

“Who would want to be a publisher with only a dozen readers? It’s also easy to see why the audience for most user-generated content is so small, filled as it is with narrow, spelling-challenged observations about going to the mall and pick out clothes. And it’s easy to deride this sort of thing as self-absorbed publishing — why would anyone put such drivel out in public? It’s simple. They’re not talking to you.

We misread these seemingly inane posts because we’re so unused to seeing written material in public that isn’t intended for us.” – Page 84

“For the last hundred years the big organizational question has been whether any given task was best taken on by the state, directing the effort in a planned way, or by businesses competing in a market. This debate was based on the universal and unspoken supposition that people couldn’t simply self-assemble; the choice between markets and managed effort assumed that there was no third alternative. Now there is.

Our electronic networks are enabling novel forms of collective action, enabling the creation of collaborative groups that are larger and more distributed than at any other time in history. The scope of work that can be done by noninstitutional groups is a profound challenge to the status quo.” – Page 47

“For people with a professional outlook, it’s hard to understand how something that isn’t professionally could affect them — not only is the internet not newspaper, it isn’t a business, or even an institution. There was a kind of narcissistic bias in the profession; the only threats they tended to take seriously were from other professional media outlets, whether newspapers, TV, or radio stations. This bias had them defending against the wrong thing when amateurs began producing material on their own.” – Page 56

“As Scott Bradner, a former trustee of the Internet Society, puts it, ‘The internet means you don’t have to convince anyone else that something is a good idea before trying it.’” – Page 99

“We are used to a world where little things happen for love and big things happen for money. Love motivates people to bake a cake and money motivates people to make an encyclopedia. Now, though, we can do big things for love.” – Page 104

“The invention of a tool doesn’t create change; it has to have been around long enough that most of society is using it. It’s when a technology becomes normal, then ubiquitous, and finally so pervasive as to be invisible, that the really profound changes happen, and for young people today, our new social tools have passed normal and are heading to ubiquitous, and invisible is coming.” – Page 105

“Any radical change in our ability to communicate with one another changes society. A culture with printing presses is a different kind of culture from one that doesn’t have them.”
Our social tools are not an improvement to modern society; they are a challenge to it. New technology makes new things possible: put another way, when new technology appears, previously impossible things start occurring. If enough of those impossible things are important and happen in a bundle, quickly, the change becomes a revolution.

The hallmark of revolution is that the goals of the revolutionaries cannot be contained by the institutional structure of the existing society.” – Page 107

“All businesses are media businesses, because whatever else they do, all businesses rely on the managing of information for two audiences — employees and the the world.” – Page 107

“Revolution doesn’t happen when society adopts new technologies — it happens when society adopts new behaviors.” – Page 160

“Another advantage of blogs over traditional media outlets is that no one can found a newspaper on a moment’s notice, run it for two issues, and then fold it, while incurring no cost but leaving a permanent record.” – Page 170

“I’m old enough to know a lot of things just from life experience. I know that newspapers are where you get your political news and how you look for a job. I know that if you want to have a conversation with someone, you call them on the phone. I know that complicated things like software and encyclopedias have to be created by professionals. In the last fifteen years I’ve had to unlearn every one of those things and a million others, because they have stopped being true.”