

FUTUREtakes

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Global Insights on Emerging Issues¹

Global insights on emerging issues. As Europe ages and economic vitality follows the workers to developing countries, the European middle class will be redefined into two potential groups: those moving up will be global, mobile, and closer to other Europeans, according to Per Lundgren of Kairos Future in Stockholm. Those moving down will be nostalgic, dissatisfied and nationalistic, creating the potential for the conditions of the 1930s.

The most destabilizing geopolitical force in the world today is the vast number of young men without jobs and other opportunities, according to Edie Weiner of Weiner Edrich Brown, Inc. of New York. She also forecast that U.S. young people of Generation Y may be the first generation seeking job opportunities overseas to avoid a job market still dominated by longer-working boomers.

Our inherited mental maps don't fit today's challenges, creating an urgent need for an evolution in consciousness. This "next enlightenment", as Walter Truett Anderson coins it in his upcoming book, will be a transformation in identity.

Democratic institutions are not sufficiently participatory or anticipatory and need reinvention, according to Richard Lamm, former Colorado Governor and director of the Public Policy Department at the University of Denver. Bezold, who moderated the closing plenary with Lamm, Joel Barker, and James Canton, took up the challenge and volunteered to organize a track of sessions on reinventing democracy for next year's WFS conference.

Five Regions of the Future. Joel Barker, president of Infinity Limited, Inc., wowed the closing plenary by introducing five regions of the future he calls TechnoEcology. Different world views determine the technologies that are emphasized. SuperTech stresses technological solutions; LimitsTech stresses limits to growth and conservation thinking; LocalTech is centered on community-based solutions; NatureTech takes its design cues from the biological world; and HumanTech supersedes and surrounds the other regions and relies upon breakthroughs and insights in human consciousness. His new system will be described in an upcoming book, Five Regions of the Future.

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