

# Technological determinism: lag

Technology



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Technological determinism: Lag - Technology advances but society lags - Can be technological, not just social - Social and political pressures can impose restrictions on technology - Technology is always pushing forward, while everything else drags behind - William Ogburn: "There is often a delay or lag in the adaptive culture after the material culture has changed" (Nye, p. 26) - Alvin Toffler ... argued that technological change had accelerated to the point that people could scarcely keep up" (Nye, p. 27) Technological determinism: Convergence - Technology creates social and cultural convergence - Convergence doesn't always happen - Technology and use can go down different paths and have unequal effects (remember Levittown) - "The future is already here - it's just not very evenly distributed." William Gibson - An argument that different social groups will become more similar as each makes use of similar technologies in similar ways - According to David Riesman: "It seemed obvious that the more technological a society became, the more uniform was its cultural life", (Nye, p. 69) Technological determinism: Inevitability - Technology is inevitable - Technology is not always inevitable - Societies can reject technology (rejection of the US SST) - Various versions: technology is autonomous, unstoppable, out of control; technology is an end to itself, "progress is inevitable" - According to Jacques Ellul: "'Technique' had permeated all aspects of society. [It is] an autonomous and unrelenting substitution of means for ends. Modern society's vast ensemble of techniques had become self-engendering and had accelerated out of humanity's control." (Nye, p. 28) - According to Theodore Roszak: Technocracy is society governed by technical experts appealing to scientific knowledge; it is "'ideologically invisible'" if you accept rationality and efficiency without question (Nye, p. 29)