

MAN AND TECHNOLOGY: ALIENATION IN RAY BRADBURY'S:
“THE MURDERER” AND “THE PEDESTRIAN”



Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Master of Arts Degree in English
at Srinakharinwirot University

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Dr. Prapaipan Aimchoo, Dr. Somsak Kaewnuch.

This research examined the impacts of technology on the main characters in Ray Bradbury's short stories, “The Murderer” and “The Pedestrian.” In addition, it compared the impacts of technology on the main characters in “The Murderer” and “The Pedestrian.” The concept of alienation was employed to analyze the two selected stories. It was found that in both stories, technology had negative impacts on both main characters. In “The Murderer,” Albert Brock felt alienated in four aspects: powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, and social isolation. Meanwhile, Leonard Mead in “The Pedestrian,” was determined to be alienated in three aspects: meaninglessness, normlessness, and social-isolation.

Comparing these two stories, it was found that there were some similarities and differences. They both were alienated in their society. However, their reactions toward technology, the relationship of people in the two societies and types of technology were different. Ray Bradbury wanted to warn the negative impacts of technology on humans.

มนุษย์และเทคโนโลยี: ความแปลกแยกในเรื่อง “THE MURDERER” และ

“THE PEDESTRIAN” ของเรย์ แบริดเบอร์รี่



บทคัดย่อ
ของ
อาทิตตยา พุ่มพิบูลย์

เสนอต่อบัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ เพื่อเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษา
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งานวิจัยนี้มุ่งศึกษาผลกระทบของเทคโนโลยีต่อตัวละครเอกในเรื่องสั้นของเรย์ แบรดเบอร์รี่เรื่อง “The Murderer” และ “The Pedestrian” และได้เปรียบเทียบผลกระทบของเทคโนโลยีที่เกิดขึ้นในเรื่องสั้นทั้งสองในการศึกษาค้นคว้าวิจัยได้นำแนวคิดเรื่องความแปลกแยกมาใช้ในการศึกษาวิเคราะห์ ผลการศึกษาพบว่าเทคโนโลยีมีผลกระทบทางด้านลบต่อตัวละครเอก โดยอัลเบิร์ต โบรคในเรื่อง “The Murderer” มีความรู้สึกแปลกแยกเนื่องจากเขารู้สึกถึงความไร้อำนาจ การไร้ความหมาย การขาดบรรทัดฐาน และแยกตัวออกจากสังคม ส่วนลีโอนาร์ด มีดในเรื่อง “The Pedestrian” มีรู้สึกแปลกแยกเนื่องจากเขารู้สึกถึงการไร้ความหมาย การขาดบรรทัดฐาน และแยกตัวออกจากสังคม

ในการเปรียบเทียบเรื่องสั้นทั้งสองเรื่องพบว่าตัวละครเอกทั้งสองคนมีความเหมือนและความแตกต่างกัน คือตัวละครเอกทั้งสองคนต่างรู้สึกแปลกแยกในสังคม แต่การตอบสนองต่อเทคโนโลยี ความสัมพันธ์ของคนในสังคม และประเภทของเทคโนโลยีในเรื่องสั้นทั้งสองเรื่องมีความแตกต่างกัน ซึ่งเรย์ แบรดเบอร์รี่ต้องการเตือนให้เห็นถึงผลกระทบของเทคโนโลยีต่อสังคม

The Master's Project Advisor, Chair of the Master of Arts Degree in English, and oral Defense Committee have approved this Master's Project: Man and Technology: Alienation in Ray Bradbury's Short Stories: "The Murderer" and "The Pedestrian" as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in English of Srinakarinwirot University.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Rationale

Most people believe that new technologies are created to develop the world, and without them, humans can not be the master of the world as they are at present. Hundreds years ago, people dreamed of a utopian society where they live happily with modern technologies. After facing the cruelty of many wars, especially World Wars, man could recognize the opposite side of technology; it could destroy their lives, their hopes and even their humanity. Although the ability of inventing tools made human beings have a dominant role on earth, this ability became their greatest curse. They eventually have found themselves in combat with their own technology. As a result, the effects of technology have been a major topic of debate. Humans realized that technology could lead to manipulation and dependency. Throughout history, humans have been sounding this alarm in many forms: articles, movies, plays and books. Dystopian science fiction is one of the reactionary works that warns about futuristic society where humans struggle with fear of technology.

According to *Dystopian Literature: a Theory and Research Guide*, dystopian literature is literature which places itself in direct resistance to utopian thought, warning against the probable harmful consequences of utopianism. The principal literary approach of dystopian literature is to focus its analysis on society in futuristic distant settings (Booker 3).

Thus, dystopian literature has been described as fiction that reveals a negative observation of society and humanity in the future. Utopian fiction usually outlines a futuristic society in which technology advances the everyday life of human beings and presses a nation forward; on the other hand, dystopian works present a negative view.

Therefore, common subjects found in dystopian fiction are dominance over nature which destroys it and causes it to turn against humankind; technological advances that enslave humans; and dehumanization (Booker 7).

Dystopian science fiction presents the common theme of the reaction against the influence of science and technology over humankind. People dreamed of a utopian society where technology could make life much more convenient. These positive elements are often counteracted by equal or greater negative results. As Rose Mark states in *Alien Encounters, Anatomy of Science fiction*:

“...sobering realization that in conquering nature science is also conquering man.... science fiction... has turned against science... its authors typically view their worlds-to-be as everything they detest in the world-as-it-is; and what they detest is everything that makes the modern world modern. Perhaps never before in history has man been such a problem to himself. Rocketing through space and on the point of conquering the heavens, he is fast losing touch with his own world” (90).

Science fiction can delve into the future, making it the perfect tool to demonstrate the consequences of modernity. Science fiction does not only portray the future ramifications of technology, but also provide a reflection of the society in which we currently live. We are able to see our problems, society and ourselves. In other words, science fiction is an outstanding instrument for social criticism.

In any works of social criticism, the relationship between characters and their society is critical. These relationships are usually risky and unpleasant. Many writers note that alienation is one of the impacts of rapid social change including technological development, which at least three different types of alienated behavior. The first type is people's inability to adapt to rapid change. The second is related to social change, which has produced a trend towards urban living, and results in depersonalized living relationship. Third, social upheaval has introduced doubts and disagreements about all types of behavioral standards. Since social change has an

alienating effect on humans' relationship to the world around them; therefore, it is very interesting to investigate the alienation of humans in the modern technological world.

Alienation is a particularly important theme to in science fiction. Since social change has an alienating effect on humans' relationship to the world around them; therefore, it is very insightful to investigate the alienation of humans in the modern technological world. In this study, the research will focus on alienation caused by technology (Blauner 64).

Ray Bradbury is one influential author who used dystopian science fiction to convey the effect of machines and their ability to destroy humankind. He is an American author who has published more than five hundred works since 1940. His literary works demonstrate themes of racism, censorship, technology, nuclear war, humanistic values, and the importance of imagination. His contrarian view shows that new technology can be destructive to society and its inhabitants, causing people to forget what lives are truly about.

This study explored the impacts of technology on the main characters in two short stories of Bradbury: Albert Brock in "The Murderer" and Leonard Mead in "The Pedestrian." These two stories are included in the collection *The Golden Apples of the Sun* (1956). The two main characters in Bradbury's short stories struggled in a society in which people were dominated by technology and machines. In "The Murderer", Brock suffered from a life dependent on technology, especially communicative technology, everywhere and all the time. Likewise, Mead felt isolated in a society where all people were addicted to watching television.

Bradbury's story, "The Murderer," took place in the future where a vast range of technologies intervention in a person's life. Bradbury described Brock who

struggled to escape from a society full of various kinds of technology. Brock lived in a society where all people were engaged in activities involving technology: listening to music, watching motion pictures, talking on the phone, or communicating in other ways. His negative feeling towards technology increased until he felt that technology threatened his life. He decided to do something against them. He eventually decided to wipe out and destroy all machines he had been forced to use; he referred to himself as “the murderer.” His abnormal behaviors led him to be sent to meet a psychiatrist in the Office of Mental Health Center. Brock told the psychiatrist that he committed these crimes because he realized how machine controlled every aspect of human life.

The second story, “The Pedestrian,” describes society in the year 2053. The protagonist, Leonard Mead, was a writer in a society where people do not read; rather, they were enchanted by watching television. People in his society left their homes for work during the day and stayed watching TV at night. In contrast to other people in the society, Mead always strolled aimlessly at night rather than watched television at home. On one of his usual walks, he encountered a robotic police car. It was the only police unit in a city of three million, since the purpose of law enforcement had disappeared with everyone watching TV at night. The robot could not understand why he was out since everything could be provided by machines at his home. He could view from screens and breathe in air conditionings. The robot caught him to the Psychiatric Center for Research on Regressive Tendencies.

Most of Bradbury’s works show the negative consequences of the progress of science and technology. However, studies of “The Murderer” and “The Pedestrian” are still neglected. Therefore, the researcher proposes to study the effects caused by technology in Ray Bradbury’s short stories: “The Murderer” and “The Pedestrian.”

Purposes of the Study

The purposes of the study are:

1. To analyze impacts of technology on the main character in Ray Bradbury's "The Murderer."
2. To analyze impacts of technology on the main character in Ray Bradbury's "The Pedestrian."
3. To compare the impacts of technology on the main character in "The Murderer" to the main character in "The Pedestrian."

Procedure

1. Accumulation of Information
 - 1.1 The researcher studied various researches related to science fictions and the impacts of technology.
 - 1.2 The researcher studied the concept of alienation and how they are applied in the relation to technology.
2. Data Analysis
 - 2.1 Read the two short stories of Ray Bradbury: "The Murderer" and "The Pedestrian."
 - 2.2 Read the critiques regarding the stories.
3. Conclusion and Recommendation for further studies

Scope of the Study

This paper analyzed the impacts of technology focusing on alienation on the main characters: Albert Brock in "The Murderer" and Leonard Mead in "The Pedestrian" by Ray Bradbury.

Benefits of the Study

1. This study will help readers understand the possible impacts of technology on humans. These impacts can be employed to the present world so we are more aware and try to find measure to prevent the effects of the progress of technology.
2. The study can be employed as a tool for further studies or as a guideline for review of related literature.
3. The study can be used as a source for discussing the terms of alienation in classes and in analysis on the texts in general.

Definition of Term

Alienation

Alienation means the separation of individuals from society, work, products of work, a specific situation and self. It is a lack of trust in one's social or physical environment or oneself. The alienation of individuals is expressed through moods, thought, and appearances. There are five dimensions of alienation: powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, social isolation and self-estrangement.

1. Powerlessness means a lack of strength or absence of power. People who feel powerless may feel out of control, hesitant, afraid and unwilling to express their feelings and fearful. It leads people to self-abusive behaviors, compulsive behaviors, or depression.

2. Meaninglessness means having no goals or emptiness. People who feel meaning less will lack purposes in life. This leads them to despair, alienation and confusion.

3. Normlessness means an individual's estrangement from social norms. People suffering normlessness have lost all personal sense of social obligation or trust in others.

4. Social Isolation means a sense of loneliness and separation from others.

An isolated individual does not have normal social supports to cope with stress. They respond to life problems with nonconventional reactions.

5. Self- estrangement means alienation from self. An individual is estranged from self by being alienated from ideal human conditions and human nature.



CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter is an overview of the related literature consisting of three major parts. The first part discusses the concept of alienation. The second part demonstrates alienation caused by technology. The final part discusses critical reviews of science fiction and Ray Bradbury's works.

The Concept of Alienation

The concept of historical alienation dates back to the very beginning of Western thought. In the Old Testament, Adam and Eve became alienated from each other, from God and from their surroundings. The concept has returned repeatedly in each historical era and has been analyzed in a wide range of contexts. Alienation can be categorized into three groups: Marxist philosophical, sociological and psychological categories (Ollman 78).

In the Marxian sense, under capitalism, Karl Marx believed that industrial workers would inevitably be alienated by the work process (Cox 6). Based on Marx's *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, alienated labor is distinguished by four major aspects: alienation from work, alienation from product of labor, alienation from other fellow men, and alienation from human nature. The worker is alienated from the product because they can never possess the products of their own labor; those products are transferred and belonged to someone else (Blauner 309). Base on the class structure of society, the workers are also alienated from those who exploit their labor and control the things they produce (Blauner 311). Finally, the workers become alienated from his human species or nature because working phenomenon degenerates them to the same species of animals: eating, drinking, and procreating (Ollman 152).

Alienation in Marx's view plays a crucial role in stimulating social revolution to change society toward a non-alienated future. The Marxist concept points out that workers experience the feeling of alienation because human nature is destroyed during the production system of capitalism that is driven by the capitalist and machine (Kanungo 413-414).

In the sociological view, alienation focuses not only on the work process but also on society. According to Stephen J. Deery and David H. Plowman, the term alienation was extended from the conditions of capitalist labor into the social relation (15). Alienation is denoted an estrangement or separation between an individual and his or her group, society or organization. Hence, to be alienated means to live in a society but not to feel part of its activities. (Harmon 42).

In the psychological view, alienation is a lack of trust in one's social or physical environment or oneself. Raymond Calabrese states that alienation is dissatisfaction with personal existence or identity. It is an estrangement from one's social group such as family, workplace, or community (116). The alienation of the individuals is a negative feeling toward self, life and society expressed through mood, thought, and appearance (Warren 294).

In conclusion, alienation means the separation of individuals from society, work, products of work, a specific situation and self. It is a lack of trust in one's social or physical environment or oneself. The alienation of individuals is expressed through moods, thought, and appearances.

Alienation Caused by Technology

Many writers claim that one of the main causes of alienation is rapid social change including technological development, which consists of at least three different types of alienated behaviors. The first type is man's inability to adapt to rapid change.

The second is related to social change that has produced a trend towards urban living and results in depersonalized living relationships. Third, social upheaval has introduced doubts and disagreements concerning all types of behavioral standards. Social change has an alienating effect on man's relationship to the world around him. It is very necessary to investigate the alienation of humans in the modern technological world. This study will focus on alienation caused by technology.

However, technology has developed very quickly and the world has transformed rapidly. The more the world changes, the more it becomes strange for humans and eventually, they experience alienation.

According to Melvin Seeman, alienation can be categorized into five dimensions: powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, social isolation and self-estrangement (783). These five types of alienation caused by technology threaten human existence and are embedded in culture and societal norms. In addition, they have varied degrees of alienation, which alienate people from human nature.

Powerlessness

Power is the ability of controlling others, and the opposite of power is powerlessness, which means a lack of strength or absence of power. This means the state that people lack power to control their own destiny but determined by external agent or others' arrangements (Seeman 784). People who experience powerlessness may feel out of control and have no solution to regain control. When individuals feel powerless, they may feel hesitant, afraid or unwilling to express their feelings, and fearful. Persistent feelings of powerlessness may lead people to become afraid to feel and express their needs. This may result in people becoming immobilized or developing the feeling of helplessness. Powerlessness may also become internalized

and lead people to self-abusive behaviors, compulsive behaviors, or depression (Jashinsky and Smothers 1269-70).

Humans have been attempting to get power over both internal and external natures using technology, but in technological society, people become a powerless subject in the modern world. Even though humans have tried to control nature through technology, technology turns out to be beyond the control of humans. For example, nuclear technology needs humans to supervise its function; otherwise, there would be a great damage on human life. This means, as technology progresses, humans who once had the power to controls it turns out to be the object of technology.

A fundamental challenge of humans is to find a meaningful life which is the life that has goals and values. Nevertheless, to live without meaning is to experience meaninglessness causing despair, alienation and confusion (Buff 132-33).

According to Karl Marx, meaninglessness refers to the state of being without meaning and values of labors in the work process. Their meaning and values of life were decreased because it is not the satisfaction of their own need, but only a means for satisfying other need. (Bottomore & Rubel 177).

Similarly, Raymond Calabease notes that meaninglessness is the state that people don't have meaning, values and goals in life; eventually, their lives become empty. Consequencely, people can never trust themselves, and they feel purposeless in life (117).

Therefore, meaninglessness means the state of being without meaning or values and purposes. In technological society, the existence of people is meaningless because the influence of technology expands to every corner of technological society. A fundamental challenge in the human experience is to find life meaningful. Meaningful life refers to having goals, being engaged and possessing inner strength in

the face of life's obstacles (Calabrese 117). Nevertheless, to live without meaning is to experience despair, alienation and confusion (Buff 132-33). Human life is very complex due to the complexity of technology, which plays a very important role in human life. As a result, human status is reduced to being an object in technological society. People seem not to understand their roles in technological world resulting in meaningless existence of human beings.

Normlessness

Norms are standards that describe what behaviors should and should not be performed. Norms can be powerful influences on behaviors. People feel duty to adhere norms because they want to show their responsibility for being members of the society.

Normlessness referred to not to follow the social norm. It is the lack of commitment to shared social conventions of behaviors in a society (Seeman 789). However, people who do not comply with the norms with no acceptable explanation for their violation, are evaluated negatively including hostility, pressure to change, negative sanction and punishment (Pederson 468-69). A person suffering normlessness has lost all personal sense of social obligation. They are also incapable of forming close bonds with others and sharing goals and acceptable means of attaining them. While their isolation increases; they suffer anxiety, feeling of futility and purposelessness, and becoming amoral and disconnected from the social norms of others around them (Scott 255).

In technological world, the degree of people's task process is related to their norms and values. In the past, the task of man in production process is very high. Nevertheless, in the present they are just a part of production process that is under the control of technology. People feel they are no longer responsible for their task. As a

result, their norms and values are low as production process much relies on technology.

Social Isolation

John Mirowsky and Catherine E Ross define social isolation as “the sense of not having anyone who is someone to you and not being someone to anyone,” (141). Social isolation is the opposite of social support which is “the sense of being cared for and loved, esteemed and valued as a person, and part of a network of communication and obligation” (Mirowsky and Ross 141).

Similarly, Raymond Calabrese states that social-isolation is the sense of loneliness, and separation from others (118). This leads people to the feeling of being different, to feel that others are not like him or her. Such feeling drives the isolated person to move far away from the connection to others and tends to be difficult to cure the state of severe isolation (Calabrese 118).

Therefore, social isolation refers to the sense of loneliness or exclusion in social relations. It means a state or process in which persons, groups, or cultures lose communication or cooperation with one another.

The theory of man’s isolation from society is based on Marx’s theory of division of labor. Marx argues that people depend on performance of their works. If they work with no one, they are isolated from society. In the same way, if humans’ performance relies on technology, they are also isolated from society.

Self-Estrangement

According to Melvin Seeman, self-Estrangement means alienation from the self. In other words, it is the state of estrangement from ideal humans condition and humans nature (790). Seeman further explains that in Marxian view, humans are alienated from their nature because they lose all connection with the real needs of

humans. They are merely a part of production process and become objects in the society (790).

Likewise Blake E. Ashforth and Ronald H. Humphrey, self-estrangement refers to the state of lose touch with the real self of humans (99). They perceive that they are acting contrary to the real, valued and salient self. Thus people experience a rupture between the real inner self and the artificial self created by their outer environment (99).

Therefore, self-estrangement refers to a sense that people are out of touch with their natural. In technological world, self -estrangement is based on the relationship between humans and mega machine in production process. People lose their potentialities as long as they depend on technology. As a result, they lose humanity. They consider themselves instruments or objects in society and have few opportunities for personal development as long as they depend on technology.

In conclusion, the concept of alienation will be use to employ as a tool to analyze the impacts of technology on the main characters: Albert Brock in “The Murderer” and Leonard Mead in “The Pedestrian” by Ray Bradbury.

Related Research on Ray Bradbury

Since science fiction is a tool for social criticism, many researchers are interested in how science and technology are presented in science fiction. Therefore, Ray Bradbury’s works are examined in various aspects and perspectives.

In “Literary Examples of Man’s Fear of Machine,” Amber Locke criticizes the ways to express a fear of machines in the literary works of Ray Bradbury, E.M. Forster, and George Orwell. He concludes that although Bradbury, Froster, and Orwell are different in their approach, they all express the fear of machines and the

impact on a society and its people. Bradbury uses his stories “The Flying Machine,” “The Murderer,” and his novel *Fahrenheit 451* to express these concerns.

“The Flying Machine” Rebecca A. Devers, shows a man’s fear of a new machine and its potential to destroy his life because of its existence and the possibility of negative purposes. “The Murderer” shows how a person comes to resent his society and its machines because of their lack of individuality, peace, and silence. *Fahrenheit 451* presents the concern that books and knowledge will be replaced by mindless machines that manipulate instead of stimulate the mind.

Another study is Paul M Frazier’s “Science Fiction Drama: The Present Seen Through the Future.” The writer explores the science fiction genre since World War II. The study finds that much science fiction shows pessimistic attitudes toward the possible future.

In “Second Natures: Media, Masculinity and the Natural World in Twentieth-Century American Literature and Film,” Jeanne E Hamming examines the cultural anxieties associated with masculine identity in relation to technology and nature in Bradbury’s “The Veldt” and “The Martian Chronicles.” The study finds that the relationship is marked by a visible cultural depression which is a sense of displacement in the midst of technological hyper mediations of self and reality. This malaise suggests a conflict in conceptions of masculinity through an impossible technological transcendence of nature.

In “Technology: a Menace to Society,” Albert W. Wendland, points out that Bradbury’s negative attitude towards technology in the book “Dandelion Wine” shows that he believes that technology does more harm than good. Bradbury shows this perspective through many examples in the novel. Bradbury’s negative view

demonstrates that new technology can be harmful to society by demoralizing society and causing people to forget what life is about.

According to the aforementioned studies, Bradbury's works show the negative effects of technology in a futuristic world. However, the study of alienation in depth, particularly in "The Murderer" and "The Pedestrian," has not been explored.

Therefore, the researcher proposes to study alienation caused by technology in Ray Bradbury's short stories: "The Murderer" and "The Pedestrian."



CHAPTER 3

THE ALIENATION OF ALBERT BROCK

In this chapter, the theory of alienation as discussed earlier in chapter two is employed to analyze Albert Brock, the protagonist in “The Murderer.”

“The Murderer” is Ray Bradbury’s story in the collection of short stories entitled *The Golden Apple of the Sun*. Albert Brock, the protagonist of the story, was a man who felt uncomfortable to live his life like other people in his society. He lived in the society where all people were engaged in the activities involving technology: listening to music, watching motion pictures, talking on the phone, or communicating in some other ways. His uncomfortable feeling about technology had increased until he felt that technology threatened his life. He decided to do something against the technology; he destroyed all technology in his life. He called himself the murderer because he killed the machines he met. His unusual behaviors led him to be sent to the psychiatrist in the Office of Mental Health Center.

Technology in Brock’s Society

In “The Murderer,” people in the society totally depended on various kinds of machines, which became a major part in human life. It was so advanced and could do everything like humans. It became a member of the family since at home it could provide everything for human: cleaning houses, preparing meals, being a friend, singing and reading. Moreover, it was a member of the society since in public, people were engaged in the activities involving technology: listening to music, watching motion pictures, talking on the phones, or communicating in other ways. People gradually preferred to connect with artificial machines rather than to interact with their real own species. There was no one who concerned about the influence and impacts of technology, but Brock did. He tried to escape from his society; as a result,

he was alienated. During the interview with the psychiatrist, four aspects of alienation were clearly found in Brock: powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness and social-isolation.

Powerlessness

To be powerful in Brock's society was to be rich of technology. Brock denied using any machines, and that led him lack power in his society. His life was not under his own control but was determined by external agents: machines and people who used machine with him, and those were causes of his powerlessness in the story.

The First External Agent: Machines

Brock's power was lost since machines were beyond control and became the powerful agents over him. In the story, machines, especially communication machines, were a very necessary part and involved in every step of human life. This led Brock feel uncomfortable, and his sense of powerlessness was expressed through his fear of machines.

Brock became afraid of machine because his life absolutely depended on machines. Every step of his habit was automatically arranged and controlled by machines. The machine beds rocked him when he went to bed and shook him awake. A house sang opera to him while he was showering and created sounds in every corner of his house: poetry reading, weather reporting, novel reciting and crooning-when-he-go-to-bed. Even in his sleep, the house taught Spanish to him. A door could blame him before entering the house if his shoes were dirty. A vacuum chased to swallow every dust or ash he dropped. Brock felt nervous and felt uncomfortable with the machine. He feared that he would be controlled by the machines. He said "One of those blathering caves where all kinds of electronic Oracles make you feel a trifle larger than a thimble" (80). As a result, he began to destroy all machines in his house.

According to Jashinsky and Smothers, when individuals feel powerless, they may feel hesitant, afraid and fearful (1269-70). In the story, Brock demonstrated his sense of powerlessness with communicative technology by expressing fear. In the beginning of the story, Brock tried to show the psychiatrist that he dominated all machines in his life by using the word “victim” in the beginning of the interview when he talked about the ruined machines: “Fine. The first victim, or one of the first, was my telephone” (76). That was the way Brock expressed his ideas against the dominance of technology. During the rest of the interview, he revealed his fear and paranoia of machines. When the psychiatrist asked him to narrate why he hated telephones, he said that he was frightened and feared by telephones as it made him feel powerless. He said, “It frightened me as a child” (76). The metaphor “as a child” can be inferred to his lack of power and being under control by telephones.

Brock tried to describe how scary the telephone was. He explained, “Uncle of mine called it the Ghost Machine. Voices without bodies. Scared the living hell out of me” (76). Comparing to the ghost machine, Brock obviously showed his horror toward telephones. This means telephones were a device connected him with a ghost since there were sounds coming without bodies.

The fear made him felt unhappy, and he emphasized that life with machines was uncomfortable: “Later in life I was never comfortable” (76). Brock added that telephones could control humans by making them become impersonal or non-humans. In other words, people became impersonal because they talked to machines rather than to their own species. Moreover, with no reality, no real voices and no real feelings, it was easier for people to say anything they wanted via telephones whether it was good or bad, right or wrong and true or false. Humans did not control a

telephone, but they were controlled by it. Brock described his feeling of being under control:

“Seemed to me a phone was an impersonal instrument. If it felt like it, it let your personality go through its wires. If it didn’t want to, it just drained your personality away until what slipped through at the other end was some cold fish of a voice, all steel, copper, plastic, no warmth, no reality. It’s easy to say the wrong things on telephones; the telephone changes your meaning on you” (76).

The Second External Agent: People in the society

In addition to being controlled by telephones, Brock also thought that communicative technology was a convenient tool for others used to dominate him. He felt he lacked strength to cope with communicative technology. He thought that telephones and wrist watches were the tools used to dominate human life. They were used to call someone whether he wanted to be called or not. Brock thought that he was called by anyone, anytime and anywhere. He said that “Then, of course, the telephone’s such a convenient thing; it just sits there and demands you call someone who doesn’t want to be called. Friends were always calling, calling, calling me. Hell, I hadn’t any time of my own” (76). He was called by his wife to report where he was now. He was called by his friends to listen to what his friends wanted to express. Moreover, he was called by strangers to do poll question and even advertising. Therefore, he thought that he was threatened by both the telephones and the wrist watches and the people who used them. He expressed in the story “... ‘Convenient for who?’ I cried. Convenient for friends... Convenient for my office, so when I’m in the field with my radio car there’s no moment when I’m not in touch” (78).

Brock described the phrase “in touch” as a threatening power which made him suffer. He felt uncomfortable to be in touch all the time. It was as if he was forced by others all the time. He continuously expressed his negative feeling toward telephones, “In touch! There’s a slimy phrase” (78). Moreover, he felt the ways people used machines to keep in touch with him all the time made him powerless. He described this using the words “grip”, “paw”, and “maul” instead of the phrase “in touch.” In the story, he said, “Touch, hell. Gripped! Pawed, rather. Mauled and massages and pounded by FM voices ” (78).

Meaninglessness

In Brock’s society, life was meaningful when it was convenient by various kinds of machines. Brock preferred life without technology. However, as it was unavoidably in the society, he had no choices and that made him meaningless.

Brock lacked purposes in life and lived aimlessly since what he preferred and what his society allowed became inverted. Brock despaired to live with technology. In his opinion, it was too late to oppose the majority of the society. He said, “They were almost toys, to be played with, but the people got too involved, went too far, and got wrapped up in a pattern of social behavior and couldn’t get out, couldn’t admit they were in, even” (81).

At the end of the story, Brock found his life empty. He destroyed every piece of technology he had and preferred living alone purposelessly in the prison: “Can I go back to my private cell now, where I can be alone and quiet for six months?” (82).

Normlessness

Normlessness is the lack of commitment to shared social conventions of behaviors. Brock was found normlessness because his thought, feeling and behaviors

were considered abnormal and completely unacceptable to others. His actions were totally different from the social norm.

“The Murderer” portrayed a technological society where people were much addicted to machines. They preferred spending life with various kinds of technology. All people were busy dealing with communication units. They enjoyed music coming from every direction and every corner of the building as if it moved with them all the time. There were voices from the ceiling of the building, from wrist radios and telephones. Televisions, phonographs, or any motion pictures were projected everywhere. The society was completely busy with all kinds of machines. As Bradbury narrated in the story:

“When it wasn’t telephone it was the television, the radio, the phonograph. When it wasn’t the television, the radio, the phonograph it was motion pictures at the corner theatre,...it was music by Mozzek in every restaurant; music and commercial on the buses... and my [Brock’s] horror chamber of a radio wrist watch on which my friend and my wife phoned every five minutes”(76-77).

In contrast to the busy society, Brock preferred silence. He hatefully refused technology and did not follow the norm of majority. Consequencely, he was considered a psychotic man and needed help. As in the story, the psychiatrist frowningly said: “I’m here to help you” (75). Brock was finally sent to the Office of Mental Health Center. In the opening scene, Bradbury contrasted the scene full of music with the quiet room where Brock is confined. When the psychiatrist entered the room he felt that the room was unusual as Bradbury explained “the psychiatrist sat across from his patient [Brock] in the unusual silence which was like the gathering of a storm”(75). Having been busy with machines, the psychiatrist, one of the main streams of the society, sensed that being in silence was unusual and uncomfortable.

The words “unusual silence” was the way Bradbury wanted to show that silence was something considered not to happen in the normal situation in the society. For this sense, Brock was considered an unusual man.

Although the people in the society considered Brock abnormal, he continued to protest technology. In the beginning of the story, he openly showed everybody in the society that he hated technology by destroying all public machines: bus radio and intercom in his office. As a result, he got punishment and people angrily glared at him because he made them miss the connection via machines. Hence, the psychiatrist suggested Brock to join a fraternity of radio haters in order to protest technology legally. The psychiatrist referred the legal protest to “democracy” which illustrated that what Brock had done was not acceptable in the society. However, Brock had joined the fraternity, but it was not successful. On the other hand, he was mocked by others who thought that what he was doing was nonsense and crazy. As he said, “I did join fraternities, picket, pass petitions, and take it to court. Year after year, I protested. Everyone laughed” (79).

Brock felt alienated since he said, “And I, said Brock am that thing best called a minority” (79). He tried to follow the norm by protesting legally but he thought that being a minority in the society, what he did was always neglected, and he thought he was astray. He said, “I was out of step.” (79). When he could not follow the norm of the society, he became normless; as a result, this led to alienation, isolation and de-socialization. Therefore, he lost the sense of what is right or wrong. However, the psychiatrist tried to ensure Brock to follow majority in the society, Brock refused and continued to commit crime by killing his own technology.

Social-isolation

At the end of the story, Brock showed the sense of social-isolation when he tried to move out of the busy society. At first, Brock tried to show other people that machines were not good for humans by protesting openly, but he was not accepted. In addition, being in the society, Brock unavoidably faced using devices, or the people who used them. He had no choice, so he decided to create his own atmosphere. He tried to move far away from connecting with others in the society. He began to destroy all busy machines in his house and preferred the silence after destroying them. As he said, "Silence happened next. God, it was beautiful" (78). Since being in the society meant connecting with others and facing many kinds of technology, Brock decided to exile himself out of the society with no machines and no people. He compared his action with closing a door and locking it by a big bolt. He said: "I just rode around feeling of the silence. It's a big bolt of the nicest, softest flannel ever made"(79).

"The Murderer" is one of Bradbury's short stories that can demonstrate the negative effects of technology as shown through Brock, the protagonist. He is considered an alienated person since he lives in the society with the states of powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, and social-isolation.

In conclusion, Bradbury's "The Murderer" portrays impacts of technology in the futuristic society. The protagonist was alienated because his thoughts, behaviors and point of view were different from the other people in the society. Accordingly, this story shows Bradbury's thought of the wrong relationship between humans and machines. Bradbury wants to warn about the negative impacts of too many machines. In the short story, Brock could not change the world around him. He said in the story that "they got too involved"; that is, it was too late to change. However, the setting of

the story is a futuristic society; Bradbury wants to warn that if humans do not realize the bad impacts of technology, they will be destroyed by it.



CHAPTER 4

THE ALIENATION OF LEONARD MEAD

In this chapter, the theory of alienation as discussed earlier in chapter two is applied to analyze Leonard Mead, the protagonist in “The Pedestrian”.

“The Pedestrian” is a short story about the futuristic world in 2053 where people did not read but were enchanted with watching television. People in society left their homes during the day and stayed home at night to watch TV. In contrast to other people in the society, Mr. Leonard Mead enjoyed walking through the city during the night, something which no one else did. On one of his usual walk, he encountered a robotic police car. It was the only police unit in a city of three million, since the purpose of law enforcement has disappeared with everyone watching TV at night. The police car could not understand why Mead was out to walk for no reason and decided to take him to the Psychiatric Center for Research on Regressive Tendencies.

Technology in Mead’s Society

In “The Pedestrian”, technology, especially TV was the center of the society and people were fascinated by the artificial things rather than real nature. People did not want to go outside because they had a screen viewing which could show them everything. They did not want fresh air because they have air-conditioning machines at home. Moreover, people in Mead’s society trusted in machines very much even the police in the society were also machines. Mead did not try to escape from the society but he normally spent life as he used to do. He was not changed by the progress of technology. He had no TV in the TV-centered world where TV fascinated people. He was a writer in the society where people did not read and he enjoyed the real nature rather than the artificial things. However, he unavoidably sensed the state of

alienation. Being different from other people in the society, Mead was alienated in three aspects: meaninglessness, normlessness and social-isolation.

Meaninglessness

Meaninglessness is the absence of meaning, values and purposes in life. The meaningful life in Mead's society was a life with technology. Watching TV made life happy. People were facilitated by various kinds of technology. Hence, a life without technology of Mead was considered meaningless.

Living in the television-centered society, Mead did not have any meaning or values since he was a writer in the society where people did not read. His occupation, as a writer, was not valued in the society. When the police robot asked Mead what his profession was. He said he was a writer, but the police robot inferred this to mean that he had no profession:“ ‘No profession’, said the police car, as if talking to itself...”(20). The conversation between the police robot and Mead clearly showed that being a writer was not considered an occupation because it was an unimportant career in the society. People did not read, but watched and were brainwashed by televisions. In the story, Mead agreed with the police robot that being a writer was nothing. He said, “You might say that” (21). Bradbury added more explanation that “He [Mead] hadn't written in years. Magazines and books didn't sell anymore. Everything went on in the tomb-like houses at night now...”(21). This describes the atmosphere in a society that television was everything while books and magazines were completely replaced by television. Therefore, being a writer was meaningless and had no significance. He said to the police robot that “Nobody wanted me”(21). This suggested that Mead had no significance to anyone in his society.

Living in the society without any significance, Mead spent life aimlessly. Every night for years, he spent time at night walking aimlessly: “He would stand upon the corner of an intersection and peer down long moonlit avenues of sidewalk in four directions, deciding which way to go, but it really made no difference; he was alone in this world of A.D. 2052, or as good as alone...”(18). The direction made no differences for Mead because he did not know which way he should go. In other words, he had no purposes and just wanted to walk.

Normlessness

Normlessness is a lack of commitment to shared social norms. The social norm of people in Mead’s society was that machines were everything a human life. The conversation between Mead and the police robot was a clear manifestation that machines could be everything in the society. In a conversation, the police robot could not understand why Mead still wanted to see outside his home since he had a screen showing him everything. Moreover, it could not understand why he still wanted fresh air since he had air-conditioning machines at home. Even police in the society were machines. All people in the society watched television at night like corpses: “Everything went on in the tomb-like houses at night now...” (21).

In contrast to other people in the society, Mead had no television. He did not watch TV at home but instead he walked along the streets alone touching real nature. The story narrated that “In ten years of walking by night or day, for thousands of miles, he had never met another person walking, not one in all that time” (19). This narrated that Mead was not the same as his neighbors. Mead behaved differently from others in the society; he spent time at night walking along the street to get fresh air and be close to the nature rather than staying at home to watch television stunningly.

His behavior was against the norm of the society; people normally sat in their homes after work and watched television, and occasionally look out their windows. As walking at night alone seemed strange in the society where all people stayed at home watching television, the police car suspected Mead's action because no one did the same as Mead. They thought what Mead did were unusual. Therefore, he was arrested because of his walking along the street.

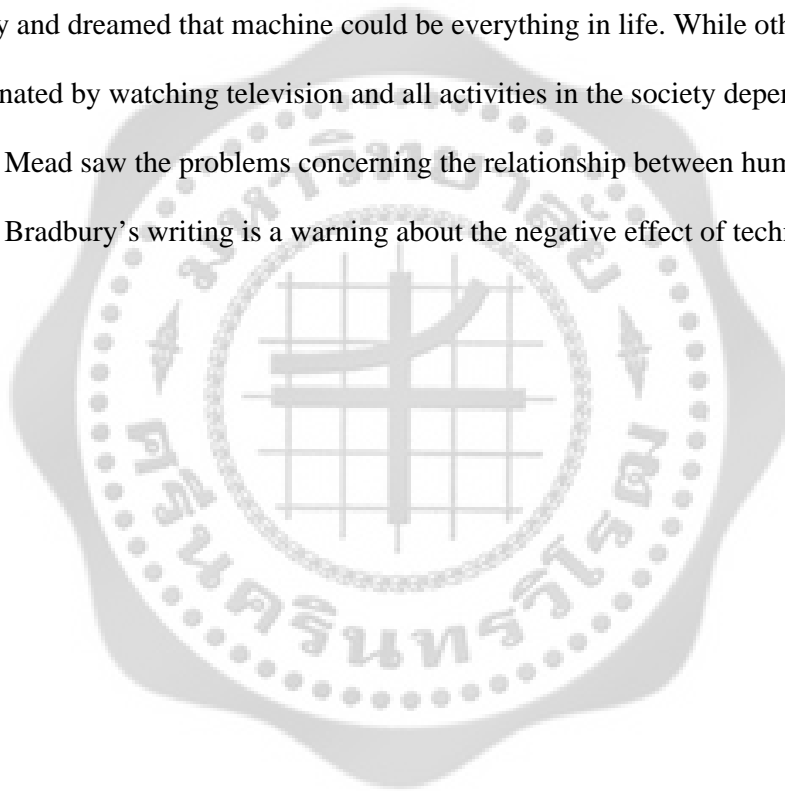
Social Isolation

The feeling of normlessness has created a great impact on social isolation. When people cannot share any convention to the social norm, they lack sense of belonging and try to move themselves far away from the others. Social isolation refers to the sense of loneliness or exclusion in social relations. It means a state or process in which persons, groups, or cultures lose or do not have communication or cooperation with one another. Mead was an isolated person because he was alone and separated from others in the society.

Mead was alone in the society because he had no friends, no wife and no family. As Bradbury narrated, "...he was alone in this world of A.D. 2052 or as good as alone..." (18). While walking at night, he felt like he was in a far place with no people. Bradbury narrated that "If he closed his eyes and stood very still, frozen, he could imagine himself upon the center of a plain, a wintry, windless Arizona desert with no house in a thousand miles, and only dry river beds, the street, for company" (19). Being different from the other people in the society, he felt unfamiliar with people and machine in the society and the only one thing that he got familiar with was the nature around him. Therefore, he separated himself from the society. "The street was silent and long and empty, with only his shadow moving like the shadow of hawk in mid-country" (19).

“The Pedestrian” is one of Ray Bradbury’s short stories that can portray the issue of the negative effect of technology. The experiences of alienation were presented through Mead, the protagonist. He lived in the society with the states of meaninglessness, normlessness, and social-isolation.

Bradbury presents the effects of technology, especially television, in a society. If human life depends on machines, they lose their humanity. People in Mead’s society are the representative of people at that time who were fascinated by new technology and dreamed that machine could be everything in life. While other people were fascinated by watching television and all activities in the society depended on machines, Mead saw the problems concerning the relationship between humans and machines. Bradbury’s writing is a warning about the negative effect of technology.



CHAPTER 5

COMPARISON OF “THE MURDERER” AND “THE PEDESTRIAN”

In comparison, there are some similarities and differences of the impacts of technology on the two main characters in “The Murderer” and “The Pedestrian.”

Albert Brock and Leonard Mead were both alienated in their society. However, the differences of the two characters are that they struggled with the different kinds of technology and that led them sense the different aspects of alienation.

It is found that the two main characters in Ray Bradbury’s short stories struggled in a society where people were much addictive to technology and machines. They both faced the state of alienation since they thought and behaved differently from most people in the society. Brock, in “The Murderer,” felt painful to live with technology, especially communication technology. Likewise, Leonard Mead, in “The Pedestrian,” felt isolated in the society where all people were addicted to watching television. While Brock faced the state of alienation in the aspects of powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, and social-isolation, Mead was found in three aspects: meaninglessness, normlessness and social-isolation.

Although both Brock and Mead are alienated in their society, their reactions toward technology were different. Brock accepted the progress of technology. He lived in the house that was full of machines to service him. He used all kinds of communication technology everywhere and anytime. Brock’s life depended on technology like other people, but he gradually realized the consequences of life depending too much on technology. He struggles in the technological society. As a result, he decided to change and escape from what his society was. He became an alienated person because he was against technology. On the other hand, Mead did not keep track of the advancement of technology. He spent life without technology for a

long time. He had never watched TV in the TV-centered society, and he was still a writer in the society where no one read. In other words, Mead had never step into a life with technology. He refused to change or escape from the technological society. However, since the entire world had changed, he unavoidably sensed the state of alienation. It was very interesting that the two characters had the different reactions toward technology, but they both faced the state of alienation. It can be inferred that if humans let technology rule the impact is unavoidable.

Apart from main character's reactions toward technology, the relationship in the societies is also different. People in Brock's society had too much interaction with others through all kinds of machines; on the other hand, people in Mead's society had no interaction at all since they were fascinated by watching TV. In Brock's society, technology was used as a connector to communicate with others and create a communicative atmosphere all the time. To be in a social group, people needed machines to get in touch with others. In contrast to Brock's society, technology in Mead's society separated people from the social group and the real nature. Technology fed people all what they wanted at home, so it was not necessary to spend life with other people and real nature outside the house. It can be concluded that technology both connects and separates people in the society. However, too much connection and too little interaction in the society are the negative impacts that can lead to the state of alienation.

Finally, different types of technology can lead to different aspects of alienation. "The Murderer" focuses on communication technology. People connected each other all the time but it was too much. Brock struggled with this problem but he unavoidably faced a life with technology, communication, and people who were fascinated by technology. He wanted to escape from his society, but he could not.

Therefore, he felt powerless. He had no power to stop others from calling or using technology with him, and he could not change the society. On the other hand, in Mead's society where people were much adhered to television, people did not have any interactions at all since they spent time stunning with TV at home. Therefore, Mead's social-isolation was very clearly demonstrated.

All in all, the impacts of technology on the characters reveal Bradbury's perspective on technology. The two characters can be described as representatives of Bradbury. The stories portray people who were fascinated with the new progress of technology and dreamed that machines could be everything in life. Like Brock and Mead, Bradbury realizes the various consequences of technology. He thinks about the intervention of technology in human species and the wrong relationship between humans and machines. Brock and Mead are Bradbury's good examples to warn against the negative impacts of technology. Bradbury emphasizes that if humans do not realize the bad impacts of technology, they will be destroyed by it. Therefore, humans should be careful about machines before "got too involved about it."

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

Conclusion

“The Murderer” and “The Pedestrian” are Bradbury’s short stories that highlight the negative impacts of technology. In these two stories, Bradbury presents the relationship between human and technology through the two protagonists: Albert Brock in the “The Murderer” and Leonard Mead in “The Pedestrian.” Bradbury attempts to present the effect of technology in the futuristic society. The two main characters struggled in the society in which people were addicted to technology and machines.

This research has examined the impacts of technology on the main characters in Bradbury’s short stories: “The Murderer” and “The Pedestrian.” It was found that the relationship between man and technology was negative if people were too addicted to technology. If humans let technology be in the society whether they use in technology or not, they unavoidably faced the impact of it. Both main characters suffered from impacts of technology; they both sensed the state of alienation. With different kinds of technology, they sensed the state of alienation in different aspects. Brock in “The Murderer” faced the state of alienation in four aspects: powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness and social-isolation. Mead in “The Pedestrian” was found alienated in three aspects: meaninglessness, normlessness and social-isolation.

Technology in Brock’s Society

In “The Murderer,” people totally depended on various kinds of machines, and they became a part in human life. Technology was so advanced and could do everything like human. However, the major concern was that technology intervened the relationship of people in the society. Unknowingly, people were connected with

artificial machines instead of other people. Brock naturally knew the consequences, and he tried to escape from his society; as a result, he was alienated.

Brock was alienated in four aspects: powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, and social-isolation. He lacked power because his life was not under his own control but was determined by external agents: machines and people in the society which were the cause of powerlessness. Brock was a purposeless person since he preferred life without technology, but this was unavoidably in the society. He was normless because his thoughts, feelings and behaviors were abnormal and completely unacceptable by others. His actions were totally different from the social norm in the society. At the end of the story, Brock showed the sense of social-isolation since he tried to move himself out of the technology.

Technology in Mead's Society

In "The Pedestrian," technology especially TV was the center of the society and people were fascinated by the artificial thing in life rather than the real nature. People did not want to see outside their home since they have a TV screen which could show them everything. They did not want some fresh air since they had air-conditioning machines which can create air for them at home. Moreover, people in Mead's society relied and trusted machines even the police in the society were also machines. Mead did not try to escape from the society, but he normally spent life as in the past. He was not changed by the progress of technology. He had no TV in the TV-centered world. He was a writer in the society where people did not read, and he enjoyed the real nature rather than the artificial things. However, he unavoidably senses the state of alienation.

Mead is considered alienated in three aspects: meaninglessness, normlessness, and social-isolation. Mead was a meaningless person because he had no meaning and

significance in the society and that led him spent life purposelessly. Mead was a normless person because his action was totally different from the norm in the society. Mead was an isolated person because he was alone and separated from others in the society.

The two short stories, can reflect people in today's societies. As technologies is increasing influential, people become powerless. In "The Murderer," communication machines were beyond control. Brock found his life powerless as he was threatened by machines. He thought people became impersonal as they lived in the unreal world. They were living and struggling in the world that people were dehumanized by machines. Instead of sharing and interacting face-to-face as they did, they were communicating and sharing via machines. People are now being far from humanity. In contrast, machines, those relevant to communication in particular which are regarded impersonal, and are increasingly influential.

As machines are embraced by people in today's society. Those who are outdated become normless resulting in their sense of alienation. That is to say, if they cannot pursue modern machines which are constantly updated, they will be alienated by the majority of people in the society. As Brock in "The Murderer" who kept silent, and Mead who strolled at nights, they were both considered the strangers. Therefore, people who are clinging on to technology are marginalized. The feeling of normlessness has created a great impact on social isolation. When people cannot share any social conventions, they lack a sense of belonging and try to move themselves far away from others.

However, the final dimension of alienation, self-estrangement, was not found in the two protagonists, but was found symbolized in other people who used machines. Self-estrangement is found when the individual loses touch with the

authentic self and perceives that they are acting contrary to salient human nature. Technology can make people self-estranged since it intervenes and become a part of the human species; it decreases the value of humanity and reduces the importance of real nature. In the two short stories, people preferred interact with machines rather than their fellow people. They talk to machines made of plastic and wires. People in the two short stories, except Brock and Mead, unknowingly felt self-estranged. They experienced a rupture between the inner self and the artificial self, created by machines and technology. Since Brock and Mead were against technology, and they did not accept technology to be in the part of their lives, they were not self-estranged.

Bradbury uses dystopian fiction to convey the effect of machines and their ability to destroy humankind. He is an American author who has written more than five hundred published works since 1940. His literary works demonstrate the themes of racism, censorship, technology, nuclear war, humanistic values and the importance of imagination. He shows this viewpoint about the negative impact of technology by his writing. Many of his works show that new technology can be destructive to society and its inhabitants and causing people to forget what life is about.

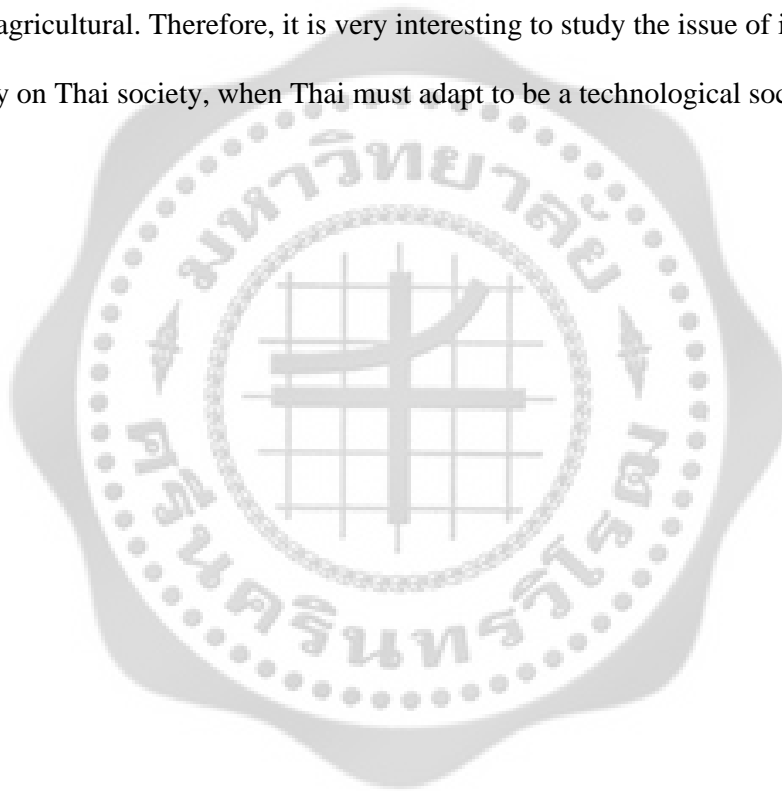
It can be concluded that Bradbury's works are not only for entertainment but also for understanding the impacts of technology. Bradbury's short stories help readers learn and understand the different points of views of technological society.

Suggestion for Further Studies

Many contemporary writings present the issues of impacts of technology. Bradbury is one of the writers who points out the impacts of advanced technology. A lot of studies on Bradbury's stories tend to be involved with Bradbury's negative view about the progress of technology. Several interesting topics should be studied further.

Science fiction in the 20th century was a tool to warn the possible impacts of technology because it was a new thing at that time. On the other hand, technology in the 21st century was so advanced, and became a major part in human life. Therefore, it is very interesting to compare the impacts of technology presented in science fiction in the 20th century to science fiction in the 21st century.

Moreover, Thailand is a developing country; Thai people use technology to improve their country to be like Western countries. However, Thai society is remains primarily agricultural. Therefore, it is very interesting to study the issue of impact of technology on Thai society, when Thai must adapt to be a technological society.





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Appendix A: Ray Bradbury's "The Murderer"

Music moved with him in the white halls. He passed an office door: "The Merry Widow Waltz." Another door: "Afternoon of a Faun." A third: "Kiss Me Again." He turned into a cross corridor: "The Sword Dance" buried him in cymbals, drums, pots, pans, knives, forks, thunder, and tin lightning. All washed away as he hurried through an anteroom where a secretary sat nicely stunned by Beethoven's Fifth. He moved himself before her eyes like a hand, she didn't see him.

His wrist radio buzzed.

"Yes?"

"This is Lee, Dad. Don't forget about my allowance."

"Yes, son, yes. I'm busy."

"Just didn't want you to forget, Dad," said the wrist radio. Tchaikovsky's "Romeo and Juliet" swarmed about the voice and flushed into the long halls.

The psychiatrist moved in the beehive of offices, in the cross-pollination of themes, Stravinsky mating with Bach, Haydn unsuccessfully repulsing Rachmaninoff, Schubert slain by Duke Ellington. He nodded to the humming secretaries and the whistling doctors, fresh to their morning work. At his office he checked a few papers with his stenographer, who sang under her breath, then phoned the police captain upstairs. A few minutes later a red light hunked, a voice said from the ceiling:

"Prisoner delivered to Interview Chamber Nine."

He unlocked the chamber door, stepped in, heard the door lock behind him.

"Go away," said the prisoner, smiling.

The psychiatrist was shocked by that smile. A very sunny, pleasant warm thing, a thing that shed bright light upon the room. Dawn among the dark hills. High noon at midnight, that smile. The blue eyes sparkled serenely above that display of self-assured dentistry.

"I'm here to help you," said the psychiatrist, frowning. Something was wrong with the room. He had hesitated the moment he entered. He glanced around. The prisoner laughed. "If you're wondering why it's so quiet in here, I just kicked the radio to death."

Violent, thought the doctor.

The prisoner read this thought, smiled, put out a gentle hand. "No, only to machines that yak-yak-yak."

Bits of the wall radio's tubes and wires lay on the gray carpeting. Ignoring these, feeling that smile upon him like a heat lamp, the psychiatrist sat across from his patient in the unusual silence, which was like the gathering of a storm.

"You're Mr. Albert Brock, who calls himself The Murderer?"

Brock nodded pleasantly. "Before we start...." He moved quietly and quickly to detach the wrist radio from the doctor's arm. He tucked it in his teeth like a walnut, gritted and heard it crack, banded it back to the appalled psychiatrist as if he had done them both a favor.

"That's better."

The psychiatrist stared at the ruined machine. "You're running up quite a damage bill."

"I don't care," smiled the patient. "As the old song goes: "Don't Care What Happens to Me!" He hummed it.

The psychiatrist said: "Shall we start?"

"Fine. The first victim, or one of the first, was my telephone. Murder most foul. I shoved it in the kitchen Insinkerator! Stopped the disposal unit in mid-swallow. Poor thing strangled to death. After that I shot the television set!"

The psychiatrist said, "Mmm."

"Fired six shots right through the cathode. Made a beautiful tinkling crash, like a dropped chandelier."

"Nice imagery."

"Thanks, I always dreamt of being a writer."

"Suppose you tell me when you first began to hate the telephone."

"It frightened me as a child. Uncle of mine called it the Ghost Machine. Voices without bodies. Scared the living hell out of me. Later in life I was never comfortable. Seemed to me a phone was an impersonal instrument. If it felt like it, it let your personality go through its wires. If it didn't want to, it just drained your personality away until what slipped through at the other end was some cold fish of a voice all steel, copper, plastic, no warmth, no reality. It's easy to say the wrong thing on telephones; the telephone changes your meaning on you. First thing you know, you've made an enemy. Then, of course, the telephone is such a

convenient thing; it just sits there and demands you call someone who doesn't want to be called. Friends were always calling, calling, calling me. Hell, I hadn't any time of my own. When it wasn't the telephone it was the television, the radio, the phonograph. When it wasn't the television or radio or the phonograph it was motion pictures at the corner theater, motion pictures projected, with commercials on low-lying cumulus clouds. It doesn't rain rain any more, it rains soapsuds. When it wasn't High-Fly Cloud advertisements, it was music by Mozzek in every restaurant; music and commercials on the busses I rode to work. When it wasn't music, it was inter-office communications, and my horror chambers of a radio wrist watch on which my friends and my wife phoned every five minutes. What is there about such 'conveniences' that makes them so temptingly convenient? The average man thinks? Here I am, time on my hands, and there on my wrist is a wrist telephone, so why not just buzz old Joe up, eh? "Hello, hello!" I love my friends, my wife, humanity, very much, but when one minute my wife calls to say, 'Where are you now dear?' and a friend calls and says, 'Got the best off-color joke to tell you. Seems there was a guy -' And a stranger calls and cries out, 'This is the Find-Fax Poll. What gum are you chewing at this very instant!' Well!"

"How did you feel during the week?"

"The fuse lit. On the edge of the cliff. That same afternoon I did what I did at the office."

"Which was?"

"I poured a paper cup of water into the intercommunications system."

The psychiatrist wrote on his pad.

"And the system shorted?"

"Beautifully! The Fourth of July on wheels! My God, stenographers ran around looking _lost_! What an uproar!"

"Felt better temporarily, eh?"

"Fine! Then I got the idea at noon of stamping my wrist radio on the sidewalk. A shrill voice was just yelling out of it at me, 'This is People's Poll Number Nine. What did you eat for lunch?' when I kicked the Jesus out of the wrist radio!"

"Felt even _better_, eh?"

"It _grew_ on me!" Brock rubbed his hands together. "Why didn't I start a solitary revolution, deliver man from certain 'conveniences'? 'Convenient for whom?' I cried. Convenient for friends: 'Hey, Al, thought I'd call you from the locker room out here at Green Hills. Just made a sockdolager hole in one! A hole in one, Al! A _beautiful_ day. Having a shot of whiskey now. Thought you'd want to know, Al!' Convenient for my office, so when I'm in the field with my radio car there's no moment when I'm not in touch. In _touch_! _There's_ a slimy phrase. Touch, hell. Gripped! Pawed, rather. Mauled and massaged and pounded by FM voices. You can't leave your car without checking in: 'Have stopped to visit gas-station men's room.' 'Okay, Brock, step on it!' 'Brock, what took you so long?' 'Sorry, sir.' 'Watch it next time, Brock.' 'Yes, sir!' So, do you know what I did, Doctor? I bought a quart of French chocolate ice cream and spooned it into the car radio transmitter."

"Was there any _special_ reason for selecting French chocolate ice cream to spoon into the broadcasting unit?"

Brock thought about it and smiled. "It's my favorite flavor."

"Oh," said the doctor.

"I figured, hell, what's good enough, for me is good enough for the radio transmitter."

"What made you think of spooning ice cream into the radio?"

"It was a hot day."

The doctor paused." And what happened next?"

"Silence happened next. God, it was beautiful. That car radio cackling all day. Brock go here. Brock go there. Brock check in. Brock check out, okay Brock, hour lunch, Brock, lunch over, Brock, Brock, Brock. Well, that silence was like putting ice cream in my ears."

"You seem to like ice cream a lot."

"I just rode around feeling of the silence. It's a big bolt of the nicest, softest flannel ever made. Silence. A whole hour of it. I just sat in my car, smiling, feeling of that flannel with my ears. I felt drunk with Freedom!"

"Go on."

"Then I got the idea of the portable diathermy machine. I rented one, took it on the bus going home that night. There sat all the tired commuters with their wrist radios, talking to their wives, saying, 'Now I'm at Forty-third, now I am at Forty-fourth, here I am at Forty-ninth, now turning at Sixty-first.' One husband cursing, 'Well, get out of that bar, damn it, and get home and get dinner started, I'm at Seventieth!' And the transit system radio playing 'Tales

from the Vienna Woods,' a canary singing words about a first-rate wheat cereal. Then I switched on my diathermy! Static! Interference! All wives cut off from husbands grousing about a hard day at the office. All husbands cut off from wives who had just seen their children break a window! The 'Vienna Woods' chopped down, the canary mangled! _Silence!_ A terrible, unexpected silence. The bus inhabitants faced with having to converse with each other. Panic! Sheer, animal panic!"

"The police seized you?"

"The bus had to stop. After all, the music was being scrambled, husbands and wives were out of touch with reality. Pandemonium, riot, and chaos. Squirrels chattering in cages! A trouble unit arrived, triangulated on me instantly, had me reprimanded, fined, and home, minus my diathermy machine, in jig time."

"Mr. Brock, may I suggest that so far your whole pattern here is not very-practical? If you didn't like transit radios or office radios or car business radios, why didn't you join a fraternity of radio haters, start petitions, get legal and constitutional rulings? After all, this is a democracy."

"And I," said Brock, "am that thing called a minority. I did join fraternities, picket, pass petitions, take it to court. Year after year, I protested. Everyone laughed. Everyone else loved bus radios and commercials. I was out of step."

"Then you should have taken it like a good soldier, don't you think? The majority rules."

"But they went too far. If a little music and 'keeping in touch' was

charming, they figured a lot would be ten times as charming. I went wild! I got home to find my wife hysterical. Why? Because she had been completely out of touch with me for half a day. Remember, I did a dance on my wrist radio? Well, that night I laid plans to murder my house."

"Are you sure that's how you want me to write it down?"

"That's semantically accurate. Kill it dead. It is one of those talking, singing, humming, weather-reporting, poetry-reading, novel-reciting, jingle-jangling, rockaby-crooning-when-you-go-to-bed houses. A house that screams opera to you in the shower and teaches you Spanish in your sleep. One of those blathering caves where all kinds of electronic Oracles make you feel a trifle larger than a thimble, with stoves that say, "I'm apricot pie, and I'm done or 'I'm prime roast beef, so haste me!' and other nursery gibberish like that. With beds that rock you to sleep and shake you awake. A house that barely tolerates humans, I tell you. A front door that barks: 'You've mud on your feet, sir!' And an electronic vacuum hound that snuffles around after you from room to room, inhaling every fingernail or ash you drop. Jesus God, I say, Jesus God!"

"Quietly," suggested the psychiatrist.

"Remember that Gilbert and Sullivan song - I've Got It on My List, It Never Will Be Missed_? all night I listed grievances. Next morning early, I bought a pistol. I purposely muddied my feet. I stood at our front door. The front door shrilled, 'Dirty feet, muddy feet! Wipe your feet! Please be neat!' I shot the damn thing in its keyhole. I ran to the kitchen, where the stove was just whining, 'Turn me over!' In the middle of a mechanical omelet I did the stove to death. Oh, how it sizzled and screamed, 'I'm shorted!' Then the telephone rang like a spoiled brat. I shoved it down the Insinkerator. I must state here and now I have nothing

whatever against the Insinkerator; it was an innocent bystander. I feel sorry for it now, a practical device indeed, which never said a word, purred like a sleepy lion most of the time, and digested our leftovers. I'll have it restored. Then I went in and shot the television, that insidious beast, that Medusa, which freezes a billion people to stone every night, staring fixedly, that Siren which called and sang and promised so much and gave, after all, so little, but myself always going back, going back, hoping and waiting until-bang! Like a headless turkey, gobbling, my wife whooped out the front door. The police came. Here I am!" He sat back happily and lit a cigarette.

"And did you realize, in committing these crimes, that the wrist radio, the broadcasting transmitter, the phone, the bus radio, the office intercoms, all were rented or were someone else's property?"

"I would do it all over again, so help me God."

The psychiatrist sat there in the sunshine of that beatific smile.

"You don't want any further help from the Office of Mental Health? You're ready to take the consequences?"

"This is only the beginning," said Mr. Brock. "I'm the vanguard of the small public which is tired of noise and being taken advantage of and pushed around and yelled at, every moment music, every moment in touch with some voice somewhere, do this, do that, quick, quick, now here, now there. You'll see. The revolt begins. My name will go down in history!"

"Mmm." The psychiatrist seemed to be thinking." It'll take time, of course. It was all so enchanting at first. The very idea of these things, the practical uses, was wonderful. They were

almost toys, to be played with, but the people got too involved, went too far, and got wrapped up in a pattern of social behavior and couldn't get out, couldn't admit they were in, even. So they rationalized their nerves as something else. 'Our modern age,' they said. 'Conditions,' they said. 'Highstrung,' they said. But mark my words, the seed has been sown. I got world-wide coverage on TV, radio, films, _there's_ an irony for you. That was five days ago. A billion people know about me. Check your financial columns. Any day now. Maybe today. Watch for a sudden spurt, a rise in sales for French chocolate ice cream!"

"I see," said the psychiatrist.

"Can I go back to my nice private cell now, where I can be alone and quiet for six months?"

"Yes," said the psychiatrist quietly.

"Don't worry about me," said Mr. Brock, rising. "I'm just going to sit around for a long time stuffing that nice soft bolt of quiet material in both ears."

"Mmm," said the psychiatrist, going to the door.

"Cheers," said Mr. Brock.

"Yes," said the psychiatrist.

He pressed a code signal on a hidden button, the door opened, he stepped out, the door shut and locked. Alone, he moved in the offices and corridors. The first twenty yards of his walk were accompanied by Tambourine Chinois. Then it was Tzigane, Bach's Passacaglia and Fugue

Appendix B: Ray Bradbury's "The Pedestrian"

To enter out into that silence that was the city at eight o'clock of a misty evening in November, to put your feet upon that buckling concrete walk, to step over grassy seams and make your way, hands in pockets, through the silences, that was what Mr Leonard Mead most dearly loved to do. He would stand upon the corner of an intersection and peer down long moonlit avenues of sidewalk in four directions, deciding which way to go, but it really made no difference; he was alone in this world of 2053 A.D., or as good as alone, and with a final decision made, a path selected, he would stride off, sending patterns of frosty air before him like the smoke of a cigar.

Sometimes he would walk for hours and miles and return only at midnight to his house. And on his way he would see the cottages and homes with their dark windows, and it was not unequal to walking through a graveyard where only the faintest glimmers of firefly light appeared in flickers behind the windows. Sudden gray phantoms seemed to manifest upon inner room walls where a curtain was still undrawn against the night, or there were whisperings and murmurs where a window in a tomb-like building was still open.

Mr Leonard Mead would pause, cock his head, listen, look, and march on, his feet making no noise on the lumpy walk. For long ago he had wisely changed to sneakers when strolling at night, because the dogs in intermittent squads would parallel his journey with barkings if he wore hard heels, and lights might click on and faces appear and an entire street be startled by the passing of a lone figure, himself, in the early November evening.

On this particular evening he began his journey in a westerly direction, toward the hidden sea. There was a good crystal frost in the air; it cut the nose and made the lungs blaze like a

Christmas tree inside; you could feel the cold light going on and off, all the branches filled with invisible snow. He listened to the faint push of his soft shoes through autumn leaves with satisfaction, and whistled a cold quiet whistle between his teeth, occasionally picking up a leaf as he passed, examining its skeletal pattern in the infrequent lamplights as he went on, smelling its rusty smell.

'Hello, in there,' he whispered to every house on every side as he moved. 'What's up tonight on Channel 4, Channel 7, Channel 9? Where are the cowboys rushing, and do I see the United States Cavalry over the next hill to the rescue?'

The street was silent and long and empty, with only his shadow moving like the shadow of a hawk in mid-country. If he closed his eyes and stood very still, frozen, he could imagine himself upon the center of a plain, a wintry, windless Arizona desert with no house in a thousand miles, and only dry river beds, the street, for company.

'What is it now?' he asked the houses, noticing his wrist watch. Eight-thirty P.M.? Time for a dozen assorted murders? A quiz? A revue? A comedian falling off the stage?'

Was that a murmur of laughter from within a moon-white house? He hesitated, but went on when nothing more happened. He stumbled over a particularly uneven section of sidewalk. The cement was vanishing under flowers and grass. In ten years of walking by night or day, for thousands of miles, he had never met another person walking, not one in all that time.

He came to a cloverleaf intersection which stood silent where two main highways crossed the town. During the day it was a thunderous surge of cars, the gas stations open, a great insect rustling and a ceaseless jockeying for position as the scarab-beetles, a faint incense pattering from their exhausts, skimmed homeward to the far directions. But now these highways, too, were like streams in a dry season, all stone and bed and moon radiance.

He turned back on a side street, circling around toward his home. He was within a block of his destination when the lone car turned a corner quite suddenly and flashed a fierce white cone of light upon him. He stood entranced, not unlike a night moth, stunned by the illumination, and then drawn toward it.

A metallic voice called to him:

'Stand still. Stay where you are! Don't move!'

He halted.

'Put up your hands!'

'But-' he said.

'Your hands up! Or we'll shoot!'

The police, of course, but what a rare, incredible thing; in a city of three million, there was only one police car left, wasn't that correct? Ever since a year ago, 2052, the election year, the force had been cut down from three cars to one. Crime was ebbing; there was no need now for the police, save for this one lone car wandering and wandering the empty streets.

'Your name?' said the police car in a metallic whisper. He couldn't see the men in it for the bright light in his eyes.

'Leonard Mead,' he said.

'Speak up!'

'Leonard Mead!'

'Business or profession?'

'I guess you'd call me a writer.'

'No profession,' said the police car, as if talking to itself. The light held him fixed, like a museum

specimen, needle thrust through chest.

'You might say that,' said Mr Mead.

He hadn't written in years. Magazines and books didn't sell anymore. Everything went on in the tomb-like houses at night now, he thought, continuing his fancy. The tombs, ill-lit by television light, where the people sat like the dead, the gray or multi-colored lights touching their faces, but never really touching them.

'No profession,' said the phonograph voice, hissing. 'What are you doing out?'

'Walking,' said Leonard Mead.

'Walking!'

'Just walking,' he said simply, but his face felt cold.

'Walking, just walking, walking?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Walking where? For what?'

'Walking for air. Walking to see.'

'Your address!'

'Eleven South Saint James Street.'

'And there is air in your house, you have an air conditioner, Mr Mead?'

Yes.'

'And you have a viewing screen in your house to see with?'

No.

'No?' There was a crackling quiet that in itself was an accusation.

'Are you married, Mr Mead?'

No.'

'Not married,' said the police voice behind the fiery beam. The moon was high and dear among the stars and the houses were gray and silent.

'Nobody wanted me,' said Leonard Mead with a smile.

'Don't speak unless you're spoken to!'

Leonard Mead waited in the cold night.

'Just walking; Mr Mead?'

'Yes.'

But you haven't explained for what purpose.'

'I explained; for air, and to see, and just to walk.'

'Have you done this often?'

Every night for years.'

The police car sat in the center of the street with its radio throat faintly humming.

'Well, Mr Mead', it said.

's that all?' he asked politely.

'Yes,' said the voice. 'Here.' There was a sigh, a pop. The back door of the police car sprang wide.

'Get in.'

'Wait a minute, I haven't done anything!'

'Get in.'

'I protest!'

'Mr Mead.'

He walked like a man suddenly drunk. As he passed the front window of the car he looked in. As he had expected, there was no one in the front seat, no one in the car at all.

'Get in.'

He put his hand to the door and peered into the back seat, which was a little cell, a little black jail with bars. It smelled of riveted steel. It smelled of harsh antiseptic; it smelled too clean and hard and metallic. There was nothing soft there.

'Now if you had a wife to give you an alibi,' said the iron voice. 'But-'

Where are you taking me?'

The car hesitated, or rather gave a faint whirring click, as if information, somewhere, was dropping card by punch-slotted card under electric eyes. 'To the Psychiatric Center for Research on Regressive Tendencies.' He got in. The door shut with a soft thud. The police car rolled through the night avenues, flashing its dim lights ahead.

They passed one house on one street a moment later, one house in an entire city of houses that were dark, but this one particular house had all of its electric lights brightly lit, every window a loud yellow illumination, square and warm in the cool darkness.

'That's my house,' said Leonard Mead.

No one answered him.

The car moved down the empty riverbed streets and off away, leaving the empty streets with the empty sidewalks, and no sound and no motion all the rest of the chill November night.



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