

Response to Technopoly

This article describes the mindset the author has dubbed “Technopoly”. The article describes various aspects of Technopoly and why they are apparently mistaken. The author cites various technological developments and pieces of literature through history to back up his arguments.

The author describes Tehnopoly as the belief that new technologies equate to human progress and that technology has no affect on its surroundings other then its intended purpose. At first the author brings up some interesting and valid points. One of which is that some creators of new technology believe that they can foresee the effect of the technology on society. This is a good point; no one can tell exactly what impact some new invention will have. Who could have known that “Google” would become a household name?

The author spends most of the rest of the article describing how technology usually benefits society in some way while detracting from it in another way. He tries to assure the reader that he is not a “Technophobe” (someone who is opposed to new technologies) but that is just what his arguments imply. He explains how new technologies change their surroundings in profound ways and indicates that this is something to be avoided. This is the point in the article where I disagree with the author. Technology causing change in society may not necessarily be a bad thing.

His main argument centers around the effect Computers have had on society. He explains how Computers are competing in schools with books and are preventing oral community-oriented teaching in favor of isolated work. He also explains how it has detracted from our need to memorize facts since we can now search for these facts via a

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computer. These changes are somewhat misleading and hide the bigger picture. While it is true that computers are changing society, the change is beneficial and not as destructive as the author implies. Teaching with computers allows for a wide range of new possibilities such as using PowerPoint presentation in class or being able to work with classes across the country via the internet. Similarly computers may be a way to prevent memorization but they also allow for more people to share knowledge. Someone who is in no way a doctor can visit WebMD online and get a basic diagnosis of a sickness rather than having to guess.

I agree with the author in that no one can foresee what impact a new technology will have on society. However I disagree that the impact will always detract from society. The change technology brings will quite often be a welcome one.