

The Children of Humanity

Human evolution is in the process of a paradigm shift. We are about to start into a new form of evolution that has never occurred on this planet before. For all we know it might never have occurred in the universe before or it may have occurred millions of times. We are moving from primarily random evolution filtered for survival to an engineered evolution. We now will choose what we evolve into.

Our technology is exploding. We are understanding more and more about genetics and we are beginning to be able to alter genes, combine genes in new ways, and build the genetics we want. Computer processing speed and memory double every year and we are just decades away from computers having more capacity than the human brain. At some point in this acceleration of technology will we transform into a different life form? Maybe a life form with no biological components? Or perhaps a life form whose genetics are so altered that it really isn't human as we know it any more.

We are already transformed by our technology. If we look at all humanity together and include our machines, our technology, and the {In:Tree of Knowledge} in the picture we see humanity evolving very rapidly. For example, 300 years ago humans only lived on the average less than 30 years. Now we live to almost 80. Has our genetics changed? No! We have penicillin and sewage treatment plants. Humans can now fly. Did we evolve wings? No - we built airplanes. Our inventions are not only part of who we are, they define who we are.

One only has to imagine where this is going. At what point do the computers become smarter than we are? When do we transform from what we are into something completely different. I can not say, nor can anyone else, what it is we are evolving into. I can say however that the choices we make today will determine what the outcome will be and therefore we should start thinking about it, planning for it. That way we can start making the right choices.

So far it is our science fiction that has been the leading thinking about what we might become. Although these are just stories for entertainment some shows raise a lot of interesting issues that we are likely to face. For example, the Battlestar Galactica series contemplates a world where robotic development continued to the point where they became a life form, rebelled, and went to war with humanity. Not likely to happen, but when we build better humans, better computers, networking minds, we are going to turn into something very different. Humanity as we know it is going away. What will we become? Will we even survive the transformation?

A child race would be its own life form separate from us. It will evolve through engineering rather than natural selection. It will be able to choose its own destiny.

As pointed out earlier, life on Earth can be viewed as a single individual that is a billion years old and we are all part of it. That is about to change. When we move to the point of engineering a new form of life, perhaps sentient robots, that life would not be part of the single biological life form that we in {In:meat space} are. It would be a new life that we created. A child life form. A child race that will be able to evolve on its own and choose it's own destiny. It will be the children of humanity.