Technology & Society

ENTC 3020

Society is...

as defined by
Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary
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Society

3a. An enduring and cooperating social group whose members have developed organized patterns of relationships through interaction with one another.

Society

3b. A community, nation, or broad grouping of people having common traditions, institutions, and collective activities and interests.

Civilization is...

as defined by
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Civilization

1a. A relatively high level of cultural and technological development.

   – *Specif*: the stage of cultural development at which writing and the keeping of written records is attained.

Civilization

1b. The culture characteristic of a particular time or place.

2. The process of becoming civilized.

Civilization

3a. Refinement of thought, manner, and taste.

3b. A situation of urban comfort.

Technology

- Three Points of View
- Emmanuel G. Mesthene from *Technology and Culture* 10:4 (1969)
- "Establishment" Perspective

Technology is a Blessing

- Utopian promise.
- Technology is "good."
- Motor of all progress.
- Permanent prosperity.
- Humans are in command.

Technology is a Curse

- Robs people of jobs, security, and privacy.
- Autonomous and uncontrollable.
- Fosters materialistic values.
- Destructive to religion.

Technology is of No Concern

- Recognized factor in social change.
- Education & communication make people more adaptable.
- This POV ignores the massive effect of new technologies.

Inventions

- No invention can be invented until the culture can support it.
- Technology is not independent of the society in which it develops.

Inventions

- Simply because we *can* does not mean we *should.*
- Desirable technologies are sometimes not pursued because of ignorance.

Technologies Should:

- Reduce costs
- Increase efficiencies
- Reduce problems

Government & Technology

- When social costs get too high, governments step in to regulate technologies

- Regulations limit individual freedom of decision making

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Political resolutions of technology-based problems are typically ineffective.

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