

PHIL 259 Philosophy of Technology

Technocracy and Standardization Assignment

This assignment is divided into three parts. In the first part, please respond to all the questions. In the second, there is a choice to respond to either (a) or (b). In the third part, use the question to summarize answers to the first two parts.

Part 1: Technocracy

What is technocracy? In what ways do these writings of Francis Bacon both anticipate and even promote the technocratic tendencies of contemporary society? In light of his reference to the Fall (TC p. 30), what societal shift did he not anticipate with regards to technical progress and the place of religion in society?

Part 2: Standardization

(a) In what ways does the process of standardization as described by Henry Petroski in *Facsimile and Networks* constitute a technocracy? (Provide specific examples.) Does decision-making by engineers and other technical experts, whether in government or corporations, concern you? Why or why not? (Reflect on your personal experience as a citizen and/or consumer and provide examples.)

Or

(b) In what ways does the process of standardization within the practice of your discipline or profession constitute a technocracy? (Provide specific examples.) Does decision-making by technical experts, whether in government or in the practice of your discipline or profession, concern you? Why or why not? (Reflect on your personal experience as one who practices your discipline or profession and provide examples.)

Part 3: Utopia versus Dystopia

Do you see contemporary society as utopian or a dystopian? Explain. Have your views changed since you began taking this course? Comment.

Length: 3-4 pages (750 to 1000 words)

Citations: MLA (or the protocol you use in your discipline)

Due: Monday, January 21st, 2008 (in class)

Note: In the writings of Francis Bacon (1561-1626) you will find references to “Bacon.” He is not referring to himself. Rather he is referring to Roger Bacon (1214–1294).