

Morloks and Eloi



By [Douglas Kruger](#)

16 Oct 2013

Working humans are becoming separate species. The divide will only increase. Will you board the right bus?

When it first debuted in bookstores in 1895, it was the 'Nightmare on Elm Street' of its day, and you have to wonder whether HG Wells plucked the notion from a vivid nightmare. You also have to wonder whether he realised how profoundly his core idea; the splitting of humanity into two completely separate groups; would sum up our modern condition.

Morloks and Eloi; the eaters and the eaten; these are the two species into which humanity divides, six hundred thousand years into Wells' version of our future.

But the millennia now seem extraneous. We are *already* dividing into Morloks and Eloi. One generation from now, as completely distinct species, we might no longer understand one another.

Consider:

The rich and the poor:

Worldwide, the division between super-wealthy and grindingly poor continues to accelerate. It self-perpetuates over time, as wealthy people increasingly empower themselves and their children with the tools and education necessary to remain the super-wealthy of the next generation.

The poor, with limited access to ever more expensive technology, move ever further backward. Ultimately, we end up with one Humanity driving satellite-guided luxury SUVs past the roadside mat where the Other Humanity sells beads.

The experts and the workers:

With over 7 billion people on the planet, the value of basic work is getting cheaper. Anything that can be done by interchangeable human workers is a low-value commodity, and selling your labour as a low-value commodity is a sure path to exhaustion and poverty. You're learning IT? So are a billion others around the planet. Starting your own IT company? Well now, that's different...

The value of creative thinking, leadership, entrepreneurial know-how, and industry reputation is *increasing*. Bosses, experts and innovators, celebrities, icons and household names are earning more than ever before.

Never in the history of the world has any age's equivalent of Richard Branson been able to make millions through mere public speaking. Icons and experts are rewarded to an exponentially greater extent than are menial labourers and 'cogs' in systems.

The equipped and the left-behind:

Just a few years ago, being illiterate meant an inability to read and write. But if a poor person learnt how to interpret letters, he or she then had access to the entire universe of knowledge, on the same level as a person of means.

The barrier has just become bigger. Sure, you can read and write. But if you don't have internet access, and if you don't know how to use a touch-screen, *you're still illiterate*. The new illiterate.

The child raised with the iPad doesn't bat an eyelid about finding information. *All of it* is available to him all the time. Inventions like Google Goggles are now paving the way for us to talk about cybernetic enhancements to the human body as a realistic part of tomorrow's norm. The Borg used to be a Star Trek concept. They will be us very, very shortly.

But they will not be the child from that other human species, who does not know what a computer is, can't work a touch-screen, and doesn't know how to access the collective knowledge of humanity at the blink of an eye. Project this small difference over a 20-year period, and the two will not know how to relate to one another as fellow human beings. They will regard one another with tilted heads, as if through the glass at a zoo.

The innovators and the dinosaurs:

Entire human cultures may also divide into Morloks and Eloi.

Where nations today rely on a single income source, such as oil, there exists a profound danger of a Morlok/Eloi scenario, the moment their resource wanes. If, in such a nation, the people have been taught to constantly upgrade themselves: to be entrepreneurs, creative thinkers and literate innovators, they will forge new paths and prosper.

Where they haven't, they will become the pale shadow of human beings in the rest of the world; unable to cope and descending into a darkness of poverty and ignorance. They will be the people of the sands, the people of the tribes, the people of the sticks.

Project this difference over time, and we will have our distinct species. We will no longer be looking at a luxury SUV passing by a bead-seller; it will be more like the Star Ship Enterprise observing cavemen. The continents of light and the continents of darkness.

The Methuselah's and the dying-young

It's not just that those who can afford healthcare live longer and that those who can't die of preventable causes. It goes beyond that. Some scientists now believe they understand how to genetically 'stop' ageing.

If you are part of the tribe of rising humans, you'll find information on it very easily (Just Google 'Ending Aging' by Aubrey de Grey). If you are not, you will probably never hear about this development in your lifetime. Or if you do, it will sound like wild tales of magic from the Other People.

Medical revolutions cost money and require education. Naturally, some will be able to manipulate the astonishing resources of tomorrow's science while others will not. With that, the difference between Morloks and Eloi will grow ever wider.

Good news: You *can* choose

The world *is* dividing into Morloks and Eloi. And yet, the ticket to ride the right bus is not that difficult to come by. Equally,

catching the wrong bus is the easiest imaginable thing. Both ultimately boil down to simple matters of mindset.

To end up as people of the sand and sticks, one need only:

- Oppose knowledge and suppress the free flow of information.
- Cling to roles that encourage an oppressor/oppressed dynamic, whether as dramatic as the totalitarian ruler of a nation, or as seemingly minor as the family that will not educate or encourage its young girls.
- Cling to one solution, whether it's as grandiose as the oil that keeps some nations dubiously and temporarily afloat, or as seemingly trivial as viewing full-time employment as the best, or only, life course.
- Cling to old ways of doing things, as though older is necessarily more meritorious, and reject the new on the grounds that new feels threatening.
- Stifle and discourage curiosity. Encourage unquestioning obedience.
- Breed unthinking workers. Do not teach them to innovate. Teach them only that hard work is noble.

To end up as people of the light, one need only:

- Love ideas.
- Encourage creativity.
- Explore new things with an open mind.
- Go where the energy is.
- Love education and the pursuit of knowledge.
- Encourage creation, innovation, growth and self-development.
- Teach the skills of communication, leadership, assertiveness, self-representation and negotiation.
- Embrace new things (selectively and intelligently) on the grounds that they are exciting and may have potential.
- Play. Play with new trends and technologies instead of fearing them. Two-year-olds learn to use iPads because it's fun. 60-year-olds don't because it's scary. The difference is exclusively one of attitude.

The new economy is Talent. The new currency is Ideas. The new human being is curious and engaged.

Morlocks and Eloi. The light and the darkness. The able and the disenfranchised. It's not a matter of resources; that is only a symptom. It is a matter of mind-set; that is the cause.

ABOUT DOUGLAS KRUGER

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