

TOFFLER ASSOCIATES®  
**FUTURE STATES**  
FORUM  
FROM FUTURE SHOCK TO THE FOURTH WAVE

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In Celebration of the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
of the Publication of *Future Shock*

OCTOBER 13-14, 2010  
WASHINGTON, D.C.



# Commemorating the 40th Anniversary of *Future Shock*

Toffler Associates, the innovative global advisory firm, is hosting the inaugural Future States Forum from October 13-14, 2010 in Washington, D.C. This invitation-only VIP event will be held in commemoration of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication of *Future Shock*, Alvin Toffler's groundbreaking work that forecast many of the trends we are living amidst today.

Future States Forum 2010 will gather remarkable individuals who have proven their capacity for innovative thinking. They will span myriad industries and contribute from different vantage points to a remarkable dialogue about the forces driving change in society.

While the forum celebrates the accuracy of the foresights laid out in *Future Shock* (1970), along with Heidi and Alvin Toffler's shared capacity for anticipating change, its orientation is prospective; the event's aim is to collectively address the challenges associated with impending societal changes and to yield solutions.

Government officials and leaders of commerce will gather to address the hurdles associated with the accelerated pace of change in our society, and the rapidity with which modern innovations and trends become outdated. In this regard, the forum will pay homage to Toffler's anticipatory perspective on the fleeting nature of modern invention.



# Commemorating the 40th Anniversary of *Future Shock*

The Forum will kick off with a formal reception and dinner on October 13<sup>th</sup>, at which luminaries will be introduced, and a retrospective on the impact of “Future Shock” will be addressed by all participants. It is a chance to meet, mingle and exchange ideas in an intimate setting with fellow pioneers who are creating our future.

The second day of the forum will feature Alvin and Heidi Toffler, along with Deborah Westphal, Managing Partner of Toffler Associates, who will offer perspectives on how the Tofflers’ work has impacted our world. Attendees will look ahead to the next 40 years by examining the forces that will shape the future. A moderated discussion on past and present perspectives on creating the future will be followed by an open Q&A session that engages leaders in dialogue with high-level consultants from Toffler Associates.

The term “future shock,” coined by Alvin Toffler in his seminal book, refers to the unexpected, rapid invasion of change into one’s own culture, such that it becomes unfamiliar, and, in extreme cases, nearly unrecognizable. Toffler Associates’ Future States Forum aims to fuel unique interactions among extraordinary people, and generate ideas that help individuals and organizations become increasingly capable, agile and successful.



# Schedule of Events...

**By invitation only.**

## **Wednesday, October 13, 2010**

6:30 PM – 7:45 PM

*VIP Reception and Dinner*

7:15 PM – 7:45 PM

*Introduction of Luminaries*

7:45 PM – 9:30 PM

*Dinner Discussion: What are we doing to create the future?*

## **Thursday, October 14, 2010**

*Forum*

8:00 AM – 8:30 AM

*Breakfast Buffet*

8:30 AM – 8:50 AM

*Welcome*

8:50 AM – 9:15 AM

*Keynote: Alvin and Heidi Toffler*

9:15 AM – 10:20AM

*Perspectives: The Impact of the Tofflers on Society*

*Distinguished Guests*

10:20 AM – 10:45 AM

*Break*

10:45 AM – 3:00 PM

*Context for the Future*

10:45 AM – 11:15 AM

*Context for the Future: 2050-the Next 40 Years*

11:15 AM – 12:30 PM

*Small Group Discussions*

12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

*The Next 40 Years*

12:30 PM – 1:45 PM

*Lunch Buffet*

1:45 PM – 2:15 PM

*Reports from Groups: What are the implications and actions for the future?*

2:15 PM – 2:30 PM

*Next Steps*

2:30 PM – 2:30 PM

*Close of Official Program*

For more information, please contact Kim Macalister ([kmacalister@toffler.com](mailto:kmacalister@toffler.com)).



How well did it stand the test of time?

# FUTURE SHOCK 40 YEARS LATER



# 1970: THE LAUNCH OF *FUTURE SHOCK*

## ABOUT THE TIMES

- Landing on the Moon
- Vietnam Riots
- Mainframe Computers
- VW Bug
- Cultural Revolution
- Feminism
- 3 Television Networks
- Dump Johnson and Nixon

## ABOUT THE BOOK

- Written in the late '60s, first published on July 29, 1970
- Published in over 130 countries in 30+ languages
- 6 million copies sold
- Global award winner:
  - McKinsey Foundation Book Award
  - China's Golden Key Award
  - France's Prix du Meilleur Livre Étranger



How well did it stand the test of time?

# WHAT THE TOFFLERS GOT RIGHT



## The Tofflers forecast some of the key changes that impact our lives today . . .

- **Contemporary events radiate instantaneously around the world:** CNN, now Twitter, Facebook, texting
- **A shift from nation-state to civil-society social power structures:** Greenpeace, now Clinton Global Initiative, Herb Allen's Sun Valley Conference
- **Rise of psycho-pharmacological treatment:** Prozac, now widespread treatment for depression, anxiety, irritability, insomnia
- **Interactive virtual reality films:** Gaming, Simulators
- **Things moving faster, people adapt (to a point), meltdown can occur:** road/airplane rage, school shootings, military service personnel violence
- **Increase in home-schooling of children:** 1.5 million children in 2007, +74% since 1999



## And will impact our lives tomorrow. In biotechnology alone . . .

- **Politics, social and ethical considerations will slow biotech advance**
- **Fusion of biology and computers:** bioinformatics, the intersection of biology, computer science and IT, allowing scientists to peer deeper into fundamental processes of life
- **Cloning of amphibia, maybe even humans:** Dolly, the sheep; gene therapy and stem cell potential to cure or regulate severe or life-threatening diseases
- **Implantable sensors:** Pet-Track, monitoring of vital signs
- **“Within a mere 10-15 years, a woman will be able to buy a tiny frozen embryo, take it to her doctor, have it implanted in her uterus, carry it for 9 months, and then give birth to it as if it had been conceived in her own body.”:** worldwide assisted reproductive technology +25% in just 2 years (2000-2002)



## Some of the Tofflers' forecasts were chillingly on target . . .

- **Creation of new schools outside of, and competitive with, the official public school system:** home-schooling (+74% since 1999)
- **Technical breakthroughs alter the economics of television by providing more channels and lowering the costs of production:** 500+ broadcast channels; YouTube
- **People may suffer from paralyzing “over-choice:”** trend towards individualization of demand
- **Two economic factors encourage this trend: more money to lavish on specialized wants, sophisticated technology reduces the cost of introducing variations:** consumers with great purchasing power express personality through customized product choices; “mass customization” brings custom products within reach of the masses



## Including the ways we organize, manage and live . . .

- **Environmental disaster and large scale pollution:** BP Deep Horizon oil gusher
- **Information overload:** deluge confounds all
- **Machines synchronized, man desynchronized:** factory whistle vanishes; computers reduce personal/face-to-face communications
- **Service sector vastly enlarged:** 1950 = 45% of non-agricultural workforce; 2001 = 80% and growing
- **Breakdown in bureaucracy in favor of team and temporary structures:** virtual teams; climate of ever-shifting project collaboration
- **Education occurs outside the classroom at hours of the students' choosing:** collaborative learning (Web 2.0, social networking tools such as blogs, wikis), "campus commons"



## Including products, technology and science . . .

- **Personal computers:** 1 billion in use (2008), expected to double by 2014
- **Temporary products and services:** rent a car, rent an office, temporary workers
- **Instant celebrities enabled, “swiftly fabricated and ruthlessly destroyed:”** Sarah Palin (re-emerges)
- **Custom newspapers:** digitized formats allow personalization
- **Computer-based intelligent agents:** retailers and e-commerce customize push based on prior purchase habits
- **Interconnected network-based society:** rise of like-minded interest-based groups (e.g., Harley Davidson owners)
- **Decades added to life span**



## Including social and cultural changes . . .

- **Families:** bio-parents, same-sex marriages, single parent
- **Skills become irrelevant over time:** high skill demands of today's factory workers render others obsolete
- **Commitments shift from place-related social structure to place-less ones:** geographic migration on the rise; impact of computers on connectivity
- **Decreased loyalty to organization:** lifetime employment concept shattered by layoffs
- **Professional and technical populations most mobile:** average # of jobs during career = 10+
- **Change absorbers:** crisis counseling; half-way houses
- **Culture has its own pace:** accelerating
- **Multi-values and vastly different lifestyles**



How well did it stand the test of time?

**WHAT HASN'T HAPPENED . . . YET**



## **The Tofflers' forecasts that yet may impact our lives . . .**

- **Submarine communities**
- **Paper clothes: (ultra discount clothiers)**
- **Education system transformed, structure of degrees and majors in shambles**
- **The doubling of the Earth's population (in 11 years)**
- **Young people introduced to space technology (like the family car)**
- **Careers planned to move downwards**
- **Steady upward [economic] progression without major fluctuations**
- **Technology simulation to anticipate change and aid coping**



What will the next 40 years bring?

**EXAMINE THE FORCES THAT WILL  
SHAPE THE FUTURE...**

