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The IT Revolution Reassessed Part Three: Framing Solutions

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Never has an industry attained such global dominance with so little effort at regulation. Search engines are like cars on motorways with no requirement for brakes, emission controls or seatbelts. The failure to regulate, let alone properly tax, these massive corporations is the grossest lapse of modern government. (Jenkins, 2017)

Big data ... is not a technology or an inevitable technology effect. It is not an autonomous process ... It originates in the social, and it is here that we must find it and know it (Zuboff, 2015).

History is made by humans not by machines (Taplin, 2017).

A People's Internet is possible ... Silicon Valley loves a good disruption, so let's give them one (Scholz, 2016).

Highlights

- The widely held, but ultimately fatalistic, view that 'you can't stop progress' lacks credibility and should be set aside. p.5.
- Merely following technical capabilities as far as they can be driven appears to confine humanity on a fast train to Dystopia. p. 14.
- With algorithms the underlying issues are less about mathematics, statistics or data than about transparency (or its lack) power and control. p.17.
- The decline of neoliberal values and assumptions would also mean that previously unthinkable options would emerge. p.20.
- Humanising the IT revolution requires something other than technical innovation. p.22.
- Nowhere is the potential for new kinds of IT-enabled organisations and practices more timely and useful than in cities and cooperatives. p. 26.
- There's a host of reasons to support informed optimism and hope, the framing of real solutions. p.29.

Introduction

The first paper in this series explored several accounts of the IT revolution. Of particular interest was the contrast between those who framed this process in terms of positive outcomes and those who consider that it has been subverted by powerful actors especially in Silicon Valley. The second paper considered two case studies: the Internet of Things (IoT) and the projected rise of Autonomous Vehicles (AVs). It briefly employed Integral concepts to identify values and worldviews that appear to characterise leading figures within the IT industry. These interior human characteristics arguably have powerful consequences yet

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