

Say Goodbye to Your Future



BY NICK CHIMICLES

WHY THE JOBS WE WANT ARE GOING AWAY, AND WHAT TO DO INSTEAD.

So, you want to be an investment banker, software engineer, or lawyer, hoping that one day, you'll make it to managing director, product manager, or partner. You'll have a six-figure paycheck, a corner office, maybe a three, four-bedroom apartment, and a goldendoodle—but most importantly, you will become an honorary member of one of the most oversaturated and exploitative classes of people that have existed on this earth: the managerial class. This class includes the VPs of Operations, the Directors of Communications, and the Heads of Human Resources, and Columbia has groomed us to be the manager of these managers—the kings and queens of the technocracy. I argue that our current managerial system is bloated and inefficient, and as economic conditions tighten, many managers and the professionals they manage will become redundant, leaving most of us to fight over the scraps as surplus elites.

First, some history. Back in the late 1970s, the country was suffering through stagflation and a general lack of competitiveness in international markets¹ just as U.S.-enabled globalization was [opening up](#) new economic opportunities. Business leaders saw how these issues partially stemmed from a lack of human capital and so lobbied for the formation of commissions to investigate the state of America's educational system.² One commission, The National Commission on Excellence in Education, [found that](#) “the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation and a people.”

What followed was a series of state-by-state reforms that amounted to a nationwide standardization of the educational system through more homework, longer school days, standardized tests, and increased disciplining.³ These reforms were an effort to prepare millions of Americans for the procedural monotony of corporate life, creating generations of soul-sucked professionals lorded over by the globalist managerial class.

This trend has only accelerated since the 1970s, with managers now representing about [33 percent](#) of the US workforce (and if you factor in administrative support staff, the statistic is 41 percent). There are [54,692,000 management professionals](#) in this country, who [“establish plans and policies, direct business activities, and oversee people, products, and services.”](#) Over just the past two decades, this group has grown at [nearly 3.5 times](#) the rate of the labor force at large: up 57 percent vs. a 16.5 percent increase in the U.S. labor force since 2000. The median annual wage for this group was [\\$102,450 in May 2021](#). How long can this continue? How much of our society can manage others while producing nothing?

After 2008, the Federal Reserve inundated the economy with cash through [low interest rates and excessive quantitative easing](#), which reduced focus on costs and value creation and likely allowed for the hiring of an army of overpaid managers. What followed was an [explosion](#) in venture capital investment, [high price-to-earnings ratios](#) in the stock market, a [ballooning](#) of the national debt, and (in [conjunction with little-to-no antitrust policy or enforcement and heavy lobbying](#)) the emergence of entrenched monopolies.

This economic environment gave rise to a world where the CEOs of 181 top corporations [stated](#) that the purpose of a corporation is no longer purely to pursue profit but to help their employees, invest in local communities, and behave fairly and ethically towards suppliers. This is coming from companies like Apple, whose suppliers [have links to Uyghur slave labor](#), and Vanguard, which [heavily invests](#) in green tech that is often [reliant on cobalt](#) mined by children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Here's the big lie: Corporations say that they are doing good for the world through inclusivity and saving the planet when they are profit-hungry animals at heart.³ "Helping employees" may just be code for spoiling the managerial class with higher paychecks and thereby placating America's surplus college-educated elites. These corporations feign doing the role of government in fairly distributing value and wealth to all, but instead, they entrench their power and influence over society and funnel money into the open gullet of the managerial class.

Thus, the ranks of these globe-spanning conglomerates become infested with thousands of professional leeches who spend 54 percent of their time on likely-arbitrary administrative tasks⁴ rather than productively managing and adding value. Output is divorced from outcome, and a huge swath of the economy takes on the face of a procedural bureaucracy, drowned in busywork and chronically unproductive.⁵

This Ponzi scheme *has* to end. As the United States begins a [strategic decoupling](#) from [demographically doomed China](#) and [reshores](#) previously global manufacturing, inflation is here, and it's here to stay. The natural short-term response to inflation is to slow spending via layoffs and wage cuts, which we have seen happening not at the typical blue-collar (now lauded "[essential](#)") worker level but with [white-collared](#), [Patagonia vest-wearing](#) professionals as [Big Tech companies](#) and [finance firms](#) lay off tens of thousands of employees. As corporations endure the hangover from the loose monetary policy of the 2010s, they will have to go to their cost structures to find which fat to cut to achieve a proper profit. The fat they have and will continue to find is the glaring gluttony and unproductivity of their inefficient professionals and salaried managers.

The weight-watchers diet for the bureaucratically obese America will be artificial intelligence. We've seen the power of GPT3 in writing a mechanistic discussion post summarizing Kant's kingdom of ends or Smith's division of labor, but AI's potential to create redundancy spans the entire job market, with [one source](#) finding that 71 percent of accountants or auditors, 79 percent of financial and investment analysts, 43 percent of postsecondary teacher assistants, 65 percent of financial managers, and 52 percent of computer programmers are at risk of redundancy from automation. The swelling of the professional and managerial ranks through the 1970s will thus rapidly be reversed, as first professionals (most of the jobs we get out of college) then their managers (the jobs we want when we're thirty or forty) are made redundant one-by-one—until only the top executives are left. Maybe you think you'll be the exception, but chances are you won't be. Here's what you can do instead.

Option #1: Deglobalization and the resulting inflation will put a renewed importance on manufacturing, not with Chinese slave labor but *domestically*, [by Americans \(in conjunction with Mexicans, Canadians, and probably Colombians\)](#). These manufacturers will need adequate energy supplies: natural gas pipelines, nuclear power plants, and (in [some but not all cases](#)) clean energy. So you could do essentially the opposite of what Columbia's education has prepared you for: become an end-product manufacturer or a fracking operator and (as support for Republicans among blue collar workers has [increased significantly](#) in recent years) join the MAGA wave.

Option #2: The world is headed for conflict. Whether it's Russia and Ukraine, [Turkey and Syria](#), [India and China](#), [China and the U.S. \(spy balloons!\)](#), or [Ethiopia and Egypt](#)—conflict is coming, and the global *Pax Americana* that we have known since the end of the Second World War will end. Returning to a state of global conflict means that our armed services will take on a new sense of importance. Conflict also presents a lucrative opportunity for defense manufacturers to export weapons ([as they have done in the Ukraine war](#)). So you could do another very un-Columbia thing and join the Navy to defend U.S. shipping routes, the special forces or Marines to offensively tip the scales of foreign conflicts, or become a manufacturer of weapons of war.

Option #3: If I had to guess, the two above options aren't quite in your wheelhouse, so here's one that may be more your speed: fix inequality. Since the late 1970s, [wealth inequality has increased](#) dramatically, with the share of the wealth of upper-income families increasing from 60 to 79 percent while the middle income's share has dropped from 32 to 17 percent and that of the lower income from 7 to 4 percent. While professionals and managers (concentrated in that upper-income tier) have been on the winning side of this widening inequality, the ghost of efficiency will soon make them the losers as wealth continues to concentrate in the top one percent, further

exacerbating inequality. All the unemployed professionals and managers, following their fall from grace, will have a significant amount of anger and resentment towards the institutions that lied to them and the people who seem to have stolen their future. You could be the political leader of this bitter constituency advocating for wealth redistribution and universal basic income on the path toward a Marxist utopia.

So, you could get that job at the investment bank, spend your bonus on expensive dinners and a trip to Ibiza, wait for the climate crisis to kill us all, then, all of sudden, you'll be made redundant. You won't be able to find another comparable job because they'll all be gone, and everything you've ever wanted to be part of will die around you, and you might just end it all yourself. This seems to me like a pretty miserable choice for a life path, even if you somehow mobilize your class's collective resentment. Alternatively, I would suggest pivoting to the winning team—options 1, 2, or similar—because at least then you will have some active purpose in the coming chaotic world rather than just being its victim.

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1. Chubb and Moe. *Politics, Markets, And America's Schools*, pgs. 8-9.
2. Chubb and Moe. *Politics, Markets, And America's Schools*, pgs. 9-10.
3. Ramaswamy, Vivek. *Woke, Inc: Inside Corporate America's Social Justice Scam*.
4. Kolbjørnsrud, Amico, and Thomas. "How Artificial Intelligence Will Redefine Management." *Harvard Business Review*.
5. Wilson, James. *Bureaucracy*, pgs. 163-4.

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