



# The Future Is Now?

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FLYMF April 2004, The Zygote Issue, Volume 1 Issue 2

Last I heard we live in the magical futuristic year of 2004. Just say it—2000 and 4. That’s twenty years after Orwell’s *1984*, three years after Kubrick’s *2001*. People in the Middle Ages thought that by 2004 we’d be crapping gold.

But what if they actually got here and saw what 2004 is really like? Would they even know they were in the future?

After all, where are the hover cars? Where are the giant sexy -voiced holograms saying, “Welcome to Sears”? I don’t even have a robotic servant in my house. Can you believe that? My bedroom looks like a crack den without a maid. It’s terrible—it’s like Poughkeepsie in there. Dirty clothes and fruit flies are not what the future’s supposed to be. And whose fault is it? I’ll tell you who—lazy scientists.

You see, for years there’s been a conspiracy to cover up one devastating fact: scientists are not only socially awkward, they’re slackers. Think about it—we’re investing billions of dollars a year in science and the best we can do on Mars is an RC Racer?

We went to the Moon thirty-five years ago! By now, I should be going to the Moon for brunch. I should be having Eggs aux Armstrong with some grated Moon on top and getting back home in time for kickoff.

And Mars? That’s the best place I’ve ever heard of to send the kids to summer camp. Let them build a little character. It could be mining camp! Or maybe just give them huge robotic exo -skeletons with lots of cool weapons and let them fight it out for a summer. That might provide an easy dodge for the question of which one you love more.

But we can’t do it. Why? Because our scientists hate to work—those shiftless bums. We don’t even have Knight Rider cars. If I talk into my watch and say something like, “KIT, meet me out front and, uh, turbo boost it, will ya?” you want to know what happens? Nothing.

That’s pathetic. The problem is there’s nothing we can do about it—after high school it’s no longer socially acceptable to throw these guys a beating. Why is that? Where does their incentive to work hard go? Once they get all the money and the chicks that come with being a scientist, they just start cruising. They don’t have to worry about wearing velcro shoes and getting the crap beat out of them because of it.

What are we doing? Sparing the wedgie spoils the scientist. They have no fear now. They do whatever they want, which is actually a lot of nothing, the lazy jerks. Did I teleport to work today? Enough said.

It’s 2004. I want food pellets that turn into a whole Thanksgiving dinner in my mouth. I want a flying motorcycle that folds up into a briefcase for convenient storage. And two words: light sabers. Is that really so much to ask?

Apparently so. Our country is so retro right now. Imagine a guy falls into a coma in 1974. He wakes up in 2004, flips on CNN and is confused. He says, “Well maybe I wasn’t out that long. Donald Rumsfeld’s still Secretary of Defense.”

Then 1974 guy hears about the economy and the federal budget deficit. 1974 guy thinks, “Man, their economic policy is: ‘What would Calvin Coolidge do?’”

Then 1974 guy hears about the invasion of Iraq. “Well good golly,” he thinks. “I’m glad they finally found some people to kill that aren’t that good at fighting back. And, man, when you’re talking occupied neo-colonies, I’ll trade a bunch of wet-ass jungle for huge oil reserves any day.”

Scientists had all kinds of wacky theories about getting rid of the jungle in Vietnam, including using mirrors on satellites to make it daytime in Vietnam 24 hours a day, thus killing the jungle through too much exposure to the sun.

They thought of that diabolical freaking idea, but we’ve still got herpes floating around. And what about the clap, AIDS, elephantiasis? These lazy scientists need to get off their asses and let the healing begin.

But the thing is they’re so obsessed with all the trappings of being scientists. It’s like they’re singing a song—“I’ve got a job as an epidemiologist/but when the ladies see me, they wanta booty knock all of this!”

Meanwhile some starving kid in Africa’s got carpal tunnel syndrome and these guys aren’t doing a damn thing about it. They’re just thinking about the next pistil they can stick their filthy stamen in.

Why can’t these dirtbags get their minds on work for a change? It’s all about celebrity these days—now they’re just obsessed with making it into *Science*, *Nature*, or *The New York Times*. They’ll do just about anything to be on the cover of one of those trash rags.

Meanwhile I live in Los Angeles and I have to carry a machete with me to hack through the air. Have these hammerheads not seen the *Jetsons*? When the air gets this bad we start building huge apartment complexes way up in the sky! What’s the holdup, you scumbags? If I start pooping out little Elroys, they’re all going to die of black lung. That’s so Industrial Revolution.

What about pollution eating microbes? What happened to that idea? I mean, I could understand the fear that they'd get out of control and eat all the botox out of Liza Minelli's face. But I think that's a small price to pay for a breath of fresh air for our grandkids.

You go to Venice Beach now and get in the water and think, "I thought the La Brea Tar Pits were downtown." I guess it has the attraction of being a sort of living history presentation. You see all these fat kids get caught in the sludge and they start screaming, "rouwrrrrr, rouwwrrr!" like the Woolly Mammoths of yore.

Sure, in the long term that might mean fewer fat kids and that's one way to deal with the problem of child obesity. But what about those of us who used to be fat but grew out of it because we liked to swim?

That right, scientists, you screwed us. And like all the girls you've bedded down over the years instead of working, we did not enjoy it.

Scientists, you've lollygagged long enough. It's 2004, you turkeys. If you think that me not having a bionic super arm is still acceptable, then you're in for a big wake-up call.

Scientists, we're just trying to be fair with you people. We've made certain concessions, like not stealing your pocket protectors and beating you about the face with them.

In turn, we expect you to pull some weight. Now I'm not saying you have to create rocket boots that make you fly at light speed and have a 6-CD changer—that's just a suggestion.

But the future is now, you deadbeat brainiacs. You'd better get your microscopes in gear. We're going to start making a different kind of deposit in your bank accounts, and let's just say if we ain't crapping gold soon, you're not going to like it.