

Sociology 325: Technology and Society
Spring Semester 2007

M-W-F 11:00-11:50

This class looks at how particular technologies only ‘work’ in appropriate environmental and social contexts, how they benefit and harm different social groups in different ways, and how their development is influenced as a result. It also considers how the tendency to ignore these social aspects of technology leads to apocalyptic or utopian predictions when major changes occur. Specific topics include pre-industrial versus industrial and post-industrial production, transport, communication, and architecture. The class also covers contemporary issues of the digital divide, online socialization and democracy, embryo research, ‘cyborg’ selves, and the possible dehumanization and/or destruction of the world. Students are required to attend class and participate in discussions. They will also have to write a 15-20 page final research paper, based on a midterm prospectus and a 12th-week draft.

Readings.

All readings are required. They are coded as follows;

(B) Book on reserve. The books we are going to read most of (Pacey, Schivelbusch, Warschauer) are also available for purchase at the bookstore.

(C) Copy on reserve.

(J) Available in pdf format on JSTOR.

Week 1: Technology vs. Humanity

Wed. Jan. 24

- J. Ellul “Techniques,” and “Total Integration,” pp3-22 and 410-427 in *The Technological Society* (BC) T14.E553 38pp

Fri. Jan. 26

- A. Feenberg “The Bias of Technology,” Ch3 in *Transforming Technology* (B) T14.F43 26pp

Week 2: Pre-Industrial Technology and Society

Mon. Jan. 29

- J. Diamond “The Rise and Spread of Food,” Chs4-8 (not 9-10) in *Guns, Germs, and Steel* (B) HM206 .D48 72pp

Wed. Jan. 31

- A. Pacey “An age of Asian technology, AD 700-1100,” “Before the Mongols,” and “Movements West. 1150-1490,” Chs 1-3 in *Technology in World Civilization* (B) 57pp

Fri. Feb. 2

- F. Braudel “The Spread of Technology: Revolutions and Delays,” Ch6 of *Capitalism and Material Life*, OR Ch6 of *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century, Volume 1: The Structures of Everyday Life* (B) HC45 .B7312 or HC51 .B67413 41pp

Week 3: The Industrial Revolution I: Production, Communication, Nation-Building

Mon. Feb. 5

- A. Pacey “Three Industrial Movements, 1700-1815,” and “Guns and Rails: Asia, Britain, and America,” Chs7-8 in *Technology in World Civilization* (B) 43pp

Wed. Feb. 7

- B. Anderson “Cultural Roots,” and “The Origins of National Consciousness,” Chs 2-3 in *Imagined Communities* (B) JC311 .A656 37pp

Fri. Feb. 9

- I. Hacking “The Argument,” “The Doctrine of Necessity,” Public Amateurs, Secret Bureaucrats,” and “Bureaux,” chs1-4 in *The Taming of Chance* (BC) BD595 .H33 34pp
- W. Kula Chs1-5 in *Measures and Men* (C) 25pp

Week 4: The Industrial Revolution II: Machines, Time, Speed

Mon. Feb. 12

- W. Schivelbusch Chs1-4 in *The Railway Journey* (B) HE1021 .S3413 69pp

Wed. Feb. 14

- W. Schivelbusch Chs5-7 in *The Railway Journey* (B) HE1021 .S3413 59pp

Fri. Feb. 16

- W. Schivelbusch Chs8-13 in *The Railway Journey* (B) HE1021 .S3413 68pp

Week 5: The Industrial Revolution III: Efficiency, Control

Mon. Feb. 19

- R. Edwards “Experiments, Beginnings, and Failures,” and “Technical Control: An All-Round Adjuster and Equalizer,” Chs6-7 in *Contested Terrain* (BC) HD6957.U6 E35 40pp

Wed. Feb. 21

- D. Noble “The Road Not Taken,” Ch7 in *Forces of Production* (BC) TJ1189 .N63 50pp

Fri. Feb. 23

- M. Burawoy “Thirty Years of Making Out,” Ch4 in *Manufacturing Consent* (B) HD6955 .B85 30pp
- B. Hamper Ch4 in *Rivthead: Tales From the Assembly Line* (B) HD8073.H26 A3 24pp

Week 6: Post-Industrial Society?

Mon. Feb. 26

- S. Vallas “Rethinking Post-Fordism: The Meaning of Workplace Flexibility”
Sociological Theory 17:1, pp.68-101 (J) 34pp
- P. Meiksins & P. Whalley “Controlling Technical Workers in Alternative Work Arrangements”
Ch11 in R. Baldoz et. al. *The Critical Study of Work* (BC) HD4854 .C75 23pp

Wed. Feb. 28

- D. Knights et. al. “Allegories of Creative Destruction: Technology and Organization in Narratives of the e-Economy,” Ch6 in *Virtual Society?* (C) 16pp
- D. Mason et. al “Getting Real About Surveillance and Privacy at Work,” Ch8 in *Virtual Society?* (C) 16pp

Fri. Mar. 2

- P. Norris “Civic Society,” Ch9 in *Digital Divide: Civic Engagement, Information Poverty, and the Internet Worldwide* (BC) 17pp

Week 7: Humanity vs. Technology

Mon. Mar. 5

- L. Winner “Building the Better Mousetrap, “ and “Decentralization Clarified,” Chs4-5 in *The Whale and The Reactor* (B) T14 .W54 36pp

Wed. Mar. 7

- L. Winner “Mythinformation,” Ch6 in *The Whale and The Reactor* (B) T14 .W54 23pp

Fri. Mar. 9

- A. Pacey “Survival Technology in the Twentieth Century,” Ch11 in *Technology in World Civilization* (B) 21pp

Week 8

BREAK!

Week 9: Invention and Uninvention

Mon. Mar. 19

- Bijker, Wiebe "The Social Construction of Bakelite" Ch in *The Social Construction of Technological Systems* (C) 28pp

Wed. Mar. 21

- C. Bazerman “Boasts, Deceptions, and Promises,” and “Lighting New York: Urban Politics and Pedestrian Appearances,” Chs8 and 11 in *The Languages of Edison’s Light* (B) TK4131.B39 32pp

Fri. Mar. 23

- N. Perrin *Giving Up the Gun: Japan's Reversion to the Sword, 1543-1879* (C) 50pp

Week 10: Cities

Mon. Mar. 26

- P. Kasinitz Chs2, 3, and 5 in *Metropolis: Center and Symbol of Our Times* (B) HT330 .M454 47pp

Wed. Mar. 28

- P. Kasinitz Chs, 7, 8, and 15 in *Metropolis: Center and Symbol of Our Times* (B) HT330 .M454 51pp

Fri. Mar. 30

- M. Davis "Beyond *Bladerunner*," Ch.7 in *Ecology of Fear: Los Angeles and the Imagination of Disaster* (B) HN80.L7 D37 57pp

Week 11: Bodies

Mon. Apr. 2

- M. Mulkay "The Myth of Frankenstein," and "Embryo Research and the Slippery Slope," Chs8-9 in *The Embryo Research Debate* (BC) RG133.5 .M846 39pp

Wed. Apr. 4

- D. Nelkin & S. Lindee "Absolution: Locating Responsibility and Blame," and "Genetic Essentialism Applied," Chs7-8 in *The DNA Mystique: The Gene as a Cultural Icon* (BC) QH430 .N46 41pp

Fri. Apr. 6

- D. Haraway "A Cyborg Manifesto," Ch8 in *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women* (BC) GN365.9 .H37 33pp

Week 12: The Internet I: The Digital Divide

Mon. Apr. 9

- M. Warschauer Chs1-3 in *Technology and Social Interaction: Rethinking the Digital Divide* (B) HN49.I56 W37 79pp

Wed. Apr. 11

- M. Warschauer Chs4-5 in *Technology and Social Interaction: Rethinking the Digital Divide* (B) HN49.I56 W37 71pp

Fri. Apr. 13

- M. Warschauer Chs6-7 in *Technology and Social Interaction: Rethinking the Digital Divide* (B) HN49.I56 W37 63pp

Week 13: The Internet II: Online Life

Mon. Apr. 16

- Wellman & Haythornthwaite “The Internet in Everyday Life,” pp.3-44 in *The Internet in Everyday Life* (C) 33pp

Wed. Apr. 18

- S. Turkle “Tinysex and Gender trouble,” and “Virtuality and Its Discontents,” Chs8-9 in *Life on the Screen* (BC) QA76.9.C66 T87 45pp

Fri. Apr. 20

- J. Dibbell “A Rape in Cyberspace,” pp.293-315 in *Internet Dreams* (BC) ZA3250.U6 I58 23pp

Week 14: Destroying Everything

Mon. Apr. 23

- K. Eriskon “Three Mile Island: A New Species of Trouble,” and “Hiroshima: Of Accidental Judgments and Casual Slaughters,” Chs4 and 6 in *A New Species of Trouble* (C) 37pp

Wed. Apr. 25

- C. Perrow “Living With High-Risk Systems,” Ch9 in *Normal Accidents* (BC) T54 .P47 49pp

Fri. Apr. 27

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