Redeeming Technology: A Deepening

By Wing Tai LEUNG

Dec 2, 2017.

Lumina College & HKU.

Deep-Structure of Technology

Technology Form Shapes Consciousness

- Example of Writing
- Synchronous sound on film drama
- Photoshop
- Calculator
- Smart phone communication

Technology as Tool or Ruling Over Us

- Minimal use of technology
- Optimal use of technology
- Massive use of technology
- Efficiency through technology
- Living dictated by technology
- Addiction to technology
- Any life without technology
- Further consideration in Ivan Illich's Convivial Tools, Lewis Mumford's megamachine, Ellul's technological system.

Inner Logic of Technology

- *La Technique* by Jacques Ellul

- Technological system

- Technological habitat: Humiliation of the Word

- Logic of machine culture for efficiency, maximization, effectiveness, systemization, institutionization, minimal human engagement, human as augment to machine, human marginalized, human annihilated.

- Further discussion in Lauren's presentation

Should What Can be Done be Done?

- Any limit to technological applications
- Applying conditioning to animals or humans
- Applying bio-weapons experiment to prisoners of war
- Human as guinea pigs?
- Medicine trials in Africa
- Human dignity concern and post-human dignity
- Where to draw the line? Human cloning, gene splicing, transgenic, eugenics.
- Further discussion in John Wyatt's discussion

Gender Bias in Technology

- Male bias of technology toward conquest and excellence
- Example of the Concorde airplanes
- Female bias towards community and family
- Limited progress in culinary, gardening, and home care technology
- Tools for human or human for machine
- Tragedy of pregnancy and childbirth technology

Tools for Conviviality: Ivan Illich

- Society can be destroyed when further growth of mass production renders the milieu hostile, when it extinguishes the free use of the natural abilities of society's members, when it isolate people from each other and locks them into a man-made shell, when it undermines the texture of community by promoting extreme social polarization and splintering specialization, or when cancerous acceleration enforces social change at a rate that rules out legal, cultural, and political precedents as formal guidelines to prevent behavior…

Convivial Tools

- Mass production… leads to specialization of functions, institutionalization of values and centralization of power and turns people into the accessories of bureaucracies or machines.

- Two watersheds: Around 1913 and 1955. The first wave that used modern technology to enable better living, medicine for health, literacy and education, production and others. The second wave with excessive use of technology that enslave human into a function of machines. Human excluded as nonprofessionals from medical care, education, and politics. Cars no longer effective mass transportation.

In Search of Convivial Tools

- Tools that enlarge the range of each person's competence, control and initiative, limited only by other individuals' claim to an equal range of power and freedom.

- Beyond the limit: Machine enslaves than replaces slaves. Education fits people into man-made environment as ward and prison.

- Triadic relationship between persons, tools, and a new collectivity.

- Convivial for community, participation, celebration.

False solution to dominance in technology

- Cure of management through more management
- Cure of specialized research through interdisciplinary research
- Cure of education by expanded curriculum

- Real solution: Invert the deep-structure of tools to guarantee people their right to work with high, independence, and effectiveness. People need tools to work than tools that 'work' for them. Human are not consumer by nature, but creator.