

Looking Ahead 125 Years: What Will 2134 Be Like?



Murrad Kazalbash:

Our grasp on technology will be so incredible that even people in the most rural villages will be able to communicate with businessmen in the most advanced metropolitan cities. The needs of the people will be for water, food, shelter, and computing technologies. Biomedical imaging and diagnostic abilities will be very inexpensive and readily available. Structures will be built from sturdy, affordable,

ergonomic materials. Engineers will not shy away from the public eye, as may have once been the case, because children will name engineering as one of their prospective career choices, where once respect and adoration were concentrated on being a doctor, lawyer, astronaut, firefighter, or president.



Professor Rahul Simha:

It is January in the year 2134. The School of Scienceneering (so named in 2050) is celebrating the return of the first student-led team to Mars. They have successfully re-created a number of early life-forms from fossils found on Mars by an earlier student team in 2101. Thousands attend the event, including the school's oldest living professor, 184-year-old D. Dolling, newly fitted with a titanium-alloy exoskeleton.

The event is attended by swarms of personal robots, standing in for the owners who couldn't return from the school's lunar campus in time for the event. Event details are transmitted directly to cranial attachments that record the event for posterity—the first generation of lightweight iNeuro cranial attachments are now required of all students. The gathering takes place on the Mall in the school-designed, self-assembling flexSteel dome that is folded away by robots at the end of the event.

The day ends with an informal student-faculty gathering to talk about current issues: students in 2134 continue to gripe about their calculus courses.



Uchenna Obaji:

Socially, I see a world heavily based on robotics and other forms of artificial intelligence. Robots will take over many everyday tasks, and they will even take over many of the blue collar occupations that are currently being done by humans. Medically, I see cloning being an important factor in our society. I see people having the ability to choose the genetic make-up of their children and choosing what traits their children will have.



Natalie Rabinovich:

I believe that over the course of the next 125 years, we will make an enormous amount of progress in genetic research and bio-informatics. Not only will we make breakthroughs in cancer research, but the potential of DNA manipulation will also be commercialized. People will be able to custom design babies and reconstruct our own genetic make-up to fit our likes and dislikes. People

will have the ability to change their eye color, hair color, or hair structure (e.g. straight, curly, wavy) without using colored contacts, hair dye, or tools.



Professor Shelly Heller:

By 2134, we will have either “done ourselves in” or managed to correct our excesses. I prefer to hope we will have prevailed through our engineering and computing efforts to harness renewable energy. Computing will no longer stand as an option alone but will be as central to everyone's life as water and air, both of which will be clean.