

WELCOME TO PRODUCT HUNT!



Discover the best new products, every day.

[Join the Community](#)



LOGIN



Kevin Kelly

Founding Executive Editor of Wired magazine and author of The Silver Cord

THIS CHAT HAPPENED ON AUGUST 25, 2015

[Thank Kevin Kelly on Twitter](#)

BOOKS



Kevin Kelly

LIVE GUEST

Greetings! I am a life-long learning who figured out a way to get paid to learn. I was a photographer in Asia instead of a college student. When I returned I started a mail order company with \$200. I sold budget travel guides. Then I started writing about the emerging internet as if it were a foreign country. These days I write about the future as if it were a foreign country. My upcoming book, due from Penguin in the spring of 2016, is called The Inevitable. It's about understanding and embracing our technological future. My last book was Cool Tools, a catalog of possibilities. I love to talk about great tools for empowering individuals to make things happen.



Ben Casnocha

POPULAR ▾

Kevin, in an interview once you said something like: "You really don't want to a billionaire. I know a lot of them. You don't want that life." What are the risks/costs/downsides of being super wealthy as you see it? And what's the ideal amount of money to have?

▲ 7 [SHARE](#)

3 MONTHS AGO



Kevin Kelly

[@bencasnocha](#) Success makes it hard for a person to move away from a local

peak onto whatever newer and higher has come along. If you have a billion dollars, those dollars demand attention and energy that takes away attention from something small, and marginal -- but the next big thing. You might think a billion dollars would make one more risk friendly, but it usually does the opposite. And if you are a good person, the weight and duty of being responsible with the billions you have becomes a burden. And then it almost becomes criminal to pass that burden onto your kids. So what do you do with it, but pay more attention to the billions. It is very hard not to have it run your life.

▲ 7  [THANK KEVIN](#)

3 MONTHS AGO



Kyle Lee — Seeking, in the world.

[@kevin2kelly](#) Sounds like risk aversion. I wonder if there are any studies looking at this on the mega million dollar scale.

▲ UPVOTE  SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO



Corley — Product Hunt

[@kevin2kelly](#) Based on this logic, do you believe Bill and Melinda Gates are doing the right thing or are simply dealing with their responsibility as billionaires?

▲ UPVOTE  SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO



Erik Torenberg — Product Hunt

Thanks for joining us today Kevin!

Q: You mentioned in a recent podcast with Tim Ferriss that you see a need for a new mythology to better reconcile the rapid advancements in technology with the actualities of human experience.

What does that look like? Where does one start?

▲ 5  SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO



Kevin Kelly

[@eriktorenberg](#) Thank you Erik for hosting me here. I aim to be useful. On new mythologies: Individuals don't create them; they are collectively and unconsciously built. But we can salute them as individuals. We can highlight myths we like and find helpful, and in that way feed the ones that work. One of the myths I am playing with right now is the myth of a global superorganism -- that we are all part of something very large composed of all of us. If this myth were true it would have major ramifications -- although what precisely is not

clear.

▲ 2  THANK KEVIN

3 MONTHS AGO



Erik Torenberg — Product Hunt

@kevin2kelly Can you speak a bit more about your distrust of nationalism and how you hope that is viewed in the future as negatively as racism (as you said in that same episode)

▲ UPVOTE  SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO



Zander — Founder, Doorman

Hi Kevin, how has your farsighted perspective affected the way you raise your kids?

▲ 3  SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO



Kevin Kelly

@zanderadell I try to remember they are the ones who will choose my nursing home, and so I give them as much slack as I can.

▲ 4  THANK KEVIN

3 MONTHS AGO



Erik Torenberg — Product Hunt

What's a lie you tell yourself the most often?

▲ 2  SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO

Kevin Kelly

@eriktorenberg That I am a nice person.

▲ 4  THANK KEVIN

3 MONTHS AGO

Jay Mutzafi

Hi @kevin2kelly, thanks for doing this AMA!

I love what you do and your perspectives on things, but you said something on your last Tim Ferriss podcast appearance that really threw me off and I would love if you can clarify or expand on it. (Here is the link starting at 15:42 for those who want to listen - <https://overcast.fm/+BmGUBN8g0/1...>).

You said that one of the issues that might come up in the next 50 years is under population (due to to negative population growth) and that this will be a problem as there won't be enough people to drive the global economy or accommodate it. Your advice for folks is that if they have the resources they should have as many kids as they

want to, basically encouraging people to have more kids, if I understood you correctly.

Don't you think that just like this negative population growth is something people didn't predict and seemed to be the answer to the concern of overpopulation, the same thing might occur if it goes to far in the other direction? Things seem to balance themselves.

And is it not also making an assumption as to what type of economy we will have in 50 years and what it's needs will be? There is plenty of concern of not having enough jobs, or automation, software, and AI taking over jobs (as they should, if you ask me), in which case lower population might not only be ok but a perfect balance for how things might look in the future? Not to mention if radical life extension (a la Aubrey de Gray) is finally achieved, this too will balance out lower population growth?

Having more kids and increasing the population just so it fills the economy's needs just doesn't sound quite right to me. Would love if you could talk more about this.

Thanks again for everything you do!

Jay

▲ 3 ↗ SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO



Erik Torenberg — Product Hunt

@jaymutzafi fantastic question

▲ 1 ↗ SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO

Kevin Kelly

@jaymutzafi I don't think anyone should have kids to fill outside economic needs. You should have as many, or as few kids, as you want for general human reasons of joy, privilege, and some duty to keeping the game going. But you should have kids understanding that there is NO long-term overpopulation problem. The main population problem in 50 years will be underpopulation. This is not a surprise to demographers; only to the public.

▲ 1 🐦 THANK KEVIN

3 MONTHS AGO



Jay Mutzafi

@kevin2kelly Ah, that makes a lot more sense to me. I completely agree. Thanks for clarifying!

▲ UPVOTE ↗ SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO



Kevin Kelly

[@jaymutzafi](#) I will add to further clarify what I said in the earlier podcast: the audience here is privileged, but the very fact you have the time to be here. Since you are privilege, you have the resources to be good parents, so I urge you to be parents.

▲ UPVOTE [THANK KEVIN](#)

3 MONTHS AGO



Erik Torenberg — Product Hunt

[@jaymutzafi](#) [@kevin2kelly](#) is this conclusive? I felt as though this was the elephant in the room no one wanted to discuss, and it would come to something catastrophic at some point (e.g. some 21st century version of eugenics (gasp))

▲ 1 [SHARE](#)

3 MONTHS AGO



Jay Mutzafi

[@eriktorenberg](#) Can you elaborate on what you mean?

▲ UPVOTE [SHARE](#)

3 MONTHS AGO



Jay Mutzafi

[@kevin2kelly](#) I'm not sure I agree here, again unless I misunderstand what you mean. I do agree that people who have the resources should have as many kids as they wish (although I think people are not great at assessing this), however, being privileged (and having the resources) is perhaps necessary but not sufficient for being good parents (i'm not even sure about that). Having the resources I do consider to be a base minimum for having kids, but that seems to me to be far from what make people good parents. But what makes good parents is a complex debate. I would not urge people to be parents just because they have the resources. I think being emotionally and physiologically balanced and in a good place (relatively), is far more important and plays a much bigger role in raising kids well.

▲ UPVOTE [SHARE](#)

3 MONTHS AGO

Hash_tag_jeff — Book Marketing and PR - get in touch

Hi Kevin - what do you think of the Wired Magazine of today? Has it held up the vision you had when it began?

▲ 3 [SHARE](#)

3 MONTHS AGO



Kevin Kelly

[@jeffumbro](#) It's dangerous for former editors to speak about their past loves, but

Wired in the last 2 years no longer holds my interest as a reader.

▲ 2  THANK KEVIN

3 MONTHS AGO



Chris Kay — Co-Founder, Multiplicity

[@kevin2kelly](#) If you could start a new technology publication today what would you want it to look like or feel like (tone, content, focus?)

▲ UPVOTE  SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO



Kevin Kelly

[@chrisjkay](#) I ask myself that all the time. I have answers to all those questions but not the major one of how it would make money. To be honest, I would not want to be editing Wired today because it is almost an impossible job, to be intelligent, radical, edgy, and making enough money to keep going.

▲ UPVOTE  THANK KEVIN

3 MONTHS AGO



Melissa Joy Kong — Content, Product Hunt

I *loved* your podcast with [@tferriss](#). What most stuck with me was the idea that we're all fundamentally asking ourselves the same questions (regardless of perceived external success): "What's my role in all of this? Why am I here? What am I doing that no one else can?" How have you come to make sense of the purpose of this life (individually and collectively)?

▲ UPVOTE  SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO



Kevin Kelly

[@melissajoykong](#) Yep, your job in life is to discover your job, and it usually takes your whole life to figure this out.

▲ 3  THANK KEVIN

3 MONTHS AGO



Star Simpson — Orion

[@kevin2kelly](#) What are the top 3 technologies do you find most exciting today?

▲ 2  SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO

Kevin Kelly

[@starsandrobots](#) AI, VR, and QUANTIFIED SELF sensors.

▲ 1  THANK KEVIN

3 MONTHS AGO

Melissa Joy Kong — Content, Product Hunt

You have an absolutely insane list of accomplishments: <http://kk.org/about-me>. I'm sure one of the questions you frequently get asked is, "How do you DO it all?" Is there a certain mindset with which you approach your life and work that you believe enables you to create at such high quality and velocity?

▲ UPVOTE  SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO

Kevin Kelly

[@melissajoykong](#) My glib answer is that I don't watch TV. (Our kids grew up without it.) But that is not fair since I watch a LOT of documentaries (see my True Films site.) A better answer is that I work a lot, but my "work" is usually the kind of thing that also gives me deep pleasure, so I could say I also play a lot. The best answer is simply, the reality is that I have a lot of help. I hire people whenever I can. Mostly freelancers, not interns. I always pay fair. It took me a long while, but hiring others was a breakthrough. I am a big do-it-yourself believer and I still do a lot myself, but more and more I also hire the best expert or professional I can as well. That really ups one's productivity.

▲ 2  THANK KEVIN

3 MONTHS AGO

tim chang — Managing Director, Mayfield Fund

Kevin - you and I chatted at recent Arc Summit dinner about how the death of privacy may be inevitable in the networked and digital age. Is the Ashley Madison hack just the start of things to come in the era of "privacy is an illusion"? Also wondering if this means that prepaid anonymous debit and Visa cards will become the norm for online transactions!?! :)

▲ 2  SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO

Kevin Kelly

[@timechange](#) Yes, the Ashley Madison is a very good example of the rule that you should assume -- in all aspects of your life -- that you live in a transparent world. Sooner or later what you say in email will be shared, where you visit will be open, and what you say to others will be passed on.

▲ UPVOTE  THANK KEVIN

3 MONTHS AGO

Mike Coutermarsh — Code @ Product Hunt

[@kevin2kelly](#) Hi Kevin! Is there anything you do everyday to help you be so productive?

▲ 1  SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO

Kevin Kelly

@mscccc Read long articles, scientific papers, and books.

▲ 1 [THANK KEVIN](#)

3 MONTHS AGO

Kunal Bhatia — Experience & Product Designer

Hi @kevin2kelly. If you were working on a remake of the Minority Report (as Hollywood seems to like financing these projects now), what might be different in your rendition of the future? What's the next big issue we face ethically?

▲ UPVOTE [SHARE](#)

3 MONTHS AGO



Kevin Kelly

@kunalslab That's a great question! I haven't thought about that, but I should. Let's say we move it 25 years into the future, to 2075. Some of the policing of pre-crime might be through automated ways that prevent you from doing the crime, rather than human cops. There would also be much more AI ,and maybe robots. Here's the pitch: Minority Report meets Robocop.

▲ 2 [THANK KEVIN](#)

3 MONTHS AGO



Jeff Huber — Founder, Standard Cyborg

@kevin2kelly What should I read next to build on "Finite and Infinite Games" by James Carse?

▲ UPVOTE [SHARE](#)

3 MONTHS AGO



Kevin Kelly

@jeffreyhuber I wish I had a perfect second recommendation, but I'd have to say: The New Testament.

▲ 1 [THANK KEVIN](#)

3 MONTHS AGO



Jeff Huber — Founder, Standard Cyborg

@kevin2kelly :) that's the highest recommendation! -- I also checked out "Art & Fear" - I found it to be sort of an applicable companion to Carse. thanks for your work!

▲ UPVOTE [SHARE](#)

3 MONTHS AGO



Kevin Kelly

@jeffreyhuber Art & Fear is highly recommended. Best book I know of on marking art.



Joel Clark — Co-Founder, RVshare

If I recall correctly, you felled the trees and hewed the beams to construct your own house at one point. Do you think that we are headed towards a future where no one knows how to work with their hands, and do you see this as a problem, or at least a loss for humanity?

▲ 1  SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO

Kevin Kelly

[@joel_clark_](#) Yes, I did cut down trees to make a house. I've hauled rocks to make many walls. I've cut tile to make floors, etc. Using your own hands will continue to be an option, but only an option. Maker Faires and Etsy will continue to expand, but at the same time, they are never going to return to be the normal. Machine made things will be the norm. Artisan things will continue to be a higher priced option, or a do it yourself option, which is good.

▲ 1  THANK KEVIN

3 MONTHS AGO



Kyle Lee — Seeking, in the world.

I love how much credence you give to the power of myths. What are some myths that we can unite upon to shift towards a more sustainable agricultural system?

▲ UPVOTE  SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO



Kevin Kelly

[@chillfoodguy](#) I think in 200 years people will look back on eating wild animal flesh as unthinkable.

▲ 2  THANK KEVIN

3 MONTHS AGO



Erik Torenberg — Product Hunt

[@Kevin2kelly](#) What do you think of the following?

"In John Brockman's book, "This idea must die", Cesar Hidalgo, an assistant professor at MIT, argues that economic growth as a concept is ready for retirement. He then poses an interesting question about what would replace it? According to Cesar, economists mostly agree that economies didn't grow before the 19th century, and therefore he believes that economic growth as a phenomenon is also recent.

Cesar admits that the lingering question is what will replace economic growth as it

would leave a void in public speech.

Hans Obrist, a historian of art, argued that the overproduction of goods, rather than their scarcity, is one of our most fundamental problems. Yet, our economy functions by inciting us to produce more and more with each passing year.

He believes that the concept of unlimited and eternal growth is an idea that must die, and that this requires a shift in our values, from producing objects to selecting among those that already exist." - Wael Ghonim from parlio.com

▲ UPVOTE  SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO

Kevin Kelly

[@eriktorenberg](#) I suspect (believe?) that economic growth can continue infinitely (even with declining human population) but I think it will be a different model than what we know of as modern capitalism today. It won't rely on making more quantitatively, but more qualitatively. Not more wine, but better wine. It may also be a post-money world; that is money may lose some of its dominance. Status and reputation may become the new currency.

▲ 2  [THANK KEVIN](#)

3 MONTHS AGO

Yusuf Parak

Hi Kevin, I wasn't familiar with your work before this AMA but judging from your answers you seem to have an extreme focus on the intersection of intellectual pursuits, technology, long term thinking and philosophy which I find quite admirable.

Based on these concepts, what advice would you give young people from developing countries (or not) who want to "change the world" for the better (Cliched, I know)?

Much love from South Africa!

▲ UPVOTE  SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO

Kevin Kelly

[@yusufparak14](#) My advice is borrowed: Be the change you want to see.

▲ 2  [THANK KEVIN](#)

3 MONTHS AGO

Melissa Joy Kong — Content, Product Hunt

What question do you think not enough of us ask of ourselves? What question do you think not enough of us ask about the world?

Kevin Kelly

[@melissajoykong](#) What am I trying to maximize? At my funeral what will people remember about me?

▲ UPVOTE [THANK KEVIN](#)

3 MONTHS AGO

YOW — ceo

[@kevin2kelly](#) where is the internet going now? What is the next phase for commercial apps in your opinion?

▲ 1 [SHARE](#)

3 MONTHS AGO

Kevin Kelly

[@yow_internet](#) Don't know. I don't think in terms of apps.

▲ UPVOTE [THANK KEVIN](#)

3 MONTHS AGO

keren phillips — Co-founder, CMO - Weirdly

[@kevin2kelly](#) It's great having AMA opportunities with well-known, traditionally successful people. I'm always curious about who these people are interested in though. Who would YOU like to have access to for an AMA - any particular pockets of the world, or characters in society that you're curious about?

▲ UPVOTE [SHARE](#)

3 MONTHS AGO

Kevin Kelly

[@kerenyp](#) Living or dead? There's a bunch of dead notables I'd like to have over for dinner: Jesus, Tesla, Leonardo, and Thoreau. Among the living, I'd like to chat with JJ. Abrams, Bob Dylan, and Stephen Hawking.

▲ 1 [THANK KEVIN](#)

3 MONTHS AGO

Adam Viener — Chairman & Founder, Imwave.com

There seems to be a lot of "noise" online today. How does one cut through the noise when launching a new product?

▲ UPVOTE [SHARE](#)

3 MONTHS AGO



Kevin Kelly

[@adamviener](#) It's tough and it will be tougher. It it a little easier if you make it a really great product that people want.

▲ 1 [THANK KEVIN](#)

3 MONTHS AGO



Teresa Hammerl — Socialmediapreneur

What did you learn as a photographer in Asia?

▲ UPVOTE SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO



Kevin Kelly

[@colazionearoma](#) I caught a bad case of optimism, despite the fact that I was photographing the disappearing traditions. I learned that humans everywhere are extremely adaptable and ready to improve their lot. They leave these beautiful villages with organic food and strong families to come to crowded slums in overburdened cities because they have more opportunities - which is exactly what I would do if I were born there.

▲ 1 THANK KEVIN

3 MONTHS AGO



Corley — Product Hunt

[@kevin2kelly](#) thank you for joining. I remember when Wired was this new magazine on the rack - I loved reading it from the beginning.

What do you think is the most interesting untold story and who do you think should tell it?

▲ UPVOTE SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO



Kevin Kelly

[@corleyh](#) I'd like to hear about the people in China who censor the internet and what they are thinking. Wired?

▲ 1 THANK KEVIN

3 MONTHS AGO



Erik Torenberg — Product Hunt

re: Wired, Long Now, + a host of other projects, you have so much to be proud of, but what's something you're not proud of and what would you have done differently?

▲ UPVOTE SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO

Kevin Kelly

[@eriktorenberg](#) Good question. I've tried really hard to do only things I am proud of, but this article is kind of embarrassing, especially today. The Roaring Zeros. <http://archive.wired.com/wired/a...>

▲ UPVOTE THANK KEVIN

3 MONTHS AGO

Cameron Woodward

Do you have an opinion on radical life extension — and if so, how does that effect the myth of the global superorganism.

▲ UPVOTE  SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO

Kevin Kelly

[@cameronwoodward](#) I think wide progress on life extension will be very slow. There is no Moore's Law operating in this sector, so while life will be extended it will be much slower than the internet runs, because life runs on evolutionary time.

▲ UPVOTE  THANK KEVIN

3 MONTHS AGO

Tyler Link — Founder, Doodle

[@kevin2kelly](#) What opinions do you hold that most diverge from the consensus?

▲ UPVOTE  SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO

Kevin Kelly

[@tylerlink](#) I think there are directions in evolution.

▲ UPVOTE  THANK KEVIN

3 MONTHS AGO

Erik Torenberg — Product Hunt

What's the biggest thing you've changed your mind about in the last year or so?

▲ 3  SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO

Kevin Kelly

Thanks everyone for your great questions and chance to chat. Thanks Erik and team for having me. Gotta go. Till next time, Peace.

▲ 2  THANK KEVIN

3 MONTHS AGO

Erik Torenberg — Product Hunt

[@kevin2kelly](#) Everyone - Please welcome me in giving [@kevin2kelly](#) a HUGE thanks for taking the time to do a Product Hunt LIVE Chat and more so for his work.

If you want more Kevin Kelly, we spoke on the PH podcast for 1.5 hours here:
<https://soundcloud.com/product-h...>

Also, reminder to check out his graphic novel, The Silver Cord, here:

<http://www.amazon.com/The-Silver...>

▲ 1  SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO

Jay Mutzafi

[@eriktorenberg](#) [@kevin2kelly](#) That was awesome. thanks you both!

▲ UPVOTE  SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO

Than Tibbetts — UX developer

What is the coolest of all tools? What's the one thing that consistently amazes you, or makes your life better, or simply astounds you that humans ever lived without it?

▲ 2  SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO

Chris Kay — Co-Founder, Multiplicity

Kevin, with the automation of knowledge based jobs (Legal, Accounting, etc) by decentralized and machine learning systems, what would you consider to be the most important skill or trait for people have to outpace automation or maintain a competitive advantage over automation?

▲ 2  SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO

Danny Quick

16 years later, "New Rules, New Economy" continues to be a seminal work, and only seems to get more and more relevant every year. If you had to release a new, "updated and expanded" version, what changes would you make, if any?

▲ 2  SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO

Kevin Kelly

I'll be here the rest of the hour.

▲ 2  [THANK KEVIN](#)

3 MONTHS AGO



Emmanuel Amberber — EIR @YourStoryAfrica

Hi [@kevin2kelly](#), how did you come up with "1,000 True Fans" concept? Has the number changed over the past half a decade as Facebook narrowed down the six degrees of separation to four?

▲ 1  SHARE

3 MONTHS AGO



Mark Cialone

[@kevin2kelly](#) I am really interested in the future coexistence of digital and hard mediums. Especially ads. Who in your opinion is on the forefront at a data capture level and big data/machine learning perspective to win in attribution of digital and non-digital campaign management to make retailers more effective at targeting?

▲ UPVOTE [SHARE](#)

3 MONTHS AGO



Stephanie Dehennin — Illustrator @ Poodlesoup.be

[@kevin2kelly](#) One of the most mindblowing experiments I've seen (online) is Loren Carpenter's SIGGRAPH experiment in 91. I still don't understand what happened there. Would you care to share your view on that, now almost 15 years later?

▲ UPVOTE [SHARE](#)

3 MONTHS AGO



Danielle Newnham — Founder, The Junto Network

Kevin, what do you say to those who believe robots will take all our jobs?

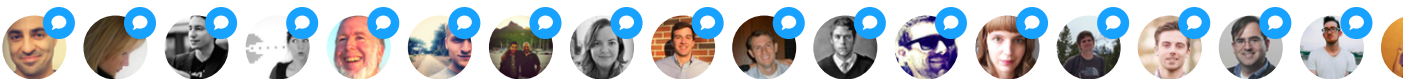
▲ UPVOTE [SHARE](#)

3 MONTHS AGO

[Login to continue.](#)

SHARE

PARTICIPANTS



MADE BY KEVIN KELLY



Cool Tools: A Catal... ▲ 21

Curated selection of the best t...

Cool Tools - Ryan ... ▲ 19

Ryan Holiday talks about a fe...

UPCOMING LIVE CHATS