

Synthisophy

Integrating the Wisdoms of History into Present Culture

By Andre Houle

Abstract: Introduction to synthisophy: roots, mission, description, conclusion and application. Synthisophy - the integration of knowledge derived from the study of history into present culture. Roots: **Synthesis/History/Sophy**. Synthesis: the integration of separate entities into a unified whole. History: what has happened in the past. Sophy: Greek root: wisdom; a system embracing knowledge and truth. **Thesis 1:** Our evolutionarily selected cognitive biases, confirmation biases, argumentative theory state of mind and our tribal and warrior ethos have caused our political polarization. **Thesis 2:** Realigion - an understanding of the real world based on scientific fact and truth, but believing in the existence of God to explain the unknowable with aspects of existing religion, faith of one's own, or accepting the unknowable as God. **Thesis 3:** Looking at Bloom's taxonomy, only the human brain can create new and original ideas. **Thesis 4:** Perhaps politics on the alt-Right and illiberal-Left has become their religion.

1. Introduction

In 1995 an article published in SKOLE, the Journal of Alternative Education, the word synthisophy first appeared (Houle 1995). The word synthisophy then appeared in the Cyclopedic Education Dictionary (Spafford, Pesce and Grosser 1998). After the election of Donald Trump in 2016, it was time to launch a website (2017) and write an extensive research paper on synthisophy, (Houle, 2018). So here's an introduction to the concept.

2. Synthisophy and Mission

Synthisophy - the scientific integration of knowledge and wisdom derived from the study of history into present culture.

Roots – Synthesis/History/Sophy

Synthesis - the integration of separate material or abstract entities into a single or unified whole

History - what has happened in the past; a detailed description of past events as relating to a particular people, country, period, etc...

Sophy - Greek root: wisdom, knowledge; an intellectual system embracing knowledge and truth; study of the real world based on fact and truth, science

The mission of synthisophy is to depolarize the Nation. We presently have 2 social/political poles, the far right and the far left, with little in the middle. Here at synthisophy we are centrist. Here's some history to put this in context. With the advent of social media on the internet and the 24/7 news cycle on television, the politics of the Nation has become polarized. There have been 5 revolutions in human history: the Agricultural Revolution around 10,000 BC which led to the advent of Civilization, Science and the Age of Enlightenment, the Industrial Revolution which occurred in the late 1700s and the Digital Revolution with the advent of social media and the internet of which we are in the early stages. Television first appeared in the United States in 1928. From there by the 1940s until the 1980s there were three major broadcasting networks available: ABC, CBS and NBC. These three networks provided morning and evening news, while the approach among broadcasters at that time was to try and present unbiased information

with the intent of informing the public for the betterment of society and the nation. In 1987 the FCC eliminated the Fairness Doctrine which required broadcasters to cover controversial issues in a balanced and equitable fashion. In the late 1980s and early '90s cable news networks, CNN, Fox, MSNBC, etc, started broadcasting news 24/7. Such major networks now appear to appeal to the far Right or the far Left in their biased presentation of news in order to increase viewership and hence increase advertising rates - make more money. The internet and social media blossomed in the early 2000s which now provides information at our fingertips, and it is quite easy to have any political opinion, do a search, go to your preferred websites (that google has algorithmically biased you to), and instantly find information that supports that opinion. This approach is called confirmation bias. So the Digital Revolution with the advent of the internet and social media and the 24/7 news cycle have led to a polarized society. This polarization is reflected in Congress in which there is little cooperation between the Democratic and Republican parties. The parties of the Left and the Right in the House and Senate have become insular and vehemently oppose each other. This polarization in the House started 25 years ago, right along with the advent of the internet, social media and the Digital Age.

Citizens are the crux of democracy, an educated and well informed citizenry is vital for the survival of a democratic republic. As Benjamin Franklin said after exiting the Constitutional Convention and was asked what sort of government the delegates had created, his answer was, "We've given you a Republic, can you keep it?" The mission of synthosophy is to depolarize the Nation and to answer Franklin's question in the affirmative, "Yes, we can."

3. Polarization and The Upside-Down Bell Curve

Here's a way to visualize the political polarization of current society. Remember the bell curve? The regular bell curve refers to a normal distribution of a value across a range. Let's look at the

distribution of human height as presented in Ask a Mathematician, 2010:

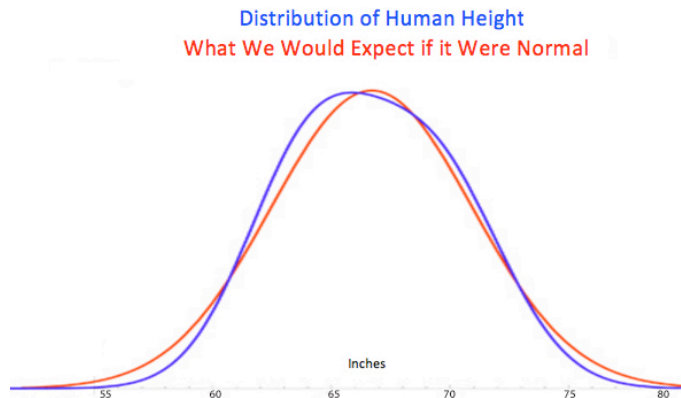
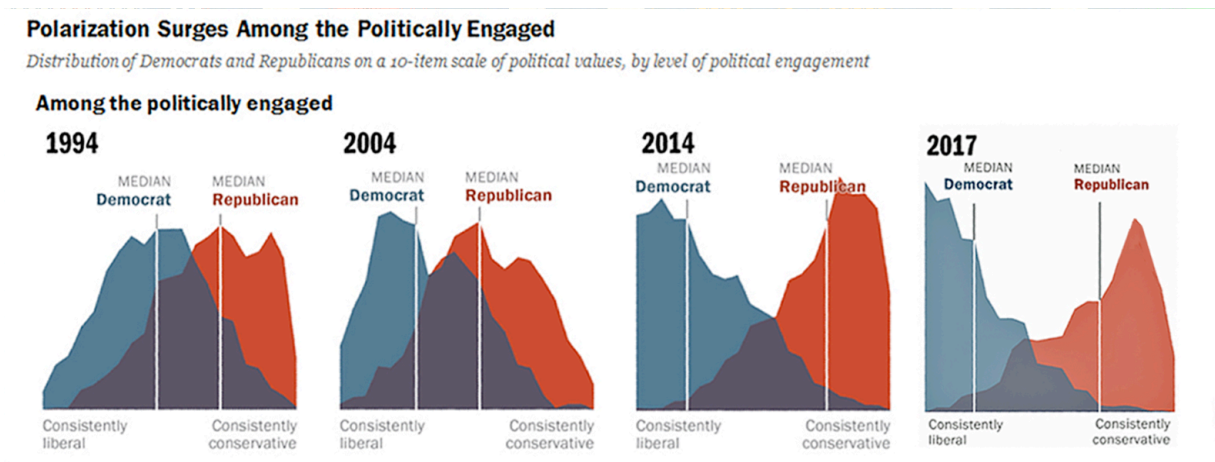


Figure 1: Distribution of Human Height¹

Looking at the blue line, the average human height is about 66 inches, with a range of the number taller and shorter than the average moving down and away from the average in both directions, making the shape of a bell. Note the red curve is a perfect bell curve and is the normal distribution. So the actual distribution of human height, the blue curve, is quite close to the normal bell curve. Now let's take a look at the polarization of the population that is politically engaged, as presented in Political Polarization, 1994-2017, Pew Research Center (2017):



¹ Ask a Mathematician. 2010. What's so special about the Gaussian distribution?

Figure 2: Polarization Surges Among the Politically Engaged²

Please look at the diagrams of the politically engaged in 1994, 2004, 2014 and 2017, notice a development over time? Note in 1994 there is no split in the curve between the Left and the Right, in 2004 we can see a split starting, by 2014 we can see an increase in polarization as the split widens, Democrats keep moving farther left, Republicans keep moving farther right. and by 2017 there's a nearly perfect upside-down bell curve! That's the exact opposite of the normal bell curve! Does that mean we're not normal? Not necessarily, but it does show just how divided and polarized, as a nation, we have become.

4. Review of Chapters 1 through 14

1) Democratic Republic - a state ruled by the people through their elected representatives

2) Human Evolution - Australopithecus, Homo habilis, Homo erectus, Homo sapiens

3) Cognitive Bias

A cognitive bias refers to a shortcut in mental thinking and decision making whereby inferences about other people and situations may be drawn in a somewhat illogical and rash fashion, but may still be highly effective in the evolutionary survival of the individual and species.

Individuals create their own subjective reality from their perception of their environmental surroundings and social input.

4) Confirmation Bias

Confirmation bias is the tendency of people to favor information that confirms their existing

² Pew Research Center.2017. US Politics and Policy. Political Polarization, 1994-2017.

beliefs. Confirmation bias in society, also called confirmatory bias or myside bias, is the tendency to search for, interpret, favor, and recall information in a way that confirms one's preexisting beliefs or hypotheses.

5) Argumentative Theory

Argumentative theory claims that the function of reasoning is argumentative. It is to devise and evaluate arguments intended to persuade. Reasoning is adaptive given the exceptional dependence of humans on communication and their vulnerability to misinformation. Skilled arguers are not after the truth but after arguments supporting their views. This explains the notorious confirmation bias. (Mercier and Sperber, 2011)

6) Brain Function

Your brain has 100 billion nerve cells, neurons. These neurons have branching axons and dozens of dendrites that allow them to communicate with each other using various neurotransmitters. These neurons in your brain get input from our 5 senses, from what you see, hear, taste, touch and smell. Input from these 5 senses are sent via neurons and synaptic connections to get neurologically processed in your brain. With the increase in axon and dendrite terminals from branching there are approximately 1 trillion synaptic connections in your brain. These 100 billion neurons and 1 trillion synaptic connections then create the perception of your immediate surroundings, your consciousness. Another layer of processing on top of your immediate consciousness are those 100 billion neurons processing all the selected information and input you've received over your lifetime, your subconscious, to which your brain refers when consciously analyzing, categorizing, critically thinking, drawing conclusions, making daily decisions and choosing directions, from everything you've experienced and thought about in

your life. That becomes your perception of reality, your neuroreality. Our hope is that synthisophy will bring our neurorealities closer to actual reality.

7) Your Neuroreality

Remember the 100 billion neurons in your brain that create your perception of reality, your neuroreality. Let's consider human evolution, brain function, cognitive bias, confirmation bias and argumentative theory as they may relate to neuroreality. As earlier mentioned, we evolved over the past 4 million years from Australopithecus, to Homo habilis, to Homo erectus, to Homo sapiens.

The Argumentative Theory as stated earlier explains the genetically selected human confirmation bias. So a more expanded explanation of human brain development may be that the genetically selected and neurologically wired cognitive biases in early human evolution resulted in the development of confirmation biases that explain the thought processes described in Argumentative Theory. The cognitive bias present in Australopithecus led to the confirmation bias in Homo habilis, which could have then led to the Argumentative Theory, an extension of confirmation bias as described above, which may have developed as Homo erectus migrated out of Africa 2 million years ago and inhabited most of Eurasia in more complex tribes and villages. This evolution then led to Homo sapiens, their exit from Africa 70,000 years ago, and their migration and dominance over the entire world. This evolution then led to the development of agriculture and the advent of civilization some 5000 years ago, then the industrial revolution, and now the digital revolution and information age. In the extraordinarily complex society of today, the instinctive cognitive biases, the resulting confirmation bias, applied in the argumentative theory, may all very well be present in the 100 billion neurons in your brain helping to generate your perception of reality, your neuroreality.

8) Bloom's Taxonomy

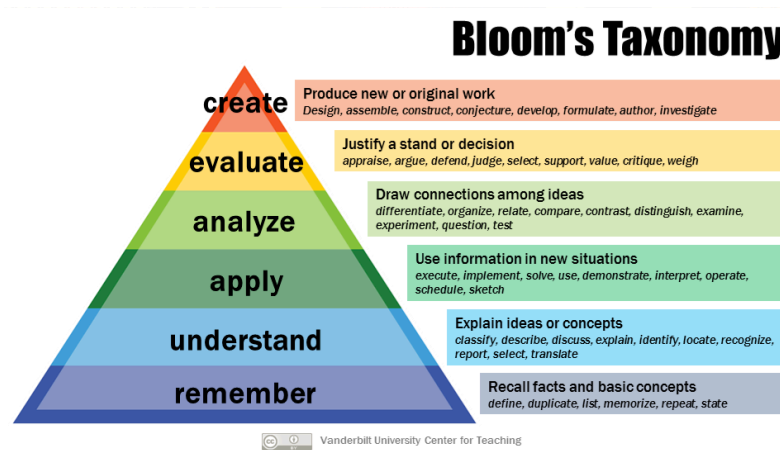


Figure 3: Bloom's Taxonomy (Armstrong, 2010)

9) Science

Science is the study of the real world based on fact and truth. This approach to understanding the world was initially developed in the 16th century, and this period is often called the Scientific Revolution, or the Age of Enlightenment. The scientific method is a procedure consisting of systematic observation, measurement, and experiment, and the formulation, testing, and modification of hypotheses.

10) Science and Religion

The scientific method is a procedure consisting of systematic observation, measurement, and experiment, and the formulation, testing, and modification of hypotheses. Note there are many questions that science can't answer, such as when did time start? Fourteen billion years ago when our universe was born in the big bang? But what was there before that? When and how did time start, or is there a start? Will time end, or is there an end? What created all the matter in the universe? Matter is made of molecules, molecules are made of atoms, atoms are made of protons,

neutrons and electrons, what are protons, neutrons and electron made of? What about energy in the universe, how did that happen, when did energy start? What will happen when all available energy is spent? What created space as in the space taken up by matter and all the vacuous space of the universe? These are questions that science cannot answer, and perhaps a place for a religion to answer with faith. What is good? What is evil? What is right? What is wrong? What are morals? What makes a good society? These are questions that science may provide direction but may not be able to fully answer. Recall science is the study of the REAL world based on fact and truth. To go one step further, for those questions that science can answer, perhaps science could be part of a religion. And for those questions that science can't fully answer, faith and morality could be part of that religion. Let's call that Realigion.

Realigion - an understanding of the real world based on scientific fact and truth, but believing in the existence of God to explain the unknowable with aspects of existing religion, or faith of one's own choice, or accepting the unknowable as God.

Perhaps God is Truth, and for questions that science can't answer, only God knows the Truth.

11) The Tribe and Modern Society

Tribe – a form of human social organization based on a set of smaller groups (bands) consisting of a small number of people (usually no more than 30 to 50 persons in all) who form a fluid, egalitarian community and cooperate in activities such as subsistence, security, ritual, and care for children and elders, and defined by traditions of common descent, language, culture, and ideology.

The following are direct quotes from the book *Tribe, On Homecoming and Belonging*, by Sebastian Junger (2016, p29).

Westerners live in a complex society, and opportunity for scamming relatively small amounts of money off the bottom are almost endless – and very hard to catch. But scamming large amounts of money off the top seems even harder to catch. Fraud by American defense contractors is estimated at around \$100 billion per year, and they are relatively well behaved compared to the financial industry. The FBI reports that since the economic recession of 2008, securities and commodities fraud in the US has gone up by more than 50%. The recession, which was triggered by illegal and unwise banking practices, cost American shareholders several trillion dollars in stock value losses and is thought to have set the American economy back by a decade and a half. Total costs for the recession have been estimated at \$14 trillion, or about \$45,000 per citizen.

Most tribal subsistence level societies would inflict severe punishments on anyone who caused that kind of damage. The fact that a group of people can cost American society several trillion dollars in losses – roughly one quarter of that year’s domestic product – and not be tried for high crimes shows how completely detribalized this country has become.

12) Modern Crises and Tribal Instinct

The following are direct quotes from the book *Tribe, On Homecoming and Belonging*, by Sebastian Junger (2016, p66), except for statements in *italic* added.

What catastrophes seem to do, sometimes in the span of a few minutes, is turn back the clock on a million years of social evolution. Self-interest gets subsumed into group interest because here is no survival outside of group survival, *that genetically evolved and chemically existent tribal instinct is revealed*, and that creates a bond that many people sorely miss.

13) The Warrior Ethos

The following are quotes from *Warrior Ethos: Analysis of the Concept and Initial Development*

of Application (Riccio et al., 2004, pp1, 2 + 5), U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral Sciences, September 2004, except for the last statement in *italic* added.

The US Army has adopted a set of army values and as a part of basic training, inculcates initial entry soldiers with their importance. The values reflect societal beliefs to which most American citizens would ascribe. Here's the Soldier's Creed with the Warrior Ethos:

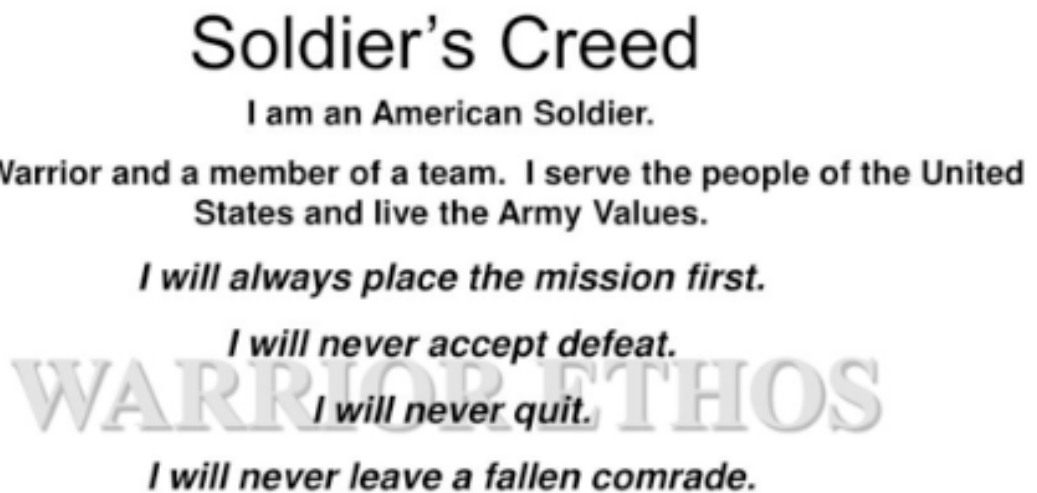


Figure 4: Soldier's Creed

These tenets reveal the nature of the Warrior Ethos commitment. There is an explicit commitment to one's fellow Soldiers. The tenets also imply a commitment to an organization, to a group whatever size is necessary to execute a mission successfully, insofar as the mission is the *raison d'être* for the organization or group. The groups to which a Soldier must be committed, and that influence the Soldier's mindset, can be nested. Sometimes the commitment can be described as to a single individual, another member of a team, or to the elements within a squad, to the platoon or company with a larger operational unit, all the way up to the Army as a whole, and ultimately to the Nation. The guidance of the Combat Support Agency suggests that Warrior

Ethos requires an understanding by all Soldiers of the interrelationships of such nested groups, not only with respect to the objectives that the smaller groups derive from larger groups, but also because of one's thoughts and actions in this social context increases the likelihood that one's thoughts and actions will be motivated by something larger than oneself.

This Warrior Ethos above exactly describes the evolutionarily and genetically selected, and now neurologically hardwired tribal approach to survival that has resulted in Homo sapiens becoming the dominant and now the only human species on the earth.

14) Soldiers Returning From Combat

The following again are direct quotes from the book *Tribe, On Homecoming and Belonging*, by Sebastian Junger (2016, p109), except for statements in *italic* added.

Two behaviors that set humans apart were the systematic sharing of food and altruistic group defense. This is the Warrior Ethos, this is the platoon. Other primates did very little of either, but increasingly, hominids did, and those behaviors helped set them on an evolutionary path that produced the modern world. The earliest and most basic definition of community, of tribe, would be the group of people that you would both help feed and help defend. Soldiers experience this kind of tribal thinking in war, but when they come home they realize that the tribe they were actually fighting for wasn't their country, it was their unit.

The most alarming rhetoric comes out of the dispute between liberals and conservatives, it's a dangerous waste of time because they're both right. The perennial conservative concern about high taxes supporting a nonworking "underclass" has entirely legitimate roots in our evolutionary past and shouldn't be dismissed out of hand. Early hominids lived a precarious existence where freeloaders were a direct threat to survival, and so they developed an

exceedingly acute sense of whether they were being taken advantage of by members of their own group. But by the same token, one of the hallmarks of early human society was the emergence of a culture of compassion that cared for the ill, the elderly, the wounded, and the unlucky. In today's terms, that is a common liberal concern that also has to be taken into account. Those two driving forces have coexisted for hundreds of thousands of years in human society and have been duly codified in this country as a two-party political system. The eternal argument over liberal and conservative thought will never be resolved because each side represents an ancient and absolutely essential component of our evolutionary past, *it's in our genes*.

5. Chapter 15) Theses 1, 2 and 3

Let's consider cognitive and confirmation bias, argumentative theory, tribal instinct and the warrior ethos from the evolutionary perspective. Cognitive bias may have been established over mammalian evolution and becoming prominent in *Australopithecus* 4 million years ago. *Homo habilis* may have evolved one step further in then using confirmation bias and starting to function as a tribe. *Homo erectus* upon leaving Africa 2 million years ago and settling all of Eurasia may have done so with the tribe and band as the basic unit of survival. 70,000 years ago, perhaps with a newly developed warrior ethos on top of the tribal instinct, *Homo sapiens* left Africa and conquered the world.

As mentioned in the mission statement, at this point in time we are a very polarized Nation, which is the result of the advent of the 24/7 news cycle and social media and the internet - we have information at our fingertips. Such massive amounts of information make it very easy and almost necessary to apply a confirmation bias to selected sources that confirm that bias. The confirmation bias is an evolutionary genetic human trait, which began with the hard-wired cognitive bias neurologically developed in the brains of our ancient ancestors. We now have a

neuroreality based on our hard-wired cognitive biases, which we now project with confirmation bias, that resulted in the argumentative state of mind, which is stoked by our tribal instinct and warrior ethos, which is now present in our society as evidenced by the polarization of our Nation.

Thesis 1:

Maybe if we become aware of our evolutionarily selected cognitive biases that resulted in our confirmation biases, which led to the argumentative state of mind and is fired up by our tribal and warrior ethos, all of which have caused our political polarization, we can reign in these genetically selected and neurologically expressed human traits that have evolved over millions of years. Perhaps we could take a step back, try and detach ourselves from this genetic predisposition, and try and be a bit more rational rather than emotional in our political positions and discussions, seek truth rather than argument, listen, and reduce the amount of polarization and vitriol present in our society. Can we as citizens overcome this predisposition and led our Democratic Republic as the founders intended? Recall what Ben Franklin said after exiting the Constitutional Convention when asked what sort of government the delegates had created? His answer was, “We’ve given you a Republic, can you keep it?” With synthisophy, the answer is yes we can.

Thesis 2:

Science is the study and understanding of the real world based on fact and truth. But there are many questions that science cannot answer, and that is a place for religion to answer with faith. Perhaps for those questions that science can answer, science and scientific fact and truth could be part of a religion, keeping intact those critical aspects of religion as a social institution that provides group cohesion, moral behavior and *raison d’etre*. To go one step further, perhaps science and the understanding of the world based on fact and truth could be part of your *raison*

d'être, with those questions that cannot be answered by science answered within a particular faith or your own faith - your Realigion.

Realigion - an understanding of the real world based on scientific fact and truth, but believing in the existence of God to explain the unknowable with aspects of existing religion, faith of one's own choice, or accepting the unknowable as God.

Perhaps God is Truth, and for questions that science can't answer, only God knows the Truth.

Thesis 3:

Only we the people can synthisophize: only we create and integrate the wisdoms of history into present culture.

Recall Chapter 8 on Bloom's Taxonomy (Vanderbilt University, n.d): Note that computers can process and correlate billions of bits of information per second, whereas the human brain at the consciousness level is very limited in that capacity. Also note that the human brain can integrate many pieces of related information and create new and original ideas, not just correlates.

Looking at Bloom's taxonomy, computers can remember, understand, apply, analyze (correlate) and even evaluate information. But at the top of Bloom's taxonomy, only the human brain can create new and original ideas integrating many pieces information from a wide variety of historic sources and come up with something completely new and of possible value to society. Restated, computers cannot and will not be able to synthisophize, integrate the wisdoms of history into present culture. Only we, the people, can do that.

6. Review of Chapters 16 through 30

16) Skinwalkers

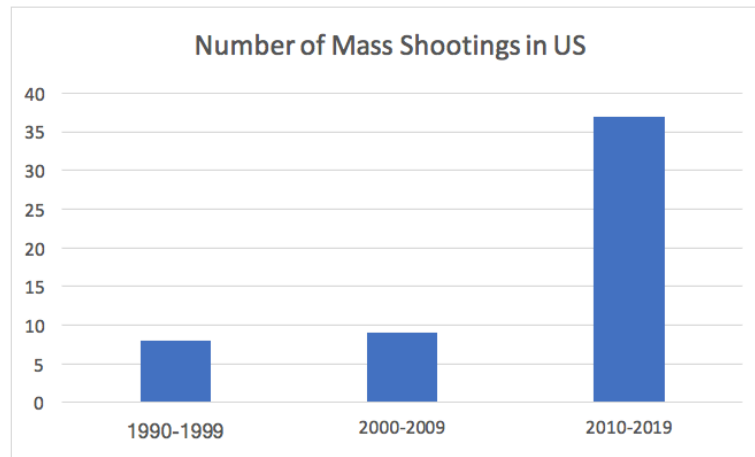


Figure 5: Number of Mass Shootings in US

Note that from 1990 through 1999 there were 8 mass shootings; from 2000 through 2009 there were 9; from 2010 through 2019 there were 37. Why does it appear that over the last 10 years our society is generating a sharp increase in skinwalkers, a term from the Navajo Indian tribe for individuals committing murder and mayhem who have rejected almost all social bonds and attack people at their most vulnerable and unprepared? Perhaps it is because, as Junger (2016, p30) stated in his book, *Tribe*, this “shows how completely detribalized this country has become.” Our neurological genetic predisposition, the tribal and warrior ethos, all for 1 and 1 for all, is no longer relevant in modern life. As individuals in modern society it appears we are now very far from our evolutionary roots.

17) Modern Skinwalkers and Societal Cancer

Modern Skinwalkers are individuals and corporations that harm or kill 1000s if not millions of people, but make millions if not billions of dollars for themselves doing it.

Metaphorically as presented in this chapter, fraud in Unemployment Benefits, Welfare, Medicare, Medicaid, and in the Defense, Financial and Pharmaceutical Industries started in their various subgroups (the cells), within a particular industry (an organ), and then metastasized and affected the whole country (the host).

Metaphorically as presented in this chapter, fraud started within the Tobacco companies (the cells), within the tobacco industry (an organ), that has metastasized now affecting people in all countries around the world (the host).

18) Climate Change

Here are quotes from the International Panel on Climate Change, Mitigation of climate Change, 2014, p37 and p69:

“Many scenarios lead to substantial climate impacts, including direct harms to human and ecological well-being that exceed the ability of those systems to adapt fully.”

“The energy supply sector is the largest contributor to global greenhouse gas emissions...” And therefore “offers a multitude of options to reduce GHG emissions. The stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations at low levels requires a fundamental transformation of the energy supply system, including the long-term phase-out of unabated fossil fuel and their substitution by low-GHG alternatives.”

Here are quotes in from the International Panel on Climate Change, Summary for Policymakers of IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C, October 8, 2018:

“One of the key messages that comes out very strongly from this report is that we are already seeing the consequences of 1°C of global warming through more extreme weather, rising sea levels and diminishing Arctic sea ice, among other changes.” - Panmao Zhai, Co-Chair of IPCC Working Group I.

“The decisions we make today are critical in ensuring a safe and sustainable world for everyone, both now and in the future. The next few years are probably the most important in our history.” - Debra Roberts, Co-Chair of IPCC Working Group II.

“Limiting warming to 1.5°C is possible within the laws of chemistry and physics but doing so would require unprecedented changes.” - Jim Skea, Co-Chair of IPCC Working Group III.

19) Smoke, Mirrors and Hot Air

The following is a Summary Statement of The Climate Deception Dossiers, titled Documenting Fossil Fuel Companies' Climate Deception, written by Elliot Negin, Union of Concerned Scientists, Summer 2015, except for statements in *italic* added.

Spanning nearly three decades, these documents reveal that the world's largest fossil fuel companies—BP, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, ExxonMobil, coal giant Peabody Energy, and Shell—were fully aware of the reality of climate change but continued to spend tens of millions

of dollars to sow doubt and promote contrarian arguments they knew to be wrong. Taken together, the documents show that these six companies, in conjunction with the American Petroleum Institute (API)—the oil and gas industry’s premier trade association—and a host of front groups, have colluded to intentionally deceive the public; their corporate officials have known for at least two decades that their products are harmful; and their disinformation campaign continues today—despite the fact that most of the companies now publicly acknowledge the reality of anthropogenic, or human-caused, climate change.

The American Petroleum Institute’s 1998 Memo Presents a Roadmap for Climate Deception

Global Climate Science Communications

Action Plan

Project Goal

A majority of the American public, including industry leadership, recognizes that significant uncertainties exist in climate science, and therefore raises questions among those (e.g. Congress) who chart the future U.S. course on global climate change.

Progress will be measured toward the goal. A measurement of the public's perspective on climate science will be taken before the plan is launched, and the same measurement will be taken at one or more as-yet-to-be-determined intervals as the plan is implemented,

Victory Will Be Achieved When

- **Average citizens "understand" (recognize) uncertainties in climate science; recognition of uncertainties becomes part of the "conventional wisdom"**
- **Media "understands" (recognizes) uncertainties in climate science**
- **Media coverage reflects balance on climate science and recognition of the validity of viewpoints that challenge the current "conventional wisdom"**
- **Industry senior leadership understands uncertainties in climate science, making them stronger ambassadors to those who shape climate policy**
- **Those promoting the Kyoto treaty on the basis of extent science appears to be out of touch with reality.**

Current Reality

Unless "climate change" becomes a non-issue, meaning that the Kyoto proposal is defeated and there are no further initiatives to thwart the threat of climate change, there may be no moment when we can declare victory for our efforts. It will be necessary to establish measurements for the science effort to track progress toward achieving the goal and strategic success.

Figure 6: Global Climate Science Communications Action Plan

The Fossil Fuel Industry is another malignant cancerous Skinwalker that metaphorically started as particular companies (the cells), within a particular industry (an organ), that has metastasized now involving all nations and, and is the cause of climate change that is now impacting the entire earth (the host) at tremendous cost. The Fossil Fuel Industry is making billions of dollars with their deceit while killing their own causing global warming and climate change with increased CO2 levels in the atmosphere, which result in global temperature rise, warming oceans, shrinking ice sheets and glacial retreat, extreme weather events like hurricanes and droughts, and ocean acidification.

20) We Are Very Far From Our Genetic Roots

As individuals and society it appears we are now very far from our evolutionarily and genetically selected, and now our neurologically hardwired roots:

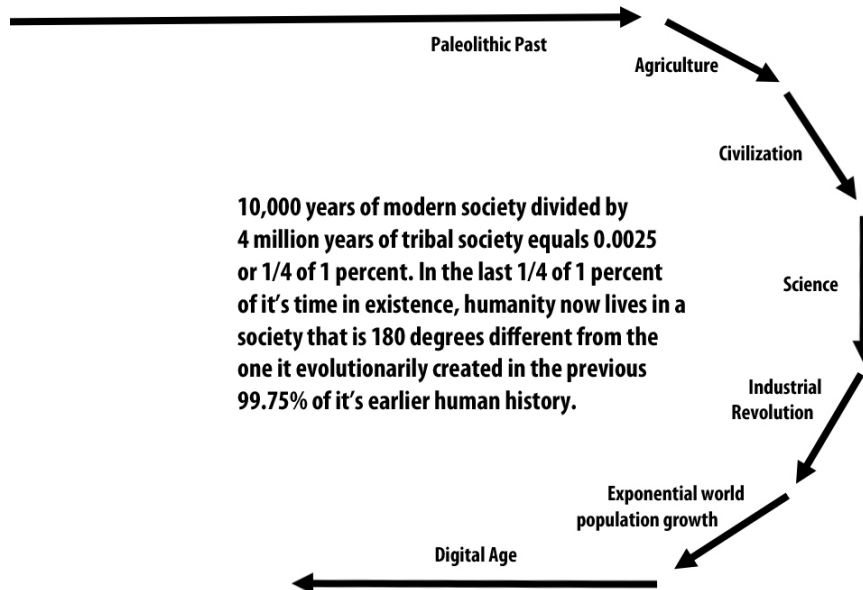


Figure 7: Each revolution results in 30 degrees of change in the direction of humanity

21) Sport, Gestalt and War

The word tribe has been used recently in the news to describe our current political layout, saying 40% of the population still supporting Trump are devoted far Right, and 40% are devoted Left, and each are using cognitive and confirmation bias and argumentative theory to support their tribal views. Apparently only 20% of the population may have a more centrist realistic political perspective, the other 80% are genetically, confirmationally, argumentatively and tribally biased to the Left and Right.

So is it our warrior ethos and sense of belonging to a tribe that now influences our neuroreality? Homo sapiens were able to dominate the world with its warrior ethos, now this warrior ethos and sense of belonging to a tribe overcomes reason and logic. That tribal instinct then creates different tribes within the whole country, the two main political tribes we have now are the Right and the Left, with sub-tribes as in the alt-Right and illiberal-Left battling each other. Where's our neuroreality as a Nation to let this tribal polarization happen?

22) Fantasyland

Fantasyland is a term used to describe one's perception of reality, one's neuroreality, when that perception is far from actual reality. The following are quotes from the book; *Fantasyland, How America Went Haywire, a 500 Year History*, by Kurt Andersen, 2017.

I've referred repeatedly to full Fantasyland and to events and phenomena (such as President

Trump) that wouldn't have happened before it emerged. And, of course, the Internet: starting in 1995 everyone could browse the Web, so let's call 2000, the first year a majority of Americans were online, the unequivocal first year of full Fantasyland.

Our circumstance doesn't seem altogether new. Fantasyland has been the norm for the run of humanity; the unusually rational and scientific centuries here and there along the way, like the last few, are exceptions. Dominant cultures have had their enlightenments and golden ages before, then returned to primitivism and murk.

23) Fantasy Has Become Reality

In his book *Fantasyland*, Kurt Andersen has made a very strong case for his theory that a significant portion of the present population has a perception of reality, a neuroreality, that is simply not true, that we are now in Fantasyland. I would like to add to Andersen's *Fantasyland* theory that fantasy has become reality to a significant portion of the US population as he has applied it to the settlement of the New world over the last 500 years, to human evolution over the last 4 million years. Let's review earlier statements.

In the extraordinarily complex society of today, the instinctive cognitive bias, the resulting confirmation bias, that generated the argumentative theory and the tribal ethos, that then led by extension to the warrior ethos, may all very well be present in the 100 billion neurons in your brain helping to generate one's perception of reality, one's neuroreality. And as proposed by Andersen in *Fantasyland*, that neuroreality may not reflect true reality. It's in our genes. Our perception of reality, our neuroreality, has been in our genes since the advent of *Australopithecus*

and cognitive bias 4 million years ago or perhaps much earlier, to Homo habilis and confirmation bias 3 million years ago, to Homo erectus and the argumentative theory 2 million years ago, all the while from there generating the tribal ethos resulting in the warrior ethos that lead to Homo sapiens 300,000 years ago and their migration out of Africa 70,000 years ago to dominate the world, and to us today.

24) The Previous President and Neuroreality

The neurorealities of Trump as described in this Chapter are quite far from actual reality. Consider earlier mentioned the neurorealities of Einstein in his theories of relativity, Charles Darwin and his theory of evolution and Francis Bacon's description of the scientific method of thinking. These are key perceptions of reality as they really exist, they are truth, and they are real. Let's call their perceptions neureal, in these areas Einstein, Darwin and Bacon are neurealists, they think neureally, their neurorealities are examples of neurealism and the neureal. As far as Trump's perceptions of reality as described here, his perceptions are unneureal, Trump is an unneurealists, he thinks unneureally, his neuroreality is an example of unneurealism and the unneureal. And as mentioned in Chapter 21, so are 40% of the current far-Right US population who adamantly support Trump.

25) The Same Unneurealism Exists on the Left

The neurorealities of the illiberal Left as presented in this Chapter are quite far from actual reality. Consider earlier mentioned the neurorealities Albert Einstein, Charles Darwin and Francis. These are key perceptions of reality as they really exist, they are truth, and they are real. Let's call their perceptions neureal, in these areas Einstein, Darwin and Bacon are neurealists,

they think neureally, their neurorealities are examples of neurealism and the neureal. As far as the illiberal Left's perceptions of reality as described here, they are unneureal, the illiberal Left are unneurealists, they think unneureally, their neurorealities are examples of unneurealism and the unneureal. And as mentioned in Chapter 21, so does 40% of the current US population who are adamantly far-Left.

In the extraordinarily complex society of today, the instinctive cognitive biases, the resulting confirmation bias, argumentative theory and the tribe mentality stoked by the warrior ethos may very well be present in the 100 billion neurons in our brain helping to generate someone's perception of reality, someone's neuroreality, and as proposed by Andersen in Fantasyland, as well as by Powers in The Silencing, and expanded upon by myself, that neuroreality may not always reflect true reality, it may be unneureal. It's in our genes, it's been in our genes for a very long time.

26) Yin and Yang

Note that with much of the historic perspective in this book being of Western origins, perhaps there are some things that the West could learn from the longest lasting civilization on the planet, China and the Far East, which is 5000 years old and is the only ancient civilization that still continues this day.



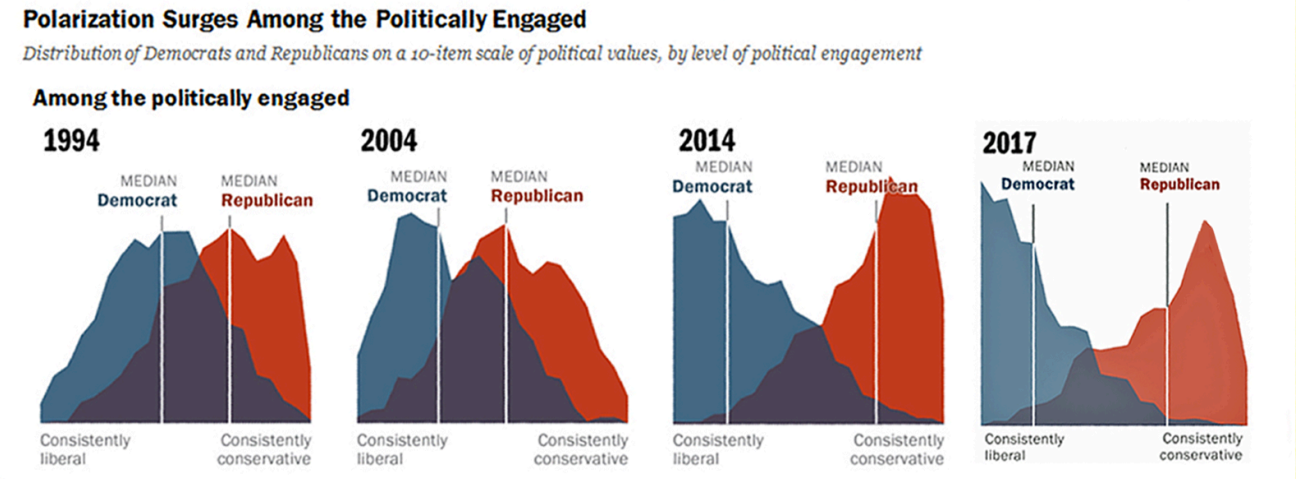
Figure 8: Yin and Yang

In Chinese philosophy, yin and yang (陰陽 yīnyáng, literally "dark-bright", "negative-positive") describe how seemingly opposite or contrary forces may actually be complementary, interconnected, and interdependent in the natural world, and how they may give rise to each other as they interrelate to one another. Many tangible dualities (such as light and dark, fire and water, expanding and contracting, left and right, black and white) are thought of as physical manifestations of the duality symbolized by yin and yang.

So let's try and get away from illiberal-Left and alt-Right polarization, move towards the more rational Center, integrating aspects of both Yin and Yang (Left and Right) so our society resembles more the functional tribe from whence we genetically and evolutionarily came.

27) The Upside-down Bell Curve

Remember the regular bell curve? Let's look at the progression of the politically engaged graphs over the past 25 years³:



³ Pew Research Center.2017. US Politics and Policy. Political Polarization, 1994-2017

Figure 9: Polarization Surges Among the Politically Engaged

Note in 1994 there is no split in the curve between the Left and the Right, in 2004 we can see a split starting, by 2014 we can see an increase in polarization as the upside-down bell curve shows itself, and by 2017 the upside-down bell curve becomes prominent. This shows us the polarization of the Left and Right and the upside-down bell curve now present in the USA. If a bell curve is considered normal, why do we as a society among the politically active and influential have an upside-down bell curve, is that abnormal? Why are we so polarized? The answer lies in the human brain and neurological evolution. It's in our genes, it's been in our genes for a very long time: cognitive bias probably developing over the course of late mammalian evolution and present in Australopithecus; to confirmation bias in Homo habilis; to the tribe and argumentative theory, where truth doesn't matter, winning the argument and gaining power does in Homo erectus; all the while generating the tribal ethos resulting in the warrior ethos that lead Homo sapiens out of Africa 70,000 years ago to dominate the world. Our genetically evolved and present cognitive, confirmation, tribal and argumentative biases shape our polarized perceptions of the world around us, and our warrior ethos finds others of similar mind to battle the opposing party. Do we have to be this polarized? Can individual human consciousness be aware of this predisposition and keep it in check, putting value in moderation, reason and truth? Can your neuroreality be neureal rather than unneureal? Ben Franklin addressed that question after the Constitutional Convention: "We've given you a republic, can you keep it?" Perhaps if we depolarize, get back to the normal bell curve, become more neureal, and become more centrist as a Nation, the answer will be yes.

4. Chapter 28: Politics and Thesis 4

I'd like to make a comment here about the unneurealism of the alt-Right and illiberal-Left as mentioned in chapters 24 and 25, as it relates to the discussion of religion in Chapter 10 and 15, particularly Thesis 2 - Realigion. Note that Religion in the United States has been on the decline for the past 50 years. Could this religious neurological void be filled with a zealous devotion to politics? Perhaps politics has taken the place of religion, particularly among the unneureal alt-Right and Illiberal-Left. Recall the old adage, never talk about politics or religion? Thesis 4: Perhaps politics on the alt-Right and illiberal-Left has become their religion.

Before we delve into Chapter 29 and address various political issues in the US, let's take a look at the opinion of Zeynep Tufekci in 2018, as she expressed in her article in the New York Times, March 2018, titled: YouTube, the Great Radicalizer. This article sums up quite clearly the impact of the Digital Revolution on society today:

It seems as if you are never "hard core" enough for YouTube's recommendation algorithm. It promotes, recommends and disseminates videos in a manner that appears to constantly up the stakes. Given its billion or so users, YouTube may be one of the most powerful radicalizing instruments of the 21st century.

This is not because a cabal of YouTube engineers is plotting to drive the world off a cliff. A more likely explanation has to do with the nexus of artificial intelligence and Google's business model. (YouTube is owned by Google.) For all its lofty rhetoric, Google is an advertising broker, selling our attention to companies that will pay for it. The longer people stay on YouTube, the

more money Google makes.

What keeps people glued to YouTube? Its algorithm seems to have concluded that people are drawn to content that is more extreme than what they started with — or to incendiary content in general. What we are witnessing is the computational exploitation of a natural human desire: to look “behind the curtain,” to dig deeper into something that engages us. As we click and click, we are carried along by the exciting sensation of uncovering more secrets and deeper truths. YouTube leads viewers down a rabbit hole of extremism, while Google racks up the ad sales.

This state of affairs is unacceptable but not inevitable. There is no reason to let a company make so much money while potentially helping to radicalize billions of people, reaping the financial benefits while asking society to bear so many of the costs.

5. Chapter 29: What can we do?

With synthisophy in mind.... what can we do to depolarize the Nation?

Recall that hominids that cooperated with one another – and punished those who didn’t – must have outfought, outhunted and outbred everyone else. Over millions of years, this genetically evolved and biologically selected tribal ethos resulting in the exit of Homo sapiens with the extension of the warrior ethos out of Africa 70,000 years ago, lead to the dominance of this human species and the extinction of others. This ethos resulted in our becoming the dominant and only human species on the planet and is still hardwired into our evolutionary genetic consciousness.

So maybe if we understand that these evolutionarily developed instinctive cognitive biases, the resulting confirmation biases, and the argumentative theory stoked by the tribal and warrior ethos may very well be present in the 100 billion neurons in our brain generating our perception of reality, our neuroreality, which as proposed by Andersen in Fantasyland, Powers in The Silencing, and expanded upon by myself, may not always reflect true reality, it may be unneural. It's in our genes, it's been in our genes for a very long time. So let's take a step back, try and detach ourselves from this genetic predisposition, take a deep breath and try and be a bit more rational rather than emotional in our political positions and discussions, listen, seek truth rather than argument, and reduce the amount of polarization and vitriol present in our society. Restated, let's be politically active, synthisophic and neural.

So what can we do to depolarize the Nation?

Take Action: Participate in the democratic process as suggested in this Chapter, be an informed citizen, get involved in a cause that will better society. We need an active and informed citizenry.

Consider classical times in ancient Greece: At any particular point in time, not just on election day, an estimated 75% of voters were participating in government in one form or another.

Consider what Thomas Jefferson said: "the people can not be all, & always, well informed, the part which is wrong [. . .] will be discontented in proportion to the importance of the facts they misconceive. If they remain quiet under such misconceptions it is a lethargy, the forerunner of death to the public liberty." Abraham Lincoln said, "If we falter and lose our freedoms it will be because we destroyed ourselves." So Take Action on one of the 30 political issues discussed in

this Chapter, or any of the 100s of other issues you think are important to you, society and humanity.

6. Chapter 30: Our Future

Let's look at an exponential graph showing the rate of evolutionary and societal change over time.

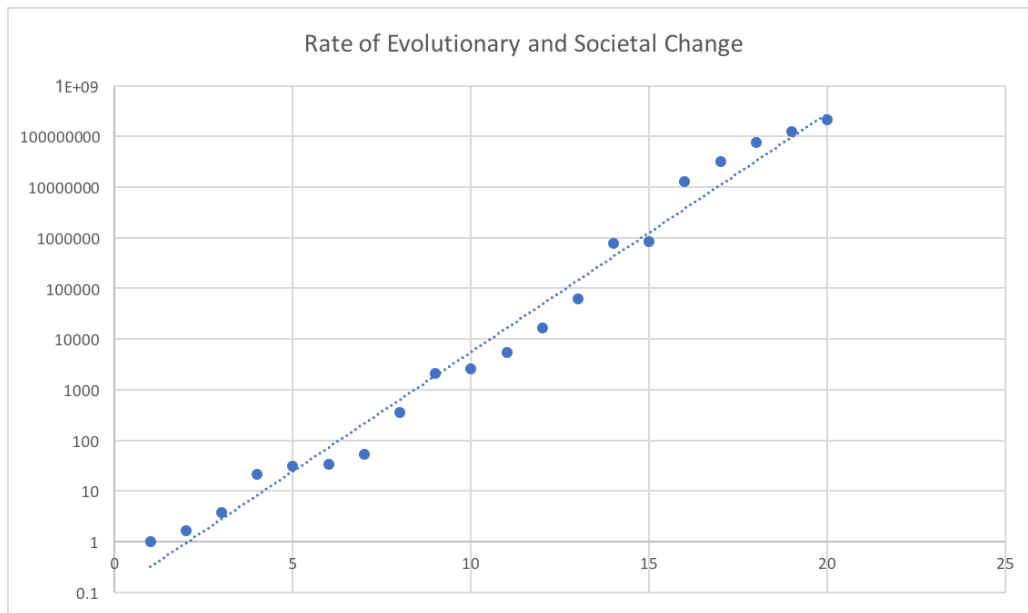


Figure 10: Rate of Evolutionary and Societal Change

This above graph looks quite similar the graph below generated for transistor counts in computers over time shown below:

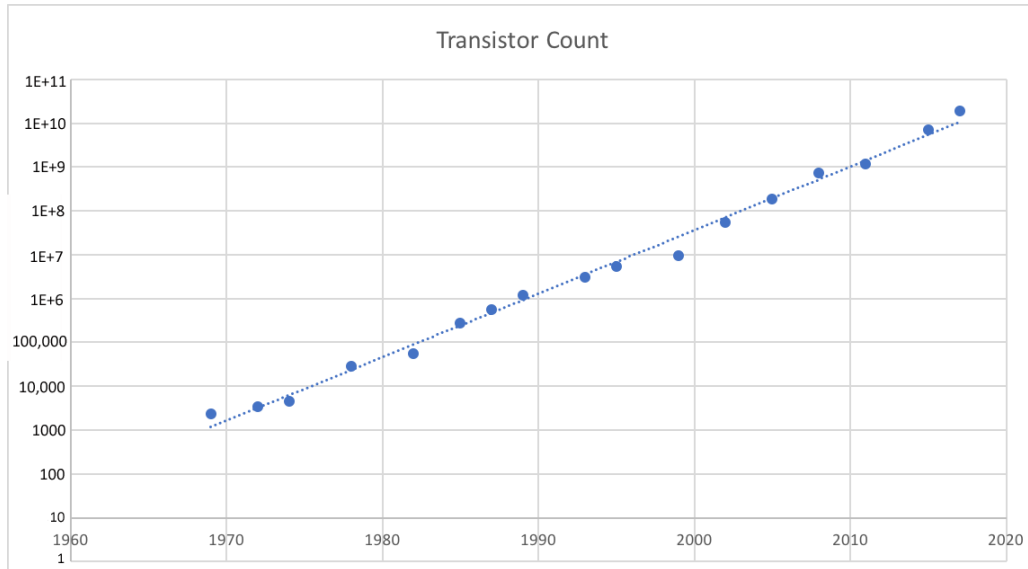


Figure 11: Transistor Count

What does this logarithmic similarity between evolutionary and societal change over the last 3.8 billion years and the computer transistor count in the last 50 years mean? At this point in time this similarity may mean that we are in the early stage of huge societal changes as a result of the digital revolution, and that it may be in our best interest to become less polarized and more rational in order to best choose our destiny as a society. We should heed Ben Franklin's question: "We've given you a Republic, can you keep it?" Yes, and to do so we need to be politically active, synthisophic and neureal.

That said, the convergence of the human/societal evolution and the transistor count/digital revolution may at some point in the not too distant future reach the point of singularity, when computers and artificial intelligence equal that of the human brain, after which computers will then surpass human intelligence. As stated earlier in Thesis 3 Chapter 15, note that computers can process and correlate billions of bits of information per second, whereas the human brain at

the consciousness level is very limited in that capacity. Also note that the human brain can integrate many pieces of related information and create new and original ideas, not just correlates.

Looking at Bloom's taxonomy, computers can remember, understand, apply, analyze (correlate) and even evaluate information. But at the top of Bloom's taxonomy, only the human brain can create new and original ideas integrating many pieces information from a wide variety of historic sources and come up with something completely new and of possible societal value. Restated, computers cannot and will not be able to synthisophize, integrate the wisdoms of history into present culture. Only we, the people, can do that.

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