks. Our only tools were a telephone, email, voicemail, checkbook, google, and a supervisor telling us to hurry up or get fired. Beyond st-st-stress stressful, very emotionally taxing.

Until you speak with a driver who is a real person.

Real person because their accident wasn’t an inconvenience but a life changing horror. Maybe their arm was amputated, or their friend was ejected from the car, or their kid burned alive twelve hours ago.

You’re mind shuts up Darth Call Centre the moment you talk to this real person. They have a problem and your soul wants to help.

Why did this happen? That’s all drivers want to know. Was someone trying to beat a red light? Was the road not salted for ice. Was it drunk driving? What’s the reason for the sudden terror of pain? It’s soothes people to know why the accident happened; it really helps knowing it won’t happen again.

My app combined several existing technologies, email, internet, GPS, google maps, and web apps, to make a new tool. It let insurance adjusters post an accident on a google map, and verified their identity by their work email. Since every accident shares the GPS coordinates, all adjusters, regardless what drivers do, can find each other. It’s minimal operating cost was paid for by rental car companies and repair shops, who loved the ability to email invoices directly to adjusters without having to call first.

A simple new tool that only someone on the frontline would ever feel the pain to make.

Society would have saved hundreds of millions in insurance claim operating costs. That’s cool. Adjuster’s and drivers would save hours of their day. That’s cool too. But this is the part worth fighting over. With my app, for the first time, we’d have a database of the exact location and causes of car accidents. Thereafter we could cross reference with weather, traffic, demographics, and many other databases. We’d finally learn why car accidents happen, and start to fight back.

This database doesn’t exist today. So, when tree branches grow over stop signs, tires are faulty, intersections jam up too much, pot holes get too big, or anything else repeatedly causes accidents, we don’t even know. With machine learning and artificial intelligence, we’d find trends to the millions of accidents, and tens of thousands of deaths that happen every year.

In a world held a bit steadier and comforted just a little more by such an app, who would be the loser?

People who don’t feel frontline pain. In my case executives, lawyers, marketers, and consultants. Like Darth Blockbuster, they didn’t know one thing about their own industry. Not one. It existed only to stand above in an art film of self-entitlement. Their self-entitlement, blank faces, clueless looks, arrogant smirks angered me so much it merged years of political theory in my mind, and let me see a new ruling philosophy called Techvolution in my head.

It was still hard writing this book. It involved condensing so much political and economic theory and history (there’s a lot) into such a short space. I was mentally pretty tired, and despite indulging in Jack Jones’ “The Impossible Dream” too much, a little bitter. Then I watched an episode of Netflix’s *Black Mirror* and went back to work.

This episode was the tale of a crazed man, who wants to talk with the powerful CEO of an Instagram-like app called Smithereens. He holds a company intern hostage, awaiting the CEO’s call. Police surround him, corporate lackies try to deflect him, bullets are fired at him, but he still wants his phone call. Nobody knows why.

I started to cry. I soon wept. I understood this man and I knew why he went crazy.

I knew distracted driving had killed someone close to him. The man had been driving, and he checked his Smithereen feed, saw a picture of a dog or something, and he missed a drunk running a stop sign, and his beloved fiancée died.

I didn’t know it was his own distracted driving, but I knew the pain the actor played out so well. I knew that because I heard it through the same crazy cries from mothers and daughters, husbands and sons. Each just wanted to tell someone why it happened, so maybe it wouldn’t happen again.

I made a new tool that would have helped. Not solved. Not actual magic, but it majically would have gotten us closer. It was against the rules because solving problems is a good story the makes people realize art and spectacle is what Darth Blockbuster lives on is bullshit.

He’ll never say that, or even know it. He thinks frontline pain is a thing to stand above, not ever feel and solve with new tools. Darth is nothing if not detached. He is the epitome of apathy in the face of others’ pain. That’s his worst and most irredeemable quality.

I did my best as a protagonist. I was not good enough to prevent anyone’s Smithereens, but I did my best. The point isn’t that I wallowed in self-pity or guilt. The point is that neither self-pity nor guilt need to exist in the digital age. We can do better! The philosophy of digital tools isn’t a place of sword wielding heroes with a mass of peasants behind them. I pushed as far and high as I could.

Am I done fighting? No. I’ve picked up another tool, though, one that fits better in my hand and that may allow me to still reach out to many others who feel the need to evolve: a book. But I am just a speck in the sea that’s got to rise up and rinse the world of old sins and false beliefs. Other protagonists can pick up where I left off—they can go further than I could even dream of. That’s how society truly evolves: a pyramid of helping hands, not a pyramid of chopped limbs and ripped-up ideas. Everyone is either an extra choosing the best tools, or a hero working to earn their favor, in the ruling philosophy of Techvolution.

Who are you, Stargazer? Who will you be?

For we have to make a new tool that kills Darth Blockbuster and the Sith. If he has his Death Star to enforce his envy, fraility, and greed upon the world, then what is the tool by which we can enforce ingenuity, honesty, and work-ethic?

Don’t worry. I look at you and see not a pupil, but the master who will forever win the war against the Sith. You will make an incorruptible rule book. Where the only rule is natural selection. It fosters evolution, not kill it like its opposite. I called it the Life Star.