

## TEC 154 2014S, Class 07: Engineering (1)

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### *Overview*

- Preliminaries.
  - Note takers.
  - General admin.
  - About the questions.
  - Introductions
- Background about Petroski.
- Small group work.
- Overview of the text.

## Preliminaries

### Note takers:

- Monday: LG and CC
- Wednesday: PG and JV (okay?)
- On Wednesday, we'll make plans for the next three weeks.
- For the next three weeks, we'll also use a different format - five most important things to remember, rather than detailed notes.

## Admin

- I should be distributing the next set of readings on Wednesday.
- Extra credit:
  - Convocation: "Putin and Pussy Riot", Noon, Wednesday, 5 February. JRC 101.
  - Basketball Saturday 1pm
  - Others?

## The "Daily" Questions

- The regular questions are a key part of the course.
  - They help me ensure that you are thinking carefully about the reading.
  - They give me a chance to help you think more deeply about the reading.
  - They can give us fodder for discussion.
- Expectations:
  - Questions use correct English spelling and grammar.
  - Questions *should* draw upon the current reading.
  - Questions will normally paraphrase or quote the reading. In both cases, you should point us to

- the appropriate section in the reading.
- Questions *must* be something that we can discuss as a class.
  - No asking about deep technical things or simple factual matters (unless you can't find info on the simple factual matters).
- Questions *must* acknowledge that authors can be right, no matter how wrongheaded they may seem to be.
- Questions *should* be about topics that will help us think more deeply about the reading or about technology.
- Questions *can* be intended for open-ended discussion.
- Questions *can* simply pick out really puzzling parts of a reading and ask for explication.
  - But generally not for things that you can search for on the Internet.
- I've started sending you grades on questions, along with occasional requests to redo.
  - Note: Since the first few weeks were learning experiences, I'm moving all grades for the first two weeks that are lower than a good/check to a good.
  - My goal is that the lowest grade anyone gets is a Good/Check. Hence, if you get below a Good/Check, I'll ask for a redo.
  - When you work from something as long as Petroski, please provide a bit more context. (Cite page numbers)

## Introductions

- Your name
- Your major (or intended major)
- Why are you taking this course?
- What will you contribute to this course?

Why?

- Techstud concentrator. [x4] But why?
  - Related to my different interests.
  - Kinds of questions I'm already asking - What role is tech playing? Putting data online and such. [Sam needs to fit this more into the course.]
  - Interested in interaction between humans and technology, particularly computers
- To think about technology and society
- To build tools to THOUGHTFULLY criticize technology
- Sounds interesting
- Further from the humanities (although not quite at the hard science side) [x2]
- I like technology. It's my father's fault. He's a CS guy.
- Know Sam's son.
- Something different.
- Liked being tortured by Sam in Tutorial and wanted one more option.
- To think about technology and sports.
  - Equipment
  - Also health and fitness
- Looks interesting and it's not in my major

- A fan of technology. Liked parts of "The Digital Age"

Contributions:

- Critical ability! [x2]
- Ability to consider political and policy side of things.
- Scientific background
- TBD
- Humanistic perspective
- Deep knowledge of audio engineering
- Broad interests
- Understanding of human cognition
- A more behavioral perspective of psychology
- 21 years of experiences with technology
- Opportunities for extra credit.
- An economics perspective. [x2]
- Critical frameworks. E.g., Marx (the real one) on labor and production

## Notes from CC

Why read Petroski? \* What is "Good" vs "Bad" technology \* The broader impact of technology \* Helping us thinking about human nature and technology \* To help us understand what engineers might think about technology, as opposed to the earlier readings that treated engineering and technology as synonymous \* Petroski is an engineer, he is a teacher. He one of the more famous writers who popularize engineering.

## Background about Petroski

### Small group work

- Choose a group of four to five students. We should have three groups.
- Task 1: Look at the big picture
  - What is Petroski's primary thesis/claim/goal for the book?
- Task 2: I will assign chapters to each group. Your goal is to identify a few aspects of the chapter:
  - What is the thesis/point of the chapter?
  - How does the thesis contribute to Petroski's broader goal?
  - How does Petroski argue for this chapter's thesis?
  - What else should we take out of this chapter?
- Task 3: The distributed questions below come from you folks and from my previous class. Each group gets assigned two questions to answer and gets to pick one question to answer. You may have to go to the Internet to answer Q's.

# Petroski

- Why read Petroski?
  - "Good" vs. "Bad" technology
  - Think about broader impact of technology
  - Helps us think about human nature and technology
  - To help us understand what engineers might think about
  - Petroski is
    - An engineer
    - A teacher of engineers
    - A famous popularizer of engineer
- What are Petroski's main theses in this book?
  - Coming on Wednesday

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