English 345: Cine/Technology
Technology Defined

Dictionary Definition

Source:
"technology." *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*. 4th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000. 9
Jan. 2007 <http://www.bartleby.com/61>.

Technology: 1a. The application of science, especially to industrial or commercial objectives. b. The scientific method and material used to achieve a commercial or industrial objective. 2. Electronic or digital products and systems considered as a group: a store specializing in office technology. 3. Anthropology The body of knowledge available to a society that is of use in fashioning implements, practicing manual arts and skills, and extracting or collecting materials.

Encyclopedia Definition

Source:
"technology." *Encyclopædia Britannica*. 2007. Encyclopædia Britannica Online. 9 Jan. 2007
<http://www.search.eb.com/eb/article-9071527>.

Technology: the application of scientific knowledge to the practical aims of human life or, as it is sometimes phrased, to the change and manipulation of the human environment.

Reference Book Article

Source:
Dunlavy, Colleen A. "Technology."   *The Oxford Companion to United States History*. Paul S. Boyer, ed. Oxford University Press 2001. Oxford Reference Online. Oxford University Press. University of Washington. 9 Jan. 2007 <http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t119.e1511>

The meaning of "technology" has undergone a revolution over the last two centuries. Although the term was familiar in German (*Technologie*) in the late Colonial Era, it came into limited use in English only as the American economy was beginning to industrialize. In 1829 Harvard professor Jacob Bigelow entitled his treatise "on the application of the sciences to the useful arts" Elements of Technology because he sought a "sufficiently expressive" word for his subject and "practical men" were employing it. Through 1900, however, its use was confined mainly to technical manuals or to the names of new institutes of technology. Most Americans favored the all-encompassing phrase "the useful arts" or the narrower "mechanical arts."

"Technology" came into currency in its modern sense in the early twentieth century. Popularized by Thorstein Veblen in the 1920s and in 1930s debates about technological unemployment, it was understood in an anthropological sense as "useful knowledge" but confined to the largely male preserves of industry and engineering. Veblen and others also stressed the machine-like, autonomous nature of the emerging "industrial system" (which they believed engineers were uniquely suited to head). As engineers strove to enhance their status, meanwhile, they embraced the term but defined it as "applied science," closely allied with "pure" or "basic" science. Although these conceptions continued to govern popular thought, a profoundly social understanding of technology took shape among scholars after the 1960s. Historians of technology, organized professionally in the 1950s, disputed the "applied science" definition, stressing instances where useful artifacts or processes were developed without a foundation of scientific understanding. This finding was reinforced by a federal study of weapons development (Project Hindsight, 1966). Also rejecting technological determinism and autonomy, historians explored the role of social choice and human agency in technological change, and inspired by gender and race studies, challenged the focus on white-male-dominated industry and engineering that had characterized earlier conceptions of "technology."

The result was a broader view of technology as ways of "making and doing things" that, at its most expansive, encompasses all ways of shaping the real world—natural and social—to human ends. Technology so understood signifies a thoroughly social process that touches all human beings, and whose history is inevitably bound up with questions of power and authority.