# TECHVOLUTION: A NEW PHILOSOPHY

by Johnny Majic April 2019

# BACK PAGE

You, me, and everyone else quarantined in their houses are anxiously waiting for the COVID-19 storm to pass.

On the bright side, we have Netflix.

Thanks to our beloved online streaming, pandemic worries are easily replaced with tales of passionate love, wicked magic spells, and galaxies far far away.

Stories are compelling because they’re so simple. Protagonists are good because they want to fix a problem. Antagonists are bad because they don’t. This moral clarity tells us precisely who the heroes and villains are, and thus lets us commit our emotions.

We can cherish Romeo and Juliet because we understand their love is beautiful and worth dying for! While we also know their families’ rivalry is ignorant and stupid. We see Luke Skywalker’s rebellion is righteous and worth fighting for! While Darth Vader’s empire because it’s hellish and must be destroyed.

But our emotions don’t change the story. Even the main character’s feelings mean so very little to the final outcome.

That’s why all characters, from Hogwarts students to Jedi Knights, reach for real objects like wands and lightsabers. And, of course, the enemy readies their tools and weapons too.

And that’s why we watch Netflix. Because we enjoy the drama of discovering if the light or dark side better controls the power of magic, the Force, and, most important, technology.

But unlike us, the protagonists can’t sit back and enjoy the story.

Because nobody ever won a battle by watching it. The victors are the ones who control the levers of power. Cinderella used a slipper to defeat her treacherous step-family. While Harry Potter used a wand to defeat Lord Voldemort. And Luke Skywalker used a small ship to destroy the Death Star.

When people master the levers of power, they overcome antagonists and solve problems. And, that is the clear lesson Main Street must learn today.

Otherwise, this pandemic was for nothing.

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Talk to any political junkie, no matter when, and they’ll say there’s a big election coming up. They’ll tell you, “if the Right-wing triumphs, infrastructure, healthcare, everything will go to shit!”

If you buy it—and most of us have at some point—you glue yourself to Left-wing blogs, radio, and TV. Filled with Left-wing philosophy, you start seeing sinister Conservatives all over the place. Or, if the other side sucked you in first, you start spotting sinful Progressives instead.

But it’s all bullshit.

Despite Left/Right yelling matches, neither ideology is your enemy. Because neither is your hero. Both only care to send you one-way messages to tune-in, protest, or donate. Like a bad friend, Left/Right partisans only want your attention and money. Idealogues think you’re an extra in your own political life.

Galileo, George Washington, and Luke Skywalker reached for the power of new technology. So, why shouldn’t you? Even more important, why shouldn’t the middle-class? Isn’t our healthcare, infrastructure, and especially our pandemic preparation, worthy of upgrades?

Of course they are. And, that’s the point.

The feud between Left and Right is a distraction. The politics of upgrading our lives (or not) is the real political game of our time.

This contest started in 1970 when our civilization left the Industrial Age and entered the Internet Age.

The owners of industrial age technology don’t want you holding advanced tools. Netflix is too affordable. And even more threatening, it lets you decide what to watch and when. That’s why “Darth Blockbuster” is working hard to antagonize all future upgrades. He wants to keep society’s levers of power all to himself.

Happily, many internet geeks, hackers, and innovators have been fighting Darth Blockbuster’s antagonism. But, they can’t keep fighting your battles for you. Main Street must now jump-in and help the protagonists.

There is no debate. The story is simple. We must upgrade our society now.

If we don’t, this pandemic only foreshadows a much more terrible storm to come. Every year, month, and day we stall, only makes our technology, tools, and culture more outdated. It’ll only get harder to respond and prevent things like recessions, depressions, and pandemics.

This book will teach you how to upgrade our society to the Internet Age. Like conquering illiteracy, defeating slavery, and going to the Moon, upgrading our culture will be a glorious story to tell your grandkids.

Once you realize politics is a game worth playing.

levers of power *Levers of power. Whoever controls them, wins.*

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## Dedication

*This book is for the people in the open-source community. For the collaboration philosophy you handed down to me. For selflessly updating Wikipedia, writing free software, and building cool new tech for us all. For being the protagonists of the Internet Age. You gave the best education a political guy can get. I hope I’ve learned enough to write this book for you.*

*For the antagonists, the self-entitled delegators keeping Blockbuster—and it’s Industrial Age mentality—alive, thanks for making history to repeat itself yet again. I hope you learn something.*

*This book is especially dedicated to the extras on Main Street. When it’s time for you to act, I pray you decide to play the game.*

## 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.

# PREFACE

“*People are angry, man! Most people’s lives suck…Even if like the economy is doing better, the vast majority of people aren’t doing what they want to do with their lives.*” Joe Rogan, November 2019.

This book was going to deal with your levels of anger and happiness in life. It was going to begin with analyzing your take on the economy, nation, and life at large.

Now we’ve hit the Great 2020 Pandemic. I don’t need to inquire about your happiness anymore. If you’re like most Americans and Canadians, you’re likely downright terrified about getting sick, and perhaps worse, what the future holds.

For years, North Americans suffered under troubling trends: micro-management at work, antisocial behavior at home, and political hatred in government. We got by because superficially we’re “doing great”: we have full employment, luxurious homes, and stable politics. Whenever things got too bad, and we got too unhappy, we visited the shopping mall for therapy. If we were still angry, we’d install a new political party. Over the years, we’ve given Left and Right the levers of power again and again.

No matter which we choose, Main Street wasn’t happy with the results.

That’s because there is something fundamentally wrong with our society. Now its time we step up, as our ancestors did so many times before, and rethink our way of life. The hardest part isn’t about explaining our problems or coming up with solutions. It involves the realization that ordinary people should be happy with our jobs, government, and life.

It’s our right to enjoy happy lives.

Because individual happiness is the ultimate sign of a healthy society. Interesting to note, our ancestors were often happier then we are. Even though they were hard up in comparison. Our grandparents or great-grandparents weren’t “simpler.” Nor did they have lower standards. They were content because they saw their society improve every year.

In contrast, our society is going backward. The trends that make us unhappy like horrible commutes, expensive education, and mindless bureaucracies keep getting worse. A significant reason is that as employees and customers of big bureaucracies and corporations, we’re powerless to demand better.

But the bigger reason for our society’s decline is our belief in Left and Right political ideologies.

We keep alternating which “side” controls our governments. But nothing changes with either because the truth is we give Conservative and Progressive doctrines far too much credit. Regular people on Main Street following one (or hating another) are never going to solve our problems.

When I began writing this book in September 2019, I wanted to (somehow) convince the middle-class to stop putting so much faith in Left and Right writers, commentators, and thinkers. Not only do partisan leaders avoid living on Main Street. Both ideologies were invented centuries ago; before humanity even had electricity. Their ideas and platforms are simply too old and outdated to give us happiness in modern civilization.

It’s okay to change our ideologies. Most people don’t realize that. But we’re free to pick and choose whichever one we want. There’s nothing special about any political doctrine. Each was created by a human being to help society prosper.

So, if you’re not happy with your life, you’re *supposed* to change the philosophy that rules your nation.

And now you should.

Because this one virus is highlighting just how shaky our foundations really are.

There have been hundreds of pandemics throughout history—and yet today, we were caught with our pants down. Why? Why was President Trump impeached? What was the reason? Even if you agreed with it then, was that media circus really what our government and political energy should have been completely obsessed with only a few months ago?

Both partisan “side” are the faces of the exact same coin. When President Obama tried to overhaul the health-care system, was any commentator, strategist, or politician talking about pandemic plans? We have fire drills throughout our society; why don’t we have pandemic plans?

RUNNING HORSES FIRE BRIGAND

Here’s why. Instead of governing our society, Left/Right ideologues, commentators, and columnists have been blaming each other for their inability to get things done.

I mean, if you ignored an election, would you even notice who won? If you looked at a COVID-19 infection map, could you uncover which states, provinces, and countries are governed by Left or Right parties?

You couldn’t, because Left/Right have no original ideas. They keep tinkering with government policy because neither understands how modern technology works. But no law encourages traffic, climate change, or forces our workdays to get more fraustrating. Remember, Harry Potter didn’t write down new spells and assume Voldemort would go away. Protagonists solve problems with real-life objects.

This isn’t just a pandemic. It’s a test to see how well we can deal with life’s inevitable challenges. Depressions, wars, famines, and epidemics are inevitable and not defeated by TV arguments or words in a regulation handbook.

We’re struggling today, because our political ideologies are so old they’re stagnating our government, culture, and civilization. I happened to be writing this book long before the coronavirus. Suddenly history has given us all a sad reality check.

To upgrade our civilization and re-attain stability, health, and happiness, we need to revamp a lot of things. Techvolution, a new philosophy that empowers the people of Main Street, will help us get there.

*Please enable the sound.* The Office *shows us how much BS we endure as employees and customers. Ordinary people vote Left/Right hoping for change. But to actually improve our lives, we need a new philosophy. One that gives us society’s levers of power. Credit:* [Wisecrack](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Lngf3J8vN4)

## Our Levers of Power

Do me a favor. Open up Skype or FaceTime. Now check your Instagram feed. Then get Google Maps up and running.

I’m serious, open these apps up. Come back when you’re done.

Isn’t it cool that within a few seconds, you can chat with friends, see what’s trending, and receive pin-point directions? Even as society is under quarantine, you have these formidable levers of power at your disposal. I mean, can you even imagine writing driving directions on a napkin. What about driving back and forth to Blockbuster (twice) every time your family watches a single movie?

Can you imaigne the waiting lines at video rental stores? Good things this is’t 1990!

Okay, so now get your medical records ready. Next up, get your health metrics like heart rate, temperature, and sleep cycles. Excellent, now let’s evaluate your risk factor to COVID-19 by comparing your statistics to the records of those unlucky people who got sick, especially the ones who are seriously ill.

What characteristics like blood types, fitness, and genetics is this new disease targetting?

*Please enable sound.*[Credit JRE Clips.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9PwTgpTlJBg)

I pray your risk factor is small. But, if you’re in trouble, what does your nurse or doctor say to do? Don’t tell me, but I hope it was at least calming to hear specialized medical advice.

Hey, don’t forget, there’s a possible drug shortage. So, what is your pharmacist recommending? Do you have enough prescriptions? What should you start doing now to plan for the worse?

After you’ve collaborated with these health professionals, quickly find out what your health insurance company will pay for. Just in case, it’s good to know before disaster strikes.

Phew, that was educational. Isn’t it good to know all this stuff! Apps and gadgets are cool, but I personally think knowledge is the ultimate lever of power.

## Problems

Wait, wait, wait. FaceTime worked, so did Instagram and Google Maps. But is the medical records “lever” stuck? What will the ER doctor assess you by in case of a flood of patients?

Did I hear that right, you aren’t in contact with your doctor? What about your pharmacist? You’re waiting on hold with your insurance company! Insurance is basically a bank-account for disasters, and now during a pandemic, you have no idea how much money you have?

This all sounds like I’m talking to someone living through the 1918 Spanish Flu Pandemic. It’s like science-fiction in reverse. Because, if someone in 1918 was teleported to 2020, they’d fit in just fine.

Well, at least many of our students, teachers, and workers can learn, work, and collaborate from home in these tough times.

WHAT! You’re still driving to work! Or worse, your work or school is closed!

What the fuck is wrong with your laptop and the internet at home? Wasn’t there a plan to keep things moving in case of earthquakes (San Francisco 1989), riots (Vancouver 2011), hurricanes (New Orleans 2005), city fires (Fort McMurray 2016), floods (New Jersey 2012), pandemics (H1N1 2009) and blizzards and seasonal flu (every winter in North America)?

Responding to this pandemic should have been a slight modification of dealing with a rainstorm or blizzard. But it wasn’t. I wonder what we were all doing before March 2020.

THE OFFICE MEETING PICTURE *No plans but more meetings, memos, and micromanagement. Credit:* [The Office](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Office_(American_TV_series)).

## People in High Places

Left and Right can’t help upgrade our society. But they don’t operate our businesses, bureaucracies, and daily lives.

Upon reflection, it’s no surprise we didn’t have a plan for this COVID-19 outbreak. Because we don’t have procedures for any disaster. Because our way of life is controlled by a select group of people looking to protect their high-paying positions.

I was an insurance claims adjuster for seven years, the person with the checkbook you talk to after horrible events like car accidents and house fires. Despite promoting a low-risk lifestyle, the insurance industry still didn’t prepare for disasters themselves. One example, we adjusters were forced to drive into an office during heat-waves, blizzards, and ice-storms.

It’s quite surreal to speak with people who had a tragic car crash on the exact same roads your boss is demanding you drive. You can have a debate about telecommuting versus offices. But not when the streets have three feet of snow.

This speaks to our society’s fundamental problem. Regular people aren’t ready for bad times because we aren’t free to decide what’s best for ourselves in good times.

It’s our own fault.

We gave the levers of power in our schools, hospitals, companies, and bureaucracies, to the same people that were giving us unhappy lives as customers and workers. That’s why our society is shutting down during this coronavirus pandemic.

Should we really have expected better?

*Please enable the sound.* [Credit Office Space](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Office_Space)

## Unhappy is a Sign of an Unhealthy Society

Our workplaces are riddled with too many bureaucrats, managers and, consultants. This way of life made us very unhappy. I wrote a book to try to convince you, it also made us dangerously complacent too. And now, sadly, it’s obvious for everyone to see and feel every time we hear “the virus is getting closer.”

Our society is fragile against disasters because of our “eight different bosses” culture. They’ve controlled our manufacturing, hospitals, insurance companies, and many other industries for generations.

As a result, when using our education system, making a claim, signing a mortgage, it’s like we’re still renting DVDs from Blockbuster. As in, we’re stuck with the hours of operation, DVD selection, and corporate policies of the rich and powerful with no ability to have our say.

Having our say makes all the difference in the world. It’s the difference between being lost at sea with a radio hearing the search parties. And holding a two-way radio so you can tell the rescuers where you are.

But, the eight different bosses will never give you that power.

Why would they? To keep their positions and prestige, they’re following the old maxim, the one with the money has the control, and the one who needs it stays under control.

And crucially, holding onto this power isn’t actually their fault. We’ll see later in this book, the massive management of today’s world is a holdover from the Industrial Age.

We’re all simply waiting to evolve a new work culture.

This is why regular people have super-advanced apps like Skype, Instagram, and Google Maps in their private lives. But, we’re watching CNN, checking mailboxes for unemployment checks, and wondering how we’ll earn a living while an killer disease searches the globe for human hosts.

Being so powerless is needless bullshit, to say the least.

When nagging about TPS reports made us unhappy, we bought bigger TVs, cars, and houses. When the middle-class got too angry, we’d turn to Left and Right politics. We thought to march in a Tea Party parade, or watching a Bernie Sanders political speech, was doing our part to solve our society’s problems.

It wasn’t. And now we’re paying for it.

Because we’re depending on our weakened manufacturing base, dated insurance processes, and overburdened health-care system to stop this pandemic.

*Please enable the sound. The rise of the middlemen. Credit:* [Wisecrack](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Lngf3J8vN4).

## Our Old Health Care System

Doctors study really hard to learn the knowledge that keeps us healthy. That’s why they’re rightfully respected in every society on Earth.

Despite that esteem, [in this TED talk from 2015](https://youtu.be/mafghkNmKgo) Dr. Alieta Eck discusses how much of a let-down her job is. You see, when she started medical school in the early ’80s, she thought practicing medicine meant making deep connections with patients. She pictured detailed examinations, home visits, and being there when needed most.

Instead, Dr. Eck got something far different. To her sadness, the Main Street economy, where customers directly dealt with specialists like carpenters, tailors, and doctors, was long gone.

True to the trend ravaging our economy, what Dr. Eck got was ever-more bureaucrats running interference drills. Since 1970, the valuable administration of clinics and hospitals was taken over by government and corporate middlemen. These people created ever-more paperwork to put themselves in between doctors and their patients.

Notice I said paperwork, because actual paper forms, regulations, and fax machines help delay processing and justify more bureaucratic positions. That’s why our society doesn’t have “Medical FaceTime” or “InstaInsuranceHealth” apps connecting patients directly with their therapists, nurses, pharmacists, nutritionists, and doctors.

Using digital technology to its full potential would put many micro-managing middlemen out of a job.

Health Admins \_ “Hello, Peter,” memos, and eight different bosses multiplied by 3500%, and trending up no matter which political party we elected into power. Credit: [PNHP](http://www.pnhp.org/publications/NEJM5_2_91.htm).\_

Is it a surprise the Internet Age started in 1970?

As computers got better it made typing and printing increasingly easy. A small group of administrators turned into almost countless regulators, managers, executives, and lawyers who used computers to make more memos, rules, and regulations.

Using new technology for themselves, and keeping it away from customers, is how the middlemen kept growing.

Some middlemen are in fact needed. Many however, are not. All of them have been sucking our health-care system dry for generations while holding back new technologies from reaching the hands of the middle-class.

Main Street doesn’t notice how screwed we’re getting.

## Nobody Is There

“Why don’t they have enough medical supplies?”

“Why didn’t they have pandemic plans?”

Too many of us on Main Street though calling ourselves consumers and taxpayers meant it was okay to assume “they” inside Big Business or Big Government is looking out for our best interest.

Have you ever demanded to hospitals stock months of medical supplies? Have you ever seen a politicians pandemic plan?

Why would “they” do these things, if you’re not?

Our problem is we’ve been obsessed with Left/Right politics and thought “fighting for our health-care” meant picking aside for (or against) policies like Obama-care.

In the end, the Left’s ideology of Big Government and the right’s ideology of Big Business came together to make a philosophy of Big Problems for Main Street. A 3500% increase in government and corporate middlemen means cleaners, paramedics, nurses, and doctors have been understaffed, underfunded, and underpowered for generations.

A lab inspector from the state came and wanted to know who was running this (lab) machine. And she wanted to be sure they all have high-school diplomas. Well, we had RN degrees, MD degrees. That didn’t suffice. She wanted to see high-school diplomas. That’s an example of mindless bureaucracy. [Dr. Alieta Eck.](https://youtu.be/mafghkNmKgo?t=54)

Talk to anyone on the frontline of today’s pandemic and ask them if they feel ready. Face masks are already running low. So are disinfectant cleaners. Hand sanitizers are often empty. More ventilators are needed, but no one knows where to get them. Even with so many bureaucrats and historical examples, no one was planning for a disaster.

Likewise, whenever there is a bad storm, our car and property insurance claim departments scramble to keep up.

Long-time and loyal customers can wait hours to speak with somebody and months to get their checks. During my time, I’d often have to explain to customers why the insurance company takes their money digitally but insists on paying claims with paper checks sent via snail mail.

I felt sorry for them. These customers paid their bills, and their claim was approved. Yet, they were like a ship-wrecked man on a beach, desperately waving at passing ships because he has no real levers of power to wield.

*This is exactly how people respond after being on hold for 45 minutes. I’m sadly only exaggerating a bit.Credit:* [*Cast Away*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cast_Away)*.*

There is no good reason my customers had to wait. But like I said above, the powerful managers and executives won’t give regular people a fair deal if they don’t have to.

It’s sad if you think about it.

Because the people who pay the bills and taxes are like extras watching their society, instead of being active players in it.

Think of this pandemic. A person during the Spanish Flu Pandemic of 1918 got their news on radios and newspapers. What would they say about us doing the same while holding supercomputers, HD cameras, and biometric sensors in our hands?

If you believe in Leftist politics, explain how more regulations or single-payer health insurance will help us prepare for the next pandemic. Coverage is crucial, but have a vote on the issue and move on. There are many other ways to improve our health-care system, such as comparative analysis of treatments, bio-testing sewers to track disease, or making every insurance more natural to use.

If you’re a Rightist, ask how many corporate boardrooms want their employees to be financially independent and capable of taking months off work when needed? Practically none is the answer. Then how is more corporate employment the best way to make regular people more secure?

The truth is, at this moment, people need solar panels, stores of food in their cellars, and a robust local supply system. Even better would be online education, seamless communication with medical professionals, easy tests for the virus, insurance apps that customers control, and the ability to still make a living during a disaster.

Regular people can have all of this with modern technology. That’s the hidden truth of today’s society. For example, watch [The Pharmicist](https://www.netflix.com/ca/title/81002576) on Netflix, and you’ll see how a simple online database of prescriptions stopped oxycontin pill mills.

Big Business or Big Government only made nearly a decade after it was needed.

But with open-source software (the free technology that makes programs like Instagram possible), the public could have banded together and built a secure and straightforward prescription database that would have prevented the turmoil, sorrorow and needless waste of [500,000 doctors prescribed opioid overdoses.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Opioid_epidemic_in_the_United_States)

With today’s electronics and software, we don’t need to depend on Big Government or Big Business. Main Street doesn’t have to give the levers of power to middlemen.

In a nutshell, if someone from 1918 were to see us today, they’d marvel at FaceTime and Youtube, but then say we have the tools of science fiction, just not the way of life.

Techvolution will give it to you, me, and everyone else on Main Street.

Cleaners I’m going to guess these aren’t bureaucrats or managers. Photo by Tedward Quinn on Unsplash https://unsplash.com/photos/o\_ez64ErEbQ

## Segway

A crisis should teach us to evolve. But, the many in recent memory, from the [loss of American manufacturing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manufacturing_in_the_United_States), [Savings and Loan Crisis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Savings_and_loan_crisis), [Dot Com Crash](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dot-com_bubble), [rising cost of formal education](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/College_tuition_in_the_United_States), and the [Great Recession](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Recession) our society borrowed more money instead. We subsidized and bailed out the “too big to fail” manufacturers, insurance companies, colleges, and banks, who caused the problems.

The truth is, these big institutions are holdovers from the Industrial Age. But, rather than admit we needed to fundamentally rework our society, we used money to sweep the bailouts, and bullshitization of work, under the rug.

Now we can’t sweep anything, anywhere. This pandemic is something different.

Printing more money can’t kill a virus. Regular people literally can’t go shopping or watch professional sports to distract themselves from the bad news. After so many crises were ignored, this one is actually shutting our society down.

The public scare, economic fall, and makeshift plans caused by this pandemic is not a surprise. Our society has been getting more in debt, wasteful, surrounded by red-tape, dependent on foreign manufacturing, and micro-managed for years.

The coronavirus is only exposing problems we’ve ignored for years.

If you want to assume things will go back to normal soon, then I appreciate you taking the time to read this far, I really do, but it’ll be best if you stop. This book isn’t for you.

You can return to watching fictional stories and hoping for the best. Or, even worse, you can go back to following infotainment broadcasts on your one-way radios and TVs. I’m sure Conservative and Progressive commentators and ideologues blaming each other for your problems will entertain you for years to come.

The truth is COVID-19 is a wake-up call.

One asking regular people to step up. Because doing our job, shopping a lot, voting every four years is not enough to earn a healthy society. We can’t assume Big Government or Big Business will educate our kids, make a healthy medical system, or provide a reliable livelihood.

If we make relatively small changes now, we’ll save ourselves so much grief in the future.

I know this because of this one historical fact. The Industrial Age ended in 1969. The Internet Age started in 1970. Since this handoff, the middle-class has gotten better technology in our private lives. But, the Industrial Age middlemen have blocked our evolution to a digital way of life. We can’t keep pushing back the upgrade.

Thankfully regular people can unpower the middlemen with our own “two-way radios.” Modern apps, computers, and the internet are that mighty.

Only if the specialists on Main Street reach for the power. If they do, the doctors, mechanics, therapists, makers, sewists, technicians, plumbers, educators, everyone with a frontline skill, can hold our society’s levers of power once again. Only then will the middle-class pay down our debts, eliminate nasty commutes, erase micro-management, and deal with pandemics with skill instead of makeshift plans.

To get to this new world, Main Street needs a new philosophy.

Here it is. Its big lesson is this. The middle-class must solve our problems with digital technology now. If we don’t, we’ll soon be suffering something much worse than unhappiness and scary pandemics. There’s only so much longer we can keep running our civilization on the fumes of Left and Right ideology before our debts explode, or bureaucracies implode, and our bullshit jobs aren’t worth working anymore.

*We have so many bullshit jobs because we still use Industrial Age culture. To make the most of modern technology, we need a new philosophy. If we don’t evolve soon, we’ll end up erased from history like the Soviets.* [Wisecrack](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Lngf3J8vN4).

## Note to the reader

As you’ve already seen, I used many images and videos throughout the book. I did so because visuals help explain ideas better. Also, since total strangers made the videos (I only edited them down), they exemplify how powerul the internet is. Today, millions of regular people are communicating their opinions and expertise directly. Not since the printing-press has information empowered ordinary people so much. These content creators and their audiences are doing historic work. Of course, all credit for the media goes to them.

Also, I use pop culture references such as those of Star Wars, Star Trek, Harry Potter, The Office, and computer games (e.g., Civilization). If you’re not a fan, don’t worry too much. If we were in Ancient Greece, I’d use Greek Mythology. If we were in Victorian Britain, I’d use Shakespeare. Using familiar stories is a more natural way to explain philosophy, politics, and in general, to relate to one another. Of course, all due credit goes to the media’s owners.

I am still getting reader feedback, so if you like to contribute anything [let me know](https://www.techvolution.io/contact/).

# INTRODUCTION

## Politics

Donald Trump is the savior of Western Civilization. If that turns your emotions on, with tears or cheers, then you are missing the point of politics. Politics isn’t about voting for a political party, advocating for a political cause, and it’s definitely not screaming at a TV. The government is so big—with so many politicians, civil servants, companies, and interest groups fighting for control, it will never respond to your small voice.

Tears or cheers don’t make a person powerful.

On the contrary, you see, exercising, composting, teaching your kids to prepare for the worst *does* change the world. Good decisions change and improve your world—giving you freedom from dependency and power over your part of society. And, since power is to politics what money is to finance, your personal choices are always your most potent political weapon.

The question is, how do we increase your powers. The answer, we’ll find out in this book, is better technology, and the self-awareness to use it to improve your life. But this isn’t a self-help book about making you “happy.” It’s about making you powerful so you can earn your happiness.

For decades, our way of life has been trying to evolve to the Internet Age. But, the established powers of the Industrial Age have been holding us back. Our society’s ability to deal with life’s inevitable pitfalls will only get worse until we completely change our politics.

Thus, this current state of affairs over the coronavirus gives the middle class a unique opportunity to learn a big lesson.

Only if we grab hold of modern tools and join the fight to upgrade our society, can we live safer, more predictable, and happy lives again. It’s an excellent opportunity, one we should all jump at.

## New Tech, New Age, New Philosophy

Life on this Earth has never been easy. However, our lives improve a lot with better technology. Deaths from disease, famine, and war have all decreased as our technological power has gone up. We can even look at this pandemic and see how lucky we are.

I’m serious. Think of this, before 1880, doctors didn’t even wash their hands before surgeries; nobody knew what bacteria or viruses were. Everyone thought disease was caused by “stale air” and would open windows in hospitals if too many people were getting sick.

In 2020, we’re all washing hands, isolating ourselves, and already working on a COVID-19 vaccine.

We still have many problems today, but our technology in medicine, agriculture, education has given us lives our ancestors would envy.

And now we have computers and the internet. They are game-changers. Laptops, digital cameras, tablets, drones, bio-sensors are all millions of times better than just 30 years ago. Modern technology dramatically empowers us to keep fighting off pandemics, hunger, ignorance, and war.

But, only if we use them to keep evolving and staying ahead of our problems.

In Nature, lifeforms evolve in jumps called eras or epochs. Likewise, humanity develops new technology in leaps; what we call “ages.” When a new age comes, its technology is so unique and powerful, it changes how society functions. Things were very different in the Stone Age in comparison to the Bronze Age, for example.

Today we’re going from the Industrial Age (1760-1969) to the Internet Age (1970-). It can be hard to appreciate all the transformations. There’s a lot to think about when civilization’s entire way of life upgrades to new technology. I’ve been thinking about our technological evolution for years and only now have a grasp.

Improving our technology is hard work, but at least we understand how to do research and development. Upgrading politics isn’t so straightforward. Evolving new policies, politics, and philosophies usually happen with public uprisings, civil wars, or revolutions.

I want to help you understand your importance in our political evolution. Getting you in the game is the fastest way to evolve. And it’s much more peaceful to too.

The key point to realize is that in 1970, personal computers and the internet came online. Since then, computer geeks, hackers, and innovators have been upgrading our society to the Internet Age. All the while, the “eight different bosses” inside Industrial Age companies and government bureaucracies have been holding us back to keep their obsolete products and services alive.

Being forced to use outdated technology is why middle-class life is can be so unhappy. It’s why we work bullshit jobs, still use so much oil, can’t understand the tax code, and now live in uncertainty during this pandemic. Middle-class life will only get better once we finish the Internet Age upgrade.

There’s no shortcuts, cheats, or gimmicks. There’s just you and your friends on Main Street who must do the work.

The first step is a new mindset. We the people already have amazingly powerful digital tools. We only need to believe in modern philosophy to upgrade our way of life to the Internet Age.

[[Upgrade-Setup](/img\diagrams\techvolution-upgrade-setup.png)

*This is our goal. Happily, we’ve already upgraded our technology. We only need to upgrade our culture to utilize what our tools can do.*

## Looking Up

There’s a lot to realize when thinking about human evolution. I found it very helpful to “look up” and imagine what our community looks like from above. Looking up lets you “look down” and gain a proper perspective on our society.

I didn’t just imagine this better perspective; I got to see it. Play computer games like *Age of Empires, Anno 1800*, and *Civilization*, and you’ll get to as well.

You’ll be the “player god” of a civilization. A virtual divinity who knows all and sees all, and who puts its general will into action using an array of buttons, switches, and toggles. As you play the game, you’ll use these levers of power to save up money and decide where to invest it by selecting what to research, where to place buildings, and especially when to click “upgrade”.

Pressing that crucial button magically transforms every factory, hospital, road, house, and citizen, to the technology of the modern age. Below, you’ll see a person being the player god in the game *Anno 1800*.

Credit: [Anno 1800](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EchYL334T7Q)

The above is a computer game, of course, but it represents reality pretty well. We’re all in there somewhere right now, trying to figure out how to earn a living while the game plays around us.

That’s why this book’s cover page is a regular person standing on Main Street—a single guy or girl in civilization. His or her job is to do what’s best for themselves and help society prosper. Gazing up for guidance, the character sees heroes and villains. In the sky high above is the mythical “player god,” whose ultimately the one making the decisions.

Will the player god act to benefit society or himself?

Illustration

Illustration

In a computer game, all of civilization is the player’s responsibility. The player must think of the greater good, save up money, and make plans for the future. That’s why the player god controls all the levers of power. Such as what science to research, what culture to adopt, and what philosophy to use.

In reality, we change society when we have personal savings, maintain our cars well, and build a new energy-efficient house. Funny to think about, but our everyday choices determine what happens in our entire civilization.

You can see the power of a single person in this pandemic. Will enough of us decide to wash our hands and self-isolate to “slow the curve”?

It’s an open question. Because we often don’t think of ourselves as being “player gods.” It’s easy for regular people to forget how important their lives really are. But that’s the big picture. It’s all our individual choices that make up the player god in our real-life game of civilization.

The more individuals realize the big picture and act like their actions matter, the happier their society. And the job of inspiring individuals to believe in the big picture is the work of philosophy.

It’s a philosophy that makes people care about something bigger than themselves. Nationalism did it for Revolutionary France. Communism created the unrealized dreams of the Soviet Union.

Think of the American Founding Fathers. They didn’t merely force 13 colonies to come together and make a new country. It was the philosophy written in many pamphlets, books, newspapers, the Declaration of Independence, and especially the US Consitution that made strangers realize the big picture. To all prosper, they needed to become Americans who believed in:

*“We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.”*

This new philosophy is how America formed a new political community. And this “Liberty Bell” player god has been kicking ass in the game of civilization ever since. That’s why the rest of Western Civilization, more or less, has followed America’s example.

So for contemporary Americans, Canadians, Brits, Aussies, Kiwis, etc. what the heck counts as ethical decisions today? Where should we steer our player god? Every newspaper, pundit, and politician says they’re fighting for the good of our society. But our politics have so much disagreement, how can a regular person know the difference between heroes and villains?

Today, we’re all looking up from Main Street, trying to figure if Donald Trump is evil, or if the United Nations is trying to make a world government. We ask if CNN is manufacturing fake news, or maybe “all of them” are. If so, what’s real news?

Our questions never stop. Should the government-run health insurance, or a big corporation regulated by the government? Is climate change real? If the world is suffering so bad, why do “green” obsessed workplaces force us to commute in every day? And, if telecommuting sometimes was unacceptable before March 2020. Why are we being asked to do it at the drop of a hat, without an apology?

That’s why, during this pandemic, many of us have stopped asking questions and started looking for better answers.

Wouldn’t it be cool if we had clear answers between good and evil? After all, if we step up, we can all be part of the player god as much as anyone else. That’s why I created Main Street’s new philosophy.

One that bypasses today’s “current events” news cycle, and childish bickering of political commentators. My philosophy wants the middle-class to take hold of the new digital levers of power. Only then will regular people no longer depend on the social services of Big Government or the corporate employment of Big Business.

Only with a new philosophy will regular people become player gods again.

If you were lost at sea, you’d grip a two-way radio like it was your life-line; because it would be. Likewise, Main Street will only enjoy greater security, freedom, dignity, productivity, and happiness when we squeeze the powerful apps and electronics of the glorious Internet Age.

Please enable sound. This game is politics. We always have a list of options to choose from. But it’s holding the levers of power that let us pick the ones best for ourselves. [Credit: Civilization 6](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yKUFvo3_FYQ)

## Good Politics Is a Moving Target Because You’re the One Who’s Moving

A common philosophy unites player gods so we can “play the game” together. There are always plenty of philosophies to choose from. The player god—we, collectively—must pick one that empowers its members to use modern technology to solve real-life problems. Only then will society live a good life.

When a player in a computer game upgrades technology, we can see the changes. Installing a sewer, damming a river, building a road, is very obvious. But we can’t see philosophy change so easily; because it’s our minds that evolve to believe in a new way of thinking.

Detaching yourself from the current ruling philosophy can be very hard. Playing Anno 1800 or Civilization 6 is the best way to give yourself a push, and understand that every ideology is temporary.

You’ll see it easily when you play the computer game. You’ll understand that each game lasts many generations, so every person is a stepping stone to the next era. Just as a sailboat is a stepping stone to a steamship, every person’s philosophical beliefs are a stepping stone to something better.

*Please enable sound.* [Credit: Civilization 6](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NLoDMsqJkE)

The video above shows a “tech tree” of new technologies, tools, civic, and philosophy upgrades. In the real world, just like improving our technology, we also upgrade our philosophy with a “click.”

But every citizen interprets the ruling philosophy differently. Which is why we have Conservative or Progressive. Libertarian or Socialist. Republican or Democrat. But it’s crucial to understand, every viewpoint is waiting to be upgraded by a more advanced version in the culture tree.

Still, even with ideologies to guide our philosophical opinions, understanding our political views is hard. We all look up at the same doctrines—we all try to “think of the big picture,” yet we arrive at different answers. Our opinions are a by-product of our psychology, job, skillset, family, geography, culture, ethnicity, religion, time-period. Who can understand how all these factors intermix to make a political opinion? Why does one friend cry tears of sadness, the other of joy, on the same election night?

I can’t explain it either. But I can help you understand politics today.

Because at the dawn of a new age, idealistic inventors create a flood of new technologies. And a wealthy establishment always fights to maintain their control over society.

Both innovators and establishment want their philosophy to click with the people and become the ruling philosophy. The establishment uses the rules of the old philosophy to persuade, or force, the people to keep the rich in power. At the same time, inventors distribute new technology to lure people away from the past.

And here is when everyone on Main Street makes a big choice.

Does the regular person help the protagonists evolve civilization by using modern tools to change their way of life? Or let the antagonists hold back progress by following old lifestyles and rules?

If you stay out of the fight, you support the establishment by keeping things the way they are. That makes you what computer games call a “non-playing character”. Which means you’re basically an extra watching your civilization as if it was a movie you can’t control. However, if you grab hold of the new levers of power and upgrade society, you’re a player god, playing the game of civilization.

Player gods help society evolve.

[Americans Liberty](img\diagrams\boston-public-library-o_ez64ErEbQ-unsplash.jpg) *Two times regular people stepped up to become player gods. Credit:* [Boston Public Library](https://unsplash.com/photos/o_ez64ErEbQ)

We hit the Internet Age in 1970. Since then, hackers, geniuses, and geeks have been fighting to give the incredible power of computers to Main Street. The middlemen who control Industrial Age technology are fighting them off with things like fancy marketing campaigns, copyright laws, and political lobbying.

And everyone on Main Street makes a choice. Do you step up to help the heroes?

That’s a choice you, the person reading this right now, has to make. It’s a choice as big as any you’re ever going to make. Because if we don’t upgrade now, it only means your kids and your grandkids are destined to live even unhappier lives. The burden of transforming society will only fall on their shoulders.

A bit heavy to pull on your parental heartstrings, but it’s true. Life on Main Street will keep getting worse until we upgrade to the Internet Age. Evil things like debt and depression, hatred and hunger, war, and pandemics, only stay away if we keep evolving our technology and culture.

Don’t worry. We can finish the Internet Age upgrade. Even now, during this pandemic, we can start to upgrade our way of life. People only need to believe in a new philosophy that teaches us our innate power as player gods.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ymI5Uv5cGU4?t=384 *This video lets you see “the game of” civilization in our real history. You don’t need to watch it all, but note how each new civilization is a group of people changing their technology, culture, and ruling philosophy. We survive and rise as protagonists and player gods, or decline and fall as antagonists and extras. Britain, France, America, and the rest of the Left and Right won the Industrial Age. But the winner of the Internet Age is still up to grasp.*

## We Upgrade our Politics Now, or We Lose the Game

Politics is currently quite emotional. Actually, from the disputed elections of the American government to the radicalization of European politics, I think it’s better to say Westerners fucking hate each other. And many don’t know why. They’re just angry. And not in the “I stepped in the puddle” sort of way. Mad “because the other side is ruining everything!” kind of way.

Let’s get some perspective. Today, regular people are increasingly unhappy. To cope, we pick an ideology to help us. Conservatism and Progressivism are the big choices because both spanned the world on the back of the Industrial Age and the era of mass-production. Conservatives fight for free-markets to help society create more property, Progressives fight for property redistribution to keep our community fair. This divide causes a tug of war over regulations, tax rates, subsidies, and other government policies.

However, digital property is mass-produced and distributed. Digital books, paperwork, audio, and video are automatically both. As our world becomes more virtual in the Internet Age, Industrial Age mentalities grow obsolete.

But rather than rethink hundreds of years of “Left vs. Right” politics, both sides turn extremist.

Old-school businessmen keep their Conservative troops loyal with constant stories of “fighting evil communists who are coming for your money!” De-regulation, tax-cuts, free-trade are among the right-wing rallying calls. In contrast, social justice warriors keep left-wing politics exciting by “fighting racist fascists who want to oppress you!” Their choir forms around demands for climate justice, diversity indoctrination, and making up pronouns.

In short, the Left thinks politics is one long Woodstock activism festival against selfish fascists. The Right believes politics is defending the idyllic *Leave It to Beaver* suburban life against lazy communists.

In our communities, nationwide fascism and communism (thankfully) died decades ago. Meaning few people in Western societies label themselves fascist or communist. Left and Right brand their enemies these names because neither understands digital technology helps our nation prosper (as Progressives dream) by forcing individuals to better themselves (as Conservatives demand). With their founding goals achieved in the Internet Age, Left and Right leaders need to keep their believers in the choir singing against “the other side” to stay alive.

Fighting phantoms distract Main Street with great television.

In fact, spectacular entertainment is their strategy. Left and Right ideologues don’t want regular people to become player gods of the Internet Age. They want their supporters to stay extras in the Industrial Age. When Main Street complains about how much modern life sucks, CNN, Fox News, MSNBC, and the rest put up “Breaking News! The Other Side Is Ruining Our Country!” to distract their believers from the fact both Left and Right are out of date.

Blockbuster sequels do the same thing. Without more special effects and sex scenes, the people would too quickly notice how boring franchise movies are.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tEczkhfLwqM *In the Industrial Age, Left and Right used to cooperate all the time. Not anymore. This video excellently shows the growing hatred between them. It’s about the US Congress but applies in every Western country. Notice how the divide started in the 1970s and has grown since. That’s because neither Left or Right knows what to do in the Internet Age, so they blame each other for the society’s growing list of problems. Trusting in Left/Right politics (both sides) is why we’re increasingly unhappy.*

The answer to countering hateful ideologies is to upgrade our philosophy.

Sadly, in history, upgrading only happens when old doctrines kill each other off. The Thirty Years War (1618-1648) is an all too good example. This horrible war between European kingdoms was fought during the Science Age. Sadly, politics hadn’t upgraded yet. Europe was still run by a powerful nobility spreading the Medieval Age philosophy of “a nobles divine right to rule.”

When Main Street demanded a better life, the ruling philosophy only had two options to choose from; Catholicism and Protestantism. Regular people picked a team and slaughtered “the other side” on behalf of “divine” kings. One author summarized The Thirty Years War as “a warning of the dangers of entrusting power to those who feel summoned by God to war, or feel that their sense of justice and order is the only one valid.”

[The Hanging](/img\diagrams\The_Hanging_by_Jacques_Callot.jpg) The Hanging by Jacques Callot. Created between 1632 and 1633 to show how regular people were treated by both “sides” during the war. Credit: [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Les_Grandes_Mis%C3%A8res_de_la_guerre).

The Thirty Years War was extremely brutal. One in five Europeans died from its pillaging, battles, and massacres. The carnage only stopped when both sides were exhausted. The worst part was when the horror ended, the people realized they were no better off, and their problem was all kings. That’s why philosophers soon wrote an upgraded philosophy of Democracy, and it wasn’t long until ordinary people adopted it as their new ruling philosophy. As player gods, the people fought against divine kings in the American Revolution (1776), the French Revolution (1789), and many more uprisings.

The hatred between Catholics and Protestants should sound scarily similar. Left and Right hate each other just as much today. But today’s fights over presidential impeachments, border walls, and trigger words are a smokescreen. Neither Right or Left can see or admit; they’re both very similar because both are way behind the times in our modern age.

Their outdatedness and hatred are what’s causing our civilization to struggle.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J2Pjudf0810 *These yahoos are what “Left/Right” philosophies have devolved to. Ms. Obama gave a speech, how can it be great or horrible? This pettiness isn’t politics. But because we often listen to these commentators, reporters, and columnists, our elected politicians are forced to care what they think. Real politics put modern technology into ordinary people’s hands. Once we demand that, so will our politicians.*

## The Internet Age Needs a New Philosophy

For our society to see the big picture again, we need a new philosophy. One that looks ahead towards the boundless horizon of the Internet Age. One that considers the work of protagonists like Tesla, SpaceX, Blue Origin, as a sneak peek for the wondrous future each person should be building now, bit by bit.

I’ve studied this topic for years. Academically, at the University of Toronto, I worked on political philosophy, history, and innovation. But I learned far more on the frontline as a projectionist, contractor, line worker, account manager, claims adjuster, and especially when inventing a digital tool for an Industrial Age industry. I wrote this book to my fellow people on Main Street today; here’s how we fix our problems and win the game.

You’ll like it best if you’re sick of contemporary infotainment politics but love checking-out what Elon is up to.

Because you’ll understand most of today’s problems are—with digital technology—quite simple engineering problems. We don’t have to invent impossible technology like time-travel to solve road traffic, personal loneliness, or rising health-care costs.

You’ll really like this book if you know that unless we see ourselves, our kids, and our grandkids in the video below, evolution will find someone who does.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5KdE0p2joJw

That’s our ancestors in the video, and it should be all of us today too. So, if you despise your job, see conspiracies everywhere, worry about climate change, get intimidated by the uber-rich, are scared about COVID-19… fine, you’ve spotted a problem.

What are you going to do about it? Wait to cast a vote in an election, or use a tool to solve the problem?

For all the negatives of this pandemic, I think there’s one big positive. Most people are stepping up, staying home, self-isolating, and social distancing. A few weeks ago, these habits didn’t even exist, and it’s already taboo to flaunt them. Our society can still adapt when we realize we should.

That’s really good because we have a lot more evolution left to do.

I wrote this book to get you dreaming about them all. It’s written to be like *New Atlantis*, *On Social Contract*, and *Common Sense*. All books that helped start modern democracies by making unhappy people realize the big picture. That our choices are our most potent political weapon. That with advanced technology, our choices are, in fact, levers for change.

Today, if we don’t step up to upgrade our politics, we’ll keep suffering the unknowns of a degenerating Industrial age society. We’ll stay unhappy extras watching stories of phantom communists and fascists, instead of gazing up to a future as player gods of the Internet Age.

And if we stay non-playing characters, at least with this book, our kids can read what their parents could have done as they regret the choices of player gods who lost because they refused to play the game.

## The Grand Mission of Techvolution

Writer David Mamet once said not trying to please a group of people, means being able to see Nature. So, I embraced that idea when writing this book. Meaning, I didn’t try to please any pundit, reporter, or professor. I’m a regular guy who wrote this for myself and my fellow people on Main Street.

Saying that Techvolution has three parts:

**I. A New Philosophy**: This part shows how to upgrade our philosophy to the Internet Age. Its purpose is to empower Main Street to see the big picture. That we’re all player gods who must use apps, electronics, and the internet to solve our problems now. Fittingly, the best indicator of our progress is how happy we are with our lives.

**II. Building the Life Star**: This section explains the new political and economic truths we’ll see in the Internet Age with technologies like apps, bio-monitors, and big data. With these digital tools, we’ll be enabled to create objective definitions of political and economic “right and wrong” as we play the game. In short, the Life Star will do for politics and economics what scientific instruments did for physics, chemistry, biology, etc. The troubling part is many people—especially phantom storytellers of old philosophies—won’t accept what this new telescope shows us.

**III. Starting Starfleet**: Once we can see ourselves in the Life Star “telescope,” we’ll use it to design digital tools detached from the Industrial Age. As the Industrial Age’s material abundance helped us live in so-called “perpetual peace,” Internet Age products will make our lifestyle one of “perpetual profit.” We’ll send the massive savings to Musk and his protegees and hence jumpstart the Space Exploration Age—or as I like to say, “Start Starfleet.”

**How to See the Matrix**: To write Techvolution, I used Aristotle’s Poetics to better understand Hegelian dialectics. Then I added some evolutionary biology because I think it and political philosophy are similar, if not the same, fields. If that bores you to pieces, that’s cool, you don’t need to read more about it. But just so you know, Techvolution is based on a full-blown philosophy that I’ll explain in another book called *How to See the Matrix*.

**No More Magic - The End of Movies**: Like Silicon Valley is today, Hollywood was once a pillar of innovation. By mastering modern technology, “the movies” became an affordable and fun night out for the middle class. Now we’ve almost forgotten what movie seats feel like. All because the industry used modern technology to oversell blockbusters instead of telling better stories like HBO or Netflix have done so well. *No More Magic* looks behind the curtain of a dying Industrial Age industry and foreshadows what’s to come if our economy doesn’t upgrade to the Internet Age soon. Note, much of what I learned about humanity’s transition from the Industrial Age to the Internet Age I learned by studying the movie industry in this article.

**The 2008 Economic Crisis Was Only the Beginning**: In the Medieval Age, the sword and scepter were the ultimate levers of power. These were replaced by the muskets of a civilian-military and the gavel of a blind justice system. In the same fashion, whether we like it or not, the Industrial Age supreme levers of power are crumbling so they can be replaced by Internet Age technology. That’s why the image for this article is the people of the Industrial Age “player god” waking up, while the leader is looking up in sadness; his time in the sun is over. I was writing this article in 2006 and finished up in 2009. Like *A New Philosophy*, it says we need to upgrade our way of life to digital technology but is cruder in doing so.

[old philosophy in a new world]((https://www.deviantart.com/philipstraub/art/Command-and-Conquer-Concept-Art-406881632) *The land of perpetual profit. We’re never going to get there with Left/Right politics.* [*Credit: Philip Straub*](https://www.deviantart.com/philipstraub/art/Command-and-Conquer-Concept-Art-406881632)*.*

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*Techvolution A New Philosophy* has a very high goal. So, I want to be crystal clear about its purpose. We’re in the new and wondrous Internet Age. But we’re still using the philosophy of the Industrial Age to run our society. Conservatism (1791), and Progressivism (1859) philosophy cards were clicked many years ago. It’s thus no longer good enough for the middle-class to watch infotainment news, donate to a social cause, march in a demonstration, and think we’re improving the world.

To have a better society, we need a new ruling philosophy. One that gives people the right and duty to evolve our culture to the Internet age, but also one that targets today’s most significant political enemy; antagonism. Like despotism, racism, and sexism, opposing our technological evolution needs to be eliminated.

Antagonism is defeated, when ordinary people have the right, duty, and protection to use the best tool to solve a problem in their home and work lives.

This isn’t too outlandish. Do you use the Waze app to help lower road congestion? Can a comedian leave a TV network to start his own podcast? Does your boss decide which apps you can use? Do you treat your plumber the same way?

In practical terms, Techvolution means ordinary people return to being specialists. Specialists are the best person to decide which new technology solves their problems. Empowering frontline specialists means local businesses on Main Street get prioritized over Big Government and Big Business. Small businesses are better because they’re more open to using new technology, and aren’t filled with layers of Industrial Age bureaucracy committed to stopping progress.

Our society is filled with parties. Cosplay, raves, dances, clubs, concerts, honkey tongs, we’re free to play as we want. But someone still has to book the venue, decorate, sell tickets, and hire staff. Perhaps the planner makes a profit, but regardless we party because a few people step up.

If Main Street wants the same freedom at work, we need to step up. Once we do, the bullshitization of work ends, and we actually enjoy our jobs again. With the added benefit of seeing our society improve.

What a reason to party!

Because, in the end, happy living wins the game of evolution. Civilization evolves when its members adopt a modern philosophy and become a player god of the modern age. We’ve upgraded our philosophy many times before, and it’s simply time to do it again.

via Gfycat

*Like magic, or even the Force, this machine can make hammers, wrenches, replacement parts, and almost anything else. Using new technology is real politics. Because it promotes evolution. Marching against climate change, or watching infotainment television is merely being an extra. Main Street has forgotten what it’s like being a protagonist or player god. And even worse, it’s often against the rules to because Industrial Age companies want us to keep using their obsolete stuff. We’ll overcome this antagonism below.*

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# PROLOGUE

## Fighting For The Internet Age - Our Philosophy is Already Generations Behind Our Technology

The Internet Age seeded itself a long time ago. Starting way back in 1843, inventors like Ada Lovelace, Vannevar Bush, and Alan Turing were building the first experimental computers. At the same time, writers like H.G. Wells, Isaac Asimov, and Gene Roddenberry imagined what life would be like once the Industrial Age ended and advanced computers ruled the world.

These authors’ stories, such as *War of the Worlds*, *I, Robot*, and *Star Trek* thought of a future so hard to grasp people called it science fiction. Then came the 1970s; when microprocessors, personal computers, the internet, and other digital technology became products. Here started the Internet Age, and it transformed the world just as much as science fiction said it would.

With every purchase, renovation, and birthday gift since 1970, we’ve been filling our society with fundamentally different technology. It’s easy to under-appreciate how a single laptop can be so many machines: a typewriter, radio, book, television, photo album, calculator. In contrast, mechanical tools of the Industrial Age are single-use, can’t be easily shared, and need many workers and managers to work.

The first mechanical tools, such as weaving looms and drill presses, significantly sped up production. However, they were so large and expensive that printers, blacksmiths, and other specialists couldn’t afford to own their own tools anymore. Main Street gradually lost out to the industrial production line and the big companies that ran them.

That’s why corporations populated the world with mechanical products during the Industrial Age. They installed colossal production lines and supply chains that spread across the globe to maximize how much stuff we could make. This era of mass-production chipped away at “Main Street” economics by centralizing production inside a few companies. If you’ve ever watched business news, you’ve seen hard the fight to be one of those companies is.

In short, Industrial Age companies live to compete.

Digital devices enable a new philosophy, one that fosters not a competition, but collaboration. Using computers and the internet for cooperation is our future. Working online saves us from the redundant work of mechanical tools. For example, with Wikipedia, the world can use one website for its general knowledge, instead of reprinting, shipping, and buying millions of encyclopedia books every year.

In contrast to the Industrial Age’s race to survive, the Internet Age has a competition to contribute.

Because, as discussed already, digital property never expires. If YouTube existed in Sir Issac Newton’s time, we’d be learning gravity from his videos. With modern technology racing to remake encyclopedias, lectures, or apps makes no sense. Instead, we can find topics with unwritten books, subjects with no Wikipedia page, problems with no apps, and contribute something new.

Because of digital property, humanity can contribute to a continuously updated repository of human knowledge, programs, and anything else you design, draw, or invent on a computer.

You can already see this world forming. Several generations into the Internet Age, items like smartphones, laptops, and smartwatches are everywhere. That’s why the collaboration websites like WikiHow, WhatsApp, and YouTube integrate so easily into our lives.

Collaboration is today’s big picture, the basic principle of the Internet Age’s new philosophy. The people who understand this best are the open-source community.

*Please enable the sound. Per the great Jeff Goldblum, “Life finds a way.” Likewise, humanity always finds a way to kill the unhappiness of doing nothing. We smile most when making a contribution to our society as we play the game of civilization. Credit:* [Wisecrack](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Lngf3J8vN4)

## Open-Source Protagonists Are Pushing Us Into the Internet Age

Open-source is a growing community of inventors, designers, and programmers. They are the successors of the first computer protagonists. With honest hearts and genius minds, they’re leading us all into the Internet Age. They live, breath, and promote collaboration at places like GitHub, Wikipedia, Dribbble, Udemy, Stack Overflow, and Discourse.

These modern-day Jedi have given Main Street the levers of power to the Internet Age. Even if most people don’t realize it yet. Most of us still think things like retail stores, manufacturing, and education are industries only for Big Governments or Big Business to control. However, because of the open-source community, there are countless new tools for ordinary people to take control of their work, identities, and lives.

Forget the bullshit jobs. Cinderella can now stop praying her fairy godmother gets her past the palace gates to a better life because open-source has given everyone an invitation to the party.

Open-source heroes let us all share in our society’s economic prosperity. Look around, and you’ll see it.

Note the parents who are educating their kids on Khan Academy. The moms learning how to repair iPads thanks to YouTube videos. The artists selling their products on Shopify websites. By distributing society’s levers of power, open-source has turned many Industrial Age companies, products, and professionals into needless middlemen.

That’s how the open-source community has super-charged Main Street. No longer are we bound to be extras in the Industrial Age, hoping for a better life. Now we can become player gods in the Internet Age, making a better life.

Open-source helped make me a player god (and later we’ll see a protagonist too). I’m a politics, history, and philosophy geek who spends far too much time thinking about this stuff. Because of easy to use digital tools I can write, research, host my work. I can very easily find world-class writers and illustrators to add a professional touch. Heck, think of the connection between you and I. You’re reading my ideas with no middlemen and for virtually free.

All because open-source heroes put new tools in both our hands.

The tech community calls this disruption. While disruption has thankfully torn down many gates. It mainly replaced low-hanging fruit like consumer goods. To keep ushering us into the Internet Age, we need to upgrade disruption with Techvolution. Only a society full of player gods will finally turn the fantastic world of science fiction into Main Street’s new reality.

https://www.instagram.com/p/B9qC71BJcfQ/?utm\_source=ig\_web\_copy\_link

*Open-source loves to topple gates and let anyone post their blogs, or have an online store. However, the levers of power don’t always have to be digital. This video shows you political power is having control over your slice of the world. Happily, this also makes disasters less scary.*

## Mass-Production Replaced by Mass-Collaboration Helps Us Thrive

As a kid, I helped my family clean office buildings. My simple role was to pick up the garbage and recycling bins. Other than still hating the smell of old coffee, I really appreciate growing up doing honest work. Years later, when working at a big office, the cleaners were short-staffed for a few weeks. Management spent hours meeting about and discussing the “garbage problem” instead of just wrapping it up (pun intended) and moving on.

This delegation first mentality began when the steam engine powered the world’s first production lines of wheels, lathes, drills, and presses. Even with this mechanical power, mass-producing trains, clothes, and newspapers needed a lot of manpower. That’s why throughout the 18th to 20th centuries, millions of farmers, craftsmen, and other specialists left their jobs to become factory workers.

Henceforth, most of Main Street worked huge machines. Coordinating everyone and everything required many managers to be micro-managing task-masters. There was no other way to be sure all workers were organized to the strict rhythm of the production line. This is the reason one-sided jobs with rigid oversight became embedded in our social consciousness.

In early assembly lines, supervisors even inspected toilets to be sure workers weren’t lying.

It sounds ridiculous, but it shows how vital coordination was. Workers were merely extensions of a great machine. Any kink in the chain was a delay in the assembly line that might cause the whole factory to stop. Look below, and you’ll see how our factory working ancestors lived.

Today we don’t work on the assembly line with bulky steam engines or massive presses. Much of industrial production is automated (or, sadly, outsourced). Most Westerners work in the [inside in hospitals, retail stores, or in an office](https://www.bls.gov/emp/tables/employment-by-major-industry-sector.htm). And especially since personal computers, smartphones, and high-speed internet got so cheap and common, many workers don’t need to work shoulder to shoulder any more.

Yet, we still value the micro-management of the production line. In fact, to earn a better living today usually means to “move up” and get a higher position inside management.

It’s time for our workplaces to modernize.

We start by no longer idolizing over-management. Then we must empower workers and customers to collaborate directly. Just as the Industrial Age enabled mass-production, the Internet Age enables mass-collaboration.

Main Street is already starting to collaborate. For example, when we Google something, the advanced search engine isn’t making up its own answer. It’s helping us find solutions other people put on their own websites. Google is outstanding precisely because it connects two people; one with a question, the other with an answer.

What prevents this kind of collaboration and efficiency at work is the holdover of “eight different bosses.”

*Digital technology automated much manufacturing and office work. But we’ve held onto the management culture of the era of mass-production. “Suffering” based employment will go away in the era of mass-collaboration. By the way, if you haven’t had a job like this before, you’re very lucky. Credit:* [*Wisecrack*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Lngf3J8vN4)

For example, before the Industrial Age, when you spoke with an innkeeper, taxi driver, blacksmith, there was nobody “above” them except perhaps the owner or master craftsman. Every worker had a skillset and was the controller of how to use it. These specialists were accountable to their customers, co-workers, and their sense of craft. It was only when industrialization gave the levers of power to factory owners, that our economy lost these small businesses.

Our work culture of “employees” and “management” didn’t exist before the Industrial Age, and shouldn’t after it’s gone either.

That’s why Airbnb gives innkeepers, Uber gives coach drivers, and Etsy gives artists back the levers of power and lets them have their own business again. The Internet Age will continue to distribute the freedom to work to other specialists like programmers, underwriters, and contractors.

Returning individuals to the liberation of a distributed Main Street economy is how the “player god” of the Internet Age will get populated.

This change can’t happen soon enough. Our culture of micro-management by layers of management is rotting our economy. While we’ll always need mentors, authority figures, and administrators (especially in massive industries). However, since 1970, there’s been a substantial bureaucratic creep. We already saw it with the proliferation of BS spreading administrators, consultants, and 3500% more middlemen in the medical system.

Another example of this bureaucratic growth, famed aerospace engineer Ben Rich (who created stealth technology). In his book Skunkworks he noted that in 1994 only about 45 percent of a procurement budget was actually spent producing the hardware. The rest went to bureaucratic madness. Rich says red-tape is primarily why development costs of fighter jets increased by a factor of 100 since the 1950s.

You can judge the bureaucratic creep yourself. From my own work experience, it’s undoubtedly true. I once worked on a customer service team with three workers and two managers. I still don’t know what 90% of my fellow insurance company employees did every day.

It certainly wasn’t talking to customers. Almost no read the insurance contract we sold. One marketing consultant even asked, “what’s claims?” when I told him what I did.

Today there’s an entire class of “eight different bosses”: consultants, administrators, managers, and executives. These self-titled professionals don’t know the skills of their respective industries like nursing, engineering, and (definitely not) cleaning. Their power is simply to keep the Industrial Age mentality alive by creating, distributing, and monitoring things like regulations, manuals, and memos.

old philosophy in a new world *Federal government regulations. An example of all the rules our bureaucratic establishment makes.*

For historical context, in 100 AD, the Roman Empire ruled over a third of the world’s population. This era of “[Roman Peace](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pax_Romana)” was a time of great prosperity not seen again until about 1700. Most outsiders dreamed about becoming Roman citizens.

And the Romans did all this with only several hundred state bureaucrats.

No kidding. Local communities, businesses, families mostly regulated their own lives with personal relationships. Not a direct comparison since our worlds are much different. But that should make you think. Meeting a Roman bureaucrat was like us meeting a physicist. They’re out there when needed, but aren’t relied upon up to live a daily life.

When given a chance, humanity is great at self-organizing. The key ingredient is clear goals, with accountability to obtain them.

Picture it as a sports team. Since all members know they must win games, everyone is capable of assessing each other’s contributions. A clear mandate lets administrators, trainers, coaches, captains, forwards, defenders, and goalies get evaluated by their impact, instead of by a distant bureaucrat. Collaboration is openness and accountability mixed together.

Happily, mass-collaboration is already here. It typically goes by the name share economy, crowd-sourcing, or Wikinomics. I call it the return of Main Street economics, and it’s sweeping through our society.

In addition to popular apps like Airbnb and Etsy, there are countless examples of mass-collaboration in the open-source community alone. The community comes together to make a core technology. [Programmers help where they can](https://opensource.guide/how-to-contribute/). First-timers are often nervous, but soon feel a rush as they see their work improve a successful project.

Separate groups then use the core technology to create specialized products.

At its core, open-source is about collaboration. Whether it’s version control, licenses, or issue trackers—everything exists to support people working with each other. Open source embodies a model for people to work together, building something greater than they can [create on their own](https://github.blog/2016-06-23-the-shape-of-open-source/).

For example, a large open-source community creates MediaWiki software. Then separate groups use MediaWiki to create Wikipedia, WikiHow, Fandom, and any other website you can think of. After all, MediaWiki is free for anyone to use; gatekeepers be damned! And this aspect of mass collaboration hasn’t just been embraced by programmers. Mass-collaboration is how the Wikipedia community of writers, researchers, and editors wrote millions of articles in only a few years. It’s also how Linux, Android, Chrome, and many other excellent services work too.

old philosophy in a new world *Some of the more famous open-source projects. Most of this software, worth many hundreds of billions, you can download and use for free. If you can’t program, it only takes hiring a few to get whatever product you can imagine.*

All this praise doesn’t mean open-source communities are perfect and can run the world. It has problems, it’s people can be too rude, and [it’s easy to free-load off its contributors](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MO8hZlgK5zc), discouraging growth.

That’s why open-source is only a part of the ecosystem bringing the Internet Age and mass-collaboration to life. There will always be significant energy, manufacturing, and mining companies with large corporate structures, mass-producing our essential products. Likewise, the government will still run social programs and install traffic lights.

Within that in mind, however, open-source is vital.

Precisely because nobody owns its server software, operating systems, web apps, and so many other remarkable technologies. That means gatekeepers can’t stop digital inventors from empowering more player gods. Whether it’s with a simple rotating list of persons to take out the trash. An app that let us rent someone’s spare bedroom. An online encyclopedia with millions of helpful articles. Or software to give society internet streaming—as when a few hackers tore down “Darth Blockbuster’s” gate when he tried to keep us buying and borrowing his DVDs.

To continue opening gates, building the era of mass-collaboration, and ushering us into the Internet Age, the open-source community needs our support. We can’t ask any more of them. The Jedi have done their job. Main Street needs to step up and flock to their banner and grab hold of the levers of power they’ve made for us.

We can, once we become player gods.

https://vimeo.com/366560857 *Figma is a design tool for websites and apps. In the past, designers, writers, programmers all spoke through many managers. With Figma, worker-to-worker collaboration becomes super-easy. Management is lessened because anyone can review progress in real-time. Your workplace can, and will, one-day foster cooperation like this. And it’s the open-source mentality that lets us build it for ourselves.*

## Fighting for The Future - The Era of Mass-Collaboration Won’t Just Happen

Main Street doesn’t have to wait for science-fiction. Because of open-source, we can by-pass the middlemen. That means empowering bakers and butchers over factory food owners. Tailors and sewists over sweatshops. Store owners and clerks over franchises. And, engineers and designers over executive bean-counters.

Only when we embrace mass-collaboration will we live happy lives again. You’ll see a small example of the future below.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ggrkTLEfFXA

*This is Louis Rossmann. He owns an electronics repair business. He’s popular on YouTube because he teaches other people how to repair their electronics using open-source technology. When Louis needed a new store location, a random person did a better design job than a big firm. This is one example of how modern technology lets regular people work together and facilitate their mutual happiness. This doesn’t mean big firms will go away, but it does mean individuals or small businesses won’t be stuck relying on them or their gated expertise.*

## Open-Source Lets Us Bust Open Gates And Initiate The Internet Age

Currently, when you phone a call center, everything is recorded. The company has access to the recording; you don’t. Likewise, when the employee logs in and out of the office, that, too, is recorded. Management automatically has access to these timesheets; the employee doesn’t.

Access to things like phone recordings and timesheets are levers of power because they control resources. Today management and corporations put “gates” around many of *our* levers out of self-defense. Is there a good reason why customers can’t confirm what was agreed to during their last phone call? Why can employees can be grilled for a long lunch when the same manager quickly forgets unpaid overtime.

This lopsided balance of power for everyday events allows customers and employees to be taken advantage of, encouraging mistrust, lackluster products, and inefficient workplaces. Uneven power makes mass-collaboration impossible.

The open-source community lets us fight back in three ways. First, it sets a great example because it entrusts everyone with all available information. Second, open-source wants more members, so the community loves to dismantle gates and distribute levers of power to regular people. And third, since no one owns open-source technology, the people can empower ourselves with levers of power, only big institutions used to control. Such has call recordings and timesheets.

*Please enable the sound. Two comedians talking about their careers. They used to need the production and broadcast facilities of big Industrial Age companies. With the internet, they don’t. But the producers/broadcasters, are fighting for their relevancy. You have you’re own antagonists too. Credit:* [*JRE*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b_yboxM33gg)*.*

Distributing the levers of power moves us into the Internet Age. It treats people like adults and expects them to act like it. And if they don’t, well, it’s not like they can complain about mistreatment. With digital technology, all the records are recorded. Once they’re open and transparent, a disgruntled person has to reference facts instead of conjecture and emotion.

For example, I can’t lie to you about starting this book in September 2019. It’s all recorded by GitHub’s “version control” system. Meaning, every day, I’ve uploaded the latest draft to a computer that timestamps everything. You can see all the versions if you want.

Open information makes lying to you and myself so much harder.

In my experience (and this is after processing 10,000 insurance claims), the vast majority of people just want to go on with their lives. It’s only when they’re misled, disadvantaged, and left in the dark that makes regular folk lash out. Open information, with easy-to-follow rules, is reasonable and thus gets the most out of people. Mainly because it makes cheating (on both sides) too hard for most people to bother with.

People working for apparently unselfish reasons is not new. Early America was blessed with communal barn-raising, quilting societies, and fraternal associations who governed themselves in a Main Street economy. Open-source software and mass-collaboration simply adopt the same incentives. Because once our basic necessities are met, most people want to improve their craft, gain the respect of their peers, and pass-on their knowledge.

Open-source hero Linus Torvalds explained it by pointing out, “Money is not the greatest of motivators. Folks do their best work when they are driven by passion. When they are having fun. This is as true for playwrights and sculptors and entrepreneurs as it is for software engineers.” Torvalds concludes, “What astonishes so many people is that the open-source model actually works.”

With open-source, we have the technology to create our own levers of power for our warranty contracts, tax-laws, employment agreements, claim systems, and so on.

So, when the school board, doctor’s office, the insurance company says, “fill in these forms,” we should begin to say, “No, I want to use this new app. It let us both see timelines, appointments, and rules. If you don’t want to use it, then I’ll move my business. But if you do, I look forward to working with you.”

Yes, it’s perfectly okay to do that. It fact, it’s your job as a player god.

old philosophy in a new world https://github.com/rails/rails

*This is the* [*GitHub “repo” for Ruby on Rails*](https://github.com/rails/rails/graphs/contributors)*, the open-source technology that runs apps like Basecamp, Airbnb, and Shopify. This software is worth billions and totally free to use. Making it free adds value, because programmers contribute to each other’s work, instead of repeating the same stuff all the time. Mass-collaboration is this simple and effective, and few garbage meetings are needed.*

## Our Story — Launching Techvolution and Making Player Gods

The middle-class has to step up and upgrade our way of life to the Internet Age. We must grab hold of the levers of power the open-source community has made for us. Only then will we live in the era of mass-collaboration. If we don’t, we’ll keep suffering the pains of a degenerating society.

The biggest roadblock to the Internet Age is the gatekeeper Darth Blockbuster. He’s the holdover from the Industrial Age and the antagonist of the modern era.

old philosophy in a new world *The American Dream, if you want to live in 1969 forever. There are lots of antagonists in this photo. Newspapers, broadcasters, oil, reporters, gas cars, k-university education are among today’s largest Industrial Age holdovers filled with layers of middlemen.*

Darth Blockbuster stalls the future by writing rules to keep his Industrial Age tools, and himself, in power. These rules are like a Death Star. They concentrate the legal departments, HR reps, corporate lobbyists of a bygone age.

This antagonism is our new evil.

Before our civilization can evolve, we need to defeat Darth Blockbuster and blow up his super-weapon.

I’ll explain the philosophy we need to win, but whether you decide to become a player is up to you. If you’re ready, keep reading. It’s time to strategize.

old philosophy in a new world *Lots of player gods have come before us. They did their job. Most recently, in the era of mass-production. Now it’s our time to step up.*

## Cast of Ideas and Characters

Before you set up to the role of a player god, here are a few terms that will put us all on the same page:

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**Player god**: Imagine a person playing a computer “civilization building” game with our society. They would hold all the levers of power and thus decide where to put roads, what food to grow, and when houses get solar panels. Of course, there is no such deity. In reality, it’s the choices of individuals that decide what the community does. We choose to emit too much CO2, eat healthy good, or use an InstaHealth medical app. It’s only when a person uses tools and takes responsibility for their actions, do they become player gods who “play the game” of civilization.

**Philosophy**: The largely unspoken ideals that tell individuals what’s right and wrong, good and bad, in science, art, morals, politics, and economics. Philosophy is created inside books, declarations, and constitutions to unite individuals to see the big picture. That how everyone’s choices matter because everyone can be a player god. Note, *the player god* is a community of people playing the game together because they’re united by the same “ruling” philosophy.

**Ruling philosophy**: A civilization’s chosen philosophy. One that “clicks” for all factions and ideologies. 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 “Right/Left” philosophies of the Western world today. The ruling philosophy is supposed to help society evolve and win the game of civilization.

**Happiness**: The test of how well the ruling philosophy is doing its job. Spending quality time with family, having good friends, improving one’s skill set are signs of genuine happiness. As is, being in good physical and mental health, and looking forward to the future.

**Rulebook**: The written and unwritten social, professional, and legal rules that govern everyday life. People write the rulebook by interpreting the ruling philosophy. Some examples are city parking by-laws, workplace seniority rules, and environmental regulations.

**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 shelter in. We use tools to evolve.

**Levers of Power**: The most powerful tools; the ones that control society. In Civilization games, these are the buttons, toggles, and sliders players control. In reality, levers of power are the tools that power, educate, inform, feed, and transport resources in our society. The more levers a person controls, the more self-sufficient they are, which gives them the freedom to become a player god.

**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 work jobs that solve specific problems with a proven skillset. Frontline workers physically hold the levers of power. Still, they don’t always control them—they will, once the era of mass-collaboration starts.

**Hierarchy**: A power structure that manages every lever of power’s use by society. Kings and queens with the keys to the castle, or the corporate ladder at Blockbuster controlling DVD rentals, are examples of past hierarchies. As hierarchies grow, they get more detached from the frontline and start forming gates to protect their tool, losing its importance. People in the regime give themselves 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 Game of Civilization**: The invention of new technology and cultures to overcome frontline problems. Civilization develops in ages. As we evolve, we create new levers of power. When society adopts a modern philosophy, it topples the hierarchies of the prior era.

**Protagonists**: People who invent, spread, and use new technology for the greater good. Usually close to the problems on the frontline, they individually struggle. Still, their continued self-sacrifice slowly improves life on Earth. I call them this world’s Jedi knights. We call their leaders trailblazers who relish skirting the rules. Galileo, Michael Faraday, Nikola Tesla, Jay Last, Grace Hopper, Michael S. Hart, Dennis Ritchie, Bill Gates, Steve Jobs, Linus Torvalds, Salman Khan, Jeff Bezos, and Elon Musk are among their number.

**Antagonists**: People who selfishly defend their wealth, power, and prestige atop a hierarchy. Antagonists manage companies or institutions based on dated technologies and think that working on the frontline is beneath them. They work to control society’s rulebook, so they can prevent protagonists’ new tools becoming new levers of power. 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’re unattached to either side, extras can pick winners and losers. Sadly, extras don’t realize their power and often refuse to even accept they’re living inside a game of civilization. When they do, they become player gods. If they don’t, the game of civilization turns into a story they merely watch. Extras blame phantom ideologies for their real-life problems.

**The Death Star**: The rulebook when it’s controlled by Darth Blockbuster. Today it exists inside many regulations, agreements, manuals, contracts, and laws that prevent new levers of power from reaching Main Street. The Death Star is currently busy trying to keep the Industrial Age alive.

**Antagonism**: Is the impulse to reject new technology. Originates out of fear that change will disadvantage one’s position. Antagonism is Darth Blockbuser’s official ideology. It’s told to Main Street inside the terminology and beliefs of an old ruling philosophy. For example, the (supposed) noble bloodlines of European royalty justifying being unelected leaders of a wealthy society. Today, antagonism is Main Street’s biggest obstacle.

**Techvolution**: A new philosophy empowering seamless human technological evolution by ridding Darth Blockbuster of his power, by giving player gods the right and duty to decide when society should upgrade our culture and tools.

**the Life Star**: A rulebook based on Techvolution that’s governed by human technological adaption and natural selection. It makes sure humanity never again lets antagonism stall our upgrade to the next technological age.

**Plot**: Getting the extras to step up, grab hold of society’s new digital levers of power, and become player gods who replace their ruling philosophy with Techvolution and thereby establish the era of mass-collaboration inside the Internet Age.

*Our civilizations have always had problems. It’s up to regular people to use new tools to solve them. Today, it’s our turn. Let’s get started.* [*Credit: Tech Insider*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2HubIBlnvko)

# ACT ONE

## The Beginning

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

Before you wonder, it wasn’t a matter of price, because there was no price. It wasn’t a question of competition. None of that either. And I can promise it worked because I had spent years in a cubicle doing the frontline job it serviced. After years of thinking about political and economic theory in the Internet Age, I’d written a book (Starting Starfleet) about some untapped possibilities of new tech like smartwatches, bio-monitors, and bitcoin. I only made this simple web app (using open-source technologies) to validate my ideas.

I was right to. I had 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 I did was enable worker-to-worker collaboration with an app that was virtually free. Why wouldn’t I want to tell people about the theory behind it?

Sadly, I was a fool. I didn’t know it at the time, but I wasn’t even knocking on doors. I was knocking on gates. See, I wasn’t talking to frontline workers (who thanked me). But to the layers of bureaucrats, lawyers, managers, and executives who were well paid to meet, discuss, delegate about “garbage problems.” They were holdovers from the obsessive management of the Industrial Age. I went against all they stood for; solving industry problems was asking them to fire themselves. Worse, I was asking them to invalidate their identity as being “superiors.” It’s why they put up gates to shut out Internet Age innovation. In their mind, the levers of power, even small ones, are theirs by right.

In retrospect, what I encountered was pure antagonism. The enemy of the middle class. The philosophy of the Industrial Age as it takes its last stand against human evolution.

All my app did was replace a few dozen fax machines with an online app. If the car adjusters had just used it themselves, nobody “above” would have even noticed.

Society would have. Because car insurance claims would have gotten processed far faster and cheaper. But instead of getting an upgrade, our nation was forced to keep waiting on hold and pay the price for increasing insurance costs. All because a few dozen managers wanted to defend their power.

That’s why the head office people never said no to me. No needs a reason. Instead, they simply said it was against the rules to say yes. You know—those obscure rules, hidden inside regulations and contracts. The antagonists believed in the rules, especially the one against frontline workers acting with initiative, holding their own levers, and taking out their own garbage, so to speak.

Like anyone, I knew bringing new products to market is hard. I knew sales is difficult. I even knew antagonists exist. But I didn’t realize how strongly the Internet Age was being held back. Antagonists do a good job masking their self-interest with self-righteous rules. In their eyes, I wasn’t an innovator helping his society win the game. I was an “uppity extra.”

I don’t want to dwell on my experience too much. All that’s important is this. There was a huge problem costing millions of dollars, weeks of workers’ time (lots of it unpaid overtime), and maybe even your life. And it was against the rules to solve it. If I had won this battle for the Internet Age, it would be a tiny victory.

So instead, I’m going to talk about winning the war. Our hospitals, schools, repair-shops, government bureaucracies—our entire way of life is being held back from the Internet Age by a group of self-entitled holdovers of the Industrial Age.

To help us win the game, I learned my lesson and wrote this book. Because despite already having the digital technology to improve our lives, antagonists maintain gates all over the place to protect the pre-digital “Suburban 1969” way of life. They know—even if subconsciously—they lose their coveted managerial status, executive positions, and superiority complexes in a mass-collaboration economy. Being held back from this brighter future is why our lives can be so unhappy. To improve our days then, the people need Techvolution. A new ruling philosophy that says improving our society is the only rule that matters.

via Gfycat

*Antagonists love antagonism.*

## To Upgrade Our Civilization We Need To Reach for the Tools

Do you love stories? I alread know you do. 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. Stories show us the different rules, philosophies, and technologies of foreign cities, mythical worlds, and galaxies far far away.

Stories are so compelling 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 righteous 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 follow their story with strong emotions—which burst out at the climax as we find out who wins.

Our hero fights hard to defeat the bad guys, 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 that’ll turn the tide in his favor. He seeks, sees, and reaches for his salvation: a tool or a weapon, like 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 marches, protests, or rules, but by which character holds the levers of power. The wielder is the victor. The victor writes the laws.

It’s the lesson that we the people need to learn for ourselves.

Because only when we reach for and hold the levers of power, do we stop watching our civilization on television and radio, marches and parades, and start playing it. Only when we hold our levers of power will we be player gods of the Internet Age.

levers of power *Levers of power. Whoever controls them, wins.*

## Player Gods Reach for the Tools and Don’t Chase Phantoms

Many people know what a revolution fights to change the rule-makers. Techvolution is different because it distributes the levers of power. Techvolution is better. Because those with the power get to make the rules. So why not go for the gold right away?

This is what America, Canada, Britain, and much of the world looked like in the 1800s. A time of mud roads, hand tools, and abacus calculators. Human perseverance and ingenuity filled in for limited technology. Being hungry and sick, cold, and tired was an all too common way of life back then. These people’s dreamed of owning some land and having the tools to work it, or later on, getting a job in a factory and buying an apartment in the city.

Solving this daily pain is why Right/Left ideologies were created. It was designed to turn nothing into something because their writers like Adam Smith, Edmund Burke, and John Stuart Mill lived the same hard up life. They too didn’t have running water, listened to the radio, made a phone call, opened a fridge, took penicillin, started a motor, typed on a keyboard, or learned about evolution.

Their philosophy was designed to upgrade society so everyone in the world would get better tools, and thus a better life.

It’s important to note, there were other philosophies out there, each telling the masses they’d make the best society. Luddites wanted to hold back technology. While Anarchists wanted to dismantle governments. Communists and Fascists socially engineered humanity with their (demented) dreams of the best society.

Left and Right went a different path. Their ideologies came together to make a philosophy that promoted and defended individual liberty.

The Left and Right ruling philosophy inspired lawmakers to make a rulebook of regulations and laws to govern society. Still, humanity was free to work, invent, create for itself.

Letting people run free is how the Left and Righ rulebook worked wonders. The philosophy usually didn’t create new products. They simply incentivized it with things such as insurance regulations, labor laws, and patent rules. Each part of the rulebook existed to solve a specific problem. Bureaucrats rarely made a rule or regulation for the sake of it.

*Please enable the sound. If you’re wondering, Civilization 6 is narrated by beloved actor Sean Bean.*

Today, we live inside the world the Industrial Age dreamed of making. But with Left and Right as our ruling philosophy, our rulebook is still focused on promoting the industrialization of society.

That’s because the philosophy that motivates our rule-makers is from the Industrial Age. We’ve already seen how both Conservative and Progressive ideologues are staying relevant by turning to phantom chasing extremism. What that means for our society, is neither side can help make a modern rulebook, because the Internet Age and the era of mass-collaboration are out of their comfort zones.

Thus, until the middle-class reaches for the new power of open-source apps and electronics, we’ll never have the political ability to upgrade our society and rewrite the rules to the modern age.

Happily, we’ve already been evolving into the Internet Age.

That’s the reason we’re so addicted to new technology. Checking news feeds, flying drones, taking endless photos, playing hours of computer games are acts of extras mastering the tools of player gods. Our ancestors did the same when learning about printed books, telescopes, and muskets. Those were merely addictive toys until new philosophies turned them into the lightsabers that finally brought down the nobility of the Medieval Age.

When regular people could read unknown history, see the Universe for themselves, and revolt against royalty, the game was won.

Our addicting toys are also new levers of power. They’re so powerful, we can use these proverbial lightsabers to earn a happier life. We will, once we stop chasing Left/Right phantoms, and use Techvolution. Only with the right and duty to solve frontline problems will we defeat antagonism and upgrade to the Internet Age.

https://youtu.be/CY9-y5zZkxs?t=7 *Compare this person to Leftists marching for “climate justice” or Rightists for “lower energy taxes.” Isn’t this the person you’d want to play your game of civilization? A regular person using a modern tool to improve his energy efficiency, increase his power, and improve his society. And once we’ve done our daily work, we can play basketball, watch a movie, or do whatever else we want. We just shouldn’t chase phantom communists or fascists. We’re better off sealing or replacing our, or someone else’s, drafty windows.*

## Once We Believe in a New philosophy, We’ll Reach for the Stars

Darth Blockbuster appears every time we upgrade to a new age. He uses antagonism to secure his power by preventing regular people from taking control of the new levers of power. To fight the antagonists off, we need a modern philosophy. Here’s one example of it working our history and our present day.

When you look up at the night sky, you see a dazzling show. It can seem to defy explanation. But even with the naked eye, you’ll see trends. The stars never move, some “objects” (really planets) look to be wandering, and it seems like the Moon, Sun, and everything else revolves around you. With all this evidence, our ancestors were sure Earth was the center of the Universe. So much so, it was a pivotal part of the “Divine Rights of Kings” philosophy that ruled European Kingdoms starting in the Medieval Age (500-1400) and even into the Science Age (1543-1687).

When you look at the night sky with a telescope, like Galileo (1564-1642) did, you see it differently. Jupiter has moons, Venus has phases, and it looks like Earth is just another planet. When Galileo told everyone these facts, the “divine kings” were threatened. By using a telescope, Galileo was saying, “we don’t know until we test, so let’s use instruments to test what we think we know.” Scientific inquiry questioned the ruler’s divine leadership. Although Catholics and Protestant political leaders hated each other, they worked together to suppress Galileo. Neither facilitated the new truths, his new tools were discovering.

Galileo is just one example of how an establishment finds it very hard to embrace a new era. The lesson is, to enter into a new age, civilization can’t just use new technology. Main Street must welcome a modern philosophy too. Today we’re also using an outdated philosophy from a bygone age. Here’s an example of how that’s hurting our everyday lives.

Space travel is a significant step for humanity. It means better satellites, worldwide internet accessibility, and ensuring intelligent life doesn’t put all its eggs in one earthly basket. All possible *if* we can build an affordable and reusable rocket.

Left/Right political culture was unable to meet the challenge. Ideologues can gossip about speeches, but rocket science doesn’t fit into soundbites. It was new companies like SpaceX and Blue Origin (funded by a few protagonists) who answered the call. They harnessed digital technology and fostered collaboration to make rockets 10 times cheaper. The protagonists even learned how to land their rockets so they can be reused!

Think about how cool it to safely land a frickin rocket. But many people, especially Left/Right politicians, still didn’t care.

*Please enable the sound. There’s a direct link between advancing our science and technology and living inside a happy civilization. This was when SpaceX landed its first rocket. Credit: Civilization 6 and SpaceX*

When you’re dependent on old philosophies, you’re also confined to its old tools and live within its old narratives. Today Left/Right politics obsesses over tax cuts, government regulations, and endless media soundbites because their philosophy says these are society’s only levers of power. New and super-powerful technologies like landing rockets are talked about, but more as a novelty act that falls beyond the believers of old philosophies comprehension and comfort zones.

That’s the power of philosophy. It tells people which tools and rules are essential, and which should be ignored. Today, Industrial Age philosophies hold back the incredible, world-changing, happiness granting potential of the Internet Age. Up and down our economy, we emphasize government policy, mass-production, layers of bureaucracy, and oppressive management practices when mass-collaboration is far better.

The lesson is, once we believe in a new philosophy that embraces the Internet Age, we’ll control our society’s real levers of power, and soar to the stars.

old philosophy in a new world *Here’s when SpaceX landed its first and second rockets. At the exact same time, Bernie Sanders was ranting about regulation battles with Wall Street. I happened to be following him, so I don’t mean to pick on him. But he should have been taking a minute to appreciate all the new solutions SpaceX just opened to humanity. The middle-class needs to stop putting their faith in old philosophies and instead become player gods with the amazing new tools digital protagonists are giving us today. Like we followed Galileo generations ago.*

## Techvolution is a Fight as Natural as Evolution

Fighting to upgrade our ruling philosophy is a classic human story. It happens every time we start a new age. It happened when Galileo fought a religious establishment with a telescope, George Washington fought a political establishment with a musket, Steve Jobs fought an economic establishment with an iPod.

We are embracing this history. But 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 digital inventions; *The Innovators* does that better than I could dream of doing. And if you want brilliant critiques and commentaries of our society, *The Incerto* and *The Great Degeneration* are waiting for you.

This book is about pushing us into the Internet Age with a new philosophy that encourages our evolution. Nature thus inspires Techvolution. Notice that gatekeepers don’t exist in our world’s ecosystems. 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 to their own problems. Nature has no non-playing characters, middlemen, or gatekeepers, just problem solvers. And only the best problem solvers live on.

That’s why making better and more powerful choices is the Nature of politics—because you’re a lifeform who should be free to adapt like any other.

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 by upgrading our tools to the latest problem. Hold a spear, then a gun, an abacus, then a calculator, an airplane joystick than a space ship joystick, and you’re a different and more powerful cyborg each time.

Nonetheless, our problem solving is held back when the power of bygone age antagonizes civilization’s upgrades. This is the equivalent of Blockbuster getting to write rules to keep us renting DVDs instead of saving time and money with YouTube and Netflix. Antagonism is the opposite of evolution.

This classic battle between old and new, good and evil, fills our stories from Greek Mythology to Shakespeare. Today the most famous story is Star Wars, so I use it most often in this book. Star Wars is about a galaxy with an all-powerful energy field called the Force. 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 call our protagonists “trailblazers.” But we don’t have a political name for the antagonists. Gatekeepers are often corrupt, but these people are sometimes just doing their job. Thus, I collectively call the antagonists to our technological evolution Darth Blockbuster: people who actively and knowingly prevent human development for the sake of their self-interest.

Since biological adaptions and upgrades are evolution, I’ve called human technological evolution Techvolution. This book is about inventing Techvolution. The new ruling philosophy that is empowering Main Street to solve problems with technology as smoothly in human society as other lifeforms do with adaptation and natural selection.

## Taking an Uber, Learning About Collaboration

Have you ever taken an Uber? If you haven’t, it’s a smartphone app that connects a person needing a ride, with a person willing to drive them. So say Julia needs a lift. She opens up Uber and inputs where she needs to go. Uber assigns Jack to pick her up. Julia and Jack are now connected and can see each other’s history, rating, vehicle, and GPS location. And the best part, all the rules they need to follow are taken care of within the app experience.

As Jack drives Julia, they can talk or not, it doesn’t matter. Once there, Julia gets out. Uber manages the payment, and Julia and Jack rate each other and then go about their lives.

That’s an Uber ride. And if you’ve ever taken one, you’ve participated in mass-collaboration as an Internet Age cyborg. Seriously, think about it. Julia needed to get somewhere, and Jack helped her get there, and they collaborated using smartphones.

Once upon a time in the Industrial Age, this coordination was done by many managers. Driver timesheets, dispatch call-centers, complaint resolution, company marketing, vehicle licensing. In the Internet Age, all this paperwork is handled by Uber’s ([mostly open-source](https://github.com/uber)) software. The company Uber still has to staff managers, marketers, executives, and whatnot. But the proportion is far less.

While Darth Taxi-Cab tried to stop Uber with lawsuits and government lobbying, it didn’t work. Once people use mass-collaboration, it’s too practical to be stopped. Our ongoing progress towards a better life is something to keep in mind while you’re reading this book. Our way of life will get better. We’ll upgrade even faster once we realize our actions, even if just catching a ride, steps our civilization into the Internet Age.

Taking an Uber is how easy it is to become a player god.

Also, notice how similar apps like Door Dash, Uber Eats, Airbnb help “the little guy” share resources once only open to big companies. If you’ve used these services, then you’ve also helped upgrade to the Internet Age.

With all this in mind, it’s time to meet the hero of Techvolution. The one who’ll defeat Darth Blockbuster, and bring on the era of mass-collaboration for all the player gods of Main Street.

collaboration *An Uber ride is collaboration. The Internet Age empowers Main Street to keep cutting out the middlemen. Fittingly, I got these images from a free image service called Unsplash. This website empowers anyone to share and use professional-grade images. In the Industrial Age, these images would cost thousands of dollars. Credit:*[*David Preston*](https://unsplash.com/photos/rjd4Whp341I)[*Dan Gold*](https://unsplash.com/photos/kARZuSYMfrA)

## Nice to Meet You, Stargazer

You’re the hero! You’re the one who can bring happy lives to Main Street. If you go for a jog, you just upgraded society’s health statistics. Walk to a friend’s house, you’ve lowered traffic and socialized your community. Stay inside and socially distance, you’ve helped “slow the curve” on a pandemic.

It’s my mission to make you realize you’re the player god capable of so much more.

That’s why, whoever you are, and wherever you are on this Earth, I’m calling you Stargazer. It’s a name in honor of ancestors like Copernicus, Bruno, and Galileo. All brave people who toppled Darth King by merely looking up at the stars and asking questions. These giants took on the responsibility to advance civilization and let evolution deal with the naysayers.

You can topple Darth Blockbuster. Not only do you already wield much power with eReaders, smartphones, and hi-speed internet, you hold the strongest lever of power ever. From hospital cleaners to internet technical support, from civil engineers to insurance underwriters, you are at the frontline—the place that creates political power.

I’m serious, Stargazer. Remember, when I said, “power is to politics what money is to finance.” Well, being on the frontline is why you’re so powerful. You are society’s nervous system. Feeling the pain of real work tells you the exact tools we need to finish the Internet Age upgrade.

Darth Blockbuster will never understand what you know.

Do you think corporate or government bureaucrats really understand the frontline pain points of our health-care systems COVID-19 response? How could they, if they don’t feel fear every time they punch their clock-like paramedics, cleaners, nurses, doctors?

All we have to do is connect this frontline pain, with modern technology, and Main Street will once again hold the levers of power. And, all the antagonists can do to stop you is play defense.

That’s why you, Stargazer, are the hero of Techvolution. That’s the way it should be. Average Joes and Janes are always the heroes. Luke Skywalker, Princess Leia, Neo, and Cinderella were all regular people feeling the pain of real-life. Heroes aren’t born. They’re stargazers, dreamers, believers, and achievers. They become heroes when they step up to defeat the bad guys. I’m like Obi-Wan Kenobi, Morpheus, or the fairy godmother, merely a guide teaching you how to overcome 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. The Internet Age is held back by the antagonism of Darth Blockbuster and his Death Star rulebook. To earn our happiness, we need to turn you into an Internet Age player god.

But to do that, you have to feel the click of “Eureka! I’m the player god. I’m the one who must evolve humanity to the Internet Age. If I don’t, we lose the game of civilization.”

via GIPHY

*Civilizations always rise and fall. Trust funds, savings accounts, jobs, and titles don’t survive the end of a civilization. That’s why nobody should want to be part of a society’s collapse. To avoid ours, you need to step up and upgrade our society to the Internet Age.*

## Techvolution Builds on the Past

The world’s on your shoulders, Stargazer. But let’s take a minute and ease some of the burdens. First off, the world is always on your shoulders. Big Business and Big Government say they’re going to be there for you, but we all know that’s a marketing promise more than a reality. After all, what lever of power do you have against a giant insurance corporation, or the Internal Revenue Service? These organizations write the rules and control the call-centers, forms, and databases you use to deal with them.

That’s why being a player god means taking extreme ownership of your life by controlling as many levers of power as possible.

Exercising, saving for a rainy day, helping a customer understand their loan application, buying locally grown produce. These are actions of a player god. And they’re not that complicated. So while yes, being a player god is hard, it’s also rather straightforward. And many of us are doing it already.

The difference with Techvolution is, we expect ourselves, and each other, to bring on the era of mass-collaboration. Vitally, player gods also demand the freedom to take responsibility for our home and work lives whenever a Sith Lord says helping our society is against the rules.

But none of this means you Stargazer have to re-invent society. We aren’t throwing away any philosophy you, or anyone else, may believe in. Old philosophies, Protestant/Catholic, Right/Left among them, will always teach us lessons, help us do our jobs better, and enlighten our personal opinions. The ideals and openness of Progressivism help bring new peoples into the Western culture while giving a helping hand to those already inside. The practicality of Conservatives helps ensure our society keeps working and doesn’t derail from too much idealism.

Moreover, each side has an immense understanding of complex fields like monetary policy, farm regulation, labor relations, and more. This single book can’t replace all that knowledge. It would be laughable to suggest it could.

Moreover, and this is the crucial point for people inside the government, Techvolution frees you to start solving problems. Ideology dies pretty quickly when entering government. Seeing “the books” of massive unfunded social programs alone is quite sobering. Antagonists block practical solutions to government problems—whether it be stubborn teachers unions or corporate lobbyists—as much as they hold back Main street.

When I say Left/Right politics, it’s usually not those inside the government but outside ideologues with a simplistic view of our world who I take aim at. These are the people who radicalize what is still a well structured political system.

protest *Unhelpful radicals. A new philosophy needs us all to start acting on our beliefs. Meaning, environmentalists should start planting trees in our communities, and gun-rights people should become police volunteers standing guard in public places. Actions make it a lot easier to judge the effectiveness of everyone’s beliefs.*

The solution to radicalization is giving power to the frontline. Like voting our interests in elections, we, the people on the frontline today, need the freedom to decide which tool best solves a problem. The right and duty to evolve must be our new ruling philosophy. It’s the only way the player god’s “nervous system” can adapt better solutions to our society’s problems.

We’re already starting to use digital tools to improve our lives. YouTube product reviews. Quora questions. Cutting cable cords and using Netflix. By controlling modern devices, the middle-class is starting to take control of society’s new levers of power. Wanting to control more is the rebellion inside our mind, we need to establish the Internet Age.

That’s why controlling tools is the Nature of all political battles. Whether in galaxies far far away. Street fights in parking lots. Wars between nations. Or your own life. It’s why antagonists make new tools against the rules. And why I needed to write a book to remind everyone philosophies and rules are supposed to empower protagonists and player gods to push human evolution, not get in the way.

But since many rules stall the Internet Age upgrade Stargazer, we must pack our bags, rally our friends, and get ready for a fight.

It’s time to blow up a Death Star.

# ACT TWO

## Blowing Up the Death Star

## When Rules Are In Our way, We Use Evolution to Defeat Them

Life’s been evolving for billions of years. Humanity continues life’s evolution by creating technology. We develop new and better tools in stages like the Bronze Age, Iron Age, and Industrial Age. Unfortunately, transitioning between stages is hard. Human Nature being what it is, the powers of the old age hold back the modern era. Since entering the Internet Age in 1970, Darth Blockbuster has continuously defended his mechanical tools by making digital tools against the rules.

Some examples. In the 1950s, AT&T defended its telephone monopoly by successfully banning devices such as [answering machines and modems](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hush-A-Phone_Corp._v._United_States) connecting to its network. In 1984, the broadcast television industry tried to ban video cassette recorders (VCRs) and only lost by [one vote in the Supreme Court](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sony_Corp._of_America_v._Universal_City_Studios,_Inc.). In 2001, the music industry defended compact discs (CDs) by [successfully suing Napster](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A%26M_Records,_Inc._v._Napster,_Inc.) for giving people digital songs. Likewise, Tesla, Uber, Airbnb’s most significant competition has been in the courtroom. Throughout society, antagonists have found rules that force people to keep using Industrial Age tools.

Industry certifications, labor laws, government lobbies full of lobbyists, bureaucratic red-tape. These are the endless pages of today’s Death Star rulebook. Darth Blockbuster uses it to prevent new and better technology from reaching the frontline. But before you face Darth Blockbuster and blow up his superweapon, 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.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zD578MutMAk&list=PL4E3463842B01E133&index=14 *I don’t want to personify Darth Blockbuster. But here’s an ad for an online investment brokerage. I have no idea if they’re any good or not, but the ad displays the scenario that makes a person think, “how can I stop this change from happening.” Once common and esteemed positions of the Woodstock 1969 way of life, like reporters, professors, brokers, are facing this scenario today. Only when Main Street sees this antagonism as our big problem will we live happy lives again.*

## The Magic of Evolution - How Evolution Works

Evolution is life’s secret weapon because it empowers every new lifeform with slightly different variations. With variations, life can continually test for environmental changes in things like water levels, temperature, and food supply. These changes create daily frontline problems like being cold, hungry, or slow. The lifeforms that can’t adapt a solution die off, and the fittest survive. This natural selection finds which lifeforms are best suited to represent life on Earth.

Evolution works so well because it creates biodiversity. Biodiversity means life can grow its nervous system and probe the environment for changes. The more lifeforms feel the pain of frontline problems, the sooner life can adapt a solution.

Evolution may not be the Force, but it’s positively magical. In tune with Nature’s own special rhyme and reason, evolution turned a lifeless planet into an oasis of many different ecosystems. 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 Arctic 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. We have the power to feel frontline pain, reflect on its causes, and create a new tool to overcome the problem (hopefully, we can do this in time to save the polar bears). That’s why you are so important, Stargazer. Your unhappiness is pain, and life uses pain to determine what tools to evolve.

Winning the game of civilization is winning the game of evolution.

Techvolution is, therefore, intentional evolution. It’s a more advanced and quicker way to adapt that isn’t a magical mystery, as natural evolution is to polar bears, but is instead something we can understand.

The question is, what drives us to become player gods and to consciously work hard to evolve life on Earth?

## The Majic of Techvolution

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

For example, think of computers. Before they could change the world, people needed to learn to type, which takes many frustrating hours. In fact, when stuffy Xerox execs (all males) saw the world’s first personal computer in 1977—the Xerox Alto—they refused to try it out. The photocopier was the future of office work they said, and besides, “typing was women’s work.” Happily, many Alto engineers fled to Apple and helped invent the MacIntosh. The point is if everyone refused to learn to type, computers would be useless. Society only upgrades when individuals learn and integrate new tools into their lifestyles.

So, what trick does Nature play on extras to reach for new tools when they would be risking Darth Blockbuster’s, or in this case, Darth Photocopier’s, ridicule, or wrath? The answer is a force found within us all.

Unlike evolution, the trick is not actually akin to magic. We, humans, understand we’re dropping one tool and familiarizing ourselves with another, like when swapping out typewriters for personal computers. Yet there’s still something wonderfully mystical about choosing to leave one’s comfort zone to learn a new cyborgology.

It’s so amazing I call it majic.

The word is pronounced like magic but spelled differently to note a critical difference: majic is the free choice of a regular person to proactively and intentionally evolve. Even if they don’t fully understand how they’re upgrading civilization. Majic encompasses our yearning to explore, to learn, to grow, to live to our fullest potential.

*The joy of majic. Creating fire started our civilization. Credit:* [*Cast Away*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cast_Away)*.*

We usually underappreciate how joyous it is to learn new tools. But every time we try, we’re like a drowning desert fox wearing fins and goggles, yelling out, “I’m getting better!” as he fulfills his dream of learning to swim. Pushing our boundaries is what life is all about. It’s majic that keeps us jumping back into the water and out of our foxholes. It’s the majical joy of overcoming obstacles, learning new skills, and trying again, that keeps us playing the game of civilization.

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

Yet what do we do when the antagonists say improving society is wrong?

**Majic**: The natural inclination of a person to learn, use, and hold new tools to increase their natural abilities. Majic inspires people to become player gods who solve frontline problems and thereby help humanity win the game of civilization. A majician teaches other people new tools.

old philosophy in a new world [*Charles Darwin’s famous finches*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Darwin%27s_finches)*. These birds are adapted to eat one type of food like bugs, seeds, or nuts. After years of study, Darwin explained the differences using his theory of evolution (1859). Humanity mimics evolution by inventing and using new tools. Since we can drop and pick up tools, we can adapt so much faster than other lifeforms. It’s majic that keeps us evolving.*

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* Note: Majić is my family name. I lucked out because it reads like “magic” in English. It may seem egotistical to coin “majic” as a term here, but I couldn’t think of a better work (I swear). Primarily, the use of “majic” pays tribute to my parents. If you’ve liked this book so far, probably yours as well.
* Sticking it to my personal Darth Blockbuster makes me smile too.

## Using Majic to Filter the Rules

Darth Blockbuster write rules to keep the tools he commands, and therefore himself, as society’s levers of power. Bank mainframes, claim processing systems, university lecture halls. These are examples of Industrial Age tools being guarded by the Death Star of dense corporate terms of service policies, elitist academic guidelines, and ever-changing city zoning by-laws.

But how can a regular person pinpoint a rulebook as a Death Star? Darth Blockbuster doesn’t tell people he’s Darth Blockbuster. Instead, he says he’s the prince or the executive, an earl, or a consultant. Are these people genuine authority figures in society, or antagonists 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.

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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, not much to learn but how to survive with your hands and the fortune God gave you.

Frederick worked in 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 help 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 was a majician every day 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 words that open 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. Sophia was told her (new) society’s ruling philosophy. Now she knows what evil is, and she will not do it. She will use the Death Star. Sophia then and there became a demon protector of vile racism to justify human slavery.

Frederick’s world shut down 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 still 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 never happy because they’re 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 angelic lever of power. And he fought ignorance and received wisdom, whenever he read.

So, Frederick taught himself to read. He practiced with innocently “ignorant” white kids on the streets. H read items tags at the grocery store, and signs on the road. And he practiced every time he was at the Baltimore dock; did you hear me Stargazer, 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 wasn’t happy just reading, he becomes a world-famous orator and writer whose actions changed the game of civilization.

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 slave States, 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.*

old philosophy in a new world *This is a diagram of the story. Technology comes with a philosophy. And each philosophy has its protagonists. The people are in the middle. If they stay as extras, antagonists win. If we become player gods, protagonists win.*

===

Frederick Douglass was a true Jedi Master. His exceptional bravery, persistence, and intelligence showcase humanity’s endless potential. He became a protagonist and convinced extras to become player gods and upgrade their society’s ruling philosophy against vile racism. His books were levers of power that changed the world.

Among his many lessons Stargazer, Douglass teaches us how to use majic to tell the difference between good and evil rules.

Sophia taught Douglass to read. She wasn’t told to. She did it because we love showing our chosen tools, whether they’re pen and paper, new apps, or how to tape drywall. It’s as natural to spread our cyborgology, as it is for a species to propagate their biology.

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, drawing, or reading, they’ve similarly performed something awesome. They’ve upgraded someone’s cyborgology, helped them solve problems better, and effectively created a new and improved person. This makes us smile for a long time.

In short, majic is Nature’s long-lasting dopamine fix to motivate us to keep playing the game of civilization.

Yet human-made rules *sometimes* say upgrading to a new tool is wrong. 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 working moms can’t telecommute.

Rather… the tired mothers can (as proven by the recent mad-dash to get workers online), they all have high-speed internet and home computers, but they don’t.

The question is: why not?

via Gfycat

There is no easy answer. Remember in no story does anyone ever say they’re evil. Society’s rulebook 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 rebel.

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 grandkid’s first steps.

Believing, pursuing, and defending majic turns us into player gods. It’s why we continually build things in civilization computer games while no game is about holding back progress.

So, when you’re teaching or learning a new tool and someone steps in your way with a rule, ask yourself if you feel happy. 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. The Death Star operates by fear, majic by joy.

Safety is fleeting Stargazer. Human rules are created by hierarchies, which topple with every new age. Thus all rulebooks eventually expire. Majic never will. It always was, and always will be, in our souls as we play the game of civilization. Majic is how we naturally test human rulebooks. Electricity, the microchip, the iPhone were all made by people who broke the rules. Yet we celebrate their innovators Nikola Tesla, Robert Noyce, Steve Jobs because they invented new tools that let us feel and spread majic today.

Ignore majic at your peril. Sophia gave one of our greatest writers and orators his start. Yet she lived a miserable life watching him achieve greatness. It’s a lesson for us to take in when we’re stuck in a meeting, watching CNN’s pandemic coverage, or doing whatever else is giving us such unhappy lives.

We’re miserable because we’re extras of the Industrial Age. And extras don’t feel the majic of playing the game of our civilization.

Player gods go on adventures, overcome challenges, and smile from genuine accomplishment. It’s a rewarding, majical life. One, we love to hear about it, and even better, live for ourselves.

This is why we need Techvolution, a modern philosophy that says holding back majic is evil.

via Gfycat

*This is truly majical. We’re unhappy today because our workplaces still treat employees like cogs in the era of mass-production. In the Internet Age, we all should be learning new tools to improve things on the frontline in the era of mass-collaboration. If someone preaches antagonism and to hold back majic at work, it’s a good sign they’re the ones with the problem.*

## Now We Know the Difference Between Good and Bad, It’s Time to Use It

Stargazer, you’re not Frederick Douglass. You’re not enslaved, beaten, or being chased. But that doesn’t mean we should be happy with our lives any more than Douglass should have been content with his personal freedom. Our society needs player gods to solve today’s frontline problems. That means you have to follow majic and grab hold of and start using the Internet Age levers of power.

One big problem arises. Sometimes we feel the wrong majic, and therefore don’t see, nevermind fight for, the levers of power. Darth Blockbuster is sly. He knows we love new and exciting technology. So he co-opts majic with an unnatural and anti-evolutionary force.

One I call dark majic.

## Dark Majic Masks

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

Upgrading a technology, such as going from sedans to SUVs, VHS to DVD’s is a small change. While each product is different technologically, they still do the same job. Someone with a DVD player still needs to rent movies from Blockbuster. Someone steering an SUV is still driving to their destination. These users may have more style and features, but all things considered, they have the same powers and are thus identical cyborgs. The point is, a brand new technology doesn’t start a political battle. The Death Star isn’t fired up, so to speak.

But when we’ve upgraded enough technologies, like microchips, touchscreens, batteries, and Wi-Fi, a protagonist can unlock a new tool like smartphones. New tools solve problems in a new way.

And this is a big deal.

New Tool Creation *New technology is continually invented. When enough separate technology is invented, a new tool is created.*

Because new tools prompt a question: who controls it? After all, whoever does is more powerful. While the game of civilization is the struggle to overcome problems by upgrading technology and inventing new tools, politics is about the battle to control them. The people with the old tool fight to retain their power. While inventors imagine a new society that shares it.

Darth Blockbuster will gladly fire up the Death Star to use society’s rulebook to suppress new tools.

But lawsuits, lobbying, and other techniques take time and money. It’s better for the antagonists if Main Street’s love of majic is misdirected for the continued enjoyment of old technology.

For example, muscle cars today keep customers away from Tesla with techniques like mass advertising, fancy auto shows, and spectacular chromes plated V8 power! Tesla’s are a new and better tool because they can be fueled using renewable energy. With a Tesla Solar Roof, player gods can even fuel their own vehicles.

Before Tesla most Americans didn’t see the majical potential of electric vehicles. Antagonists persuaded them to value vanity and the tried and true.

Which is why I call these anti-evolution persuasion techniques dark majic.

Dark majic is the spectacle that surrounds today’s Industrial Age tools. Soda marketing campaigns and credit card rewards are easy examples. This fake majic is insidious. It gives people the joy of learning about technology but doesn’t upgrade their cyborgology. Like a corrupted rule book, dark majic stalls our society in the game of civilization.

To destroy the Death Star Stargazer, we have to first learn to ignore evil dark majic.

**Dark majic**: Methods and techniques used to keep a person using an old tool. Mass marketing campaigns are an easy example.Dark majic gives regular people a false sense of joy and accomplishment, so they don’t upgrade their cyborgology and become player gods. A dark majician tricks people into being extras.

*Please enable the sound. Credit:* [*Civilization 6*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j6v5byyCyW4) *and* [*VICE News*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EdvJSGc14xA)*.*

## Dark Majic

I’ve processed many car accident insurance claims. While claims get quite emotional, usually, the task is straightforward. Drivers call a call center, claim adjusters (me) ask them questions to get them back on the road. The job is mostly filling out paperwork. One question showcased how deeply our society can fall for dark majic.

Among the many questions, I had to ask customers about their car’s color. I’d often hear something like, “It’s midnight summer blue.” Being somewhat of a jokester, I’d play around and ask, “you sure it wasn’t sunrise winter blue?”. And the customer would almost always reply with, “No, it’s the midnight summer. I’m positive.”

My chuckle would turn into amazement when I’d ask about the other car. I’d almost always hear, “I have no idea.” It was a pain because my job was to get this information. But even though they were just in a car accident together, customers usually didn’t remember a thing about the other car. I mean nothing. Not the make, model, color, not even if it was a sedan or SUV. When a driver ran into a horse, they’d remember lots of details; but a car? Usually, I’d have to write “unknown” and move on.

We think our vehicles are so unique and special. It’s not a car, it’s “The original Sports Activity Vehicle®: a fearless leader and stylish benchmark. A BMW x5Drive50i, with Phytonic Blue Metallic paint”. I’m not kidding. People would talk like that. And not know a thing about the other car.

Which, of course, means the other person didn’t know anything about their car.

And that’s dark majic.

Because of this mystical force, a person living in 2020 actd like it is 1930; when cars were new and majical. The first cars upgraded people used to walking around or riding for a horse and carriage. Buying vehicles for the first time meant created new cyborgs who could happily cruise around, take family road trips, visit faraway friends.

The cars of the early 1900s were a significant transportation upgrade, like us getting hi-speed internet for the first time.

But today is 2020, and we’re not in *Grease*, *American Graffiti*, or *Rebel Without a Cause*.

*Professional driver on a closed course. And still, a gas car, with four wheels. There’s nothing wrong with cars, trucks, or tractor-trailers. But, we’re buying too many vehicles, and stupidly neglecting our infrastructure to pay for all the frills.*

The truth is cars aren’t new and exciting. They’re already integrated into our lives. More chrome, keyless entry, leather interior are refreshing, enjoyable, but in the end, they don’t really matter. You’re the same cyborg with almost any car.

Polishing up old technology doesn’t upgrade civilization.

My customers admitted as much. After an accident, what they wanted most of all (by far) was a rental car. Fancy features and made up colors didn’t matter; they just needed to get around.

Dark majic turns us into introverts who think we’re controlling levers of power in the game of civilization as important player gods. In reality, we’re really just non-playing characters living in the past.

So, before antagonists use their Death Star, they distract us with false luxury. To be a happy community in the era of mass-collaboration, Main Street has to wake-up to dark majic; and then take on the Death Star.

Happily, we already did. Against Darth Blockbuster himself.

Lets see who won that contest.

## Darth Blockbuster Uses Dark Majic and the Death Star

Industrial Age industries use dark majic to keep their customers attached to an aging product. Today’s Hollywood, with its endless remakes and franchise, is a great example. But Tinseltown didn’t start out as replicators.

Today’s studios were started by innovators. At first they were based around New Jersey. They only went to Los Angeles to escape the ceaseless patent trolls of East Coast companies.

Once free, master storytellers like Samual Goldwyn, David O. Selnick, and Irving Thalberg made movies into a worldwide sensation. Like Steve Jobs used modern technology to glue us to smartphones, these creators used projector, sound, and film technology that glued people to theatre seats.

By the 1930s, Hollywood’s Studio System was the Silicon Valley of its day.

However, over the next decades, things changed a lot. Television came in 1948, which obviously hurt the movie business. Worst was the government (foolishly) banned studios from owning, or even collaborating with, movie theatres—which broke up the studio system that worked so well. By the 1970s, the movie industry was in big trouble.

The industry was saved by good movies like The Godfather (1972), Jaws (1975), Star Wars (1977).

However, by this time, the movie industry was no longer run by master storytellers. Businessman obsessed with mass-production had taken over. The industry lost its ability to tell original stories. Starting in the late 1970s Hollywood followed the ideals of mass-production and pumped out sequels, remakes, and franchises. Each new release had to use more raunchiness, special effects, and celebrities to attract attention.

Here’s how movie legend John Wayne explained it:

All the real motion picture people have always made family pictures. But the downbeats and the so-called intelligentsia got in when the government stupidly split up the production companies and the theaters. The old giants like Mayer, Thalberg, even Harry Cohn, despite the fact that personally I couldn’t stand him—were good for this industry. 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

As all this was happening, the entertainment industry tried to ban VCRs. That case was started because the industry didn’t want customers to “time-shift” and watch shows on-demand. After the industry lost by one vote on the Supreme Court, the public (of course) kept buying videotapes.

Enter Blockbuster.

Blockbuster rose to VHS rental dominance by using bar-codes to monitor its videos. Other rental companies were still using paper records. Bar codes let Blockbuster move around its videos based on daily demand, and be organized enough to charge highly profitable late-fees.

In fact, VHS rental business was so good Hollywood changed its business plan. Starting in the earlty 1990s they began to use movie theatres as a hype machine, to pump up their more profitable movie rental business. That’s why a high “opening weekend” became so important. Movie distributors wanted to give their titles a “must see” status when it came out to rent, or better yet, buy.

Then came DVDs and flatscreen televisions (1999).

Hollywood’s businessman were gleeful. As the public crazed over home theatres, they bought billions of DVDs to watch their stories at home on-demand. DVDs were so popular that many theatre chains—despite jacked-up popcorn prices—went bankrupt in the 1990s. Hollywood didn’t care; they kept making spectacular and raunchy franchises and remakes to sell more DVDs.

The public kept buying more. We loved watching movies on demand.

The movie industry took credit for the surge in business. They hosted more lavish Emmy, Golden Globes, and Oscar award shows. But while the audience seemed happy with the dark majic of movie blockbusters, there was more behind the story.

Techvolution battle

Techvolution battle

Fundamentally speaking, movie theatres and home theatres are both technological gates. A customer still needs to drive to a DVD, like they do to a theatre. And here was the sweet spot of the Industrial Age powers. With the DVD, the industry could use digital technology to lower the costs of mass-production, while still charging premium prices required for a physical product.

Just like the bureaucracy of the medical and insurance system, the movie industry businessmen used Internet Age technology to its own benefit, instead of the customers.

Too bad for them, historical sweet spots never last. True to the game of civilization, technology kept getting better. Soon enough, hi-speed internet (2004) came to Main Street. Now the public didn’t have to drive to a theatre or Blockbuster store. Regular people could finally share in the benefits of the Internet Age; home internet streaming was possible.

And predictably, a new tool asked a substantial political question; who controls the internet streaming lever of power?

Techvolution battle

Techvolution battle

I was a theatre usher/projectionist back then and saw it all first hand. Some movies were great, but most were bland: comedies, tragedies, dramas, suspense, all genres usually fell flat. Theatres were over-priced and often empty. Customers were unhappy and often told me so. Regardless, the industry didn’t care because, on the back of strong DVD sales, they were busy enjoying lavish paychecks, banquets, and award shows.

Any consideration of upgrading their customers to the Internet Age was not-existent. The industry wasn’t going to throw away the DVD.

Instead, they double-downed on it. Twice! They made HD-DVD and Blu-Ray (2006). They increased the dark majic of marketing, special effects, and celebrity culture. The Hollywood hierarchy was happy the way things were. They (thought) they controlled the digital technology lever of power. Their business model was to ration access to it. After all, marketing “teasers”, with a ordered theater release, DVD, and finally on television seemed to be working just fine.

In swooped internet Jedi on an ethernet chandelier.

Unknown and unpaid technologists created BitTorrent sites (2008). Although filled with computer viruses, lousy picture quality, and poorly designed user interfaces, these sites gave regular people movies on the internet.

With the lever of power in both hands, DVDs faced off against internet streaming: Industrial Age vs.Internet Age.

A decade before, the music industry was in the same spot. Compact Disc (1982) sales died when customers got the internet and flocked to torrent sites like Napster (1999). Music executives tried—and failed—to make their own online music platform. When the great Steve Jobs created iTunes (2001) to help save the music industry, the executives still didn’t want to share power over the music business.

Jobs said this about his experience, “I’ve never spent so much of my time trying to convince people [music executives] to do the right thing for themselves.” Eventually, Jobs got them on board, and the iPod, iTunes, and AppleMusic are, of course, history.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| All Best Picture Winners | Average Theatre Gross |
| 1990s | $ 188,752,801 |
| 2000s | $ 142,705,937 |
| 2010s | $ 64,035,754 |

*Average North American theater gross for each Oscar Best Picture winner. As the movies were dying, the industry fought back with excuses and lawsuits instead of innovation and evolution. Most people didn’t even bother watching Oscar movies on Netflix either. All numbers from* [*boxofficemojo*](https://boxofficemojo.com)*.*

The movie industry rejected the lesson of Napster. Ever notice how online movies don’t include opening credits, red-carpet interviews, and politically charged acceptance speeches. When the public controlled the lever of power, the first thing they did was erase this filler because of its useless dark majic. When in control of the lever of power, the public wants the simple majic of a new story.

*Fan reactions of another generic blockbuster movie versus Game of Thrones. Or, dark majic versus majic.*

The public flocked to online movies like they did for online music. The DVD was being replaced, and dark majic lost out to the majic of streaming.

So the industry fired up the Death Star.

The same public who bought billions of dollars on DVDs and merchandise. That was paying 800 million a year in DVD late fees. That created movie fan clubs and flocked to comic-cons; was declared evil.

The movie industry put FBI warnings on their products, lobbied the government for harsh punishments, and demanded the public feel ashamed for not buying DVDs anymore. Endless interviews were given as customers were sued threats of lawsuits were mailed out.

The industry refused to do the hard word and evolve. Instead, they called their own customers’ disloyal thieves.

And here was born Darth Blockbuster.

Hollywood became antagonists who preached antagonism as they actively and knowingly tried to force humanity to keep using old tools in our cyborgology. Rather than sending us quality stories over the internet, Hollywood used dark majic and the Death Star trying to make us keep buying DVDs, Blu-rays, and HD-DVDs.

It was quite the battle. Before we find if the villain could save the DVD (I know you know the answer, but indulge me), let’s take a short break.

Frontline movies full *Today, most movies stink, and most theatres are dead. That’s you Stargazer, looking at the frontline after removing the dark majic mask. The masks trickery had you watching banquets awarding movies you’ve likely not even seen.*

# INTERMISSION

Intermissions are an excellent time to stretch our legs, buy a snack, and also ask some questions about the story so far. Here, I want to go more in-depth on some terms and characters. I especially want to emphasize why reaching for modern levers of power and upgrading to the Internet Age will make us happy again.

## Recap

The game of civilization never stops. It goes on forever because it’s the game of life; evolve or die. Thus, we’re always that person on Main Street trying to figure out what’s right for ourselves while trying to help our society prosper. I think we all try our best. We try to educate ourselves, eat well, use green products, and join movements like sustainable agriculture and renewable energy.

Although we try our best, we have a huge problem—we’re running out of time. Canada, Britain, France, America and the rest of Western Civilization peaked in the Industrial Age, and we still haven’t updated our ruling philosophy to the Internet Age.

Still obsessed with the era of mass-production, we’ve been digitizing our society using ideas designed to industrialize it.

That’s why we still measure our success by Industrial Age stats like GDP growth, employment numbers, Dow Jones Industrial Average, and union membership rates. These numbers don’t tell us anything about ourselves. They don’t say if we have more savings, fewer heart attacks, more reliable medical supplies, or if we’re living happier lives.

The Internet Age empowers us to measure our happiness and, therefore, our civilization’s health. To get there, we have to “click” a new philosophy. One that says antagonism is evil, and improving our lives with digital technology is everyone’s right and duty.

*You’ll never hear this stat on CNBC, but it means so much wasted times and money. It’s a number we’ll be talking much about in the Internet Age.*

## COVID-19 Shows We Can Still Evolve

Like many people, especially office workers, I love the idea of remote work. I telecommuted for a year while going to night classes at university, and it was awesome. Yet in university transportation classes, several workplaces, and in society as a whole, driving into work was always defended.

Despite using facts, figures, and [books](https://basecamp.com/books/remote) to explain why commutes suck, I was always told it doesn’t matter because “managers don’t like it.”

Now with the coronavirus, within a few weeks, every university, workplace, and bureaucracy is scrambling to distribute their workers with home offices. Although it’s sad it took a pandemic to open up our minds, it’s nice to see how easily our civilization can adapt when we decide to.

This doesn’t mean any, and all work can be done from home. But, it does mean many of us stuck in traffic for decades didn’t need to be.

Funny to note, by my back of the envelope math, this pandemic is actually improving long-held problems. Road congestion is gone, air pollution is improved, car accidents are far lower. The question is, how did a few managers and executives stop these upgrades from our society?

Because we let them control the rulebook.

## The Rulebook

The rulebook is what governs everyday life. Since entering the Internet Age, our rulebook has kept growing. Government regulations have shot up, political correctness is spreading, office workers study to get absurd certifications.

Think of this, [business lobbyists didn’t even exist in 1969](https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/04/how-corporate-lobbyists-conquered-american-democracy/390822/), now many people think special interests run our governments.

Our rulebook is enormous, and you’re probably used to it being over your head. We’ve all signed loan contracts, terms of service, credit card agreements without reading them. We live under many by-laws, regulations, and laws. We buy products filled with so many copyrights, trademarks, patents that it’s hard to understand how much of our stuff we own. We live under the jurisdiction of a massive rulebook. But big isn’t always bad.

It is when the size is used against us.

*Please turn on the sound. The cards are stacked against Main Street because the middlemen of the Industrial Age are fighting to stay alive.* Credit: [JRE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=swzogcjasNY)

## The Death Star

A big rulebook makes rules convoluted. This is bad when rules become so open to interpretation, they need interpreters. Today, we keep many lawyers busy arguing what the rules “really mean”. Having the right laywers thus gives someone the power to win a disagreement.

But a big rulebook is still not automatically a Death Star.

It became one when Industrial Age powers wanted to keep themselves in power. Far removed from the original industrialists, they relied on controlling existing levers of power, instead of inventing new ones. They wanted the era of mass-production to never end. This scene from Mad Men, taking place in 1960, shows it well.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QKcneQ6N50Q&feature=youtu.be&t=50

This same conversation happened at car, clothing, appliance, entertainment, cosmetic, and other once upon a time cutting edge companies. After the Industrial Age ended in 1969, they wanted to keep their time in the sun going. To do so, the juniors of this world, with no idea how their industry worked, or how to innovate, paid for more “mad men” dark majic advertisements, car shows, and franchise movies.

And when that didn’t work, a large, confusing, and ever-growing rulebook became their superweapon to defend their gates against new technology.

Only established Industrial Age companies and bureaucracies had the money to buy the lawyers who could interpret the rulebook in their favor. Henceforth, the massive rulebook of society became a Death Star to the Internet Age. While “junior” became Darth Blockbusters who adopted antagonism as his ideology.

The antagonsts are still very powerful. We can only defeat them by reaching for modern levers of power.

*Antagonism can pay well. But it’s always in the short-term. Because if the society printing the money fails, everyone loses the game. No one is rich off of Confederate or Soviet money are they?* Credit: [VICE News](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mutpYD0Amfk).

## Levers of Power

In the Industrial Age, when regular people thought of politics, they first had to think of ideologies. This was because government policy was society’s biggest lever of power. To have any say in what that lever did, Main Street could only support Right or Left political parties.

The Internet Age changes the power dynamic. Now when you think of politics Stargazer, you should not think of nightly news broadcasts or what Left/Right commentators believe. You must think of apps, websites, and electronics. These are the new levers of power.

Thus, the most important political question of our time is asking, “who controls mine?”.

The middle-class can start to control their society with water reclaimers, home agriculture, solar panels, and records of communication. Once we believe in Techvolution, we’ll be player gods in our minds. But only when we control our own levers of power will we defeat antagonism, and become player gods in reality.

## Polar Bears in the Amazon

The era of mass-production is over. But politicians went along with Darth Blockbuster’s antagonism. It was easier to keep doing the same old thing.

Our society used dark majic to make people happy with living the Suburban 1969 lifestyle. Thus, to look like we’re improving education, we put up more prestigious colleges. To deal with traffic-jammed and decaying roads, we sold more luxury cars. To make people “happy,” we built more generic suburban homes.

suburbs *Can you guess where these pictures were taken? You can’t, because mass-production brought mass-uniformity that’s very unusual in our history, and in Nature.*

If you’d see a camel drinking from the Great Lakes, eagles flying inside a cave system, or polar bears swimming in the Amazon, you’d stop and wonder, “why are these biologies here?”.

Likewise, when we see the same modes of transportation, working hours, and houses in Boston and Phoenix, we should see something is out of place.

Different geographies, demographics, and weather give unique problems and thus force custom biologies, and they should create different cyborgologies too.

If you’re asking how humanity should evolve, I don’t know. That’s your choice. It’s up to free lifeforms to adapt. But, I do know our cyborgology, has none of the splendid diversity of biology we’ve all watch in BBC Earth.

via Gfycat

*If this was a Nature show, you could tell the difference between desert, mountain, or coastal life. You can’t with us today. And that’s a big problem. Credit:* [*Office Space*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Office_Space)*.*

The Western world’s mass uniformity is why we’re unhappy. We’re forced to live in a world so interconnected with “just in time” economics our lives have little adaptions to make life easier. Profits and surplus depends on adapting new housing, work schedules, transportation methods, food supply, power generation, etc. to our local environment.

But because we’re stuck in the Industrial Age’s and its mass uniformity, we’re as unhappy as a camel forced to live in the Amazon. Being stuck in traffic is expecting a camel to enjoy swimming.

It’s a hateful experience, because it’s simply not what we’re designed to do. Unsurpringly, our society is bleeding money. Not the antagonists of course. But the rest of us.

Because can you imagine all the money a polar bear would owe trying to live in the Sahara? Or a camel in the Amazon? You don’t have to, just look down.

Government debt \_Industrial Age tools like suburban houses, gas cars, and junk food are too generic to give a return on their investment. We’ve borrowed from the future to avoid adapting ourselves. We’ll only evole more efficient lifestyles in the era of mass-collaboration. Because you know what makes a camel happy and rich? Living in the f\*cking desert. Credit: [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Consumer_debt).\_

## Ideologues Don’t Care About Evolution

Ruling philosophies are compelling. They can make firm believers of people who sometimes have a hard time applying their theory to the real-world. One example is Lysenkoism. This was a pseudo-science in the Soviet Union that assumed our genes inherit learned traits. So, for example, if you lived in a hot climate, your genes would morph to sweat more.

Darwin said the opposite. He taught us our genes are set in stone, and it’s the fittest who survive. Soviets didn’t want to believe that because their communist ideology said natural selection was unnatural. The result was Soviet genetic research didn’t exist. Soviet agriculture didn’t get better seeds. And thousands of Soviet biologists were sent to labor camps for asking questions.

Likewise, Progressive and Conservative extremists won’t go easy. These ideologues don’t know—or care to know—about upgrading to the Interner Age. Even now, they’re fighting evolution to stay alive.

These fights get very serious—like when Europe set itself aflame in the Thirty Years War fighting for Protestantism and Catholicism. Unhappily, now we have enraged Progressives and Conservatives blaming each other for our society’s growing problems.

The coronavirus will make it worse. Dealing with this pandemic will consume lots of reources. That means the Left and Right fights over trigger words, tea-party marches, woke culture, and “convince me I’m wrong” trolling, will only get worse. These misguided people will keep raising tensions until we click a new philosophy.

Watch out.

via Gfycat

## Made In America

How did Darth Blockbuster stay in business by re-selling the same products? He lowered his labor costs by exporting his factories and called it profitability.

There are endless pages of economic theory that justify exporting the American industry. All of its bullshit. If lower costs are such a good thing, why aren’t trademarks, registered trademarks, copyrights, or patents filed in markets with cheap lawyers? Why aren’t executives or marketing departments outsourced?

Where would you rather penny-pinch, on marketing campaigns, or the person making brake lines?

In 1945 America held the world’s largest and best manufacturing base. Within a generation, it was sold by antagonists to buy themselves more time. China was seen as the promised land. A country so populated it could seemingly supply the cheap labor and market needed to keep the era of mass-production alive forever.

Left and Right politicians agreed. Unable to adapt our lifestyle to the Internet Age, they saw cheap labor as a way to sustain the “American Dream” babyboomer lifestyle they sold to voters. Bureaucratic creep and rising debt were ignored. Free-trade was Left and Rights answer to Main Street’s money problems, even when it meant selling off Main Street (note, in college I had two jobs outsourced).

But, no matter how cheap we make Industrial Age living, it’s still outdated. Nature demands adaption, not replication. We don’t win the game by replaying bygone ages. We win by continually evolving technology and ourselves. That’s why there’s never been a time where the society full of marketers, managers, and economists, defeated the nation full of engineers, makers, and technicians.

To start winning the game in the Internet Age, Main Street must demand more “Made In America.” Buying each other’s products is a great sign we’re controlling our society’s new Internet Age levers of power. Also, having a vibrant industrial base makes it far easier to respond to wars, famines, and yes, pandemics too.

I smile, thinking of all those bakers, tailors, designers, craftsmen, and repairmen happily working on a new empowered Main Street.

*A tale of two ruling philosophies. As Left and Right were selling itself to keep the past alive, China was pressing itself forward. This is America’s manufacturing centres versus and China’s over the past 50 years, Credit* [*Tech Insider*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ce_6oZEB9Gw)*, and* [*Pion*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SfLclErvMmM)*.*

## New and Old Societies As Seen in Celebrities

New technology is already changing our society. By connecting people to the internet, we’ve given ourselves the power to receive and send information on demand. Like a person holding a two-way radio in a life raft, we now have our say when we need it.

An example of this freedom is celebrities. We’ll always celebrate the people we look up to. But, in the Industrial Age society, our stars were often decided for us. The era of mass-production only let a few people make movies, release albums, or get their names in “the papers.”

Internet Age celebrities are different. While we can make fun of Instagram models, silly YouTubers, Twitter trolls, and obscure podcasts, but at least we can follow who we want. Which also means we celebrate who we wish to.

Heck, with no gates to overcome, anyone can be a musician, artist, comedian, or “celebrity.”

Personally, I follow Sailing La Vagabonde, Adam Savage’s Tested, Linus Tech Tips, Kings and Generals, Historia Civilis, BatmanRealAccount, Invicta, The Joe Rogan Experience, Dave 2D, Kirsten Dirksen, Traversy Media, Taylor Tries, RealEngineering, Dr. Becky. I celebrate them because they’re real people doing cool stuff who’d never consider themselves celebrities.

The next time you hear “celebrity,” ask yourself if they’re one of yours. Modern technology gives you that power.

## I Want to Work at Blockbuster, I Want to Use Netflix

Stargazer, never let anyone call you an employee, consumer, or taxpayer. Those are all different names for non-playing characters. There’s no achievement or responsibility required to be them.

Player gods call themselves workers, owners, and citizens. These are the roles where people have problems, and thus seek out solutions, which gives upgrades their society.

With that in mind, let’s think about our future.

Everyone knows the world is changing. We hear a lot of the computerization of work and the end of the “one job for life” mentality. What doesn’t exist is the self-realization that *your* job is changing. There are still lots of Blockbusters in the world today. They sustain themselves on hidden fees, confusing sales contracts, and high mark-ups. And, the people inside often think they’ll be there forever even though they watch Netflix every night.

Player gods should always know the truth. Times are “always a’changin.”

This doesn’t mean you’ll lose your job tomorrow. But eventually, you’ll just have to adapt because society will eventually get just as sick paying for your Blockbuster as it did the original one.

You can’t work at Blockbuster and use Netflix forever. Don’t worry, they’ll be lots of patriots running around, teaching you how to make a great living with modern tech.

## Modern Patriots

When I worked at the insurance call-center, my customers often had a paper invoice or report. When I told them I needed to see it, they’d usually ask themselves where they could get a scanner or fax machine.

I’d remind them their smartphone has a great camera, so they could just snap a photo and email me. This always sparked a eureka moment; “that’s right, I can do that, thanks, John!”

We know about scanning and faxing, but there’s still no word for snapping a photo of paperwork. Because this new ability of our cyborgology is still evolving.

Cool huh?

And, that’s what I mean by cyborgology and majic. When a new tool is in our hands, it gives us a unique ability and therefore increases our cyborgology. But we need to be taught how to use it. We can learn this majic ourselves, or a majician can teach us.

To have a prosperous future, we’ll need lots of majic lessons.

Because technology will keep getting more advanced. So, someone needs to teach Main Street all the possibilities behind modern tech. Artificial intelligence, machine learning, robotics, 3D printing, augmented reality, virtual reality, super-computers, and whatever else the protagonist wizards invent.

You know how Home Depot workers give “Do It Yourself” advice? Well, who does a plumber ask about using a 3D printer to make a custom pipe? What about a roofer curious which drone and camera best inspect weather damage? How can a physiotherapist use machine learning to help her client’s sprained knee?

While tech companies will keep making and marketing excellent products, someone has to know all the options to help the frontline connect with the majic of modern levers of power.

Linus Tech Tips is an example of someone already doing this. There’s a big job for someone doing this all day; modern patriots who “cross-pollinate” products on Main Street during the era of mass-collaboration.

*Please enable the sound. Today’s geeks, nerds, and gamers will be the ones teaching you how to make a better, more productive, and happier life in the era of mass-collaboration. Credit* [*Civilization 6*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NLoDMsqJkE) *and* [*Linus Tech Tips*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-EA2FQXs4dw)*.*

## Does The World Need to Know

Internet Age player gods should be celebrating stuff like #madeinamerica, #staycation, #mainstreet.

That can be hard. Darth Blockbuster heads a hierarchy, so there are lots of underlings inside who fight his cause. Dealing with these BMW drivers, junior execs, or sales agents is sometimes rough. They define success as rising up the ranks and buying dark majic consumer products. If you’re “beneath” them, they assume they’re better than you and act like it.

If they ever intimidate you, just press the button below.

The Funny Wakeup Button

It randomly selects a Wikipedia article. With three clicks, I got:

* Lorenz Nieberl, a German bobsledder.
* Sandamías, a village in northern Spain with 67 residents.
* Aartsenia arctica, a sea snail.

Anyone can make a Wikipedia article, so someone out there said, “the world needs to know” about this stuff. But, no one has ever thought that about your personal antagonist. You haven’t, have you?

Ignore arrogant pricks. They’re collecting and polishing participation trophies for needlessly changing the company logo, or re-writing the unread corporate manual. Now and always, its contributions to win the game of civilization that makes people think, “the worlds needs to know.”

Whether or not you contribute is up to you.

## What You Can Do Today

While the antagonists are fighting it, the era of mass-collaboration is already here. We’ve already seen examples of Uber, Airbnb, and Wikipedia. But there are many more.

These websites let you change the world today. Right now.

[Galaxy Zoo](https://www.zooniverse.org%22%20target=%22_blank): Help astronomers classify stars and galaxies. You might even be the first to discover something new.

[Common Voice:](https://voice.mozilla.org/en): Help inventors give their apps voice commands by donating your voice, anonymously, of course. A free voice database lets anyone improve their software.

[Stack Overflow](https://stackoverflow.com): Stack Overflow lets programmers, engineers, customer support ask a question to colleagues. The person with the best answer gets rewarded. This kind of mass-collaboration will soon connect you with other people doing your frontline job.

[Khan Academy](https://www.khanacademy.org/): Give yourself, or your kids, world-class education for free. You only need to login and start doing the work. Likewise, Udemy, Skillshare, The Great Courses all teach you programming, art design, photography, or anything else you need to know.

[Kickstarter](https://www.kickstarter.com/): You can fund your own levers of power. Kickstarter connects regular people trying to solve a problem, with ordinary people waiting for a solution. It only takes a few bucks to fund a product. The software of this website, Ghost Foundation, was started on Kickstarter.

Naysayers will point out problems here. They’ll say Wikipedia has errors, or Kickstarter funds terrible products. Ignore people who find a reason the future won’t happen. I mean, compare some errors and delayed product releases, to Industrial Age industries that get billions in bail-outs every generation.

The mass-collaboration websites above are very young and inexpensive, yet they still put levers of power in your hand. As they improve, they will only increase your control over your slice of the world, which directly increases your political power.

Holding political power is what founded America, ended slavery, gave civil rights, and soon, will make player gods of the Internet Age.

## The Era of Mass-Collaboration Is Only Waiting for a New Rulebook

The happier we are, the healthier our society. We’re making progress at places like Wikipedia or YouTube. But, we’ll be the happiest once we evolve to the Internet Age by clicking a modern philosophy. Because as player gods we can install a modernd rulebook, what I call the Life Star.

I’ll show you an example of it.

When we buy a new house, we can’t wait to move in, bring in our furniture, and start renovations. Soon enough, everyone’s putting in decks, pools, fences, sheds, and whatever else we dream up.

Take a second and watch this clip of a player building backyards in the city-builder *Cities: Skylines*.

*Credit:* [Cities: Skylines](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8KjNohyz_XQ)

Evolution needs us to buy solar-power roofs, install a Hydroloop water reuser, start a 3D printing business in the garage. These are the new technologies that upgrade civilization.

But there’s a roadblock; do you know if your home insurance policy covers hail damage to newly installed solar panels? Do you even know where to find out if it does? Do you where to get your local business by-laws, building codes, tax laws?

Even without antagonists, our society’s rulebook is so vast and dense, we all live under the threat of “not reading the fine print.” At any time, we could be hit by a code violation, claim denial, warranty rejection, liability lawsuit, or tax audit.

And what if antagonists want to attack us? It’s so easy for anyone with the resources to find “a problem” and use their Death Star to start a lawsuit, find a violation, or lobby government against you.

Technologically speaking, there’s absolutely no reason for this. How is it that Linux software is worth billions, operates every Android phone, runs most of the internet’s servers, and you can download it by pressing this button.

Instantly Download Billion Dollar Software For Free

But to access our health insurance policy, we do what? What does it take to get the blueprints to our home? How many people understand how their mortgage works? By what regulation can a city by-law officer tell a business to take down their car lifts after 9 years in operation?

The rules, regulations, contracts, and laws that govern our lives are a complete mystery to most of Main Street. And that makes us dependent on the bureaucratic creep of Big Business and Big Government inside city-halls, mortgage companies, and law offices.

The truth is, regular people and small businesses can work as freely as the *Cities: Skylines* clip above. With open-source software, GPS, smartphones, high-speed internet, AES security protocols, cloud computing, MySQL databases, the middle-class can literally put the power to read, understand, and question the rules in our own hands!

Once we hold Internet Age levers of power, we’ll make a rulebook that’s friendly and reasonable. We will understand what we should be doing, be able to ask informed questions, and of course fight back if we think something is wrong.

Most vitally, everyone will be held accountable for their actions.

However, this new rulebook will only be a happy reality once Main Street uses Techvolution as our shield and motivation to end antagonism and bring-on the era of mass-collaboration.

That’s why we’ll make the modern rulebook in the next chapter *Techvolution II: Building the Life Star*.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PgGLgygsqus *This scene is from the movie The Big Short. It’s a movie about the 2008 housing crisis. The Industrial Age antagonists wanted to keep building the 1969 lifestyle. To get people to sign for generic suburban houses, they used underlings to sell a confusing rulebook. 2008 is when I came up with the camel in the Amazon metaphor. I was trying to explain why the crisis was always going to happen. In short, if you trick a camel into buying a house in the Amazon, that doesn’t change the fact it’s living out of its ecosystem. Credit* [*The Big Short*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Big_Short_(film))

## Pandemic Test

Today we’re counting on our local industries to make more medical masks, hand sanitizer and [very quickly design, build, and distribute enough ventilators for our sick](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7vLPefHYWpY).

The small “maker” community is stepping up to [print face shields for medical staff](https://www.opshieldsup.org/). Typically, they’d need untold hours and money dealing with the medical middlemen;s rules, regulations, and paperwork to get approved for use. But, after exporting our factories, there’s not enough left to respond in time. So the middlemen have put their [Death Star on hold,](https://youtu.be/HgPj6e3jtz0?t=173).

Our response to the coronavirus didn’t need to be so uncertain. When a society is playing the game well, it has the resources, expertise, and drive to respond to any crisis.

For example, let’s look at American during one of its biggest crisis, World War II (1939-1945).

America didn’t enter the war right away. In fact, several years into the conflict the US still had a tiny military. But when Japan attacked in late 1941, and the Nazis declared war, the two “awoke a sleeping giant.” This phrase describes America because it didn’t matter the American military was small. Because her industrial base was extensive, her technical expertise was precise, and most importantly, her people were happy.

Led by industrialists [William S. Knudsen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_S._Knudsen), and [Henry J. Kaiser](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_J._Kaiser) (both with no formal education) America’s “Victory” war production program quickly outproduced the Axis countries. Even though Germany, Japan, and Italy were already geared for war, the American worker was twice as productive as a German, and four times more than a Japanese. The Ford Motor Company alone made more war equipment than all of Italy.

You can read more about America’s [transformation during World War II](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Home_front_during_World_War_II) on Wikipedia. The point is, America got into the war in late 1941, and it was all over within 3 and a half years. A big reason is the blazing speed America designed, built, and delivered new tanks, planes, and ships. More proof that the civilization that adapts the fastest wins.

And today, we’re struggling to figure out where to get more face masks, hand sanitizers, and ventilators.

On the bright side, having our backs against the wall makes us adapt. Among the technical innovations, World War II is when America updated its culture. Finally, women and blacks got to show their full potential in the frontline and assemly line of the war.

It’s no surprise the equality, and civil rights movements upgraded even further after its people helped win the war.

We can follow suit and start to remake our society during this pandemic by adopting a modern philosophy for the Internet Age.

Battle Scene This photo was taken in 1943 in Pascagoula Mississipi. While most German and Japanese women were prohibited from working, America was adapting away from old traditions. Its no surprise which philosophy won. Credit: [National Archives Catalog](https://catalog.archives.gov/id/522890)

## Click

What makes something click in a person’s mind? If only we knew. Sadly, we can’t decide to cry, scream, or love. We all must wait for a connection. Here’s some stand-up that’ll probably make you laugh, I’ll make a point afterward.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZOiPQ8nqB1s&feature=youtu.be&t=15

Note, it’s the extras of the Industrial Age who complain because they’ve forgotten how fun it is to play the game of civilization.

Here’s my point. Nobody knows how or why something clicks. However, we do understand when it does; when we can’t go back. And could you ever drop Netflix and rent DVDs again? What about flipping through a phone book or calling a taxi-cab and wondering when it’ll arrive?

Of course not, and that’s a good sign you’re already a believer in the Internet Age.

Our civilization has fought many battles to liberate extras. The first was the fight against kings and their despotism. Then it was the fight against sexism and racism. At each stage, more people fought for the levers of power like books, telescopes, guns, and voting. Holding these tools let more people become full members of their community; what we now call player gods.

Liberating people works because, just like in Nature, the more lifeforms play the game, the more adaptations we evolve to frontline problems.

Now, as we upgrade to the Internet Age, we have another “ism” in our way; antagonism. Despotism, racial prejudice, and gender oppression will always need to be kept at bay. But, Darth Blockbuster’s ideology is by far Main Street’s biggest problem today.

Look at what antagonism has forced upon us during this pandemic. Limited medical supplies. A fragile supply chain. Getting informed via infotainment. Almost zero contact with medical professionals. A rush to work or study from home. A months long unemployment claim reviews. An extremely bureaucratic health-care system.

Antagonism is why we’re camels trying to cope in the Amazon during this crisis.

The good news is, we already have Internet Age technology. You already love it; it clicks in your mind. This book is merely asking you to increase your cyborgology using a philosophy you already believe in.

So, let’s return to our mission. I want you to drop the era of mass-production and Left/Right politics for Techvolution. A new philosophy that gives you the right and duty to upgrade our civilization to the Internet Age and the era of mass-collaboration.

At the end of this book, I’d love it if you’d tell your claims adjuster, “Just to let you know, I’m recording this conversation. And I already have a copy of the policy, and know what section I’m claiming under. I look forward to collaborating with you.”

Because that’s what player gods say when we control the levers of power.

*Please enable the sound. Faster evolution is our savior. And antagonism is our enemy. Credit:* [*Civlization 6*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NLoDMsqJkE)*, and* [*Office Space*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Office_Space)*.*

# MID POINT

## A Techvolution Battle Scene. Internet Age vs. Industrial Age

Before we return to the battle with Darth Blockbuster Stargazer, let’s learn from another battle in the war to upgrade to the Internet Age. Let’s talk about how we used modern technology to better record and access knowledge.

Humanity is always asking questions. Some of those today might be, why are the movies so expensive, are candy applies real apples, or, more importantly, what are proven techniques to stop the coronavirus. Humanity deals with all these questions by creating a reference tool.

Our first reference tool was the wisdom of our elders. We eventually upgraded when inventing papyrus scrolls and ink (around 2300 BC) and books (about 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 ago, many households proudly included a physical encyclopedia collection in their library. *The Encyclopedia Britannica* (1878) was the standard. In 1933 it started to be re-published every year to keep people updated to the latest facts. When the Internet Age hit in the 1970s, home computers, digital printers, 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 brought the internet, and the Internet Age, directly to Main Street. The web lets ordinary people send and receive information. This new technology 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 write technical manuals collaboratively.

As the web boomed in the late ’90s, protagonist Jimmy Wales wondered if the web could upgrade encyclopedias. Today, most of us curious about things like the movies or candy apples know this story ends with a free online encyclopedia anyone can edit called Wikipedia. Indeed the online encyclopedia anyone can edit is the poster child for the era of mass-collaboration.

But Wikipedia didn’t start out as the favorite kid.

Wikipedia started as Nupedia (2000), a free online copycat of Encyclopedia Britannica. Nupedia followed the Industrial Age rationale of making gates. It said only “expert” professors were qualified to write articles. Wikipedia (2001) was a side project. Only the programmers, designers, innovators of the Internet Age knew mass-collaboration was the way of the future.

Everyone else didn’t realize that with a new technological age, comes a modern philosophy as well. The first sign of a problem with Nupedia was that the professors didn’t like to share their knowledge. In its first year, Nupedia had 12 articles.

Wikipedia had 40,000.

And here rose Wikipedia’s antagonists. Professors loved to belittle the public’s articles as rubbish. They even used the Death Star and disallowed students from referencing Wikipedia’s materials in their school work. Yet professors refused to improve, or to assign students to improve, Wikipedia.

Instead of stepping up, the professors performed dark majic. Despite exceptional referencing abilities and wide-spread adoption, the self-proclaimed experts still tried to convince people Wikipedia was garbage.

The professors felt the lever of power over society’s knowledge was theirs by right.

The problem for the professors was it turned out “expert” answers, and “regular” answers are the same. The movies are expensive because of the [1948 Paramount Decrees](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_v._Paramount_Pictures,_Inc.) banning studios working with theatres. [Candy apples are real apples](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Candy_apple). And, washing hands, social distancing, and self-isolating is so far the best defense against [COVID-19](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coronavirus_disease_2019).

We can all look up these facts because Wikipedia puts the levers of power into our hands! A massive community voluntarily shares their knowledge one “edit now” at a time and fiercely protects their common knowledge with “undo now.” Nobody tells them, pays them, or forces them to.

Because writing or reading a Wikipedia article, is Nature’s small dopamine rush. It’s not perfect, there’s still room for improvement, but Wikipedia is far better than buying an enclyopedia set every few years. Heck,while writing this book I’ve used YouTube, Project Gutenberg, and Wikipedia dozens of times and never checked my univeristy lecture notes or course readers once. Not out of malice, digital tools are simply better.

That’s the story of Wikipedia. Invented by protagonists, upgraded to society’s reference tool by player gods. 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.

My Wikipedia pages make [car insurance policy rules](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ontario_Automobile_Policy_1) and [accident fault regulations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ontario_Fault_Determination_Rules) a little easier to understand. Also, by opening up society’s rulebook, I constructed a tiny piece of the Internet Age rulebook called the Life Star.

That’s why it felt so majical to press “edit now.” With every piece of open and easy to read rules, the Death Star gets a little smaller.

Doing that definitely put a big smile on my face.

## Death Star Goes KaBoom

Stargazer, let’s take a second to appreciate the irony of pain. Every lifeform hates it, but without feeling hunger, thirst, or cold, we wouldn’t exist. Evolution is series of adaptions to pain. A caged polar bear can’t adapt to the Artic’s changing environment. Only ones on the frontline can save the species.

The middle-class flocked to Wikipedia, internet music and movies. We didn’t need marches or protests. We only needed to use the best tool for the job. That’s all it takes to evolve humantiy.

And we’re right to be selfish because we’re the ones feeling frontline pain.

Of course, the antagonists will disagree. But they have a distored perspective. After all, in just a few decades, the formal education industry has given American college [students 1.5 trillion in student debt](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Student_debt). Hollywood is hardly thinking of the big-picture. They get billions in subsidies despite having empty theatres, bad movies, off-shored production, and many splendid banquets and balls. Not to mention a culture of “creative accounting” and sexual predators.

The middle-class is the beacon of evolution because we have no ulterior motives.

We are rational beings marching to solve problems, because we feel the pain of everyday life. We rightfully rejected the dark majic of Blu-ray and HD-DVD, and endured the Death Star attacks when using BitTorrent and worked to evolve humanity.

And if you still doubt Main Street being inherently just, realize this.

Once protagonist Reed Hastings gave the public internet streaming at a fair price with Netflix (2008), the middle-class proved the frontline’s superior ethics and morality.

Look at the graph below. You’ll see the Industrial Age evolving into the Internet Age. This is the power of an empowered middle-class practicing good politics and grabbing levers of power. Evolution is always right in Nature, and Techvolution is always right in the game of civilization.

<script type="text/javascript" src="https://ssl.gstatic.com/trends\_nrtr/1605\_RC01/embed\_loader.js"></script>  
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 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>

Main Street flocked to Netflix because it was a fair deal and a much better product then either DVDs or torrents. We acted like player gods, upgraded our tools, and evolved our society to the Internet Age.

During this transformation, I was working at the movie theater, calling pirates thieves, and buying DVDs when I could afford them. Like most of Main Street, I got dozens collecting dust somewhere. Darth Blockbuster never said he was wrong about DVDs being better and the moral choice.

I wonder, do you think the Sith Lord will buy them all back? I’ll talk half-price.

Of course not. Antagonists hold back society as long as possible. But when evolution happens, they forget their objections and do what’s best for themselves. And that’s the point. We shouldn’t listen to Darth Blockbsuter’s complaints or excuses.

The people on the frontline should copy antagonists’ actions and simply do what’s best for ourselves.

Fittingly, that’s why BitTorents aren’t dead. While most people don’t bother with torrent sites anymore—because Netflix is so much better—our civilization holds torrents in reserve. Torrents check and balance the economy in the Internet Age to be sure Main Street isn’t taken advantage of again.

Fairness is the motivation for this insightful GIF.

Battle Scene

Battle Scene

## We’ve Blown Up One Death Star, Now Here’s How We Win the War

So Stargazer, we did well with Wikipedia and Netflix. Despite great antagonism, we upgraded two sectors of our society to the Internet Age. To keep the momentum going, we have to keep making you happy.

There’s no reason to antagonize. There’s so much work to be done and glory to be earned in our never-ending game of civilization.

Regardless, some people choose to hold humanity back. Today, there is an entire class of middlemen, consultants, administrators, managers, and executives who don’t know the skills of their industry like nursing, teaching, and (definitely not) cleaning. Their power comes from guarding the gates of an Industrial Age technology.

Together, protagonists and player gods can overcome these antagonists and bring on the full might of the Internet Age. I know this is possible because history has proven it. Our struggle to upgrade civilization was fought generations ago with Darth Blockbuster’s master: Darth King.

Darth King ruled atop a vast hierarchy. He lived inside gated palaces, using society’s money to host splendid banquets and balls. His absolute control over society’s levers of power was hidden by the Medieval Age’s ruling philosophy of the “noble’s divine right to rule.”

Slowly, as protagonists invented scientific instruments, books, and guns, the Age of Enlightenment was born. With it came values of science, equality, and democracy that turned the people into player gods in the American and French Revolutions.

These revolutionaries were inspired by the new philosophy of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

 *Player god, extra, protagonist or antagonist? Credit:* [*Marie Antoinette*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marie_Antoinette_(2006_film))*.*

## Freeing Cinderella

“Player gods are born free, and everywhere they are tricked into being extras,” Rousseau said that in 1762. Actually, he didn’t. He said, “people are born free, and everywhere they are in chains.” But the idea is the same. Rousseau was the son of a Swiss watchmaker who grew up to be a famous (or infamous) writer. Infamy didn’t pay much, so he often had to copy sheets of music to make his rent.

In return, Rousseau got rewarded as a hero in the pages of history. Because more than 300 years after his death, he is 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 Cinderella dreamed about while cleaning a dirty chateau. Sadly, unlike the fairy tale, the people 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 people were distracted from the power of new tools by dark majic. As extras, they truly believed their beloved Holy Bible said only Darth King had the right to rule. The commoners even accepted paying all the taxes.

Rousseau called bullshit. In truth, Jesus was a carpenter, a commoner just like any other person. So, why can’t everyone live up to their potential and become heroes of their own lives? Rousseau made the people understand that books, guns, and scientific instruments should liberate extras, who were only in chains for the happiness of con artists.

The self-proclaimed “divine nobility” didn’t like hearing that, they especially disliked the idea of paying taxes. The nobles declared Rousseau a banquet-pooper, a rule-breaker, and chased him out of Switzerland, France, and England. Maybe that’s why the genius philosopher rented instead of owned.

It didn’t matter. The nobility was in the dying days of their Medieval Age ruling philosophy.

Starting in 1776, within Rousseau’s lifetime, Darth King faced the music when the American people started a revolution. One year after Rousseau died, the French had their own uprising in 1789. And on it went from country to country because Rousseau, and others like him, made extras realize they should become player gods in a country “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:

*Les Miserables is a story of antagonists, protagonists, and especially extras singing about becoming player gods. Notice after a new philosophy clicked, they made it real with that lever of power called a musket. Credit:* [*Civilization 6*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MD9druFjSkg) *and* [*Les Miserables*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1q82twrdr0U)*.*

Revolution spread the people’s liberty, equality, and fraternity throughout the world. In a few years, the Medieval Age was finally gone. The dark majic of fake holiness was exposed. The royals Death Star rulebook was destroyed. Everyone paid taxes and was answerable to the law. Church and State were separate. Government had checks and balances. Main Street put presidents and senators, judges, and sheriffs in power, who ruled at the request of the people because the people were player gods.

Rousseau died never having found a home. After they won their revolutions, the people put him to rest inside the glorious Panthéon. He was heralded as a renowned breaker of chains, destroyer of corrupted rulebooks, and liberator of player gods with his new philosophy.

Such was the payment ordinary people gave to the person who said any guy can be the prince, and any girl can be Cinderella.

The question for us is, how did Rousseau help an entire people embrace a new age, become player gods, and change their ruling philosophy? I’d especially like to know how we do it better because I’d really like to skip horrible wars and revolutions as we venture into the Internet Age.

## Old Philosophy vs. New Philosophy

Techvolution is a philosophy book, but I don’t directly reference past philosophies. Like any topic, it takes some practice to read. However, I thought it might help to study the subject a little. Below are snippets from two influential philosophers.

One who hated Rousseau’s ideas, and another who loved them.

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SINCE the time that learning began to flourish there has been a common opinion maintained which affirms: “Mankind is naturally endowed and born with freedom, and at liberty to choose what form of government it please, and that the power which any one man has over others was at first bestowed according to the discretion of the people.”

But how this vulgar opinion has of late obtained a great reputation is unknown to me. It is not to be found in the ancient fathers and doctors of the true Church. It contradicts the doctrine and history of the Holy Scriptures, the practice of all ancient monarchies, and the very principles of the law of Nature. It is hard to say whether it is more erroneous in divinity or dangerous in policy.

This desperate assertion whereby kings are made subject to the judgements and deprivations of their subjects follows as a necessary consequence of foolhardy position of the supposed natural equality and freedom of mankind. The people do not have the liberty to choose what form of government they please.

[Patricia, Or the Natural Power of Kings](https://www.constitution.org/eng/patriarcha.htm) by Robert Filmer 1680 (I made small edits for readability’s sake)

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We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. —That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, —That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.

[Declaration of Independence](https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration-transcript) by Thomas Jefferson July 4, 1776

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There are always many philosophies to believe in. Only when the people become player gods do we get to declare which should be their ruling philosophy.

Let’s see how our ancestors on Main Street won their battle against noble kings, so we can honor their legacy and upgrade our society today.

![Treaty of Paris](data:text/html; charset=UTF-8;base64,)

Treaty of Paris

*The American Revolution ended when the USA and the United Kingdom signed the Treaty of Paris (1783). The arrogant British nobles were so insulted by the sight of “commoners”, they refused to sit with the Americans and therefore weren’t painted in the official portrait. Player gods get their place in history; antagonists erase themselves. I love it!*

## Society’s Three Stories Tell Us If We’re Watching the Story of Civilization, or Playing the Game of Civilization

Entering a new age doesn’t require war, peace treaties, and funny unfinished portraits. Unfortunately, conflict usually tears down the old age and rings in the new. To avoid it while entering the Internet Age, we have to see our society better than Rousseau did. We can do that because we can learn from him.

Rousseau’s words echo this sentiment: let society enter into the Age of Enlightenment. Let the people debate, argue, and collaborate to find out who should operate the government. Rousseau encouraged individuals to become player gods who use modern tools to improve their work and home lives. He told the nobility to return to natural equality. Rousseau said anyone can lead society—if they can solve problems and thereby earn the public’s approval and consent.

Rousseau never said there shouldn’t be leaders. He said leaders should deserve their spot in charge of the player god’s general will.

He didn’t phrase it like this, of course, but that’s what Rousseau basically said. He understood every new age needs a modern philosophy that unites the people into thinking of the big picture and making a new player god.

Rousseau’s new philosophy says only by updating their ruling philosophy, can the people live happy lives in a healthy society.

So how did Rousseau turn extras into player gods? He Rousseau used stories.

With all the talk of heroes and villains, extras, and player gods, it shouldn’t come as a big surprise that the troublemaking philosopher was also a great novelist.

So let’s explain the three different stories that let Rousseau change the world:

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**Classic stories**: are good stories about real-life problems. A protagonist leaves her typical day and builds up the courage to think of the big picture. That she acts to overcome a newfound problem, or no one else will.

“The ice-caps are melting!”, says the heroic polar bear, and “I’m going to teach us all to fish!”

If only it was that simple.

But that’s the point. To a protagonist, solutions are that simple, and she’ll show everyone the way and save the community from disaster.

In a classic story, the protagonist marches to solve the problem. Which forces the antagonist to repeatedly try to stop her. No one knows who’ll win, which makes the hero all the braver for fighting. Both sides—and their supporters—fight to create or control levers of power like magic books, big bombs, or the secret lesson that’ll teach polar bears how to fish.

There’s no way to know which stories will reasonate with audiences. Still, only classic stories can resonate with audiences and become archetypes like *Cinderella*, *Romeo and Juliette*, *The Matrix*, and *Star Wars*.

**Selfish stories**: also called art films, these stories are not about any specific problem. The main character doesn’t challenge themselves or rise to the occasion. They think the big picture is doing whatever they feel like doing, such as going shopping, or complaining about being shy.

The main character is thus egotistical, selfish, and self-important; a con-artist. Not because he doesn’t help others. But because he wants to be the center of attention without risking anything. The selfish hero wants something for nothing.

It’s like he’s a polar bear who marches against climate change instead of venturing out to learn how to fish, or invent better solar panels.

The result is stories with no levers of power. Instead, art stories showcase the main characters’ idiosyncratic behavior. Selfish stories are surprising to the point of being weird, and can’t improve the world because the main character didn’t even try to. Film festivals like Cannes, Sundance, and Toronto mainly show selfish films.

**Spectacle movies**: also called blockbusters, these stories 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 straightforward because the problem is straightforward; 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 logical but unsurprising stories.

In a spectacle movie, the polar bears may fight off Arctic oil drilling. Still, these spectacular victories do not create a new lever of power. After the story ends, the world still uses oil, and thus climage change continues to kill all the polar bears.

To capialize on old success, blockbusters reuse old stories and characters. However, each replicated story gets less attractive, forcing its producers to look for new customers with hype-filled, dark majic using mass marketing campaigns. Most franchise movies, sequels, and remakes are spectacle movies.

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These are the three-story categories. In a nutshell, classic stories tackle real-life problems. Selfish stories are self-obsessed. Spectacle stories are a distraction. This is why selfish/spectacle stories don’t have “spoilers”, while we want to “go in fresh” for classic stories.

Society transitions from classic, to selfish/spectacle inside ages. You can see the change 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. For example, not liking their jobs or being tired of dating.

We watch episode after episode because we see ourselves in these characters. We laugh and cry in recognition because we’re living the same life on Main Street.

However, in later seasons, to keep their now popular characters alive, the sitcom characters stop evolving.

Kramer never gets a job, Raj can’t get a girl, Dwight doesn’t get self-aware. Here sitcoms become selfish and spectacle stories. Selfish, because the main characters don’t overcome problems anymore. And, spectacle, because we the audience keep re-watching our favorite actors, characters, sets, catch-phrases, instead of looking for a new story. The turning point between a classic story and a selfish/spectacle story is often called “jumping the shark.”

GoT horse *Game of Thrones went from great to horrible because the characters became more important than the story. Every fan felt this transition and was saddened by it. But we (including me) kept watching, which is why this picture shows the transition from a majical product, to a dark majic one.*

Rousseau explained how society goes through classic, selfish, and spectacle stories as we develop through ages. When we start a new era, it’s like watching the first years of the sitcom. Everyone in the cast is solving everyday problems, and the main characters have earned their spot by taking risks to solve the community problems.

At the end of the age, the leaders are self-important, and the people are only loyal out of habit.

In short, Rousseau noticed how the classic story works to advance and help society, and the other two work to enrich the selfish artists and distract the masses. And that’s where we are today. At that’s the problem Techvolution has to solve with a click.

*Please enable the sound. We’re not “being the cause” because we’re not free to be player gods. But, it’s your right to feel the joy of majic as you evolve humanity in the game of civilization. You will again soon, if you can see antagonism is your biggest enemy. Credit:* [*Wisecrack*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Lngf3J8vN4)

## Clicking

We’ve already seen Main Street click a new philosophy. When the player god of Civilization 6 pressed upgrade, and the people sung, “do you hear the people sing” on the Paris Main Street.

You can also see this click in the movie called *The Matrix*. This classic story is about a dystopian Earth in the not too distant future. Our planet is a dark place where most of humanity is unknowingly trapped inside a simulated reality called the matrix. The dream world is created by machines to distract humans while using our bodies as an energy source.

The matrix looks and feels like 1990s America. It’s a wonderfully believable world of dark majic. A never-ending spectacle story to keep the selfish machines in power.

The story’s hero is a regular person named Neo. Neo starts his adventure to heroism by asking and innocent question, “what is the Matrix?”

This is a powerful question because if the rules are stacked against you, throw awaying ones beliefs, and rebuilding a new philosophy, is the only way regain the advantage.

Neo’s willingness to question reality eventually gets him recruited. Neo isn’t alone. There are other untapped humans also rebelling against the machines.

Neo joins them. Soon he learns how to see through the dark majic of the matrix’s illusions. Even better, Neo realizes the supposed unbreakable rules of the virtual world are fake.

By ignoring the rules, Neo learns many new abilities like jumping high, moving fast, and soon even how to dodge bullets.

Neo soon gets noticed by the enforcers. The “Agents” who seek out rulebreakers and punish them with their powers of inhuman strength, speed, and loyalty of the people still stuck in the matrix. Neo counters by mastering more levers of power such as guns, explosions, and helicopters.

Neo wins. Because knowing the rules makes Agents powerful, but also limits them as well. Since, Neo is making a new way of life, and is free to expand his horizons. Neo becomes so free, he can fully “decode the Matrix”.

As Frederick Douglass would agree, freedom of thought is the greatest power of all.

After Neo defeats Agent Smith, he calls the machine’s bosses and says:

I know you’re out there. I can feel you now. I know you’re afraid. You’re afraid of us. You’re afraid of change. I don’t know the future. I didn’t come here to tell you how this is going to end. 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 borders or boundaries. A world where anything is possible. Where we go from there, is a choice I leave to you.

Rousseau would have been proud.

The point is this. Decoding dark majic and breaking the rules is often very hard. But, we automatically do both when we simply learn new tools, and do what’s best for ourselves.

You don’t have to be a super-hero to be Neo. You simply have to use tools to solve your real-life problems. Evolution defeats antagonism all by itself.

Let’s see how our ancestors evolved and click Rousseau’s new philosophy.

## Protagonist Kings

Not all kings are con artists. There’s a good reason we tell ourselves stories of gallant knights and dreamy princesses. At first, the Medieval Age was led by heroes of a classic tale. These kings and their nobles defeated monsters to create a peaceful country for the people to live in.

Their countries needed peace. After western Rome fell in 476, western Europe entered the Early Medieval Ages (500-1000). Often called the Dark Ages because there were few books, ink, or even literate people to write anything down. In fact, maintaining the existing Roman infrastructure like sanitation, roads, and farms was hard enough. When Rome fell, advanced civilization was gone, the levers of power of organized government were erased. Anarchy ruled where Rome’s Caesars once did.

People like Clovis I, Charles Martel, and Alfred the Great took charge. They stepped up and risked their lives to help their communities rebuild civilization.

These leaders were master warriors who used swords, bows, armor, and cavalry to expand their kingdoms, keep away vandals, and fight off invading Vikings and Arabs. Even better, they headed large families who kept a growing peace. Soon, sons, nephews, and cousins were busily rebuilding roads, bridges, castles, cities, markets, and hospitals throughout their family’s kingdom.

The Early Medieval Ages was a classic story because heroes solved real-life problems with technology, tools, buildings, infrastructure and other levers of power.

Society formed a hierarchy called feudalism. You’ve probably seen it in stories like *Robin Hood*, or *Game of Thrones*. Feudalism cemented the personal rule of the first leaders with a rigid ranking of kings, bishops, dukes, sheriffs, knights, priests, tradesmen, and peasants. In return for loyalty, the people at the bottom got what was called the “King’s Peace.”

It was a good deal. The growing peace returned civilization to western Europe. Soon the people had new and better shovels, oxen, wood houses, buckets, sickles, and other tools to expand their cyborgology. Since the kings did such a good job, society happily recognized them as heroes, or “Protagonist Kings.”

This was the start of the “noble divine right to rule.” The kings weren’t bad guys. They had many battle scars to prove it.

*You’d believe in holy kings too if barbarians, Vandals, or Vikings were at your doorstep. Credit:* [*Vikings*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vikings_(2013_TV_series))

Under the rule of Protagonist Kings, Western Civilization rebuilt political institutions, court systems, town councils, sanitation departments. Peace, let the player god save up the money to start pressing upgrade again.

But it was slow going. By the time Western Europe had a fully functioning civilization again at the Renaissance (1400-1600), nobody could remember why the story of divine nobility had started. Who could blame them, the story was already 1000 years old. Do you remember what happened 1000 years ago?

As Europe went through the Renaissance, the Age of Science, the Age of Enlightenment, the invaders were increasingly gone, freshwater was available, the roads were clean, the markets were busy. The once Protagoinst Kings, were now merely executives of extensive and bureaucratic civilized governments.

The only thing that didn’t change was the culture of royalty. The leaders had the title of king but were no longer protagonists. Instead they lived lavishly, and outright refused to let society grow out of the “nobles divine right to rule” philosophy. Society’s leaders thus became Antagonist Kings.

## Antagonist Kings

By the time Europe entered the Renaissance, the system had done its job. The nobles were no longer protagonists, but merely ordinary people who happened to be born with “noble blood.” For the most part, they only waged war against each other, and usually only for personal glory, or “gloire” as they called it. Otherwise, they sat atop a hierarchy who paid no taxes, did not work, and answered to no one. These antagonist nobles used peace and prosperity to replace armor with dresses, churches with cathedrals, and castles with palaces.

Loving life, and without opposition, these nobles conned the people, and themselves, with art and spectacle. They lived inside a self-important culture, where increasing weird behavior, childish gossip, and useless titles, was the norm.

And they distracted the people with spectacle. Brilliant cathedrals, royal palaces, and terrible and meaningless wars like the Thirty Years War, all helped to keep the masses occupied. Like franchise movies, all these spectacles got more intense, to keep the same old story of “noble divinity” interesting.

Visit European castles and extravagant palaces, modest churches, and brilliant cathedrals, and you’ll see the transformation civilization had from classic stories to spectacle yourself. Compare the clothes of armored clad [Charles Martel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Martel), and the dress-wearing [Louis XVI](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_XVI_of_France), and you’ll easily see the transformation from heroic protagonists to self-important Antagonist Kings.

Antagonists Kings were had no personal achievements, but took credit for the accomplishments of civilization, as though they, themselves, were the player god responsible for it all.

*Louis XIV (1643-1715) spent an estimated 50% of France’s annual Gross National Product on building and maintaining his Palace at Versailles. And he didn’t even pay taxes. He was a self-described god on earth. I love to think about what Protagonist Kings would feel if they time-traveled to see this opulence. Credit: .*

Most of society’s money went to the leaders vanity and wasn’t re-invested to help win the game of civilization. Main Street became increasingly unhappy as frontline problems piled up. Their houses were still thatched, hands still worn, and they did manual labor all day. They even paid all the taxes but were still banned from advancing in official society.

Antagonist Kings turned Feudalism into a caste system.

The leaders fought against distributing the benefits of an advancing civilization to the people doing the work on the frontline. We thus rightfully call Antagonist Kings, Darth King. The nobles lost the plot of their own stories. They turned their people from players gods into extras.

Trying to keep society in the Medieval Age forever sent Darth King’s civilizations into revolutions, and cost him his head.

## Angels and Demons On Our Shoulders

I’m not sure if you know this Stargazer, but the Devil was once an angel. The angel Lucifer was his name. He lived with God up in the clouds with the rest of the heavenly beings. These angels were tasked to educate us about virtue, morality, and ethics so we can become protagonists and player gods.

But Lucifer rejected God’s teachings. He grew vain, greedy, and deceptive. Soon he even challenged God’s will. In response, God threw Lucifer down from Heaven to be the Dark Lord of Hell.

Free from God, Lucifer grew his evil powers. Soon he was the Devil, who taught humanity the vanity, greed, hubris, and selfishness they’d need to become antagonists and extras.

But Lucifer kept his angelic form.

So, while anyone can be a saint, anyone can also be a demon. That is why the choice of good and evil, protagonist and antagonist, extra and player god, rest on our shoulders; always attracting us to either side.

The trick for humanity is to resist our demons and embrace our angels. That’s how we can be player gods who do what’s best for ourselves and help society prosper.

## Mistaken Heroes

Angels and demons are the Christian tales of good and evil. Most religions share a similar story though. The story of Lucifer even echoes throughout human literature. Harry Potter’s Lord Voldermort, The Lord of the Rings Lord Sauron, and Star War’s Lord Vader were all once heroes. Each grew evil because they were unwilling to give up their power; they were corrupted by ambitions of lifelong supremacy.

The story of vanity, greed, and hubris is probably so prevalent in our religions and literature because it’s so common in humanity; power often corrupts. Absolute power corrupts absolutely.

Darth King thought he was an angel.

No joke. During the Age of Enlightenment, philosophers like Voltaire, Hume, and Rousseau were writing about improving humanity with ideals of freedom and compassion. Believe it or not, the nobility liked these values.

After all, the leaders believed they were protectors of their flock. That’s why monarchs with the absolute power of life and death over their subjects, such as Frederick I, Emperor Joseph II, and Catherine II, called themselves “enlighten monarchs.”

The trending royal mentality was, “Everything for the people, nothing by the people.”

We can see how self-serving this mentality is. Why couldn’t the nobles pay taxes? Why couldn’t the people have a fair judicial system? Enlightened monarchs preached one thing and did another. The point is Darth King wasn’t evil for being born into nobility. He is evil for holding his people back. He wanted them to be extras watching the story of civilization, and not player gods playing the game of civilization.

When a regular person rose himself up with hard work and innovation, a royal felt justified to take ownership of his work and spend the rewards as he wanted.

The nobles thus became fallen heroes. And sadly, this story of fallen kings is repeating itself in our modern times. Our antagonists are also heroes fallen from grace.

## Fallen Heroes

It’s important to note, while Rousseau’s followers were politically free, they were economically desperate. Hunger, disease, unemployment, illiteracy were frequent after the American, French, and following revolutions. Rousseau’s time was basically one of “economic anarchy.” This was when red/blue philosophies were born. Their writers like Edmund Burke and John Stuart Mill wanted political liberation from kings.

But they were also obsessed with economic growth to bring the people up from poverty.

\_ Here’s a tidbit of an Industrial Revolution business magnate George Westinghouse. Among his inventions was the air brake, fridge, and electric generator. Westinghouse’s massive company helped conquer economic anarchy. Credit: [Business Casual](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8tuXdlGBbcg).\_

Society loved the original kings for winning the “King’s Peace”. Likewise, the initial economic kings were heroes of the era of mass-production for winning the “Executive’s Prosperity.” These heroes said follow me, recognize my property rights, work (hard as hell) for my company, and we’ll all be better off.

The people did. The executives were correct, and society upgraded its technology very fast. As a result, everyone, even the factory workers, could buy new tools like lightbulbs, stoves, and telephones.

The original leaders of the Industrial Age told a good story, and the people were player gods inside society’s new factories, warehouses, and offices. Protagonists like Andrew Carnegie, Cornelius Vanderbilt, Louis B. Mayer are basically the economical versions of original warrior kings like Clovis I, Charles Martel, and Charlemagne.

But, the Industrial Age eventually ended.

Within a few generations, lightbulbs, stoves, and telephones were no longer new. Like we saw in the *Mad Men* clip about marketing tobacco, the children of the Protagonist Executives didn’t earn their spots as society’s leaders. They didn’t and couldn’t invent anything new.

That’s when society was lead by antagonists again. You can still see it today in Hollywood. Darth Blockbuster is another story of a fallen angel who think he’s enlighenten, but really just as his head up his ass.

*Please enable the sound. This isn’t a roast, it’s a historical moment. Once leaders of society, Hollywood had no idea this is what (many, if not most) of the frontline now thinks of them.*

Being lead by antagonists should both worry and make you happy, Stargazer.

First, the worrying part. Darth Blockbuste, defends the Industrial Age because it makes him powerful. He surrounds himself with a story of self-importance (like award shows) and funds ways to distracts the people (like spectacle movies).

That’s why, since entering the Internet Age, dark majic has skyrocketed in our society. The once humble American Dream to own a home, and make an honest living, became a lifestyle of spectacle.

Small homes became McMansions with luxury baths and kitchens. Cars weren’t one for a family, but one per person and still got way bigger, with more chrome, more horsepower. Televisions increased in size to ludicrous proportions. Food got supersized while sugar was added to everything we eat. Being a sports fan went from being a fun distraction to a never ending occupation. Movies became franchise stories that were retold over and over.

Instead of using digital technology to keep upgrading society, it was used to make a matrix of dark majic to keep the Industrial Age alive. A nation of protagonists and player gods became a society of antagonists and extras.

In return, the people got fancier stuff, with the added benefit of diabetes, traffic, and climate change. All because Darth Oil, Telephone, Suburbs, Sugar needed to distract the people from upgrading to the Internet Age and mass-collaboration.

The good news is, where not at a “let’s burn down society” point yet. We can transition to the Internet Age ourselves before the frontline gets so bad and so unhappy we start a bloody revolution.

But only if we click a new philosophy can we usher in the era of mass-collaboration ourselves.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A25EUhZGBws \_This is another clip from the movie [The Big Short](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Big_Short_(film)). This "solid gold a\*\*hole" is a modern-day antagonist. You’re not supposed to understand the rationale of CDOs that makes him super-wealthy; because there is none. Like the divine rights of nobility, it’s just the justification of a self-important hero.\_

# ACT THREE

## Evolution Yea or Nea

Act three is the nail bitter. The time when a good writer rewards the audience with the final duel: Noble Jedis or Evil Sith, the Ministry of Magic or the Thugs of Voldemort, Open-source Heroes or Darth Blockbuster Antagonists.

But this isn’t a movie Stargazer. Life is a real-life game, so you decide the winner. If you realize your power.

You can always be a player god (or protagonist) because the game of evolution never stops. Life is like an addicted computer gamer who can never quit playing Civilization 6. Life always wants to upgrade its technology and philosophy as soon as possible.

And right now, we’ve upgraded to the Internet Age with our technology. But not our culture.

Thus, act three is a simple question; do you believe in Techvolution? Do you think Right/Left philosophy is outdated? Do you hate antagonism even more than racism and communism? Do you see why the era of mass-production must be replaced by the era of mass-collaboration? Do you want to hold the levers of power in your society instead of complaining, protesting, and begging? Do you think our rulebook of regulations, codes, and laws should be easy to access, use, and understand?

Open up Instagram, YouTube, or WhatsApp. So easy and effective.

Now, when you look at the 1969 way of life run by Big Business and Big Government, do you see dark majic designed to hold back upgrades and keep us in the Industrial Age forever?

This final battle has an even more straightforward question. Do you appreciate your importance to life on Earth? Do you realize you have the right, and duty, to solve your problems with modern tools?

If you don’t, we’re stuck using adaptions as out of place as camels trying to swim in the Amazon. Driving to work in Boston blizzards, forcing people to call into call-centers, depending on doctor writing to record our medical histories.

All that’s old technology. If keep using it, tt would be like a gamer leaving his computer and going to watch a movie. The game is still running, so the player is bound to lose.

This shouldn’t sound dramatic. I’m not trying to scare you. But literally, if we stop playing evolution, what do you think happens?

Society has no magic button. No divine player who’ll evolve for us. You’re retirement fund, college education, the money in your bank, are all creations of our civilization. The extras and antagonists inside the Soviet Union, the Confederate States of America, and the Kingdom of France all had pieces of paper making them protected or rich.

When the player god lost their games, all that paper money, social status, and retirement funds meant nothing. Nothing at all!

You are on the frontline. You are the one in the game that’s supposed to keeping doing the hard work and update society bit by bit to the new age with the majic of new tools.

I think you do understand all this. So, act three comes down to a straightforward question. Do you want to be a player god?

That’s a choice you have to make. It’s a choice as big as any you’re ever going to make. Because if we don’t upgrade to a new philosophy now, it only means your kids and your grandkids will live even unhappier lives. The burden of transforming our culture will only fall on their shoulders.

Heck, there’s a chance you’re kids will have to start a new game of civilization from scratch. Because this COVID-19 pandemic and resulting worldwide panic might be too severe and expensive to bounce back from.

The choice is yours. Here are two stories to help you decide between player god and extra.

## Option 1 - Extra

Remember the Thirty Years War? It’s when Main Street was inside the Science Age, but tearing itself apart in the name of Protestant and Catholic kings. Well, adding to that anarchy was King Charles. His nasty, brutish, and short reign is what extras think they want to sit back and watch today.

So let’s watch it.

Charles ruled England as a proud protestant. His father King James taught him from birth the “nobles right to rule” was a matter of responsibility and Faith, not self-interest. After all, it was King James who commissioned the “King James Version” Holy Bible that’s still used today. One of the big reasons James had it written was to help regular people understand why kings are their natural leaders.

Remember this was before Rousseau. So, there were no alternatives to holy kings.

That’s why, although England had many versions of Christianity, all believed in a king’s right to rule. However, England did have an elected Parliament. But in Charle’s eyes, it was only supposed to advise the king. Which its elected representatives did, even if most advice was ignored. However, much to Charles’ chagrin, Parliament held a big lever of power. After some revolts in the Middle Ages, Parliament had the authority to approve or reject new taxes.

Like most kings, Charles and his father lived large; jewelry, palaces, banquets and balls never come cheap. With the Thirty Years War raging, it wasn’t long before England went broke. Holy King Charles needed a bail out.

Parliament, filling up with idealistic Christians (especially Puritans, the people who fled to America and started Thanksgiving) wouldn’t say yes until they got more political powers. In turn, Charles refused to talk to them. In fact, the king sent Parliament home and ruled by himself for over 10 years. The king got his money by using the ancient feudal rulebook. One example, he fined men who didn’t come to his royal coronation.

And here is the moment we all should fear. The government was broke. The struggle between king and Parliament was very simple; who should pick up the bill?

England wasn’t weak and destitute. It was rather wealthy. Both the King and Parliament could pay the debt by sacrificing for the good of the country.

But both sides thought it was the other side’s responsibility.

Sadly for Charles, the people were no longer weak. After all, they were in the middle of the Science Age, and thus enjoying all the benefits of better cyborgology like calenders, record keeping, navigation equipment, and, most important, gunpowder.

It was precisely because the English people were empowered by new levers of power, that they could stand up to the king. The sword and scepter of the “divine king” meant little against gunpowder. As a famous saying goes, “God made us, but the gun made us all equal.”

However, without Rousseau’s new philosophy to explain themselves, the people were left asking for change from a king who thought he was a god.

Credit: [Cromwell](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cromwell_(film)).

Parliament eventually got sick of being ignored. So they raised a modern army, Charles did the same, and the two sides fought the English Civil War (1642–1646). The Parliamentary Army was local Protestants devoted to democracy on their way to becoming player gods. They chose their own leaders by merit and suspected Charles was a closet Catholic.

Charles’s Royalist Army was mostly nobles who hired foreign mercenaries and suspected the Parliamentarians had gone mad.

After four years of gruesome battles and bloodshed, Charles lost. He was held under arrest while rules for a less powerful “constitutional monarchy” were being made by the victors. Charles then escaped, hired a new army, and fought the Second English Civil War (1648–1649). Charles lost again. The Parliamentarians were now enraged.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Cx2kkgO5\_Y *Before Rousseau’s new philosophy, the people had a hard time justifying being player gods.*

They forgot about making a constitutional monarchy, and instead sign a warrant charging Charles for crimes against the English people. These newly minted player gods wanted all the levers of power.

Charles didn’t budge. The ruling philosophy said he was king. The Bible—his father’s Bible!, the ultimate rulebook!—said so in plain English. So, Charles refused to speak to the court; a father doesn’t answer to his children.

Soon, Darth King Charles was put on trial. And what happened next tells us why being an extra today is a terrible idea.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zjxu1De8npY

## Charles Speaks His Antagonism- The Proof is in the Words

Public speaking is hard for most everyone; for Charles, it was near impossible. Charles had a speech impediment. Often called a stammer or stutter. No one then, or even now, understands what causes it. For a stutterer, talking is like playing guitar with music notes written on the spot by a gremlin. Some words are easy to say, some are ~~difficult~~ hard, and some decide which at the last mil-mili-mili-second.

But a stutter isn’t just about pauses, repetitions, or missing words. A stutter is like having a mini-seizure. Your body flexes. 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 Parliament or the-the-the-the people inside, theeee Commons…”*

Actually, the worst part is the irony. All you want to do is talk to someone about your problem.

That’s why stuttering forces a person to be quiet, shy, passive, and eager to please. It’s very frustrating because one doesn’t stutter when alone, swearing, yelling, singing, talking to a dog (Charles had two), or sometimes when speaking through a “character.”

But for some damn reason, in everyday conversation, the gremlin forces erratic speaking, random silence, binge drinking, and watching life pass you by. It’s entirely possible Charles’ relationship with Parliament was so bad because he simply didn’t want to face the gremlin.

I mean, should a king have one?

My speech impediment was why 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.

Of course, I was hurt, but I never told anyone I had the impediment, so, despite very helpful therapy as a kid, it was obviously still a problem.

Fuck it. I decided to jump in the ocean and sink or swim in the scary waters of a call-center.

The water was a virtual horror show of gremlins. It was a daily workout of all-day phone calls, angry drivers, and giving out bad news. The worst part was having no “outs” like swear words, drinking games, or wonky behavior to hide behind. I stayed with it like that desert fox learning to swim, motivating myself by saying, “I’m getting better!”

And it was far worse than I thought possible.

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 (probably because they’re sleeping at the wheel inside the Industrial Age’s love of micromanagment). We employees learned to question “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. Adjusters were often more stressed than the person who just had a car crash. Whatever the reason, DING-DING-DING-DING-DING-DING-DING-DING almost all day. This damn bell gave people who weren’t stutterers tremendous 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 killed that fucking gremlin! And that’s what it took for me to greatly improve my fluency.

Like an ocean fox, I walked around a new, happier person.

Yet, Charles never had this lesson. In fact, he didn’t have any lessons. No speech therapy to learn “turtle talk.” No field trips to practice ordering a pizza with professional guidance. No fourth-grade teacher to give him winks to remember to breathe.

Charles’ gremlin didn’t even have a name like “speech impediment.” In his day, doctors prescribed blood-sucking leeches as medicine. Like everyone, Charles was all alone trying to make sense of Nature’s gremlins of diseases, infections, viruses, and speech impediments.

Charles adapted as anyone would. He was famously shy, quiet, and antisocial his whole life. I feel for him when I picture a him watching the party from afar, too afraid to join in. You can watch [The King’s Speech](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_King%27s_Speech) to see all this in a movie.

Even when fighting for 16 years to defend his ruling philosophy, Charles still probably had to massage his strained jaws every night. He was a king, all alone.

And now, Charles, God’s King, was accused of being “a Tyrant, A Traitor, Murderer, and a public enemy to the Commonwealth of England.”

This was a watershed moment in modern human history. For the first time, the people weren’t replacing one king for another. They were killing the king and replacing him with themselves. The people would control all the levers of people and be their own player god!

This was a total shock to Charles. It would be like us watching the laws of physics being broken. It simply makes no sense that a king, isn’t the king. There was no rule to reference, no justification to use. The ruling philosophy is the matrix, and the matrix is supposed to keep everyone in line. But all of a sudden, some people were waking up and calling the matrix a lie.

A noble lie perhaps, but still a lie. Charles couldn’t make any sense of the people’s point of view.

Charles was devoted to his father, his Faith, and his conscience. Being a king was his responsibility, and he thus must defend his country and its holy rulebook. So at his trial, Charles only asked by what rule was he being tried? That’s all Charles wanted to know.

The judge said, “the people.” And dropped his gavel. Charles was astounded.

The king’s next chance to talk sense into these misguided madmen would be at his own chopping block.

Whitehall *This is Whitehall. A palace built by Henry VIII. Charles walked through here to a scaffold and his chopping block. On the ceiling is a painting commissioned by his father, King James, which shows him being escorted to Heaven by angels. Charles was raised his entire life to be a divine king. Could you see outside the matrix and its divine rights of nobles if you were him?*

## Charles Speaks

Charles’ last chance to justify himself, was at his own chopping block.

Forget about the ringing bell of a claims department. Imagine the stress of a stutterer minutes from execution, having to say something to defend his throne, his family’s place in history, and his kingdom.

I can’t explain how anxious he would have been. I know he feared the emotional pain of ~~silence~~ quiet far more than death.

Charles Speaks

Charles Speaks

Now Charles had to stand before these misguided, sinning, want-to-be player gods. And he said this:

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 go from a corruptable to an incorruptable crown where no disturbance can be, no disturbance in the world.

Charles spoke his word so eloquently everyone was impressed. He was rarely so clear and passionate.

Charles died happy, knowing the angels around his shoulders, killed his gremlin before lifting him up to Heaven to be with his holy father. I must say I’m happy for him. It is heavenly to say what’s on your mind.

But in truth, there were no angles and no gremlins. Stuttering is an anxiety disorder. So what really happened is amazing.

What should have been extremely stressful, the crowds, the soldiers, his lost royalty, and his chopping block; were Charles’ freedom. He was 100 percent positive nobles had the divine right to rule. Everyone else had gone mad, and why should anyone be anxious around madmen who’ve already committed to murdering you? Why be anxious around people who’ll never get it? Without any interaction possible, Charles’ last words was basically talking to himself, or to one of his dogs.

We do our best to understand history with songs, books, and images. But we can’t time travel. Nor can go into Julius Caesar’s or Cleopatra’s minds and fully understand their motives.

But, by luck or good fortune, I can go into Charles’ mind at this historic moment. And one of history’s most evil Antagonist Kings was a completely moral man. He had no hate in his heart. In fact, it was his morality that killed the gremlin.

It’s the only way he could have spoken a word on that scaffold.

Charles was a victim. A regular person told he was king. When he was told to throw that away, it was like being asked to wake up from the matrix with no experience with frontline pain to prompt the awakening. Could you do any better?

Only a few leaders ever have. Often called “philosopher kings,” they have the wisdom and kindness to empathize with frontline pain. Like good army generals, they use their power to help win the war on the frontline.

But philosopher kings are very rare. In times of general peace, most everyone in a hierarchy gets detached from the game of civilization. This detachment from life breeds complacency, shortsightedness, hubris and, therefore, antagonism.

This happened to Charles. He never felt frontline pain, not even in the battles he caused, and that’s the point. It’s not the job of detached leaders to decide when to upgrade civilization. Why would they want to?

The truth then, now, and forever is that evolution happens on the frontline. Leaders aren’t there.

You are.

## Option 2 - Player God

Main Street can only become player gods of the Internet Age. But that’s only because of modern protagonists.

Paul Baran (1926-2011) is one of the big ones. A true Jedi. This one guy took it upon himself to prevent a nuclear holocaust (talk about stepping up). When the Soviets tested a hydrogen bomb in 1955, Baran realized only an updated, robust, and reliable communications network would ease American and Soviet trigger fingers during tense standoffs.

Baran worked all alone for years. By 1960 he came up with his new network’s two core ideas; fully distributed data networks and packet communication. The first eliminated central hubs and hierarchy, the second made sure no information would be lost during transmission.

With many pages of technical specifications on hand, he ventured out into the world, to give his work away. Sadly, the Defense Department surrounded him with red-tape, and AT&T, with a monopoly over America’s telephone network, repeatedly said his ideas were impossible.

These antagonists shut Baran down until years later the Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) saw the brilliance and built Baran’s distributed communications network.

By late 1969, as the world was watching Woodstock, Vietnam, and the Moon landing, ARPAnet, the first version of the internet, went online. Reliable communication with no central hubs was born. For the first time in history, all individuals could communicate with no middlemen to control their information or message.

It was the last days of the Industrial Age. Almost no one understood how their world, way of life, and philosophy, had been replaced.

The Internet Age was here.

Think of that when you browse the web. The internet was created to survive a nuclear holocaust. Realize how powerful it must be, and therefore realize how powerful you are.

The internet is your New World. A place of eternal equality because no one can control you. No professor, executive, president, or king can shut you down. BitTorrents, Netflix, and Wikipedia all beat Darth Blockbuster just because you used them.

You never even have to talk to Darth Blockbuster to win. Just do what’s best for you and your family. That’s how new online technologies will keep winning in the war to establish the Internet Age.

Now think of the rest of your technology. Those high-flying drones, sensor filled smartwatches, 20-megapixel cameras, and super-computer gaming systems. These tools are your Internet Age cyborgology. If you had those at Woodstock in 1969, not even those drugged-up hippies would believe your mutant powers. You are a unique lifeform on Earth.

For all we know, you’re the most advanced lifeform ever to exist.

As Gordon Moore said in 1973, “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.”

In fact, it’s Moore’s Law that shows us how much better our cyborgologies will keep getting. He predicted that every 12-24 months, the power of computers would double. And he was right. That’s why our digital technology and internet speed is over three million times faster now, then in 1969.

Gordon Moore was part of the “Traitorous Eight,” a group of young inventors who founded Silicon Valley. They each had a pivotal hand in creating technology like the integrated circuit, microprocessor, and personal computer. Intel, AMD, Amelco, Eugene Kleiner Perkins, and dozens of other historic companies were started by their hands.

More than that, the Traitorous Eight bucked the rigid corporate hierarchies of the day and treated every employee as a member.

Because they started companies based on mass-collaboration.

And the Traitorous Eight broke the rules to do it all. In the late ’50s, the era of mass-production was still in full swing. Everyone was a line worker—a cog in the wheel of machinery. The company gave you a dress code, told you who to socialize with, and what furniture your office was allowed to have. The company owned its employees and wrote itself the rulebook to prove it.

These eight guys said to heck with all that.

The game of civilization rewards invention and risk, not conformity and business-as-usual. Protagonists beat antagonists if they keep innovating. So “the eight” left to start their own companies, and so changed the world.

SILICON VALLEY VIDEO *This is edited down from* [*American Experience: Silicon Valley*](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/films/silicon/)*.*

Traitors. Troublemakers. Shameful act. Equality over hierarchy. Invention over the tried and true.

Look at your home assistant, smartphone, or laptop, these morals invented your cyborgology. Don’t take it for granted. Other cultures were investing billions into research and development back in 1969. Now these cultures are totally forgotten.

The Traitorous Eight and their followers are heroes because they went beyond inventing technology. They merged new technology with a new culture of collaboration to kickstart the Internet Age.

Now it’s your turn.

We first toy around with new technology. Checking news feeds, flying drones, taking endless photos, playing computer games are acts of non-playing characters learning the tools of player gods. To become a player god, we only need to use our toys as the levers of power.

When we hold our medical records, employment contracts, work portfolios, and other tools made by open-source, in our own hands, we will finish what the Traitorous Eight started, and upgrade to the Internet Age.

All it takes to reach this new age is the click of a new set of ideals of right and wrong, good and bad, in science, art, morals, politics, and economics. Only a modern ruling philosophy will unite Main Street to see the big picture.

Antagonism is our mutual enemy, which we must unite into a player god to win our game of civilization.

*Each graphic improvement, is your cyborgology getting upgraded. It means you have better education, cancer research, crime-fighting, electricity generation, product design and manufacturing, and so much more. The point is, we’ve technically evolved so fast, we’ve far outpaced our politics. We need to click a new philosophy, to start living happier lives in our real-life game of civilization.*

We have all this incredible power at our fingertips, and we’re letting bozo Left/Right political pundits tell us if climate change is real? We’re stuck in two hours of traffic going to bullshit jobs because Michael Scott wants to have friends?

We’re letting Darth Blockbuster tell us to… what? Follow his rules that make him king?

Then comes this pandemic. Our society is wondering how to make ventilators, face masks, and hand sanitizer? Like serious what the fuck, why we’re their factories packed up and sent to foreign lands? We did this to benefit who?

Look at the video above; we can change our own world!

Pandemics, global warming, human migrations, widespread obesity, antisocial behavior, soaring national and personal debt, high divorce rates, traffic-filled roads, rising insurance rates, hopeless kids who are shooting up their schools.

Our list of problems keeps growing, because ordinary people aren’t using the miraculous power of modern technology to evolve our civilization.

There’s nothing rational or moral about that decision because a ruling philosophy worth following is one that facilitates evolution; and Right/Left philosophies, and the era of mass-production, no longer do that.

*Please turn on the sound. Rogan is talking about Darth Blockbuster. He wasn’t a bad guy, until history passed him over. Fighting for his high position revealed an antagonist. There’s still many more left to overcome. Rising to this occasion, is your new politics. Credit:* [*JRE*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b_yboxM33gg)*.*

We defeated Darth Blockbuster. But there’s more industries waiting to be upgraded to mass-collaboration. Techvolution tells you our problem is antagonists, and antagonism. It lets you claim the high-ground when dealing with people as a employee, business owner, or customer.

Techvolution removes the justifications of antagonism hidden inside employment contracts, terms of service, and Left/Right infotainment news. Techvolution levels the playing field so our civilization starts winning again. Techvolution does all this.

If you believe in yourself.

## Extras Die-Off

The English Civil War started over a simple question, “who should pay for the government’s massive debt?”

And we’re having that same fight now.

Making camels live in the Amazon won’t get any cheaper. Our debt will keep rising. No Conservative or Progressive ideologue is going to sacrifice their platform, projects, and politics to pay for the 1969 lifestyle.

The “other side” will have to.

So, if you stay an extra of the Industrial Age, that’s your fate. You’ll limit your politics to only see Progressivism or Conservatism. You’ll slowly become radicalized, and end up chasing phantoms in the news, rallies, and demonstrations. You’ll argue with antagonists at work but get nowhere. You’ll get so frustrated you’ll march and scream for change. Eventually, after another financial crisis, debt crisis, the migrant crisis, pandemic, disputed election, constitutional amendment; some disaster or another, the West will reach the end of kicking the can down the road, and live through a new version of the Thirty Years War or English Civil War.

That’s not supposed to sound alarmist. It’s a diagnosis using our history.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tEczkhfLwqM

Remember this quote from the Thirty Years War?, “A warning of the dangers of entrusting power to those who feel summoned by God to war, or feel that their sense of justice and order is the only one valid.” How much longer do you think before Red/Left politics completely breaks down?

Look at Left/Right followers raging at each other, do you want to let them decide your fate?

## Look Up

Look up. Wherever you are, look up. Do you see the “mythical player god”? No, you don’t, and you never will. You are that player; you’re choices determine what happens in the game. If you eat a salad, install solar panels, read a book, you’re improving society’s statistics.

That makes you the lifeform playing the game of civilization.

Darth Blockbuster will never, ever, ever, “see the light” and play the game for you. That’s why I’m not writing to “The Executive.” I’m writing to you, Stargazer. You’re the player god!

Illustration

Illustration

The fate of civilization is entirely on your shoulders. Your job is to do what’s best for yourself, and help society prosper. Looking up for guidance, you see two options. Open-source Jedi, who’ve never stopped struggling, innovating, and filling the world we majic. And the self-importance, shortsightedness of Darth Blockbuster. The fallen hero of the Industrial Age who uses the trickery of dark majic and a corrupted rulebook to keep himself in power.

Our game’s fate then is rather simple. Who’s your hero, Stargazer?

## The End

I wanted to write beautiful Platonic dialogues for you here. I’d love to have Antagonists and Protagonists debating with Stargazer, who has an internal discussion between the benefits and drawbacks of being an extra or player god, and the joys of majic versus dark majic.

I’d also love to write “Black Mirror” stories about cyborgologists, techvolutionaries, majicians (whatever you call them), rejecting the easy money of Industrial Age society. History is waiting for nerds to bring people out of the matrix and into the era of mass-collaboration. Roofers will learn to use drones, cleaners to use IR cameras, craftsman to use 3D printers. Because of yesterday’s geeks, the middle-class will like their jobs, raise their families and give their kids a brighter future on a newly empowered Main Street.

A place where bullshit jobs don’t exist.

via Gfycat

*An idealized view of mass-collaboration and the Life Star. Although we’ll lose the suburban lifestyle once there’s no antagonists or extras, and just protagonists and player gods.*

I want to write all this stuff, but I didn’t. This book has been informative enough. At the start, I asked, “are you happy?” Now you have to ask yourself, “Am I going to do something about it?”

Our unhappiness is a fire alarm. This pandemic is a warning.

What’s your way of thinking for solutions?

Are you waiting to vote for Left or Right? Are you going to post on social media corporations should treat their customers and employees better? Are you going to watch more infotainment about evil Big Business and Big Government?

COMPLICATION GIF?

Or are you going to find, fund, or make new tools to solve whatever problem you have? Kickstarter, open-source technology, Khan Academy are only the beginning if you step up.

The fate of your life, your kids, and of your society, rests on the simple question—will you step up and become a player god in the game of civilization?

If you do, we win. If you don’t, we lose.

# EPILOGUE

## Welcome

Hello Stargazer! I’m glad you came aboard. If it wasn’t for you, the future would exist only in science fiction. Now because of you, we can start Techvolution.

There’s lots of work ahead. But we’ve done it many times before, the Minutemen, Abolitionist, Civil Rights, Environmental movements have all changed the world. While I, unfortunately, can’t tell you what your journey will be like. You can be your own celebrity. I’m sure you’ll soon love to tag #installsolarpanels, #forgetrushhour, #newsmallbusiness, #smallhomeliving.

And if you like, you can follow my trek to make our society better. I’ll be your guide.

## My Frontline Problem

Watch this clip from Netflix’s *Black Mirror*. It’s a story of a crazed man who wants to talk with the CEO of an Instagram-like app called Smithereen. He holds a company intern hostage awaiting the CEO’s call. Police surround him, corporate lackeys try to deflect him, bullets are fired at him. But he still wants his phone call.

The only thing people know is he was hit by a drunk driver years before.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\_gF1oGQ2hAA&feature=youtu.be&t=57

New technology is either our salvation. Or our distraction. This is frontline pain. It’s not caused, or solved, by Progressives or Conservatives. It’s neither someone else problem or bad luck. This is the pain of regular life on Main Street. Pain is what Evolution uses to force lifeforms to adapt. If we refuse, life finds someone else to carry its banner.

Feeling pain is good if we solve it and move on.

These are the poor souls’ car insurance adjusters speak to. While most aren’t so devastated, far too many are. (In fact, many adjusters don’t use social media because of threats from callers, sadly a kidnapping isn’t too outlandish. Some callers send thank-you presents though, so there’s good and bad).

Deadly crashes, hijackings, abductions, drive-by shootings, drunk driving, car fires, running red lights, and yes, distracted driving—every human tragedy eventually calls an insurance adjuster.

And all the while DING-DING-DING-DING-DING-DING.

I wept while watching Smithereens, full out tears. I knew what the plot twist was—that distracted driving killed a loved one—because I’d spoken with this person too many times. This was the motivation for me to make my app. I wanted to help solve horrible, useless, and preventable car crashes with something (I now call) the Life Star.

Here’s why I failed, and here’s why I’ll succeed.

via Gfycat

*This is the what digital technology is good for. Only player gods will reach for it.*

## My App

My app was straightforward. 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 so simple, it might not even get me a job in “tech.”

Here’s how it worked.

Today’s insurance industry is entirely based in the Industrial Age. So after an accident, drivers are expected to exchange information. Because they’re (understandably) frazzled, they often don’t. Adjusters have to search for each other—literally calling around or hoping someone calls you. Delays pile up like crazy; causing most of the maddening DING-DING-DING-DING-DING.

Like Uber uses online maps, my app let adjusters post an accident on a google map. Since every accident shares GPS coordinates, all adjusters, regardless of what drivers do, can find and email each other. Its minimal cost was paid for by rental car companies and repair shops who loved the ability to communicate with adjusters online instead of waiting on hold.

That’s how simple it is to foster mass-collaboration and save hundreds of millions of dollars and millions of hours of productivity. That’s how much the Internet Age is already here. Still, the Matrix of the Industrial Age dark majic keeps it from people’s eyes.

To wake workers up, all I had to do was show my app’s majic, and they instantly smiled.

The best part was something that Frederick Douglass would love; learning about ourselves. With digital collaboration, we start getting better information on our economy than things like GDP.

For example, with my small little app, for the first time, we’d have a database of the exact location and causes of car crashes. After that, we could cross-reference with weather, traffic, demographics, and many other databases.

We’d finally learn why car crashes happen and start to fight back. We wouldn’t have to work such bullshit jobs, because our insurance rates would naturally go down.

A database of crash locations and causes doesn’t exist today. Government regulators and insurance company managers don’t care about it. Ironic because extras tell themselves “they” do care. So, when tires are faulty, intersections jam up too much, potholes get too big, or anything else repeatedly causes crashes, we don’t even know.

My little app was a happy upgrade in the game of civilization, but not good enough. Or more likely, too good. My biggest problem was I messed with a lever of power. Now because of open-source and Techvolution, I can depend on player gods to help me fight back.

New Tool Creation *Look familiar? Uber, Airbnb, and my app; all use GPS maps. Kind of looks like the game of Anno1800 or Civilization 6, doesn’t it? Didn’t I tell you computer games teach us how we’ll live in the Internet Age? A sneak peek at the Life Star.*

## Attacking a Lever of Power

Adjusters hold the insurance checkbook in their hands. They decide how much to pay out on every claim. Making adjusters use telephones isn’t an accident. It’s a massive lever of power to say, “call me when I’m available.” By easing congestion and taking away the DINGS, I was, in effect, taking away the insurance company’s ability to create friction for anyone withdrawing money. And, lessening crashes wasn’t much of a selling point either.

This was never officially said to me. Remember being far from the frontline makes people not realize the consequences of their actions. In fact, most insurance decision-makers today have never even spoken with a customer; nevermind processed a claim. They’d watch Smithereens with no tearful recognition.

Simply put, with no pain felt, there was no problem to solve.

Thus, now I know how to fix my failure. The key to success, for me and you Stargazer, is making a modern lever of power. With it, we make frontline pain common knowledge. By knowing our society’s pain, we turn extras into player gods who take control of their lives.

Tweets by OPP\_GTATraffic

*This is a Twitter feed for the Ontario Police. It tells everyone about crashes in real-tme. People on this list—right now—are living through Smithereens in some way. That pain used to only be felt by the unlucky few, but by making it common knowledge, we can all feel the pain and use mass-collaboration to solve it using the life saving rules of the Life Star.*

## the Life Star

At its heart, Smithereens is a story about an extra. The tortured man assumes the company Smithereen will care about his problem. Extras believe “they” have the people’s best interest at heart. “They” in government bureaucracy. “They” in corporations. “They” someone else. The truth is, “they” only have your interest at heart if you’re holding levers of power.

Only then does “they” the powerful, becomes “we” the player god.

And that’s the subject for the next book. For all the antagonists blustering and excuses, once a regular person becomes a player god, and holds a lever of power, the game is won.

Consider this, for every dollar Main Street puts into car insurance, we only get back 50 cents in claims; the rest goes to taxes, marketing, and administration fees. That’s how Main Street pays for the bullshit jobs of Darth Blockbuster.

This book made you a player god in mind, the next will make you a player god in reality. You’ll finally hold many levers of power in your hand, first for car crashes. No middleman. No phantom chasing. No dark majic. No Death Star. No Darth Call Centre. No bullshit jobs.

Just you in control of your destiny—exactly like a person playing *Civilization, Anno 1800, or Cities: Skylines* who always has all the levers of power they need to win the game.

That’s what the Life Star is—the technological re-creation of Evolution; a rulebook to enforce Techvolution. It lets everyone play, understand, and master the game of civilization with fair, accountable, and understandable rules that give everyone a chance to win. It’s a modern rulebook that makes everybody happy.

It’s a modern rulebook that gets Main Street paid The Life Star is how we earn a living as specialists in the era of mass-collaboration.

Philosophers call it the rational state earned through years of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. I also call it the state of nature because all lifeforms happily live inside a place where Darth Blockbuster isn’t allowed to play, and bullshit jobs don’t exist.

You’ll soon hold my new app in your hand and read about your power to win the game of civilization in Techvolution: Building the Life Star.

levers of power *Levers of power. Whoever controls them, wins.*

# THE APPENDICES

## Other Stuff

Hello. Thanks for sticking around. The appendices is some stuff I couldn’t fit into the narrative of the book, but I thought might be cool to know.

## Bears Everywhere, Polar Bears Only In Some Places

I never wanted to write this book. Most of this book is based on combinining the lessons of evolutionary biology and political philosophy “How to See the Matrix”.

I think they’re the same field of study, so similar they suggest a supreme physical life field of some kind. That’s the book I wanted to write. I used my take on political societies earned by using Aristotle’s Poetics to better understand Hegelian Dialectics. It’s work I did years ago. But it’s original thinking will need the objective data from the Life Star to prove.

There’s no way around the game of civilization. Like evolution to lifeforms, we all are inside it. It’s paint by numbers. Tracks on the road. We all live and die under it’s demands. Playing a Civilization computer game is really the best way to understand it. In the game, every player starts off small, then gathers resources, invests them smartly, and grows. Playing the game teaches the importance of geography, technological upgrades, adopting modern philosophies, defeating everyone who opposes you, investing in research and development, avoiding building palaces to host jewellery laden banquets and balls.

But no computer game forces the player into diversification or “adaptive radiation.” In every game a player tries to take over the world with his one civilization. Never does the player have to segment himself into different civilizations. But, in natura this life-cycle of seed, growth, then adaption and diversificationns happens to all lifeforms and thus all civilizations.

Few people realize how human cyborgology is the same as biology.

Polar Bears are nearly identitical to Brown Bears. But they’re polar for a good reason. If they didn’t adapt to the cold, water, and food supply, they’ve never live in the Artic. Thus, life diversified them. Adaptation is why we can’t send the suffering polar bears to the Amazon, or even Antartica. They are not adapted to the climate in one area, and the ecosystem in the other. Imagine penguins with a few antartic polar bears walking around. Happy feet indeed.

The point is this. We evolve just like any other lifeform. But we evolve with tools, and we evolve in ages. So we start off small, grow, and diversity in waves. Each new age, is like new lifeforms, new cyborgs, spreading across the world for the first time. Look at the European Powers below, who colonized the world a few generations ago during the Age of Discovery.

via GIPHY

The European Powers spread advanced civilization far and wide. Brutally in some cases—has anyone invented a way to spread new civilization or new lifeform easily? But that’s the point. Evolution doesn’t care about individuals. Survival of the best adaptation is Nature’s rulebook.

So Trump and Brexit were inevitable. Our society wants to diversity after the Industrial Age. This is part of the game of civilization we all play, but few see the entireity of. That’s why the established powers of the Industrial Age were so suprised, and have so much hatred, for nativist politics in the West. Although nativist politics isn’t the future. Like the English Civil War, they’re using old philosophies to try and make fundamental change. Only Techvolution, conscious adaptation using modern tools, is the new philosophy for our new Internet Age.

I plan to write a textbook on Techvolution (How to See the Matrix), I’ll love to now delve more into the game of civilization for you., and teach you how to decode the trends of history: what a civil war is, how to predict a revolution, and so forth. The game defines our lives in so many ways, because it determines the roles we play in our lives. The accident of birth to parents, geography, or time-period makes us antagonists, protagonists, extras and player gods. Few people understand these roles. Once they can see it in the Life Star mirror, they’ll be far more likely to choose Techvolution. But that’ll come later. Hopefully.

## The End of One Game, and the Beginning of a New One

This section is my personal opinion, so take it for what it’s worth to you.

The Western World is a made up term. Don’t get me wrong, it’s a good way to describe the shared culture of France, Britain, Holland, America, Austrialia and the other members of the political unit we call “The West”. But if you look down at the globe, these landmasses wouldn’t look united. The West is a human creation. There was no “Western Europe” in Roman times. The entire Mediterranean Sea and surrounding land was unified under the Roman Empire.

If the world had ended in 1900, The West would have won the game of civilization. Western Europe didn’t have a head start. They didn’t have any sort of advantage. If it’s geography, resources, genes, or whatever were the reason for the West’s rise to power, why did Rome fall. Why did Western Europe suffer so greatly in the Dark Ages if they had advantages available to no one else?

Western Europe conqured the world, because it used modern technology better than any other civilization. Their philosophy let them do that, and philosophy is a gift. It lets humanity invent and use new and better tools. Ancient Greece got it first, then it went to Rome, then to Middle East in the Islamic Golden Age, back to Italy in the Renaissance, where it spread to Western Civilization during the Science and Industrial Age, and thereafter to the world via European colonialization.

Playing Civilzation, Anno 1800, or any other game is a better education than the best schooling today. These games mimick real-life, and thus integrate so many lessons. They force players to think of the big picture that’s so hard to appreciate in real-life. It’s an invaluable perspective, especially to our society which is so obessed with itself, inside our spectacle, and art stories.

Our culture is very entrenched in the Industrial Age. But, we’re in an entirely new age. The Internet Age is just as historical and powerful as the Science Age. And nobody has earned victory over it yet. Africa, South America, East Asia, Middle East, India, Eastern Europe, any civilization in the world is no better off then the West. Actually, I’d say, the West is far behind in the race to win the era of mass-collaboration.

In all my schooling, reading, discussing, working, in all my life, the ancestors of the barbarian kings, the ones whose grand parents worked 365 days a year in horrible English factories, who suffered famines in Ireland, draughts in France, and wars throughout Europe, the ones who worked the labs in New York, who worked the mines of Pennsylvania, the lines of Michigan, who solved millions of different problems during the Science and Industrial Ages as player gods; their descendents today simple don’t want to feel frontline pain.

And without pain, these people fell no reason to update to the Internet Age. As one sharp observer noted to me, “it’s like they’ve folded their cards.”

Whichever society throws away the memories, excuses, and philosphies of the past, and embraces Techvolution and the era of mass-collaboration, will be the winner of the Internet Age. It’s their player god who will happily reign supreme for many years in the never ending game of civilization. I smile, thinking of all those bakers, tailors, designers, roofers, engineers, cleaners, repairmen, and maybe even a few majicians, smiling on a new and empowered Main Street.

## Stuff I Couldn’t Fit In

I tried to make Techvolution very readable. Almost all the topics and subjects are metaphors for the lessons Europe learned going from the Dark Ages, through the Medieval Ages, to the Science Age, Enlightenment Age, and finally the Industrial Age. So there was a lot of stuff to fit it.

If you’re a history or philosophy nerd, I hope you realize why I synthesized things the way I did. The benefit was, by keeping things simple, I was forced to better understand the content.

If I could travel back to 1618 to those very unhappy Europeans before the Thirty Years War, and the English Civil Wars, I’d say the same thing to them that I told you.

But they wouldn’t believe it because I’d be talking about the future. With you it’s been the past. There’s a better chance it’ll all click.

For reference, here’s some of the lessons our ancestors taught us in blood, sweat, and tears, and I used in this book.

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**Phantom Communists and Fascists**: Machiavelli’s “Imagined Principalities”. Which is what Nicolo Machiavelli said to try and get people in the Renaissance to ignore the politics of the selfish religious leaders and political leaders. Watch the Borgias and you’ll get a good idea how religion was used for political ends.

These leaders used old philosophies like Catholicsm, and Aristotelism as literal words from God. That’s why they called Galileo a heretic for using a telescope to uncover the truth. Likewse, so does our old philosophies stay alive by cries of “communists and fascists!” as modern technology reveals better truths.

And, if by chance you’ve heard of Machiavelli or “Machiavellism”, the philosopher has gotten a bad wrap. Although he’s famous for being deceptive and conniving, it’s only because political leaders hated him and so smeared him and his ideas far and wide.

They even tortured him for weeks by hanging him by his shoulders. If that wasn’t bad enough, the leaders told the public “Old Nick” was the Devil.

Machiavelli was simply the first to say humanity should use history, and tools, to uncover truth, instead of listening to those in power. The real conniving and evil leaders didn’t like someone looking behind their curtain and telling the public all their nastry tricks.

Machiavelli was a great writer, descent statemen, bad soldier, and was born and died middle-class. He inspired Galileo, Francis Bacon, and helped kickstart the Science Age. We owe him a better memory.

**Frontline**: is Machiavelli’s “effectual truth.” Rather then believing what people say, this philosophy only cares about a person’s actions. “Talk is cheap” is another way of putting it.

This simple disregard for talk, was the basis for Galileo, Francis Bacon, and lots of other people, to create the Scientific Method.

The effectual truth said truth is revealed at the “point of contact” between a tool and it’s user. Thus, to know anything for sure, you must run experiments. This philosophy upgraded us to Science in physics, chemistry, biology etc.

With the Life Star we’ll be able to upgrade the social sciences too. Because the pain of frontline life is where we’ll find the answers to good and evil in human affairs.

**Player god**: Is Rousseau’s General Will. This started with comes from Thomas Hobbes. He lived during the English Civil War, and hated all the carnage. So Hobbes started the creation of a new ruling philosophy.

He said everyone is equal in Nature. Hobbes said people should still be loyal to a king, but not because the king is divine, but because one person having absolute power is in everyone’s best interest.

The people thus make a “social contract” to all of government. Give up natural freedom, for security guarantees.

Hobbes’s ideas were too extreme to work. But they still clicked new ideas in some people’s minds. One was John Locke. He agreed people are naturally equal, but said government should not be a person, but an institution. Meaning, the people should elect a executive, legislature, and judicial. This way, each institution will “check and balance” each other, and thus government will still function, but won’t be easily corrupted and become worse than the anarchy it’s supposed to solve.

Rousseau later adapted this idea. Rousseau, said a true democracy is made up of the people. Unlike Hobbes/Locke, who said humanity was born from a chaotic Nature, Rousseau said its society that makes people bad.

Rousseau made the connection that individuals make up their society, so if each individual reformed themselves, together they’d make a better society, or “player god”.

**The Game of Civilization**: Hegel’s March of Reason. Hegel (1770– 1831) tried to decode World History, by giving a reason for our development. He saw the “march of Reason” in the facts of World History. World History, he tried to show, developed in “dialectical” stages until we reach the rational state.

Hegel wrote before Evolution was discovered. Without knowing it, what he was uncovering was our Evolution. His rational state, is when Internet Age technology provides enough food, water, challenges so politics and chill the fuck out.

**Going From Extras to Player Gods**: This is Machiavelli’s “wised up”. Only when persons learn to take hold of modern technology, will they have power over their lives.

**Your Happiness**: Machiavelli’s “new modes and orders”. The call to change the world to become more rational, and favourable to the little guy. The kings of his day didn’t much care to inspired happiness in their subjects.

Thus, when you’re playing computer games like Civilization 6, it’s a novel idea to succeed or fail according to the publics opinion of you. Reading history reveals this truth to be true too.

**Heirarchy**:: is from the friction of distance. The farther people are from the pain, the more likely they’re disregard it. So for all her faults, Sofia Auld did teach an enslaved person to read. That’s only because she spent time with him everyday. Natural humanity comes out with empathy. And empathy needs to be seen, heard, and felt to exist.

Feeling the pain is the best way to respond to it. The further one is from the frontline, the less natural morality and ethics will prompt a humane response. We use products made by slave labour because we don’t feel or see it. Civlizations need heirachries, but with better technology, those heirarchies can become smaller.

**The Power of Stories/Games**: Aristotle’s Poetics, and especially David Mamet’s On Directing Film. Learning storytelling so darn well, it’s layers and components, characters and motivations, is what I used to intepret Hegelian dialectics. I’m writing “How to See the Matrix” using these tools. It’s much more detailed analysis of all this stuff.

**Ruling philosophy**: comes from Aristotle’s regime. Regime is the form of government or the set of rules, cultural or social norms, etc. that regulate the operation of a government or institution and its interactions with society. Aristotle noted the end of democracy is freedom; of oligarchy, wealth; of aristocracy, the maintenance of power, education, and national institutions; of tyranny, the protection of the tyrant.

**Protagonist and antagonist**: is Hegel’s Thesis, Antithesis, Synthesis dialectics. After centuries of histories, looked back at the trends, and said there was a ruling philosophy, whose problems manifested into a competitor, the two would eventually fight it out, and make a new ruling philosphy that merged the two together. He also said master–slave is a relationship that recurs throughout humanity, and is the reason we looked at Frederick Douglas and Neo, who while was the physical slave, his captors were the mental ones, bound to a horrible social system as much as Frederick was. Frederick’s process of self-discovery, was how slaves realize their status and break free.

**Darth Blockbuster**: working insurance :)

**The Death Star**: working insurance :)

**Cyborgology**: is Darwinism. The evolution of lifeforms based on their tools to collect resources. Life started out as simple organisms, and as these primitive lifeforms struggled to survive, they adapted better —biological—tools to do so. Eventually the benefits of biology maxed out with us, and so we have to continue evolution with tools. We similarly started to evolve (techvolve) with primitive tools, which slowly got better and better.

**Freedom to use any tool**: Comes from freedom of religion and speech. John Locke and his A Letter Concerning Toleration, gets the nod here.

**Majic**: Watching people learn. Not study, or do what they’re told. But watching, and teaching people to actually connect with a book, pencil, computer, smartphone, and seeing their eyes open from the burst of life that learning a new cyborgology. I little from Hegel’s actualization mixed with Rousseau’s Emile.

**Dark majic**: come from modern psychology. I’m no expert, but basic reading on The Milgram Experiment, Marshmellow Test, and the Standford Experiment helped come up with this.

**The Life Star**: Francis Bacon’s New Atlantis.

**Techvolution**: Comes from me. It synthesizes all that we’ve learned, into a new philosophy for a modern age. I attributed much of it to playing computer games, reading and watching science fiction, and working lots of frontline jobs. Playing, reading, and living in the future made the old philosophies of 20th Century politics so old fashioned. Putting it all together into a book took lots of reading, thinking, and working. Some intelligence helped, but it was the stubborness to keep going, and the belief in a higher power, that deserves the most credit.

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So, that’s where it all came from. Machiavelli taught regular people to stop hoping for a better life, and start making one. Hobbes/Locke taught us our government can be instruments for liberty. Rousseau said we, the people, could make up government if we empowered our better natures. Hegel taught us the difference between Protagonsits and Antagonists, Player Gods, and Extras. Galileo taught us to use tools to see the Truth. Darwin taught us life is nothing but the evolution of new tools. And Majic, he taught us that technology is an extension of life, that player gods can use to improve this world, once we believe in ourselves.