

The Invention of Tomorrow

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In-person, F&S (+ Livestream and Recorded)
Tuesdays, 10:00 – noon

Course Description

History tells the story that brought us here. The Invention of Tomorrow addresses the story that might unfold going forward from here, over the next 50 years. Based on what we are doing now, what does the future hold for our environment? Where is geopolitics headed: is China on the rise, is the West in decline? Wither the nation-state in the age of cyber=space? How will AI, robotics, and genetic engineering change what “human” means? What is the future of parenting, family, gender, and self-hood? Finally: what epic story might we craft to give our species as a whole the sense of shared peoplehood we will need, to deal with the global crisis we are facing as a global human “we”?

Course Overview

1. The Planet

Introduction to the question: what will the next chapter of the human story be about?
Fossil fuels, pollution, and climate change
Desertification: the Allan Soffary plan.
Nuclear solutions: the Bill Gates plan
Carbon removal: algae as a game changer

2. Geopolitics

Decline of the Western empire
The Islamic surge
The rise of China
Prospects for an east/west war.
The future of the nation-state

3. Technology

Medicine: cancer, autoimmune diseases & genetic engineering
The future of aging
AI and Robotics
Cyborgs-R-us?
3-D printing and industrial production

4. Economy

Growth industries of the future.
Cyber crime, cyber war, cyber security
Crypto-currency and blockchain
Virtual reality

The future of art and creative work
Global Basic Income?

5. Self and Society

Future of gender and family
The algorithm and its discontents
Social networking: birth of the collective brain
Consciousness and identity

6. Narrative: Forming the Global Self

The function of narrative
From tribal narratives to global narratives
Global narratives of the ancient past
Global narratives of the recent past
A global narrative for the Digital Age
Prospects for the emergence of a global human self