

Re: The Future

Source: <http://coding.derkeiler.com/Archive/Cobol/comp.lang.cobol/2007-04/msg00200.html>

- *From:* "Charles Hottel" <chottel@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Fri, 13 Apr 2007 23:28:58 GMT
-

"tlmfu" <lacey@xxxxxxx> wrote in message
[news:3SBTh.44480\\$EJ6.43955@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](news:3SBTh.44480$EJ6.43955@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)

Charles Hottel <chottel@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message
[news:MhATh.2380\\$3P3.811@xx](news:MhATh.2380$3P3.811@xx)

What do you think the next 20 to 30 years will be like? If you are like most people you think it will be like the last 20 to 30 years and there is

a

good chance that you would be unprepared for the powerful changes coming

and

the the rapid pace of those changes.

That is just a small part of the thesis of a book I have just read: The Singularity Is Near: When Humans Transcend Biology by Ray Kurzweil

Couple of questions: does he specify his assumptions – in particular does he expect that the resources for what he foresees will always be there? And does he include individual choice in the matter: will people be obliged to go along with the changes or not?

It is somewhat hard to answer your question and yet do the book justice. The book is focused yet very wideranging in giving lots of background for his assumptions and reasoning as well as concrete examples in support of his views.

Yes he gives his assumptions. He started out many years ago studying technology trends in order to better time his inventions for the

Re: The Future

marketplace. As he says it took on a life of its own after a while. He gives some of the mathematics also and has developed a "Law of Accelerating Returns".

He says where he thinks some of the resources will come from and gives estimates of their availability. Some of it is more concrete and some is more speculative. I think the predictions for trends are easier than for which specific designs and/or products will win out over others.

Well people will have the same choice or lack of choice that they have now. We have no choice now but to live with the fact of nuclear weapons. In theory we could stop development of biotechnology, nanotechnology and strong AI, but in