

*Philip Emeagwali*

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# My Quest for an Internet

In this, the 23rd installment of our weekly series at [emeagwali.com](http://emeagwali.com), we present Part 5/6 of Philip Emeagwali's lecture on his contribution to the body of knowledge that defines an internet.

## My Quest for the Holy Grail of the Internet

The lecture [video](#) is posted at [emeagwali.com](http://emeagwali.com)

We are like the lost traveler who asks a local woman,

“Could you tell me where this road leads?”

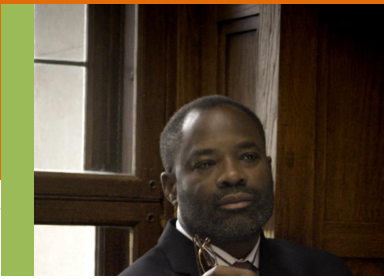
“Where do you want to go?” the woman asks.

“I don't know,” says the traveler.

The woman replies,

“Then it obviously doesn't matter which road you take!”

For humans, it is important not to blindly choose between humanity and technology; in fact, it is absolutely imperative that we fuse the two together to ensure the continued evolution of our unbroken chain that began three and a half billion years ago.



Let me describe to you a possible picture of the Internet in the 21st century. In 20 years, you will give your young daughter a pair of earrings wired to an invisible camera and a global positioning system (GPS) satellite orbiting 18,000 miles above the Earth, which is connected to the Internet.



The University of Alberta, Canada

Your child's schedule, her school bus, and her route to school will be posted on the Internet; you will be able to follow her actions via cyberspace, knowing exactly where and when your child is dropped off.

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technology will not be limited to human functions.

If one million cats and dogs currently wear electronic identity cards, the next step will be to wire all pets to the Internet with coded information that can be detected and GPS-tracked across long distances to within 20 feet. If your pet is ever lost, a few clicks will pinpoint its location anywhere in the world.

Such technology will satisfy a social need. Our elders with Alzheimer's disease who can't remember their names will be identifiable as a result of human barcodes that have been injected into their bodies.

I predict that in 50 years, your grandchild's body will be

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embedded with a human bar code, as well, injected through a syringe. Or perhaps it will be a microchip the size of a grain of rice that serves as an identity card and makes paper birth certificates obsolete.

Your grandchild will be registered upon birth or even conception as a node on the internet; her life's journey—her decisions, successes, and failures—will be barcode-recorded in a black box, archived, and retrievable for future study by a scanner. When your granddaughter dies, her children will retrieve her personal black box to analyze her life history, much like we do today when an airplane crashes.


Your granddaughter's personal black box will contain her autopsy report, the joys, the pains, and the dramas of her life. These will be archived as an epitaph on her cyber tombstone.

The computer as we know it today will have become obsolete and disappeared into the Internet, while the Internet will become the computer.

One hundred years after that, the Internet will have become obsolete and “disappeared” back into humanity.

The word “computer” was coined 700 years ago; since then, the technology has been reinvented, over and over again. If history repeats itself, the supercomputer of today will become the computer of tomorrow.

The supercomputer gave rise to the Internet, and both consist of nodes connected to work together. So, when the computer disappears into the supercomputer, and the supercomputer



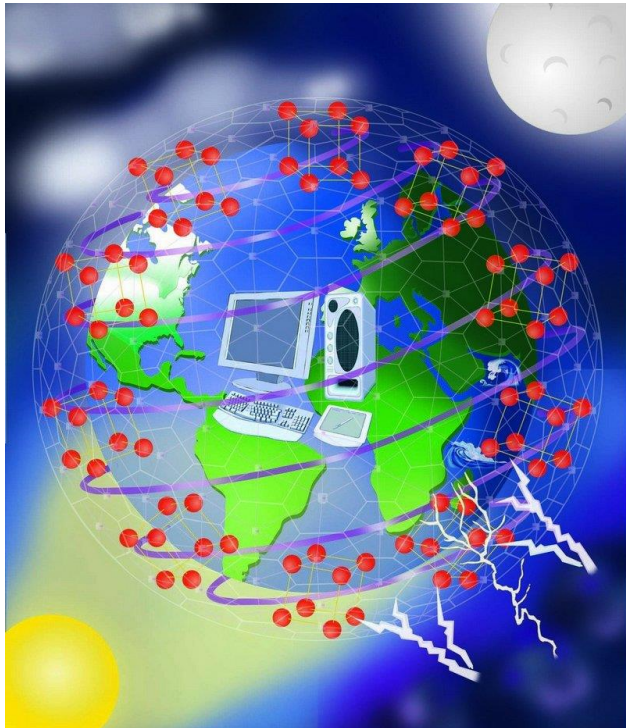
Your grandchild will be registered upon birth or even conception as a node on the Internet.

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disappears into the Internet, and the Internet disappears into humanity, what remains will be a universal ultra-computer—an electronic and organic web 10,000 miles in diameter enshrouding the Earth.



An artist's rendition of my theorized Internet described in the book "History of the Internet."

This 10,000-mile wide web is my theorized Internet of the future. The nodes will be the people, continuously connected in order to work together as one.



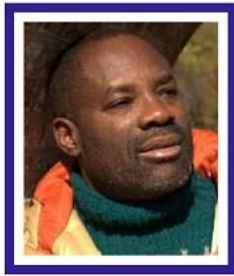
I holed up for three days in this hotel writing this speech [The Fairmont Hotel Macdonald, Edmonton, Alberta, on September 23, 2006]



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