



# 4

## Myths & Stories

*Words are, of course, the most powerful drug used by mankind.*  
—Rudyard Kipling

Humans love stories. We have been telling and listening to stories for as long as we have had language, and putting stories to paper (or scrolls, or the inside of caves) for as long as we've had the ability to record them. Our brains are predisposed to respond to, remember, and attach ourselves to narratives above facts, allegories above reality. While our identity can help us understand ourselves, and our culture helps us understand our environment, stories help us understand our place in the world.

Our actions, beliefs, and behaviors are informed, in large part, by the narratives we believe to be true about the world around us. These stories, which vary greatly between different groups and cultures, help us explain and interpret the world in a way that is consistent with our existing beliefs. Yuval Harari explains how our ability to create and propagate myths has not only enabled human cooperation, but also the dominance of our species.

*Homo sapiens* conquered this planet thanks above all to the unique human ability to create and spread fictions. We are the only mammals that can cooperate with numerous strangers because only we can invent fictional stories, spread them around, and convince millions of others to believe in them. As long as everybody believes in the same fictions, we all obey the same laws, and can thereby cooperate effectively.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to providing a shared sense of reality, narratives serve a variety of purposes: they act as expressions of our culture's values, encourage us to act in certain ways, and position our beliefs in accordance with the beliefs of others, such that we share a common reality. If our identity tells the story of who we are, our narratives inform how we act and what we believe to be true.

The stories we choose to adopt and accept as credible not only provide a rationale for our thinking and behaviors, they also give us the sense that we understand and are in control of our environment.

As a species, humans prefer power to truth. We spend far more time and effort on trying to control the world than on trying to understand it—and even when we try to understand it, we usually do so in the hope that understanding the world will make it easier to control.<sup>2</sup>

Evolutionarily, myth-making is a hugely beneficial psychological mechanism. Narratives help us fill in the gaps of our knowledge and experience the world as more controllable and coherent.<sup>3</sup> By putting our faith in a variety of cultural narratives—whether religious, political, or social—we give intelligibility and structure to our experience, which feels far more comfortable than trying (and often failing) to piece together disparate bits of information about the world. Because narratives are developed not necessarily to inform, but to ensure psychological cohesion and social cooperation, our stories often come at a price and there is often a tension between the stories we tell and the facts we encounter.

The use of myths to structure our understanding of the world and our place in it goes back tens of thousands of years, to the religious myths dating back to Neanderthal burial rituals some 120,000–35,000 years ago. Before we understood things like rainfall, thunder, earthquakes, and

other natural phenomena, such events were attributed to supernatural forces or the gods, which functioned to explain what scientific knowledge at the time could not. Myths were historically passed down as oral stories within individual communities, at a slow, generational pace. In our current world, however, myths have an unprecedented opportunity to insert themselves into modern discourse in a variety of ways. Enabled by the rise of digital media and the range of storytelling outlets we have access to—television, films, social media, online and print news, video games—modern culture’s working mythology can be found everywhere we turn. Despite the changes to the mythic landscape, our cultural stories still help orient us in terms of our beliefs, values, and ambitions, though perhaps in more innocuous ways. Our stories are an expression not only of what we believe, but also what we fear, aspire to, and who we are.

While myths may help us do many things—order our experience, set behavioral expectations, better understand the world around us—they cannot act as a barometer of truth. Many ancient and religious myths, for example, we now recognize as socially constructed to illustrate moral precepts or reflect cultural values, rather than convey facts. You may not literally believe the story of Moses’s journey to Mount Sinai, but you might still orient your life around the principles of the Ten Commandments. You probably still say “bless you” when someone sneezes even though you know their soul is not in danger of escaping from their body. Stories, if they are socially valuable, “survive as receptacles of important cultural values,” even if “a culture no longer believes that its myths are true explanations” of events.<sup>4</sup> But what happens when a myth is neither true nor culturally beneficial? When stories neither hold up to scrutiny nor serve a valid purpose in society? Identifying current myths that may be patently false allows us not only to deconstruct them, but also to uncover what may be concealed beneath them and what impulses may have created them.

## When Narratives Crumble

Silicon Valley is full of myths. Some of which are true, many of which are not. Unless you happen to live there or work in tech, you probably never thought much about Silicon Valley until the past decade. The tech

industry has historically not been a group of people inclined to scream and shout about what they do. You are more likely to find an engineer building something, head down, deep in code, than marketing his or her latest app. As technology began to become more culturally and financially relevant, a handful of people recognized an opportunity to fill this gap and author the industry's as-yet-undefined narrative. Margit Wennmachers, an operating partner at VC firm Andreessen Horowitz, is largely credited with harnessing that narrative. In 1997, Wennmachers founded OutCast, a communication and marketing firm that now represents Facebook, Amazon, and numerous other tech giants. Since 2010, she has been tasked with creating and pushing a set of stories that, in the words of Andreessen Horowitz founder Marc Andreessen, "tie the disparate stories in the basket of startups into a cohesive narrative about tech's broader impact on business." She has been called the "spin master,"<sup>5</sup> "guru," and "godfather"<sup>6</sup> of the narratives that define tech. While Wennmachers is by no means solely responsible for the narrative of Silicon Valley, she is a good example of how and why modern myths function in the tech industry.

When Wennmachers was hired by Andreessen Horowitz, her purpose was largely to attract business to the company by communicating to engineers and entrepreneurs that the firm understood both their genius and their plight. It was also to help Andreessen Horowitz "set the agenda for tech's future."<sup>7</sup> Wennmachers recognized early that "the best way to defend oneself in the world of ideas is to shape those ideas, to author them. To play offense."<sup>8</sup> And so she helped shape the narratives of Silicon Valley in a way that advanced certain stories and diminished others. Jessi Hempel explains how Wennmachers and other marketing experts have "quietly advanced a narrative that has shaped how the world sees Silicon Valley and how the Valley perceives itself,"<sup>9</sup> promoting stories of nerdy but well-intentioned founders, "brainy outcasts upending the limits of the status quo,"<sup>10</sup> and the increasingly suspect "tech-for-good" narrative.

As more and more of Silicon Valley's myths are exposed as hollow and insincere, the industry has faced a growing identity crisis. There are some—the PR architects and corporate leaders across the industry—who we must assume knew the stories they were spinning were, to various degrees, false. And then there are the rest of us, who believed the slogans and promises of an industry that marketed itself as patently different to

corporate cultures of the past. The reality, of course—and the disappointment for those of us who believed the shiny, PR version of Silicon Valley—is that the narratives these companies would like us to believe are largely formed of half-truths and outright lies. As the brands, slogans, and mission statements of some of tech’s most influential companies fall apart, there is an opportunity to learn where certain leaders in the industry have gone wrong and how the effects of these false narratives might be redressed. The remainder of this chapter will explore the most prominent narratives we’ve been told about Silicon Valley, where they fail to hold up under scrutiny, and the consequences of building an industry on myth and pretense.

## Silicon Valley Mythology

- Don't be evil. (Google, scrapped in 2015.)*
- Bring the world closer together. (Facebook.)*
- Put a dent in the universe. (Steve Jobs, Apple.)*
- Move fast and break things. (Facebook.)*
- Organize the world's information. (Google.)*
- Broadcast yourself. (YouTube.)*
- Give everyone a voice. (Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook.)*
- Make tools that advance humankind. (Apple.)*
- Improve communities around the world. (Salesforce.)*
- Create a world where you can belong anywhere. (AirBnB.)*
- Communicate with the full range of human emotion. (Snapchat.)*
- Connect people to their passions, communities, and the world's knowledge. (Yahoo!)*
- Give everyone the power to create and share ideas and information instantly, without barriers. (Twitter.)*
- Simplify life for people around the world. (Dropbox.)*
- Empower every person and every organization on the planet to achieve more. (Microsoft.)*
- Solve intelligence, use it to make the world a better place. (Deepmind.)*
- Work hard. Have fun. Make history. (Amazon.)*
- Do the right thing. (Google, current.)*

The sound bites of the Bay Area echo far and wide. Reminiscent of the inspirational, disruptive mentality Silicon Valley is known for, they serve to reflect the lofty aspirations and benevolent ideals of the world's most influential companies. They are also, to varying degrees, false and toxic aphorisms designed to mask the true intentions of the companies who craft them. Jeff Hauser, executive director of the Revolving Door Project, calls the mottos and propaganda of industry-leading companies in Silicon Valley “a public relations effort to make people think of technology very differently than they do Wall Street.... That's how they maintain the illusion that they are cutting-edge nerds who are toiling for the good of humanity.”<sup>11</sup> Georges Abi-Heila, Head of Acquisition & Product Growth at Paris-based tech company Station, warns against being fooled by the corporate slogans of internet behemoths like Facebook, Google, and Amazon. The slogans, Abi-Heila explains, are a distraction from the true corporate aims of the industry, which are to bring in “the largest amount of users, for the longest period possible, at the most frequent rate.”<sup>12</sup>

Thanks to the marketing efforts of people like Wennmachers and her former business partner Caryn Marooney, who now heads PR and communications at Facebook, the industry has managed to paint a self-serving picture of itself that fails to reflect the reality of its priorities and intentions. As journalist Olivia Solon explains, the mottos and missions of tech giants serve primarily as a diversion from their actual aims.

Facebook has gone to great lengths to convince members of the public that it's all about “connecting people” and “building a global community”. This pseudo-uplifting marketing speak is much easier for employees and users to stomach than the mission of “guzzling personal data so we can micro-target you with advertising”.<sup>13</sup>

The branding of Silicon Valley, which focuses on warm, fuzzy catchlines, mottos, and clichés conceived of and cultivated by people like Wennmachers and Marooney, have distracted users from the fact that they are, indeed, corporations, designed to turn a profit—not to make your life better, and not to be your friend. This is the primary and most fundamental narrative of tech, which is worth deconstructing further: the myth that technology can not only change the world but, in the process, make it a better place.

## Making the World a Better Place?

The benevolence of the tech industry is a common thread in many of the narratives that emanate from the PR teams of Silicon Valley. The idea that technology can change the world by acting as a tool for the advancement of the human species is baked into every carefully crafted advertising campaign we're bombarded with from morning till night. *Buy an iPhone: it will change your life! Broadcast yourself on YouTube: your cat videos will change the world! Connect your digital persona to every person you've ever met: it will bring us closer together!* The promises of digital technology companies sound ludicrous when we stop to consider what they're actually selling, and even more shocking when we realize how they've accomplished it. Anand Giridharadas, author of *Winners Take All: The Elite Charade of Changing the World*, explains how corporations have capitalized on what was traditionally a liberal and progressive idea:

“Change the world” has long been the cry of the oppressed. But in recent years world-changing has been co-opted by the rich and the powerful.... At first, you think: Rich people making a difference—so generous! Until you consider that America might not be in the fix it's in had we not fallen for the kind of change these winners have been selling: fake change.<sup>14</sup>

Giridharadas explains that the “elite-led, market-friendly, winner-safe social change”<sup>15</sup> that companies pedal does not, in practice, make the world a better place, but instead multiplies the returns and financial dominance of those who already enjoy immense power. The collection of stories we are told by corporate giants such as Facebook, Twitter, and Google are, in fact, “myths that have fostered an age of extraordinary power concentration; that have allowed the elite's private, partial, and self-preservational deeds to pass for real change.”<sup>16</sup> The industry has orchestrated a magic show of sorts, in which we are told the multitude of shiny objects we now enjoy (smartphones, Alexas, social media with endless scrolls, next day shipping), really have made the world a patently better place. The success of the show rests on the promulgation of a culture that is distracted, such that its customer base is unable to see through the barrage of myths, half-truths, and lies that mask the intentions behind the taglines and slogans.

The illusion of positive social change promised by the tech industry is flimsily guarded by myths and vague promises of innovation. As we wait on the world to change, many have begun to notice that things do appear to be shifting—but in the wrong direction. In his 2019 keynote speech at SXSW, T-Bone Burnett suggests that the “leaders of Google and Facebook may seem to some like benevolent plutocrats, but, in fact, they are malevolent and without ethics. On top of that,” Burnett argues, “the time for plutocracy is over.”<sup>17</sup> Noam Cohen, author of *The Know-It-Alls: The Rise of Silicon Valley as a Political Powerhouse and Social Wrecking Ball*, compares the deception of Silicon Valley’s myths to “abuse” and “a form of gaslighting,” in which tech companies continue to harm us while claiming “how great they are and how much they are helping [us].”<sup>18</sup> Umair Haque, who argues persuasively for reexamining modern, hypercapitalist business practices, particularly in the space of tech companies, explains that Silicon Valley “gives us the illusion that it’s solving big problems—while in fact addressing utterly trivial ones. Consider Facebook. Friends are not exactly an existential threat to humanity. We’ve had them throughout history.”<sup>19</sup>

Let’s look at the products of the big four: Amazon, Facebook, Google, and Apple. Amazon sells you stuff. Its game is not profit but market dominance. Facebook allows you to see an ever-diminishing sliver of the lives of people you know in exchange for your attention, in order to sell you stuff. Google gives you search, email, maps, and a host of other conveniences for “free,” in order to harvest data and serve ads. To sell you stuff. Apple is perhaps the only one of the four with an up-front business model: Apple sells you quality stuff for a significant price. All in all, there is very little world-changing going on. There is, however, a lot of selling stuff.

## Along Came Capitalism

The myth that these companies exist to make your life better, your connections more meaningful, or the information you get more reliable may have been true when Google and Facebook were in their infancy, but time has collapsed the original intentions of many leading tech organizations.



Technology journalist Ben Tarnoff explains that the altruistic sentiments that underpin Silicon Valley's original myth arises from sincere origins of the tech counterculture of the 60s and 70s, which tried to imagine technology as an instrument of human liberation. Tarnoff points to examples such as Stewart Brand's Whole Earth Catalog and acknowledges that although "much of the culture, ethos, and self-image of the tech industry are still largely driven from those forces," there is now a growing incongruence between what tech says and what it does.<sup>20</sup> Increasingly, Tarnoff views the majority of Silicon Valley's "rhetoric as a cynical attempt to divert attention from what they're actually doing."

They pretend to have altruistic motives when in fact this is an industry that is driven by capitalist imperatives, just as any other industry is. The culture of the tech industry is distinct—certainly—but the reason that a company like Google behaves the way it does is for the same reasons as Exxon-Mobile or Walmart. These are capitalist firms that are subject to the pressures of the market; they're beholden to shareholders, they're trying to build a large monopoly that can dominate markets. So in terms of how the technoutopian rhetoric fits into that, I think that frankly at this point it seems to have just been weaponized in the service of profit maximization.<sup>21</sup>

Profit, in and of itself, is nothing to be ashamed of; companies need to make money in order to survive. What becomes problematic is the pretense—the dishonesty about what is being sold and how.

The need for fables of changed lives and technological benevolence arose during the transition from the internet's original intentions to its more recent ambitions, which center less on human liberation and more on revenue and shareholder value. The original aims and ideals of the tech community still linger on in company mottos and slidedecks, but they have been corrupted and misaligned from their original intent. Unfortunately for those who believed in the original vision of connectivity and the power of information, according to Noah Kulwin, the ideas "envisioned by Silicon Valley's early hippies turned out to be as well suited for making money as they were for saving the world."<sup>22</sup> The promises of utopian sharing and free information were ultimately, as anyone who has read Marx or has a Facebook account may have already guessed, seduced

and co-opted by the market, whose invisible hand seems to be everywhere these days. As one employee of a prominent Silicon Valley company put it to me, “change the world. Sounds cool right? But in order to change the world you need capital. Capital doesn’t want to change the world. Capital wants to make more capital.” When it became clear the spoils of tech could extend beyond the social benefits of information sharing and networked collaboration, a different set of priorities materialized. Ellen Pao ascribes this change, in part, to the meteoric success of companies like Facebook and Google and the rapid influx of investment capital in the Bay Area after the 2008 financial crash.

[A]ll of a sudden you have these instant billionaires. No longer did you have to toil for decades. So in 2008, when the markets crashed, all those people from Wall Street who were motivated by money ended up coming out to Silicon Valley and going into tech. That’s when values shifted even more. The early, unfounded optimism about good coming out of the internet ended up getting completely distorted in the 2000s, when you had these people coming in with a different set of goals.<sup>23</sup>

As the products and services of tech proved, again and again, to be money-spinners, the type of attention the industry received began to change, from both the public and investors. As the affluence of Silicon Valley grew, so did its enmeshment in the world of markets and venture capital. By the early twenty-first century, the birth of technocapitalism had begun.

## There’s an App for That

As money and interest flooded the Bay Area, the shift in values Pao describes began to affect the quality, aims, and social usefulness of the products and services that emerged from Silicon Valley. What began as genuine aspirations to solve legitimate problems, slowly devolved into an ethos that believed technology could solve any problem, an idea Evgeny Morozov has labelled techno-solutionism. In his 2014 book, *To Save Everything, Click Here: The Folly of Technological Solutionism*, Morozov

explains that many founders and organizations in the Valley suffer from the misguided tendency to recast “all complex social situations either as neat problems with definite, computable solutions or as transparent and self-evident processes that can be easily optimized—if only the right algorithms are in place.”<sup>24</sup> Amongst the many problems arising from solutionist thinking, Morozov argues, is a disregard for the scale and complexity of long-standing human and social issues, alongside a presumptive arrogance that the right code can fix any problem.

Armed with the belief that technology could solve any problem and propped up by the free-flowing capital of VCs, an unprecedented number of tech companies were born, each operating under the belief that their app or platform would change the world. In 2014, \$48bn made its way into U.S. tech start-ups, with Silicon Valley and San Francisco companies receiving half the total.<sup>25</sup> Let loose with more money than sense, writer and software engineer Yiren Lu explains how it became less and less “necessary to have particularly deep domain knowledge before founding your own start-up,” due to “the willingness of venture capitalists to finance Mark Zuckerberg look-alikes” in the hopes of betting on the right product or founder.<sup>26</sup> This, in turn, encouraged an influx of ideas—both good and bad, but largely unnecessary—that Lu argues changed the landscape of Silicon Valley’s products.

There are more platforms, more websites, more pat solutions to serious problems—here’s an app that can fix drug addiction! promote fiscal responsibility! advance childhood literacy! Companies like Meraki that build enterprise-grade hardware and leverage years of research tend to be anomalies among the new guard. Even as the pool of founders has grown and diversified, the products themselves seem more homogeneous, more pedestrian.<sup>27</sup>

As some of the brightest minds in engineering flocked to the Bay Area—some to change the world, others to make millions and retire—Silicon Valley found itself with a very peculiar problem: a surplus of talent, comprised largely of young, Ivy League educated engineers, and a shortage of meaningful work for them to do. What followed has been a slew of mostly prosaic products that fail to solve real-world problems like economic

inequality, climate change, or job displacement or which make the most of the engineering talent in the tech community.

In addition to the homogeneity of the products that began to emerge, Silicon Valley's onslaught of investment had another curious side effect: it encouraged the creation of problems. In an effort to make something—anything—that might prove to be the next big thing, entrepreneurs and tech founders began to scramble for problems they could fix. Professor Don Norman, head of the Design Lab at University of California, San Diego and author of *The Design of Future Things* and *Living with Complexity*, explains that, recently a lot of design energy has been spent finding problems that aren't problems. The first response of most designers and technologists, Norman laments, is "let's make an app."<sup>28</sup> With this mentality, Norman explains, comes a tendency to prioritize the application of technology without paying attention to the actual, underlying problem:

A lot of the companies don't think much of the implications of what they're doing—they're often very excited by the technology, it's all about the technology and what the technology can do. In the design field, we try to train our students to find out what the fundamental need is for people is first, then decide how to deal with that and what they should do. The technology comes last.<sup>29</sup>

One famous example of the "technology first" phenomenon Norman describes is the Juicero, perhaps the most notorious example of over-engineering in Silicon Valley's history.

The Juicero was always a contentious product. It launched in 2016 as a \$700 Wi-Fi connected juicer designed to squeeze subscription-purchased, pre-cut veggies from a pouch into your cup—at a moment when the average American had less than a grand in their bank account. To many, it was a symbol of the Silicon Valley class designing for its own, insular problems. In Juicero's case, that problem was, "I'm rich, but I can't drive thru to get a morning juice." Juicero is basically a mini trash compactor that connects to the internet to squeeze bags of juice, and auto-replenish them as they run out. But it wasn't until we tried Juicero for ourselves that we faced the real silliness of some of its user experience design.<sup>30</sup>

The Juicero is completely unnecessary, as the packets can be squeezed easily by hand. Mark Wilson argues that the product epitomizes “everything wrong with Silicon Valley design today. It’s a solution for rich people that’s worse than the problem.”<sup>31</sup> Juicero is something of a running joke now, a cautionary tale of over-designing products. It is also illustrative of a larger trend in tech in which products are not built to serve a real world need or a global audience, but made for those in its own, elite backyard.

In an article entitled, “The Shut-in Economy,” tech journalist Lauren Smiley details how a growing majority of products emerging from Silicon Valley “are created by the urban young for the needs of urban young,” many of which are born of the ubiquitous “on-demand economy.”<sup>32</sup> Examples range from suitcases that follow you from the airport check-in desk to your gate; smart underwear; smart salt shakers; toothbrushes equipped with AI; virtual candles, lighters, and fireplaces; and more food delivery and laundry apps than you could ever hope to use in a lifetime. There really is something for everyone. And by everyone, I mean predominantly the people who envision and fund these products. Tom Goodwin describes how Silicon Valley’s more recent products appear to be increasingly designed for a smaller subset of people.

There’s an app where you can order another car to come and fill your car with petrol. The target audience for a lot of these things appears to be the founders themselves, because it’s normally something for a 26-year-old, privileged white guy who isn’t very social. When you consider the products that they make and the way that they do things, it’s as if they’ve never really met a normal human being.<sup>33</sup>

This is not to say there aren’t a number of companies in the Bay Area working on socially responsible, civically-minded applications of technology. (The woman sitting next to me as I write works for a company that develops new technologies for libraries, which aim to increase accessibility of educational materials and improve literacy.) Overall, however, there is a disturbing lack of cohesion between the grand pronouncements of social change the industry promises, and the real-world effects of its most venerated, utilized, and well-financed products and platforms.

Tech’s rallying cry to “change the world,” then, proves not so much false as misleading. The world is indeed changing, but not in the ways we

thought were being sold. The devil, in this case, is in the lack of details. No one asked exactly what kind of change we were being promised. Nor did anyone think to ask how we would pay for it or what the long-term impacts and side-effects might be. Instead, most of us swallowed whole the narrative spun by the marketers and PR experts charged with ensuring we explicitly trusted the industry and its products. As media journalist John Herrman explains, this masterful marketing spin allowed dominant tech companies to settle “into a sort of permanent revolution.”

If they were founded to address an easy question, that question has either been answered and forgotten or repeated enough times to convert it into an odd, self-justifying ideology. (See: Facebook’s “Connecting the world.”) The questions became companies, which then, mostly without explicitly deciding to, became institutions. And now, for anyone affected by the tech industry, the most obvious and important questions are about the world that these companies are making.<sup>34</sup>

And this is perhaps the most pressing, and interesting, contradiction: while promising one world that offers “happiness, peace, prosperity and even eternal life,”<sup>35</sup> tech has delivered another, fraught with problems and challenges none of us could have envisioned. The bargain we’ve made is beginning to feel rather Faustian, and the effects—broken democracies, mental health problems, economic dislocation—are rather more serious than we realized. Morozov’s early recognition—that the solutionist thinking of the tech industry would “have unexpected consequences that could eventually cause more damage than the problems they seek to address”<sup>36</sup>—now seems eerily prophetic and disquieting. It should also make us question what might be broken next.

## **Move Fast and Break Things Civility, Truth & Democracy**

The myth of speed and fast failure has dominated Silicon Valley’s mythological landscape since Facebook’s dorm room mentality went mainstream in 2006. “Move fast and break things” remained one of the

company's mottos until 2014, when the phrase changed to a slightly more mature and less sexy, "Move fast with stable infra." But the standard of innovating first and asking permission later had been set, and with it a dangerous precedent. The intention that informed the thinking behind Facebook's well-known slogan arose innocently enough, as political economist and journalist Angus Hervey explains:

Facebook's classic mantra represented a philosophy of trying out new ideas quickly so you could see if they survived in the marketplace. If they did, you refined them; if they didn't, you could throw them away without blowing more time and money on development.<sup>37</sup>

On a small scale—Harvard's 2004 student body, for example—the repercussions of innovating without consent were relatively benign, if a bit immature and indicative of poor values. On a global scale, however, the mentality that enabled the rise of Facebook and its contemporaries has come at a substantial price that only now, over a decade later, have begun to come to light.

The practical applications of agility and testing are hardly sinister. William Edward Deming's model, which is used throughout healthcare, is one of many theories of leadership and management that encourages improvement, testing, and iterative learning in a controlled and safe environment. Deming's theory of innovation is grounded in the idea of testing on a small scale to determine both methods of success and areas of potential harm. Where Deming's model balances innovation with a healthy respect for the environment in which it operates, Silicon Valley's philosophy prioritizes aggressive change and growth at scale, often without the safety net of controlled testing. As Andrew McCollum, one of Facebook's co-founders explains,

["Move fast and break things"] encapsulate[s] a philosophy of rapid development, constant iteration and the courage to leave the past behind. Of course, some might wonder why you couldn't just stop at the "move fast" part. The truth is that breaking things is unavoidable.... A billion people will pretty quickly try every possible way to interact with your code, so features will be used in ways you never expected,

and sometimes things will break in ways that you didn't anticipate. Because you can't get that level of feedback until things reach production, it means that moving fast is inextricably tied with the process of deployment.<sup>38</sup>

McCollum recalls that in Facebook's early days the operations team suggested building a staging environment in which new code could be properly tested before it reached the live production environment and Facebook's then audience of over a billion users. Adam D'Angelo, the company's future CTO, argued against the change, and ultimately convinced Zuckerberg to forgo the additional testing stage, reinforcing the company's now-infamous attitude that prioritizes growth above safety and security.

The primacy of growth, particularly in the context of a global audience, necessitates a number of compromises and, in many cases, precludes the possibility of responsible innovation. As journalist Fred Vogelstein and Wired CEO Nick Thompson explain, Facebook's "move fast" dictum "wasn't just a piece of advice to [Zuckerberg's] developers; it was a philosophy that served to resolve countless delicate trade-offs—many of them involving user privacy—in ways that best favored the platform's growth."<sup>39</sup> The compromises Vogelstein and Thompson describe continue to pile up at Facebook: from the devastating effects of the Cambridge Analytica scandal, to the emails that show Zuckerberg and his colleagues discussing the pros and cons of decisions impacting privacy and user experience, to Facebook's secret partnerships with over 150 companies that granted access to users' data without their consent. Tech journalist Alison Griswold explains how the unmitigated demand for speed, growth, and profit quietly underpin the actual aims of the "move fast and break things" myth.

The startups that moved fast and broke things have been egged on by return-hungry venture capitalists and their companion motto, "growth at any cost." These investors poured money into some of the Valley's most tarnished companies, including Theranos, Uber, and human-resources startup Zenefits, which devised software to help employees cheat on state compliance tests. Venture capitalists have also spent years looking the other



way on tech's egregious lack of diversity and a culture of sexual harassment that hurt and disempowered women. Today, as funding rounds that exceed \$100 million—so-called “mega-rounds”—have become the new norm, startups remain under pressure from investors to raise as much money and grow as quickly as possible.<sup>40</sup>

One startup founder, who had worked in tech for over twenty years, put it this way: “there are many things wrong with the industry; but the one thing it always comes back to is the endless pursuit of capital. It’s never enough to satiate the VCs; you have to just grow and grow and grow.” The entrepreneur was bootstrapping his newest company in order to distance himself and his team from the “short-term thinking and bad values” he associated with many VC firms.

The consequences of embracing Facebook’s “do it now, ask forgiveness later” ideology, unfortunately, aren’t always clear until it’s too late. One of the most obvious and notable examples is Uber’s cataclysmic series of mistakes leading up to CEO Travis Kalanick’s removal in 2017. From its infancy in 2009, the company has been a perfect cocktail of truly disruptive and innovative technology, unmitigated growth, and abundant funding, without any of the requisite cultural, legal, or social checks one might expect from a global corporation of its scale and reach. Hempel explains how Uber’s second CEO, Dara Khosrowshahi, recognized how the company’s misplaced worship of growth had “left a trail of wreckage” in its wake.

[Uber] disregarded and even undermined laws and regulations; it squandered the loyalty of its drivers, who felt mistreated under its contractor system; and it became notorious for a workplace culture that exemplified the worst tendencies of the Silicon Valley bro. By the time investors moved to demand Kalanick’s resignation in June 2017, observers were calling Uber the world’s most dysfunctional startup. But where others saw Uber’s travails as a symbol of Silicon Valley comeuppance, Khosrowshahi saw something less loaded: a sophisticated tech company that had taken on too much, too quickly, and whose systems groaned under the weight and confusion. Growth, not quality, had been its guiding principle for too long, he said.<sup>41</sup>

The reality of innovating at speed and without proper safety precautions is that, eventually, people will get hurt, as Facebook, Twitter, and Uber's platforms have demonstrated. The bro culture at Uber may have been quelled by a renewed sense of maturity and stability thanks to Khosrowshahi, but the demands for growth and market share still affect the company's ability to think about the implications of its actions. In March 2018, one of Uber's self-driving cars, which was being tested on the streets of Tempe, Arizona, hit and killed pedestrian Elaine Herzberg, a 49-year-old mother of two. The company has also been accused of attempting to silence a growing number of female riders who have been sexually assaulted by Uber's partner drivers.<sup>42</sup> Such cases are a sobering reminder that growth, without caution or concern, can have real, human consequences.

The pace at which Silicon Valley insists organizations and developers must move and scale is intricately linked to its tendency to break the things, people, and systems it claims to be helping. As tech companies align themselves with an ethos that caters to growth and profit over the safety of people, the gravity of the consequences now associated with untested or unfit technology have become more urgent. Award-winning technology journalist Christina Larson has warned that the myth that tech companies must scale and break things in order to succeed, encapsulates "the twin totems of speed and aggression that animate many programmers and venture capitalists in the U.S. tech industry." "It's a lot less appealing," Larson says, "when the things being broken are people."<sup>43</sup> Angus Hervey, a journalist and co-founder of FutureCrunch, explains that as Silicon Valley's technology has been subsumed into a greater number of industries, the industry now bears a responsibility that historically it was not expected to shoulder.

Traditionally, digital enthusiasts haven't had to worry about stuff like this. Code has always been relatively harmless. Daily interaction with pain, physical harm or death was a lot less likely if you were working with bits and bytes, than if you were working with human bodies (medicine) or heavy machinery (transportation). In order to fulfil the ethical warrant of the profession, all you had to do was make the product work. It was up to other people to figure out the applications or the social mission. That's no longer the case. Software can now propel steel and glass into human flesh, or be turned into propaganda by foreign agents.<sup>44</sup>

A conversation about what it means to be the custodian of public safety in the digital era has simply not been sufficiently or transparently discussed.

Neither those in power, nor those of us who entrusted the tech industry with it, as yet have a clear understanding of what standards of behavior and ethical frameworks in tech should include. What is clear, however, is the immensity of power digital companies wield, and the magnitude of responsibility that accompanies it.

If information is power in the digital age (and it is), then Google has a fair claim to being the most powerful company in the world. It has collected, digitised, arranged and presented more information than any company in history. It knows more about you than anyone. Does the NHS or HMRC know if you have a dog or not? Google does. With great power, supposedly, comes great responsibility. The powerful should not abuse their position and should perhaps play a role in supporting the societies in which they operate. Do Google and the other titans of the digital age like Apple, Facebook and Amazon pass those tests?<sup>45</sup>

Based on their behaviors to date, many would likely argue that the industry has not proven itself to be sufficiently mature or capable of handling such responsibility. Alex Stamos, Facebook's former CSO, has put forth the argument that the attitude towards responsibility in Silicon Valley has not kept pace with the changing landscape, power, and influence of the industry.

While the times have changed, the community and the industry have not really changed with them. The truth is that we are no longer the upstarts, we are no longer the hacker kids fighting against corporate conformity.... We don't fight the man anymore, in some ways we are the man. But we haven't really changed our attitude towards what kind of responsibility that puts on us.<sup>46</sup>

What Stamos touches on here is a critical shortcoming of the industry, with far-reaching implications: the tendency to grow without necessarily maturing, and the willingness to assume the most important professions of the digital age without assuming the corresponding moral demands those roles entail.

In addition to the nebulous ethical responsibilities and as-yet-unformulated expectations of the tech industry, there is an important point to be made about the perception of distance and responsibility in today's digital world. In bygone days, when privacy included our physical space and tangible belongings, what constituted harm or misconduct was, for the most part, unequivocal. Today, however, the lines of property, data, possessions, harm, hate speech, and free speech have been blurred by the new, largely intangible world created behind our screens.

Perhaps what's set Silicon Valley apart—the difference between Elon Musk and John D. Rockefeller, Elizabeth Holmes and Jay Gould—is that it believes, since the “disruption” is orchestrated from behind a computer, it's not the same. That it was somehow cleaner than coal or oil or steel. This is naive. Disruption is painful. People get hurt. And someone has to do that hurting. It's called creative *destruction* for a reason. Good comes from it, but it's not without its costs—to society or to the people who make it their living. The ability to willfully seek out this destruction on a massive scale is, in its own way, a skill. Not all of us have it. It's probably better that most of us do not. But certain people do.<sup>47</sup>

Tech companies are quick to take credit for the improvements their products make (or claim to make), but they are less likely to take responsibility for the damage their disruption leaves in its wake. Until our systems, laws, and moral expectations have caught up to our machines, there remains a dangerous discrepancy between the responsibility with which the industry has been entrusted and the hands-off approach it assumes.

The disruption myth has persisted thanks, in large part, to the expertly spun narratives of tech founders and marketing wizards intent on exaggerating the benefits of their companies, products, and platforms, without acknowledging the many consequences of disruption. As lawmakers, governments, and individuals become more conscious of the negative impacts the industry brings about, however, things show signs of changing. As Alison Griswold has recently observed, “‘move fast and break things’ has long been the tech way, but it no longer appears to be working.”<sup>48</sup> Griswold cites the array of investigations and allegations against prominent tech companies, including Theranos's fraudulent claims around the company's blood testing capabilities; Tesla's SEC investigation

following Musk's false claim that he was taking the company private; Uber's string of cultural misdeeds, which resulted in six federal investigations; and Facebook's role in spreading misinformation and undermining democracy on its platform. The assumption that it is acceptable to break things—truth, civility, laws, human life, mental health, democracy—for one's own advancement is a narrative that, thankfully, appears to be breaking down. David Hanson, a programmer and partner at software firm Basecamp, argues “it takes a while for people to catch up when the world changes, but eventually they do, and now they have.”

It used to be that you could unironically claim to be disrupting this or that, and people would look at you with puppy eyes asking to hear more. Now if you claim to be on some disruptive mission, you're far more likely to be met with skepticism and critical inquiry, if not outright eye rolls. That's because the disruption story hasn't had the neat happy ending its main protagonists would like you to believe. Whether it's the gig economy normalizing, nay, *celebrating*, working three jobs to make ends met. Or specifically ride sharing outsourcing all capital costs and risk to drivers. Or apartment buildings turned into defacto hotels by short-term rentals. There are real, systemic downsides.<sup>49</sup>

Disruption for the sake of growth is neither a pardonable nor a permissible ideology. New laws and organizational ethos should reflect the breadth of responsibility that has been conferred upon technology companies, while Silicon Valley must figure out a way to disrupt its own ideology of “move fast and break things” to something comparable to the medical community's ethos to “first, do no harm.”

## Tech Knows Best

Two of the underlying beliefs that have enabled the above myths to survive and proliferate are the assumption that those leading the tech industry know what's best—for our relationships, for society at large, for the laws that govern them—and that they are trustworthy, upstanding custodians of our wellbeing. Let me say this unequivocally: neither of these beliefs is accurate. Tech author and journalist John Battelle notes the

problematic paternalist attitude of platforms like Facebook, which he argues communicate, “[w]e know what’s best for you, better than you do in fact, so trust us, we’ll roll the code, you consume what we put in front of you.”<sup>50</sup> This dynamic has persisted unchallenged thanks, in large part, to Silicon Valley’s positive public image. According to Ben Tarnoff, who has reported on the industry for the past decade, as it ascended to public consciousness and market dominance, Silicon Valley companies has been absolved of numerous transgressions, while repeatedly proving themselves undeserving of the positive and deferential treatment they enjoy.

Silicon Valley benefits from an enormous amount of positive coverage. It’s hard to think of another industry that everyone seems to give the benefit of the doubt to. This may have begun to shift a little bit, but when people think of the motivations of Google or Facebook, until relatively recently, they’ve largely thought of those motivations as being altruistic in nature. Which again is preposterous if we were to think about say, the fossil fuel industry or the financial industry or the restaurant industry—the notion that the executives at those companies were motivated by anything other than profit maximization would strike anyone as absurd. But somehow when we think of the leaders of tech companies, particularly a figure like Elon Musk, who receives an enormous amount of, frankly, quite sycophantic press coverage—they’re seen as heroic figures, which is how they see themselves, as figures who have the capacity to liberate mankind. That does the industry a lot of very concrete favors; it’s eased and accelerated its success with lobbies, for instance—the top five in tech firms now outspend Wall Street 2:1 on lobbying in D.C. Obviously, that buys a lot of influence, but one of the things that makes that purchase of influence easier is the fact that a significant portion of the general public has bought into this idea that the tech industry really is a force for good in the world. And no other industry enjoys that advantage.<sup>51</sup>

The assumption that the leaders of the tech industry, across the board, have the public’s best interests at heart is a common but misguided fallacy, often referred to as technopaternalism. There are certainly lovely human beings who work in tech, but to assume they have a special understanding of what is best for the population at large or are motivated by altruism rather than profits is a dangerous cultural delusion.

In 2018, a survey by HarrisX found that 63 percent of Americans considered technology to be a force for good in society, while 68 percent thought it was having a “positive impact on the world,” indicating the myth of the benevolent tech company was alive and well.<sup>52</sup> A 2017 Gallup poll, by comparison, found that, across all industries, only 21 percent of Americans surveyed had a favourable opinion of big businesses in general,<sup>53</sup> suggesting people do not necessarily associate tech companies with traditional corporate America. The unique ability of the tech industry to psychologically uncouple itself from big business is a myth in and of itself, which the following chapter will seek to dispel. Dritan Nesho, CEO of HarrisX, suggests the results of her company’s survey illustrate that “the public has a complex relationship with personal technology. Broadly speaking, a majority of Americans perceive technology to be a good force on the world. But dig deeper and you find very conflicted views on a series of important social issues.”<sup>54</sup> This ambivalence is reflected in other research, including a poll by Axios and SurveyMonkey, which found that from October 2017 to March 2018, favorability had dropped for Facebook (–28%), Amazon (–13%), Google (–12%), Apple (–10%), Twitter (–7%), and Microsoft (–3%).<sup>55</sup> Nesho puts these numbers down to tech’s recent “series of scandals around fake news, platform bias, foreign interference and privacy concerns,”<sup>56</sup> which have begun to dismantle the popular myths of tech companies as a force for social good.

Despite recent trends in public opinion, however, Silicon Valley’s worst offenders continue to dominate the market. Simon Jack points to a troubling discrepancy in public perception: that regardless of the transgressions of leading tech companies such as Facebook, Google, Uber, and Twitter—and the accompanying lawsuits, fines, and Congressional, Senate, and Parliamentary hearings that have resulted from their actions—“tech giants enjoy incredible customer loyalty which is perhaps why they genuinely do not believe they are the bad guys in the story of the new industrial revolution.”<sup>57</sup> This shared misconception may soon be invalidated, according to author and journalist Scott Rosenberg, as people begin “to ask hard questions about whether tech platforms are weakening democracy, promoting ignorance, and fostering a new wave of authoritarian nationalism.”<sup>58</sup>

Anyone would have a hard time answering these questions. But the Silicon Valley founder is uniquely ill prepared. Many founders begin their careers embracing high-minded ideals: freedom of speech, tolerance of difference, equality of opportunity, support for the underdog, respect for the law, and more. They believe, ardently and innocently, that they are doing good in the world, and they see their companies as levers for world-changing improvements.<sup>59</sup>

The problem of assigning responsibility becomes more difficult when those in power believe and defend their own myths. When we have a narrative to which we can attribute our behaviors, our actions often become detached from our original intentions, well-meaning as they may be, and instead become unconsciously justified by our narrative. As tech companies move toward what they perceive to be their goal—bolstered by whatever mantra they keep repeating (“connecting people,” “giving everyone a voice,” “doing the right thing”)—their actions can become oddly self-perpetuating if they fail to reflect on their behavior. If myths serve to inform our understanding of the world and how we must comport ourselves in it, the notion that tech companies are the “good guys” gives them unprecedented license to behave in entirely unbecoming ways.

## Dismantling the Myths

We believe stories for a number of reasons. Mostly, however, we believe them because they're easy. Stories are less complicated than the full, messy, unadulterated truth. In the same way it's easier to read a headline than an entire article, our brains are prone to take the path of least resistance between making a judgment about something or connecting two ideas. In our current climate of attention warfare and information overload, we are even more likely to choose myth over fact, as long as it makes some semblance of sense or corresponds to something we already believe or wish to be true. Myths and stories that explain the world are especially powerful, in that they provide us with a rationalization about who or what something is or how it works. As we deconstruct the narratives that have shaped our beliefs about Silicon Valley, we need to ensure they are not replaced with equally inaccurate myths.



Silicon Valley's recent cacophony of misdeeds has revealed, in some cases, deception on a global scale. The discrepancy between Silicon Valley's myths and the realities of its behaviors has created significant cognitive dissonance (to put it lightly) and have exposed a range of challenges that, if left unresolved and unregulated, will have profound implications for the future. The media and the public spent the better part of 2017 and 2018 attempting to reconcile the image portrayed by tech companies with their actions, which have disappointed on both ethical and social grounds. Journalist Maria Bustillos explains the public has been conditioned to believe the archetypal tech leader is "generous, a thoughtful and responsible custodian of our private information, a wise and intelligent leader,"<sup>60</sup> a myth "crafted to evoke warmth, admiration, and good feelings so the people keep coming, keep reading, keep liking, keep paying."<sup>61</sup> PR and communications employees are hired at major tech firms, such as Facebook, with the express purpose of measuring and improving the public's perception of their executives. Others, such as Wennmachers, are tasked with crafting the warm, fuzzy stories we are meant to believe about Silicon Valley's benevolent intentions.

In some cases, what we believe, even if it is patently false, doesn't really matter—in the case of Silicon Valley, it very much does, and we can no longer afford the price we pay for believing its false and misleading narratives. The myths of making the world a better place, of the virtue of moving fast and breaking things, and of the benevolent, socially responsible tech company have survived because we have not sufficiently questioned them. We have collectively allowed and set a precedent that needs to be reversed as soon as possible and replaced with a better, healthier, and more mature narrative based on awareness, fact, and more sophisticated thinking about cultural health. While the myths of Silicon Valley have begun to break down en masse, we must continue to examine and dismantle them in order to truly understand and correct the underlying problems that drive them.

Our next question might be: why? What are the motivations behind the narratives tech feels compelled to tell? What drives an industry like Silicon Valley to behave in the way it has?

## Notes

1. Harari, Y. N. (2018, August 5). Yuval Noah Harari Extract: 'Humans have Always Lived in the Age of Post-truth. We're a Post-truth Species.' *The Observer*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2018/aug/05/yuval-noah-harari-extract-fake-news-sapiens-homo-deus>
2. Ibid.
3. Betuel, E. (2018, August 22). Scientists Reveal the Number of Times You're Actually Conscious Each Minute. Retrieved August 27, 2018, from *Inverse* website: <https://www.inverse.com/article/48300-why-is-it-hard-to-focus-research-humans>
4. Murfin, R., & Ray, S. M. (Eds.). (2003). Myth. In *The Bedford Glossary of Critical Literary Terms* (2nd ed., p. 284). Boston: Bedford-St. Martin's.
5. Hempel, J. (2018, January 21). The Spin Master Behind Facebook, Airbnb, and Silicon Valley as You Know It. *Wired*. Retrieved from <https://www.wired.com/story/margit-wennmachers-is-andreessen-horowitzs-secret-weapon/>
6. Bowles, N. (2013, September 22). Marketing Guru Margit Wennmachers' New Venture. Retrieved December 4, 2018, from *SFGate* website: <https://www.sfgate.com/news/article/Marketing-guru-Margit-Wennmachers-new-venture-4833221.php>
7. Hempel, J. (2018, January 21). The Spin Master Behind Facebook, Airbnb, and Silicon Valley as You Know It. *Wired*. Retrieved from <https://www.wired.com/story/margit-wennmachers-is-andreessen-horowitzs-secret-weapon/>
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Abi-Heila, G. (2018, March 1). Attention Hacking is the Epidemic of Our Generation.... Retrieved August 27, 2018, from *Hacker Noon* website: <https://hackernoon.com/attention-hacking-is-the-epidemic-of-our-generation-e212e111c675>
13. Solon, O. (2018, March 24). 'A Grand Illusion': Seven Days that Shattered Facebook's Facade. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2018/mar/24/cambridge-analytica-week-that-shattered-facebook-privacy>

14. Giridharadas, A. (2018, August 25). Beware Rich People Who Say They Want to Change the World. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/24/opinion/sunday/wealth-philanthropy-fake-change.html>
15. Giridharadas, A. (2018). *Winners Take All: The Elite Charade of Changing the World* (1st ed., First Printing edition, p. 11). New York: Knopf.
16. Ibid., p. 12.
17. Bronson, K. (2019, March 14). Read T Bone Burnett's Keynote Speech at SXSW. Retrieved May 23, 2019, from [buzzbands.la](http://buzzbands.la) website: <http://buzzbands.la/2019/03/13/t-bone-burnetts-keynote-speech-at-sxsw-dire-warnings-vs-the-goal-of-art-to-create-conscience/>
18. Solon, O. (2017, December 23). Tech's Terrible Year: How the World Turned on Silicon Valley in 2017. *The Observer*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2017/dec/22/tech-year-in-review-2017>
19. Haque, U. (2018, March 26). Why Capitalism is Obsolete. Retrieved September 17, 2018, from *Eudaimonia and Co* website: <https://eand.co/why-capitalism-is-obsolete-d10197b5bca2>
20. Tarnoff, B. (2017, September 5). *Interview with Ben Tarnoff* (K. Cook, Interviewer).
21. Ibid.
22. Kulwin, N. (2018, April 13). An Apology for the Internet—From the Architects Who Built It. *Select All*. Retrieved from <http://nymag.com/intelligencer/2018/04/an-apology-for-the-internet-from-the-people-who-built-it.html>
23. Ibid.
24. Morozov, E. (2014). *To Save Everything, Click Here: The Folly of Technological Solutionism* (p. 5). New York: PublicAffairs.
25. Relander, B. (2015, February 27). #1 Country for Tech Start-Ups: U.S.A. Retrieved December 6, 2018, from *Investopedia* website: <https://www.investopedia.com/articles/investing/022815/1-country-tech-startups-usa.asp>
26. Lu, Y. (2018, January 19). Silicon Valley's Youth Problem. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/16/magazine/silicon-valleys-youth-problem.html>
27. Ibid.
28. Norman, D. (2018, September 27). *Interview with Don Norman* (K. Cook, Interviewer).
29. Ibid.

30. Wilson, M. (2017, April 20). My Day with Juicero, Silicon Valley's Absurd \$400 Juicer. Retrieved August 19, 2018, from *Fast Company* website: <https://www.fastcompany.com/90110876/my-day-with-silicon-valleys-absurd-400-juicer>
31. Ibid.
32. Smiley, L. (2015, March 25). The Shut-In Economy. Retrieved September 16, 2018, from *Matter* website: <https://medium.com/matter/the-shut-in-economy-ec3ec1294816>
33. Goodwin, T. (2017, August 3). *Interview with Tom Goodwin* (K. Cook, Interviewer).
34. Herrman, J. (2018, July 15). Have the Tech Giants Grown Too Powerful? That's an Easy One. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/11/magazine/facebook-google-uber-tech-giants-power.html>
35. Harari, Y. N. (2017). *Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow* (p. 409). London: Vintage.
36. Morozov, E. (2014). *To Save Everything, Click Here: The Folly of Technological Solutionism* (p. 5). New York: PublicAffairs.
37. Hervey, A. (2018, May 25). Move Slowly, and Don't Break Things. Retrieved August 27, 2018, from *Future Crunch* website: <https://medium.com/future-crunch/move-slowly-and-dont-break-things-693f00601b19>
38. McCollum, A. (2015, March 10). The Unavoidable Truth of Moving Fast and Breaking Things. Retrieved December 7, 2018, from *Tech Crunch* website: <http://social.techcrunch.com/2015/03/10/move-fast-and-break-things/>
39. Vogelstein, F., & Thompson, N. (2018, February 12). Inside Facebook's Two Years of Hell. *Wired*. Retrieved from <https://www.wired.com/story/inside-facebook-mark-zuckerberg-2-years-of-hell/>
40. Griswold, A. (2018, September 8). "Move Fast and Break Things" is Broken. Retrieved December 7, 2018, from *Quartz* website: <https://qz.com/1380490/move-fast-and-break-things-is-broken/>
41. Hempel, J. (2018, April 19). Can this Man Help Uber Recover from the Travis Kalanick Era? *Wired*. Retrieved from <https://www.wired.com/story/uber-move-slow-test-things/>
42. Levin, S. (2018, March 16). Uber Accused of Silencing Women Who Claim Sexual Assault by Drivers. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2018/mar/15/uber-class-action-lawsuit-sexual-assault-rape-arbitration>

43. Larson, C. (2017, November 7). Facebook Can't Cope with the World It's Created. *Foreign Policy*. Retrieved from <https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/11/07/facebook-cant-cope-with-the-world-its-created/>
44. Hervey, A. (2018, May 25). Move Slowly, and Don't Break Things. Retrieved August 27, 2018, from *Future Crunch* website: <https://medium.com/future-crunch/move-slowly-and-dont-break-things-693f00601b19>
45. Jack, S. (2017, November 21). *Google—Powerful and Responsible?* Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-42060091>
46. Stamos, A. (2017). *Black Hat Keynote: Stepping Up Our Game: Re-focusing the Security Community on Defense and Making Security Work for Everyone*. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJOMTAREfY>
47. Holiday, R. (2018, March 15). It's Time to Get Real about Power in Silicon Valley. Retrieved August 28, 2018, from *Medium* website: <https://medium.com/the-mission/its-time-to-get-real-about-power-in-silicon-valley-b59b4772138d>
48. Griswold, A. (2018, September 8). "Move Fast and Break Things" is Broken. Retrieved December 7, 2018, from *Quartz* website: <https://qz.com/1380490/move-fast-and-break-things-is-broken/>
49. Hanson, D. (2017, December 19). Silicon Valley Should Welcome the Scrutiny. Retrieved May 27, 2019, from *Signal v. Noise* website: <https://m.signalvnoise.com/silicon-valley-should-welcome-the-scrutiny/>
50. Battelle, J. (2018, January 24). Is this the Society We Really Want? Retrieved 27 August 2018, from *Newco Shift* website: <https://shift.newco.co/2018/01/24/is-this-the-society-we-really-want/>
51. Tarnoff, B. (2017, September 5). *Interview with Ben Tarnoff* (K. Cook, Interviewer).
52. HarrisX. (2018). *Inaugural Tech Media Telecom Pulse Survey 2018*. Retrieved from [http://harrisx.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Inaugural-TMT-Pulse-Survey\\_-20-Apr-Final.pdf](http://harrisx.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Inaugural-TMT-Pulse-Survey_-20-Apr-Final.pdf)
53. Newport, F. (2017). *Business Gets Bigger Even as Americans Prefer Small*. Retrieved from *Gallup* website: <https://news.gallup.com/opinion/polling-matters/216674/business-gets-bigger-even-americans-prefer-small.aspx>
54. Solon, O. (2018, April 20). Americans Want Tougher Rules for Big Tech Amid Privacy Scandals, Poll Finds. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2018/apr/20/facebook-tech-companies-us-privacy-poll>

55. Hart, K., & Fried, I. (2018, March 26). Exclusive Poll: Facebook Favorability Plunges. Retrieved August 26, 2018, from *Axios* website: <https://www.axios.com/exclusive-poll-facebook-favorability-plunges-1522057235-b1fa31db-e646-4413-a273-95d3387da4f2.html>
56. Solon, O. (2018, April 20). Americans Want Tougher Rules for Big Tech Amid Privacy Scandals, Poll Finds. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2018/apr/20/facebook-tech-companies-us-privacy-poll>
57. Jack, S. (2017, November 21). Google—Powerful and Responsible? *BBC News*. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-42060091>
58. Rosenberg, S. (2017, November 8). The End of the Cult of the Founder. *Wired*. Retrieved from <https://www.wired.com/story/the-end-of-the-cult-of-the-founder/>
59. Ibid.
60. Bustillos, M. (2018, March 8). The Smallness of Mark Zuckerberg. Retrieved August 31, 2018, from *Medium* website: <https://medium.com/s/story/the-smallness-of-mark-zuckerberg-4e94a88bba02>
61. Ibid.

**Open Access** This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons licence and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons licence, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons licence and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

