

Will Steve Rest In Peace?

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I am quite aware of the extent to which millions of people across the world are attached to Apple's "i-gadget" family (almost like adaptors, connectors, or chargers), and can therefore sense the depths of their shock and sense of disconnect at the tragic passing of the "i-guru" – Steven Paul Jobs. In fact, many of them received the news of Steve's death on one of his own inventions, which made their grief all the more poignant.

Although I am an unrepentant and incorrigible "i-illiterate", I found myself inescapably drawn to Steve, back in the late 1980s, when I saw the first Mac of my life at an air-conditioned DTP bureau in a city in southern India. Mac's GUI, icons (in place of nasty chains of command), colour graphics, mouse, feather-touch keyboard ("Life is smoother since we can touch instead of push"), sleek design and several other cool features struck me like some strange magic, and I can recall times when Mac was the apple of the computer world's "i," and its SA (Sex Appeal) and price-tag were so high that snobs would carry Mac just to make a fashion statement.

But, in my case, more than the machine itself, its prodigious maker mesmerized me, and Steve breaking conventions impressed me more than Steve making inventions (or reinventions). Steve's traumatic early childhood experiences, particularly his unwed parents giving him up for adoption; his dropping out of college; his passion for calligraphy and typographic fonts; his garage start-up; his conversion to Zen Buddhism (and consequent head-shaving); his counterculture experiments; his dismissal from his own Apple Computers; his counter-challenge to cancer (the rebel's own cells rebelled against him, and in the beginning, he shunned mainstream medicine) – there was nothing about him, in style as well as substance, that was not sensational and maverick.

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In my view, Steve was more an iConoclast than an iCon, and I loved seeing him defying tradition more than defining tastes and trends. To me, Steve was a person of transterrestrial brilliance, and an archetypal representative of an uber-smart technological civilization to come.

What "NeXT"? Maybe some insanely ingenious nerds will keep Steve-the-Geek's celebrated inventive legacy alive, and present the world with i-peds, i-pids, i-puds, and other game-changing gizmos to carry users' sensory experiences still deeper. But, I personally look forward to the advent of a "pan-creative" Steve-like genius who will present a cure for pancreatic and other pernicious cancers. Also, I anxiously anticipate the emergence of a Pixar that can physically reanimate the likes of Steve Jobs!!

It is now time to wish "RIP" to Steve, but I would prefer to refrain from doing so, because I know Steve is not the type to ever "rest in peace." Indeed, he will already be trying to i-connect to his successors from his pad in "outer cyberspace"! Steve will always stay logged in to the memory systems of his countless fans, and his life and mind will continue to inspire them as long as history lasts.

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