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## The IT Revolution Reassessed Part Two: Case Studies and Implications

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### Highlights

- Public knowledge of the 'next big things' in information technology tends to be sourced from a few powerful organisations
- Those who make 'innovation' their ultimate value cannot be trusted with the future of humanity
- The high tech sector's obsession with short term competition rather than long term value is creating existential risks
- The relative absence of quality foresight practice places entire societies at significantly greater risk than they need to be
- Relying on empirical evidence alone as a guide to the future is unwise once critical futures studies reveal motives and power

*We rely on technology for almost everything...and yet no society in the world has yet stood up to demand greater control over its digital destiny. No country has committed itself to building a technology that is as fair as it is convenient (Fox, 2017).*

*The new technologies do not entail a radical reshaping of modes of doing things. A driverless car is still a car (Das, 2016).*

*Google's tools are not the objects of value exchange. They do not establish productive consumer-producer reciprocities. Instead they are 'hooks' that lure users into extractive operations and turn ordinary life into a 21st Century Faustian pact. This social dependency is at the heart of the surveillance project (Zuboff, 2015, 82).*

### Introduction

The first part of this study considered a sample of publications to explore some of the many contested issues that have arisen between promoters and critics of the IT revolution. It concluded that there are substantive reasons to believe that the Internet, in particular, falls short what it was originally intended to be and, indeed, what it could yet become. It underperforms when assessed for fairness and egalitarian uses. It seriously over-reaches as a medium that's become dedicated to selling and to extracting value from entire populations - usually without their knowledge or permission. Hence the Internet we have is a

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