

SCENARIO ARCHETYPES

Developed by Democracy 2076 based on the the School of International Futures archetypes using the archetype framework of Jim Dator, Hawaii Futures Studies Research Center:

1

Continued Growth or the “official future:” assumes continuation of current growth trajectories.

The global economy continues to grow due to technology, despite the slow global population growth. We continue to live in an increasingly globalized world as it has for the last 50 years and cross-country inequality continues to decline globally, as it has been for the last 40 years. The bifurcation between capitalism and democracy continues to grow as more and more people adopt values of consumerism and individualism as democracy continues to decline globally (as it has been for nearly 20 years). The global population continues to age and the number of international migrants continues to grow, resulting in the global loneliness crisis continuing to grow. Finally, global temperatures continue to rise, leading to more frequent and severe natural disasters.

2

Silver Linings: dominant systems have run out of runway and show signs of decay.

Amidst intersecting existential crises (e.g. wars, pandemics, climate crises, social unrest), trust in large cities and national institutions deteriorates even as those cities and institutions continue to exist, leading many to seek solace in homogeneous communities with localized, self-sustaining economies. Traditional forms of value tied to materialism and interaction amongst different types of people are replaced by an emphasis on community traditions within small homogeneous groups due to the immediate needs of survival, security and self-sustainability with technology as a tool of adaptive resilience.

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3**Constrained Society: constraints are navigated through the imposition of limits.**

In response to global challenges, societies adopt strong governance models, with the help of technology, to ensure resource sustainability and pricing that reflects true costs and limit externalities. Some are democratic whereas others are not. The emphasis shifts from personal freedom to personal responsibility, where the ability to be constrained in consumption of resources is seen as a personal achievement and provides social capital because it ensures security and adheres to tradition.

4**Transformation: a world in which new possibilities are unlocked by upending old rules.**

Driven by disruptive technologies and alternatives to economic growth measures, societies experience a paradigm shift from focusing on material consumption and efficiency to experiential social pursuits and technology as a tool to support human endeavors. This leads to a tremendous reduction in income inequality and a reduction in consumption. The transformation heralds a future where value is rooted in social bonds that provide new experiences and where care for others provides meaning to individuals.

PROJECTIONS 1

► DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFTS

In 2076, the global population exceeds **9 billion**. Significant demographic changes, including aging populations and changing migration patterns, impact the social fabric and economic stability. Whereas in **2015**, the United States was 62% White, 18% Hispanic, 12% Black and 6% Asian, by **2065**, the country is 46% White, 24% Hispanic, 13% Black, and 14% Asian. The nation grapples with a significantly older population due to increases in life expectancy and declining birth rates. **Over 20 percent** of the population is 65 and older in 2076, compared to **17 percent** in 2023; leading to an increased demand for healthcare services and social support for seniors. Social security and **medicare became insolvent in the early 2030's**. Additionally, the ratio of workers to elderly population shifted from **6:10 in 2023** to **5:10 in 2076**.

PROJECTIONS 2

► CLIMATE CHANGE

Scenario: According to climate models, in the absence of any intervention, global temperatures are projected to rise by approximately **2-4 degrees Celsius by 2100 or 3.6-7.2** degrees Fahrenheit leading to more frequent and severe natural disasters including heatwaves, hurricanes, and floods by 2076. Sea levels are expected to **rise by several feet by 2100**, displacing millions of people from coastal areas including in New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia Florida, Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. Mass migrations are likely occurring as people flee affected areas.

Projections from the U.N. suggest that freshwater scarcity will affect **nearly half of the world's population** by 2050. Additionally, critical minerals, essential for advanced technology such as **solar panels, wind turbines and batteries**, will become **increasingly scarce** as **early as 2028**. Both of these challenges could possibly lead to geopolitical conflict as competition for resources grows.

PROJECTIONS 3

► THE FUTURE OF WORK AND INEQUALITY

Scenario: Automation is expected to impact up to **50% of jobs** in **finance and banking, media and marketing and legal** by 2045. By 2076, as the result of new science and technology, new industries and job categories have emerged. However, the transition is not seamless, and there are challenges associated with retraining the workforce for emerging roles. The pace of this transition has, in some cases, outpaced the ability of workers to adapt, contributing to pockets of unemployment and underemployment. Additionally, absent intervention, economic inequality would continue to expand. In 2023, **69 percent of the total wealth in the United States was owned by the top 10 percent of earners**. In 2076, **88 percent** of the total wealth in the United States would be owned by the top 10 percent of earners if current economic consolidation trends continue without intervention.