New York Prophecies: : the imaginary future of artificial intelligen

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Lead-in / Abstract	This article is examines the imaginary future presented by the IBM pavilion at the 1964 New York World's Fair, especially its promotion of the 'artificial intelligence'. As well as comparing this SF dream with other exhibitors' fantasies about unmetered electricity from nuclear power stations and holidays on the moon using space rockets, the article also draws parallels between the 1964 New York World's Fair with the ideological themes of its predecessors from the 1851 London Great Exhibition onwards. Inspired by **Eric Hobsbawm's** concept of 'invented traditions', this article argues that imaginary futures are also a method of sanctifying the transient socio-economic relationships of the present by disguising them as products of another historical moment.
Participants and speakers	Barbrook, Richard (GB)
Short biography of participants	Dr. Richard Barbrook was educated at Cambridge, Essex and Kent universities. During the early-1980s, he was involved in pirate and community radio broadcasting. He helped to set up Spectrum Radio, a multi-lingual station operating in London, and published extensively on radio issues. In the late-1980s and early-1990s, Richard worked for a research institute at the University of Westminster on media regulation within the EU. Some of this research was later published in 'Media Freedom: the contradictions of communications in the age of modernity' (Pluto Press, London 1995). Since the mid-1990s, Richard has been coordinator of the Hypermedia Research Centre at the University of Westminster and is course leader of its MA in Hypermedia Studies. In collaboration with Andy Cameron, he wrote 'The Californian Ideology' which was a pioneering critique of the neo-liberal politics of 'Wired' magazine. In the last few years, Richard has written a series of articles exploring the influence of the gift economy on the Net. He is presently working on a book - 'Imaginary Futures' – which is about how ideas from the 1960s have shaped our contemporary conception of the information society. A selection of Richard's writings are available on the Hypermedia Research Centre's website: <www.hrc.wmin.ac.uk>.
Full text	Please see RTF-file.
Related internet addresses	http://www.hrc.wmin.ac.uk