

# Change Change Change

A popular song released in 1964 captured the spirit of the times:

*Come writers and critics  
Who prophesize with your pen  
And keep your eyes wide  
The chance won't come again  
And don't speak too soon  
For the wheel's still in spin  
And there's no telling who that it's naming  
For the loser now will be later to win  
Cause the times they are a-changing*

What brought about so much change? Some might point to demographics, others might indicate the decentralizing influence of the car. Today, we are again in the midst of a sea of change. It appears to this old geezer that the “generation gap” is stronger than ever, as younger and older folks have rather different mindsets on many issues.

Trust in government is at an all-time low. The Internet has transformed society, government, education, and business. Think of the path from four broadcast TV channels to cable to VHS to DVD to rentals to “Netflix and chill”; from the single landline per household, to one cell phone per household member. We have apps to get weed – legal weed; to hookup; to obtain rides; to transfer cash; to deposit checks into our bank accounts; to do many other things which would have seemed like wizardry just a decade ago. Some of our largest and most familiar institutions are not even in their “teen years” yet.

This observer is fascinated by technological change, particularly in the field of computers, the Internet, and Artificial Intelligence. If a world-beating program which plays the game of Go against a top professional, beating him four games out of five, seems too esoteric for you, think about the recent demonstration by a Chinese CEO of real-time speech-to-text translation, before a live audience. Or the self-driving automobiles.

The world is changing, in big and small ways. It would be no great leap to envision this as the beginning of a new Age of Enlightenment – or of horrors to come. It is we who must make the choices which shape our future. In ways large and small, many of us seek to liberate our selves, to broaden the scope of our choices.