IE 380
The Responsible Engineer
Class Discussion Questions for
Chapter 10, Engineers and Technological Progress


Answer the following questions. Questions in **boldface** are required; the others are optional.

1. Define *technology*.

2. **What were the three most significant technological innovations in history? Why?**

3. What do you think the technology of the future will be like?

4. **What are the three best things about technology?**

5. **What are the three worst things about technology?**

6. Is technology value-neutral or value-laden? Justify your answer.

7. Are you a technological optimist, a technological pessimist, ..., or what? Justify your answer.

To answer the following questions, read Part 1 of the instructor's essay, “A Proverb From the Grave of the *Titanic*,” which will be handed out in class.

8. Summarize the *Titanic* disaster in a paragraph of your own words.

9. Beyond the *proximate* causes of the disaster identified in the American and British inquiries, what do you think were the *fundamental* causes?

10. What lesson, if any, is there to be learned from the *Titanic* disaster?

As you know, the First Rule of Practice of the NSPE Code of Ethics for Engineers is this:

> Engineers shall hold paramount the safety, health, and *welfare* of the public.

*Welfare* is, literally, to fare well, to live well, to live a good life, to live *The Good Life.*

11. **What is your idea of The Good Life? Finish this: “The Good Life is a life of …”** Make your definition of The Good Life general enough to apply to yourself and to others as well, but not so general as to be a platitude.

12. **Using this idea of the Good Life as your definition of welfare, how ought you to apply the First Rule, as a Responsible Engineer?**

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1. “A dull and commonplace or trivial remark or statement . . .” *Oxford English Dictionary.*