

Game Changer 4: Competing Viewpoints

Transcript

Our fourth major transformation is the rise of competing points of view, which we can also understand as: struggle for identity and truth, and the struggle over culture. Right now we've got a generation of people who have more education and more access to information than just about any previous generation we can think of. They are deeply interconnected with others around the world, they are traveling, they are having experiences, and in many ways people today are asserting themselves and their identity much more strongly and confidently than previously.

At the same time, we have globally a shifting center of gravity moving from the post-Cold War Atlantic center of gravity east to China. As China develops and rises, it's getting more assertive and increasingly its seeking to be an alternative pull on the world, a source of alternative world view and culture.

When we are looking at the intersection and confluence of these things, we find a number of potential outcomes looking forward. We have the greater exploration of alternative viewpoints and identities, and a greater number of synthesized views, as people sort of create their own and mix and match. All of this mixing is not going to just reinforce certain established identities, it's going to create new ones. And at the same time we're looking at the continued expansion of protections for a diversity of viewpoints and identities. And on the flipside, in response to that, we would, in a very natural way, expect increasing cultural tensions and fragmentation. Humans don't often like the "other." It's different, it can be anxiety-inducing, and so it's a very strong historical pattern that when there is an explosion of diversity, and great intermixing, and lots of change being introduced, there is an increase in that resistance to that change, and thus we are anticipating greater tension and frankly more fragmentation. That's partly, in one sense, what diversity is. So how will we pull that together, and what will that look like? These are really important deeper questions and changes that the country's going to have to address.

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