



1970

A GATHERING OF THE ELDERLY

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It was 1970. There I sat, during my first college year, in a meeting of the elderly.

I mean, nobody in that room — but me — could have been born post-World War II. And this meeting was *supposed* to be about planning the future.

I asked myself, “What do the **elderly** really know about the *creating the future*?”

The “Old Lady” — my nickname for the oldest person in the room — walked slowly to the head of the table.

Placing her books and binder and notes silently upon the table, she seemed to be about four feet tall and graying — like so many of the elderly.

She sat down, looking around as if needing permission to begin to speak.

A hush fell upon the room.

As she prepared to speak, I prepared for a long, boring meeting wherein my role, as student representative, was to act interested. I repeated to myself, “What do the **elderly** really know about the *creating the future*?”

She began to speak. I listened.

Unexpectedly, she had remarkable insights into what the *creating the future* meant — not only for the university but for the nation and the world. She spoke of technological innovations, dwindling natural resources,



¹ These are reflections to be re-read when I am too old to journey from the comfort of my stead and, so that in my bed, I can relive the days gone by. **Permission for reproduction** in whole or in part is granted to groups and organizations for internal, non-profit use provided credit is given to the author along with the copyright notice: Article reprinted with permission. Copyright © 2011 Darryl D Eggleston, <http://DarrylD.com>. **This Journal can be read online** at <http://DarrylD.com/CCA>. **Graphic art** used in these Journals is available at no cost. Ask & it is yours.

challenges of a universe beyond our understanding, and a population growth beyond our management.

She spoke of the “global village” and how each interaction between peoples and nations lead to long-term implications for all mankind.

She pointed out we — each in our own way combined with all the other contributors — change the larger whole of this planet by our every action.

I scribbled into my Daily Journal: **The future doesn't just happen. We, by our collective endeavors, create the future.**

She outlined an emerging need for a university outreach program whereby it could teach students in their homes instead of requiring them to come to the campus.

She spoke of the need for improving interpersonal communication and information management — among the faculty, among the students, and among our committee. She spoke of teamwork, community involvement, and long-range planning.

I was enthralled. I was mesmerized. I yearned to become educated.

Looking back, over 40 years later, I still remember my awe at the words, the skill, and the knowledge of that lady.

She was about 58-years-old; I was 20.

She was educated. I was ignorant.

Now, that I'm 65 years of age, I must ask you, “What do the **young really** know about the *creating the future*?”