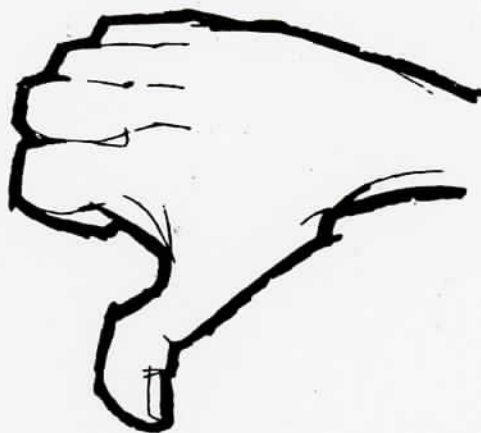


From Stan Platt



Why nobody loves a pessimist

A pessimist will tell you that he can always predict failure, and so he can. But maybe you should tell him that sometimes you can predict success, because you're involved in its making.

Pessimists say "it can't happen", when it will; "the boss won't buy it", and he does; "we've never done it that way", but now we are.

Once the world was flat. Now it isn't. Once there were 92 elements. Now there are not.

Orville Wright flew his airplane 120 feet. Marconi sent his signal across the ocean, and Oldsmobile advertised that it was cheaper to buy a car than feed and stable a horse. And it was.

Dr. Norman Vincent Peale called this triumph of "can do" the Power of Positive Thinking.

Beethoven was deaf. Edison's grades were poor in school. Churchill lisped during childhood. But men like

these, men who might have been counted out before they even began, somehow turned history against pessimism. And now nobody loves a pessimist anymore.

Tell a man it's impossible to live on Mars, or farm in the sea, or cure cancer and he may put you in the same class with those who laughed at Buck Rogers, or Ford or Salk. Yes, pessimism is a dying art.

People are learning not to accept the impossible, the improbable, the inevitable, nor the prediction of defeat or failure.

They are also learning that for one man to move the world, he must first move himself.

To the man who is spurred on by "it won't work", or "it's a lost cause", or "it's impossible", the future will give its own rewards. For, as John Paul Jones said to the skeptics who asked him to strike his flag, and waited for his words of defeat, "We have not yet begun to fight."

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