

technology, although many do feel the pull of its promise. The claims of social justice will not likely be met until the more privileged ones, the middle and higher classes of these industrialized countries, come to terms with the questionable character of technology's promise. So, the critique of technology I am developing here does not apply to those in poverty. It applies only to those who have too much.

For these latter, technology has made good on its promise in important ways. My grandmother's father died from what she believes was pneumonia when she was eleven, leaving her and her younger sister to perform heroic feats to save the cattle from starvation in the drought times of an extended winter that followed. Often hitching the team up before dawn and returning hours after dark, especially in winter, her family took an entire day to get to and from town sixteen miles away. For the privileged, then, many past hardships have now been conquered. Although we may have legitimate concerns about whether there is too much medical technology, no one could reasonably refuse every advance of modern medical technology. The weather will never be brought under control, but, via comfortable structures, nature's heat and cold, rain and snow are controlled as well as darkness and drought. Toilsome labor is largely eliminated within the culture of technology.

A reasonable person may reject motorcycles in favor of horses to do ranch work, but that person still rides to town on paved roads in a car, has parts shipped by air, reads a newspaper and books, transacts business over the phone, and owns at least a radio. No thoughtful person will want to turn her back on technology entirely. Thus, technology, by conquering nature, has relieved humans of severe burdens. Today we are still working to overcome those, such as cancer and AIDS, that remain. So, if technology does not saddle us in the long run with more than it has relieved us from, it will have made good on this aspect of what at first seemed and still does seem promising about it. It could turn out that ozone depletion, global warming, ecosystem destruction, the population explosion, polluted land, air, streams and oceans, and human and mechanical

errors will impose burdens far greater than those we were relieved from in the first place. To meet these problems certainly calls for a reform of present practices. We read or hear of these calls for reform nearly every day. More common critiques of technology, such as David Ehrenfeld's *The Arrogance of Humanism*, attempt to show that technology will fail its own standards, bringing disaster upon us.

Much as reform in these areas is needed and much as these pessimistic critiques deserve thoughtful consideration, the present work will turn to a uniquely different task. It grants and, in fact, seeks to have the reader appreciate the genuine success of modern technology. Technology has relieved, and technology will, I assume for the purposes at hand, continue to relieve, humans of many hardships of the human condition.

So what is wrong with technology for those within the realm of its benefits? Underlying these standards of availability is really a vision of a good life that is free and prosperous. What is at the bottom of concern with technological availability is an aspiration for freedom and happiness. Most people, at least in the Western tradition, are concerned with liberty and prosperity. For Aristotle only the Greek free man was able to have sufficient time and sufficient wherewithal to develop the moral and intellectual virtues he thought to be required for happiness or eudaemonia. The Hebrew people's understanding of the covenant centered on an idea of prosperity. Jesus preached of a free and abundant life. The Enlightenment, as we see its results in "the pursuit of happiness" in our Declaration of Independence, is fully within this tradition. But to find agreement at this high level of abstraction is not to see that the crucial differences lie with the particular versions of freedom and prosperity. For Socrates living well had to do with human excellence and living a just life, not with materialism. The blessed life and the abundant life of the Hebrews and of Jesus was not commodity happiness. So, too, we must look carefully at the particular idea of freedom and prosperity governing people's attraction to technology, for only at this level of particularity will its misleading and harmful features begin to show. In other words, one can criticize the