

In a new study, we ask the question which expert group is more 'right' in the future of work debate: tech entrepreneurs (optimists), economists (sceptics), or best-selling authors (pessimists)? The answer may surprise you... 😊

Paper see @[Academy of Management](#)

Full-text preprint at

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zufzkRbzfhsBgJ8W8g4sNNKIPjXkYCul/view?usp=sharing>

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... As the answer is 'no one'! The study shows that the act of predicting the future is highly subjective and political (informed by disciplinary and dispositional beliefs AKA your job and your personality). We even went as far as administering personality tests from 570 people from these expert groups and showed that their beliefs about the future stand in direct relation to their childhoods, their personality, and their values. In other words, we can't predict the future, but we can predict your prediction 😊!

If we know what you majored in, and what your job is, we can make an educated guess about your personality AND the future of work scenario you believe in: Effective Accelerationism (Technocracy), Capitalist Realism (TINA), or Degrowth (System Change). Can you guess which expert group believes in what narrative? 😊

Why is this important? It shows us that the future is a fiction, not a fact that is already predetermined. And that the future will be whatever we make it! All scenarios are still possible, what future do YOU want to live in?

It also shows that experts are not as objective as they like to believe. We found that all expert groups use numbers, figures, research, and historical trends as evidence. We also believe most of them truly do believe they are being objective and neutral. Sometimes they even refer to the SAME numbers, studies, and historical events, but interpret them entirely differently to support their preferred narrative!

The explanation is that they have been socialized into 'field frames', possibly since childhood. Based on their interests and strengths (and encouragement from parents and teachers), they majored in computer science, economics, or political sociology, where they learned to understand the world through certain vocabularies and theories, and what constitutes 'evidence'. This is further socialized throughout their working lives: the people they talk to, the reports they read, the conferences they attend. This also explains why they cannot even fathom the types of arguments and sources of evidence presented by other groups in the debate, and why they all believe they are right and everyone else is wrong!

This means we must see the public debate on the future of work, including threats of AI automation, for what it is: a framing contest, a war of narratives.

Disclaimer. As research starts focusing on political aspects, fields typically become polarized (climate change, epidemiology). People prefer to believe science is 'objective'—especially tech and econ experts, whose own predictions are, we regret to inform, also political.