

# Amusing ourselves to death

[Sociology](#), [Communication](#)



Amusing Ourselves to Death Neil Postman's main thesis: the medium controls the message, "medium is the message." (p. 8) And how the changes in the medium in which we obtain our news and information cause the changes in society's communication, exchange of ideas, our culture and language; mainly the public discourse. In according to this, Postman argues that every medium of communication has the power to "direct us to organize our minds and integrate our experience of the world...it imposes itself on our consciousness and social institution." (p. 18) Television has become the basis of everything that is happening in current times. There is no subject of public interest—politics, news, education, religion, science, sports—that does not find its way to television and it is subject to be shaped by the biases of television. Through television we learn what telephone and electricity system to use, what movies to watch, where to eat and travel, what book, records, or magazines to buy, and what radio and programs to listen to. Television "arranges our communication environment for us in ways that no other medium has the power to do" so. (p. 78) Postman views were correct then, that electronic media is reshaping our culture. Postman targets Television as the main source of "our culture's principal mode of knowing about itself." (p. 92) He also refers to the next generations of technological innovations, even though he mainly targets TV in his books he foresaw other forms of mediums that would have the same effect in our society. Postman states that American television has devoted to supply its audience with entertainment and slowly created an appetite to which everything that we consume should be presented in a form of entertainment. Television has "made entertainment itself the natural format for the

representation of all experience" and the problem is that " all subject matter is presented as entertaining. " (p. 87) Television broadcasts combines programs that are meant to educate with ones to entertain mainly to keep an audience watching. Postman states that, " As television takes its place at the center, the seriousness, clarity and above all, value of public discourse dangerously declines. " (p. 29) Work sources Postman, Neil. " Amusing Ourselves to Death Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business. " Penguin Book. 1995.