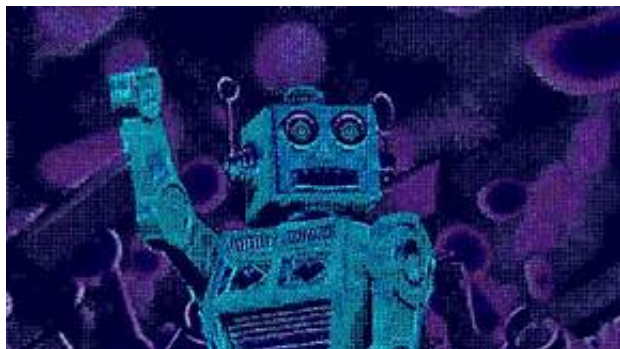# ADVENTURES IN COMPUTER MODELING

photo: Fusion.net

I spent more than 17 years, and quasi-retired from a company that was in the computer data processing and billing business as well as systems design and fabrication.

My own positions were in administration and management and not technical "stuff" but I spent hundreds, if not thousands of hours with technical people including programmers and engineers.

I remember one technical manager in particular that used to "remind" me over and over that everyone seems to think "Computers are smart but actually they are stupid - they can just process data very, very fast."

Or, as was often mentioned as a "great truth" by countless programmers and technicians that we must never forget: "Garbage In - Garbage Out". Computer systems can only produce results based on the the data that is input into them. In other words, if you provide the computer program with incomplete or inaccurate data they will produce faulty or misleading results.

For example, early in the current Coronavirus Pandemic, "modeling" was predicting United States potential fatalities from the virus could run 2.2 million by August of this year, this was later revised to 1.4 million and still later to maybe 140 thousand and it now appears the actual number with likely come in well below that number. That is a huge differential in predictions and is why the task force kept reiterating that they needed accurate data for "modeling".

These experts are not stupid or inept, these are educated, intelligent and dedicated people. Apparently the first "models" were based on input data that nothing would be done to mitigate the spread of the virus. As mitigation factors were input, the modeling predictions changed.

(Definition of mitigate: Spreading the impact of possible contamination over a longer period of time to avoid overwhelming hospitals by social distancing, closing of non-essential businesses and instituting modified house arrest for citizenry.)

My real fear of relying on computer modeling is that it can, and has been abused by those with an agenda to make "junk science" predictions on subjects from global famine to global freezing to climate change prognostications that have a history of causing unnecessary fear and panic only to be ultimately proven false.

By "picking and choosing" what data fits your agenda and you want to use in your computer modeling, you can skew the computer output to fit your goals. This is not true science, it is an example of "Garbage in - Garbage out".

Politicians use Pollsters to do something similar by carefully wording questions and then polling segments of the population likely to produce their desired results. "Garbage in - Garbage out".

In 1966 former Vice President Al Gore's "modeling" and his book (An Inconvenient Truth) predicted global warming unless immediate and drastic action was taken within a decade. He predicted, among other things, rising sea levels and worldwide massive flooding along with Polar Bear Extinction (Polar Bear populations have actually increased) and the South Sahara drying up among other dire warnings. None of these things happened. Despite his predictions of rising sea levels, the former Vice President and author bought himself a beachfront home.

In his book "The Population Bomb", by Stanford Professor Paul Ehrlich, his modeling predicted worldwide famine in the 70's and 80's due to overpopulation. The worldwide famine never occurred but caused near panic in many quarters of academia.

In the 1970's more "modeling" led scientists to predict an imminent new "ice age", a vision of which can be seen in the 2004 movie "The Day After Tomorrow" which was based on this prediction. It never happened.

More recently, a "Progressive Green New Deal" movement within our own country predicted, based on their own accepted "modeling" in 2019 that our planet only had 12 years left for human survival unless we immediately adopt their agenda, part of which is to abruptly abandon all use of "fossil" fuels (oil and natural gas) and switch to only solar and wind power on a crisis basis. This is "junk" science on steroids but they have caused tremendous fear and panic, especially on our young and vulnerable. In my opinion this is fear mongering on a criminal level. The climate is not going to make the earth uninhabitable by humans within the next, now 11 years and there is no

definitive scientific proof to the fact. Only predictions based on computer "modeling" from often skewed, cherry picked questionable data.

You will forgive me if I do not trust "modeling". Good people can be led far from the truth by inaccurate, faulty or fraudulent data. There are too many "experts" out there with an agenda looking for a way to further that agenda with "modeling" data.

To close on a more humorous note. Many of these experts are telling us that we will need to permanently change our behavior in the future and practice social distancing everywhere and at every age. I want to be a "fly on the wall" of a third grade classroom and watch all the the 8-9 year old's maintain, at all times, a six foot spacing in the classroom, cafeteria and playground. I pity the teachers!

Bob Bandy - April 2020