

research directions – *technological determinism*

Although there are many technical issues involved in (digital) multimedia, as exemplified in the issues that play a role in digital convergence, a technical perspective alone does not suffice. Each technological innovation has its consequences on our social life. Conversely, each trend in society might result in the adoption or development of new technology. Looking at the history of the media, we may observe that media become *materials* in our social processes. Or, as phrased in [History]:

media as materials

each medium of communication tended to create a dangerous monopoly of knowledge

For example ([History], p. 8) for Christians, images were both a means of conveying information and a means of persuasion, that is part of the rhetorics of institutionalized religion.

Looking at our age, and the media that have come into existence in the previous century (radio, television, ...), [History] observe that:

technological determinism

technological determinism was not the answer, ... more attempts were to be made to provide answers about the social consequences of television than had ever been asked about radio.

In effect, underlying all developments in the media (including the computer) we may assume a basic need for information. A rather problematic need, for that matter:

information

Information became a major concern anywhere during the late 1960 and 1970s where there was simultaneous talk both of 'lack of information' and 'information saturation'.

[History], p. 555

Nowadays, we regard information as a commodity. Train schedules, movies, roadmaps, touristic information, stock prices, we expect it all to be there, preferably online, at no cost. No information, no life. Information drives the economy. Upwards and downwards!