

The "New" Job Market

Challenges and Solutions

Gonzalo Contento · [@GonzaloContento](#)



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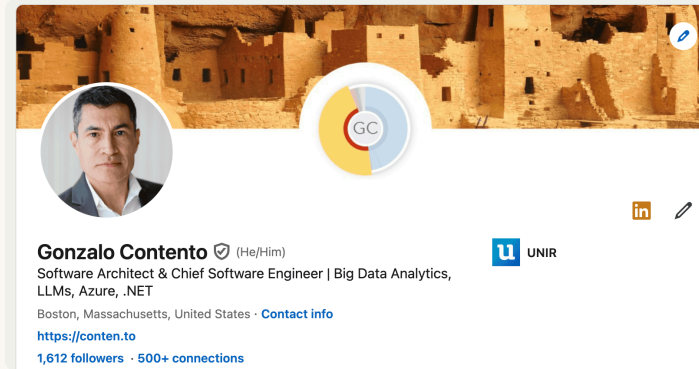
Poco después el ferrocarril empezó a prestar sus servicios. Macondo era un pueblo próspero, lleno de caras nuevas, con un salón de cine y numerosos lugares de diversiones. Entonces hubo trabajo para todo el mundo, menos para él. [...] Habló con espontaneidad y hasta con entusiasmo de las magníficas perspectivas del pueblo. Esa mañana oí la palabra por primera vez. Él la dijo:

«Todo esto pasará cuando nos acostumbremos a la hojarasca.»

— Gabriel García Márquez, [La hojarasca](#)

Me?

- X: [@GonzaloContento](#)
- "PhD" from YouTube
- "Masters" from Instagram
- 30+ years in the industry



I'm not a Tourist

Robert Cornelius, 1839 — the first ever selfie.

publicdomainreview.org

Robert Cornelius' Self-Portrait: The First Ever "Selfie" (1839)



4

Do We Have a Problem?

"Houston, we've had a problem here."

Apollo 13, 1970 — the actual quote, in past tense. We tend to narrate the crisis *after* it has already begun.

Photo: NASA (public domain)



What you are *supposed* to care about

- **Sara Imari Walker** — how life emerges from non-life; Assembly Theory as a measure of complexity.
- **Edward Witten** — Morse theory, knot theory, and M-theory unifying the string landscape.
- **Nima Arkani-Hamed** — replacing space-time with more fundamental structures like quantum geometry.

Important, fascinating, and almost entirely orthogonal to what pays your rent.

What you *actually* care about

- **Vision** — of your future.
- **Jobs** — BS jobs, ghost jobs, "investment" jobs.
- **Money** — all kinds of it.
- **Social relevance** (not social appearances).
- **Emotional connection.**
- **Solidarity vs. handouts.**
- **Social mobility vs. meritocracy.**

Im dunklen Wald

*In der Mitte unsres Lebensweges
fand ich mich in einem dunklen Wald —
den geraden Weg hatte ich verloren.
Ach, wie schwer ist es zu sagen, was jener Wald war,
wild und rauh und dicht —
der bloße Gedanke daran erneuert die Furcht!*

— Dante Alighieri

*En el medio del camino de nuestra vida
me encontré en una selva oscura,
porque la senda recta se había perdido.
¡Ay, qué difícil es decir lo que era
aquella selva salvaje, áspera y espesa,
cuyo recuerdo renueva el miedo!*

— Dante Alighieri, [La Divina Comedia](#) (1320)

Market vs. Economy

We live in a **global market**, and we must compete not just to survive but to thrive — while the **economy** we actually live in is stubbornly local.

Your competition is in Bangalore and Bogotá.
Your rent is on your street.



Opportunity vs. Meritocracy

Historical & contemporary context —

- **Yuval Noah Harari** — *Sapiens; 21 Lessons for the 21st Century*
- **Richard Wolff** — *Understanding Capitalism; Solidarity*
- **Michael Sandel** — *The Tyranny of Merit*
- **Scott Galloway** — *The Algebra of Wealth*
- **Jeffrey Sachs** — sustainable development and international finance

Revenge of the Nerd

"If you build it, he will come."

— *Field of Dreams*

The quiet, patient builder has the advantage again.



Fictions! | Fictions?

- Stories
- Myths
- Agency
- Corporations
- LLMs

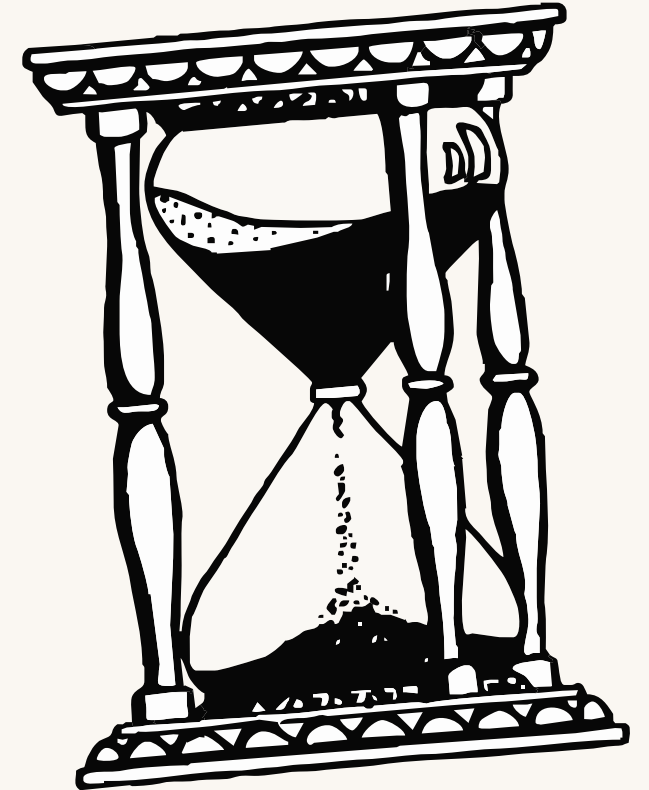
The things that move the world are almost never physically real.



Time is (isn't) on your side

*You will need not merely to invent new ideas and products — you will above all need to **reinvent yourself again and again.***

— Yuval Noah Harari, *Sapiens*



Perspective Matters

4.5 B years — Planet

6 M years — Apes / humans

70 K years — Fictive language

12 K years — Agriculture

~3000 BCE — Hinduism

~500 BCE — The Buddha

2 K years — Christianity

1440 — Gutenberg printing press

1760 — Industrial Revolution

1895 — Radio

1947 — Transistor

1971 — End of gold standard

1991 — World Wide Web

2007 — iPhone

2016 — DeepMind AlphaGo

2017 — Transformers (attention)

2019 — GPT-2: too dangerous to release

2020 — GPT-3: language at scale

2022 — ChatGPT: AI goes consumer

2023 — GPT-4, Claude: multimodal

2025 — Agents: from tools to actors

The 4Cs

An education based only on **Skills** vs. the **4Cs** —

- Critical thinking
- Creativity
- Communication
- Collaboration

[Partnership for 21st Century Learning \(P21, 2002\)](#)

If you do follow your bliss you put yourself on a kind of track that has been there all the while, waiting for you, and the life that you ought to be living is the one you are living... Follow your bliss and don't be afraid, and doors will open where you didn't know they were going to be.

— *Joseph Campbell* —

¡Que pase el aserrador!

*Compadre, le grité — ¿cómo se llama esto aquí?
¿La mina de Nus está muy lejos?
— Aquí es; yo soy el encargado de la tarabita para el paso, pero tengo orden de no pasar a nadie, porque no se necesitan peones. Lo único que hace falta son aserradores.*

*No vacilé un momento en replicar:
— Ya lo sabía, y por eso he venido: yo soy aserrador. Eche la oroya para este lado.*

— [Jesús del Corral](#), ¡Que pase el aserrador!

Jean-François Millet, *The Sower* (c. 1850) —

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Things we need to let go

"Let go, Luke."

Entitlement. Titles. The idea that the last 30 years of rules will describe the next 30.

© Lucasfilm / Disney — *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (1980)



Things we need to cultivate

Patience. Craft. Depth.

Like coffee on a Vietnamese plantation — the things worth having are slow, deliberate, and compounding.



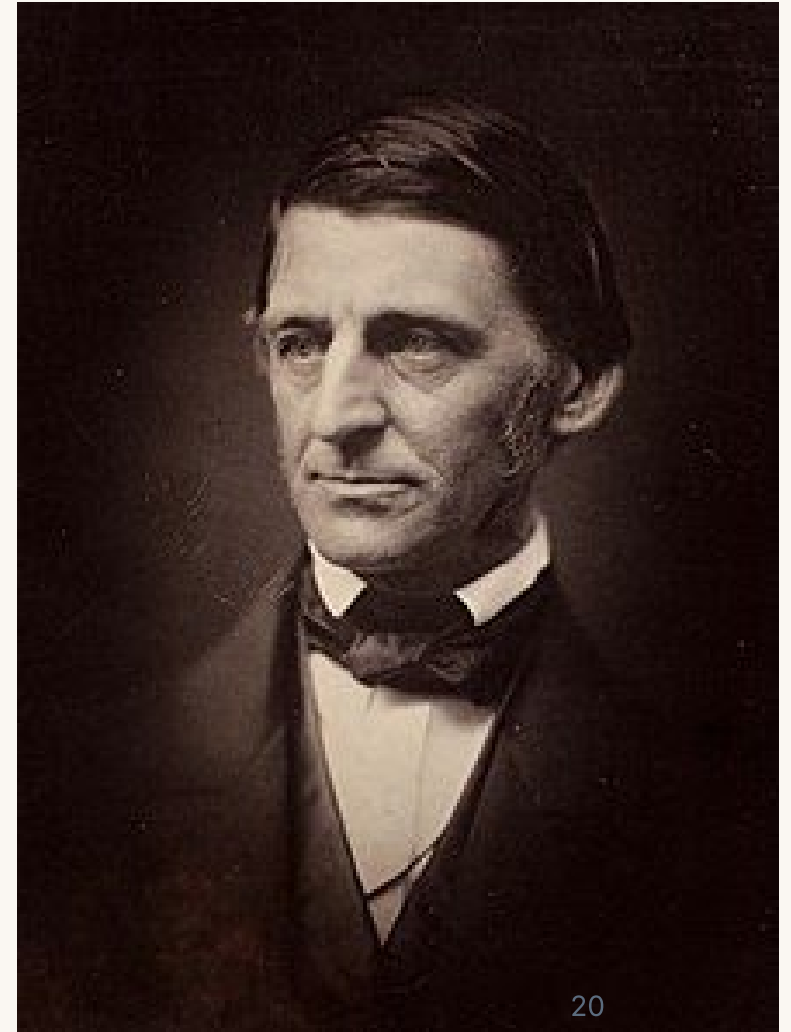
Self Reliance (Agency and AI)

"Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string."

— *Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882)*

Traducción libre (Rosina Castaño):

"¡Sálgase de las enaguas de su mamá y enfrente la vida que le tocó!"



Universal Basic Income (UBI)

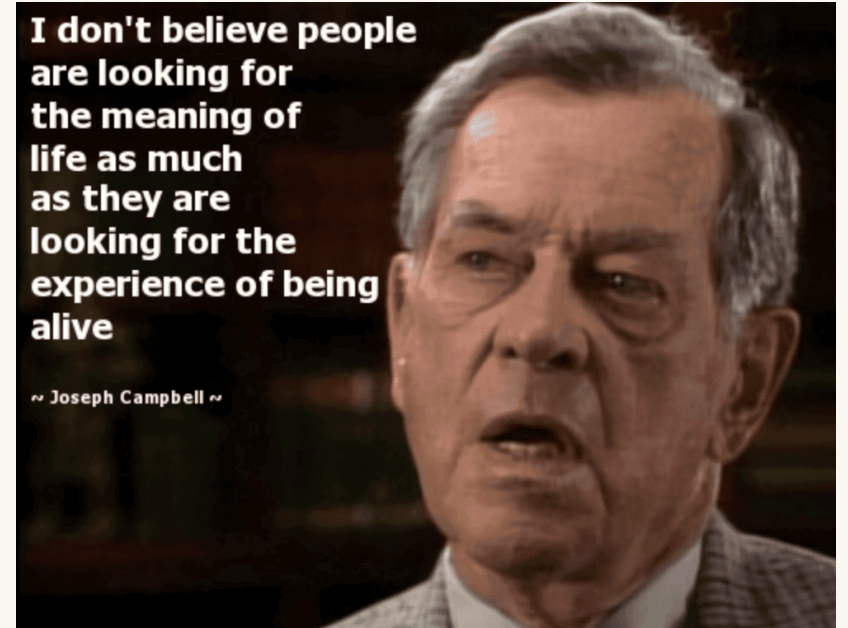
- **Why?** Hyper-automation, and humans' inability to keep up with AI.
- **How / what kind?** TBD.
- **Who / where?** ~67% of humanity — i.e. everywhere.
- **When?** TBD — but sooner than the techno-feudalists are saying.
- **CUBI** — *Conditional* UBI: tied to participation (education, community), not entitlement.



References



gc2.me/refs



Q&A

*Caminante, son tus huellas
el camino y nada más;
caminante, no hay camino,
se hace camino al andar.
Al andar se hace camino,
y al volver la vista atrás
se ve la senda que nunca
se ha de volver a pisar.
Caminante, no hay camino,
sino estelas en la mar.*

— [Antonio Machado](#), *Proverbios y Cantares* (1912)