Introductory Blog to Tech + Policy Series [1]

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Image reference (MLA format): Bernstein, Rebecca. “5 Futuristic Technology Innovations.” Husson University, 10 May 2017, online.husson.edu/futuristic-technology/.

What happens when changes occur faster than the time it takes to get used to them? This is the case of science and politics in our era.

We are now living in a world much different than the one our parents and grandparents lived in; and this is all due to the contemporary technologies among us. To deeply understand the upcoming series of blogs about science and technology relating to policy and governance we need to shift our mindset a little bit.

In the lives of our ancestors, **change was slow and stable: they lived with a local and linear mindset** that most of us are predisposed to carry as well. In this mindset, the important things that mattered to your livelihood happened within walking distance from where you were (local environment) and change occurred across generations, but very slowly (linear pattern). In general, your life was likely to look, feel, and be quite similar to the lives of your parents and grandparents. Then, in the last 50 years **we suddenly find ourselves in this kind of world where everything is global and exponential.** Ever since cities began to form around 10,000 years ago, people began meeting and exchanging ideas in city-centers leading to new ideas and innovation. We tend to forget how recent the formation of the internet is (just a few decades old) but it has forever transformed human history and made this exchange of information easier and faster, allowing ideas to spreadacross the world and leading to greater amounts of inventions and innovations. These sudden advances have occurred due to the law of accelerating returns, described by Ray Kurtzweil in his book The Singularity is Near, which and statesthat advances breed more advances.

Looking at where we are today, even though we still don't see flying cars, i**nnovative technologies currently under development have the potential to drastically change the world** (probably even a little bit more practical than flying cars). With existing technologies, we can solve the world's greatest challenges such as: disaster resilience, energy, environment, food, global health, governance, education, prosperity, security, shelter, space and water; as I learned spending an entire summer at Singularity University. Technologies that serve as tools that become information follow the behavior dictated by Moore's Law: meaning that they jump on an exponential growth curve and experience a price performance doubling every 12-24 months. These are referred to as Exponential technologies and there are currently 8: Infinite Computing, Sensor & Networks, Robotics, 3D Printing, Synthetic Biology, Digital Medicine, Nanomaterials and Artificial Intelligence. **In the upcoming blogs we will explore the potential of some of these technologies to impact the way we see the world and alter both the fields of science and politics.**

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