

# History



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History It is rightly perceived that the only constant thing in the present world of today is the word 'change'. Not just today, changes have been part of human lives since the early days. Among the various form of changes, influential impacts are brought in with the technological changes. The change of a technology essentially obsoletes the older versions. As and when new versions of technological solutions are developed or invented, it is obvious that lot many resources becomes irrelevant. The human resource has to be trained again and also various related services of the older version might not work. Yet, new inventions and technological up-gradations are important.

Neil Postman has identified a framework that has five factors that he thought is essential for any technological development. The experts feel that the frame work holds good for almost all of the technologies. The five factors are as follows:

Every technology change is a trade-off as it has a price associated with it. The equation says that higher the degree of technology, greater is the price. As the new technology comes in, it has certain advantages and disadvantages associated with it. But those advantages and dis-advantages are never distributed equally among the population and always there are certain gainers and some losers when a new technology is introduced. The new technology always comes aligned with certain new message and that could be social, political and epistemological. The medium changes with every new technology.

The change that is brought in by the new technology is essentially ecological and therefore it should not be left to the hands of the few assuming it to be additive.

New technology is often assumed to be the gift of God, but it is created by human and therefore the good or bad affects would depend upon human's actions and decisions.

Western America had been famous for mines. It was in 1848, when James Marshall found gold at a ranch in Northern California. Soon, whole lot of Americans gathered in the region in search of luck through minerals. Some mined for gold while others for silver and other precious minerals. But the technology of mining changed soon. The crude wooden sluices that were used previously were replaced by hydraulic mining that used water jets to break the earth.

Such a change impacted greatly over the economy and the society which can be co-related with the Neil Postman's framework of new technology. As the first principle goes, the new technology called for huge investments and many of the small miners could not bear the cost and they lost the mines to big Western companies. The new technology was advantageous for the big established players and the companies as it called for huge investments. The entrepreneurs who dreamt of making it big through mines were definitely in the disadvantageous positions. The message (third principle) that came with the new technology was that more power was bestowed in the hands of the powerful and the rich with sound infrastructure only could take advantage of it. Though Postman says that the power should not be left to the few, in his fourth principle, most unfortunately same happened. It was only the big companies that could survive with only few individuals like Philip O'Rourke, with the involvement of hydraulic machines in place of wooden instruments for mining. The last principle was followed as it was the management of companies that decided where to mine and how much to mine. The mining

was never an act of the God but was based upon decisions and actions of humans.

#### Bibliography

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