

[How I learned to stop worrying and love the future](#) [1]

Written by [Sam Bowman](#) [2] | Thursday 5 April 2012

Jeff Tucker, writing from his new home at Laissez Faire Books, extolls the virtues of technology and the future:

True confession: I was once among the late adopters. I freely put down the techno enthusiasts. I wrote a highly negative review of Virginia Postrel's provocative book *The Future and Its Enemies*, which turns out to have seen what I did not see. After the digital revolution advanced more and more, I began to notice something. By being a late adopter, I gained no advantage whatsoever. All it meant was that I paid a high price in the form of foregone opportunities. If something is highly useful tomorrow, chances are that it is highly useful today, too. It took me a long time to learn this lesson. . . .

In World War II, we saw technology used for mass murder and ghastly accomplishment of human evil as never before seen in history. Then we went through almost 50 years in which the world was frozen in fear of the uses of technology. It wasn't called the Cold War for nothing. When it finally ended, the world opened up and we could turn our energies again toward technology that serves, rather than kills, people.

The real "peace dividend" you hold in your hand. It's your smartphone. It's your e-reader. It's the movies you stream, the music you have discovered, the books you can read, the new friends you have, the amazing explosion of global prosperity that has visited us over the last 10 years. This is technology in the service of the welfare of humanity.

In conclusion, no, we are not oppressed by technology. We can embrace it or not. When we do, we find that it brightens both the big picture and our own individual lives. It is not to bemoan, ever. The state of nature is nothing we should ever be tempted to long for. We are all very fortunate to be alive in our times. My suggestion: Try becoming an early adopter and see how your life improves.

Hear, hear. Matt Ridley had a similarly optimistic post today, called "[17 reasons to be cheerful](#)" [3].

I'm still a little pessimistic, though. Even if it isn't outright war, things like email surveillance, phony "anti-terror" erosions of our civil liberties and the medicalization of alcohol and tobacco make me worry. For all the quality of life improvements that technology brings, states can still wipe away everything we have at the push of a button.

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