

BORGMANN'S TECHNOLOGY AND THE RECOVERY OF THE GOOD LIFE

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The Philippine society is not at all caught unaware of the technological boom in Western societies. In a small way, it is a party to the development. Through its special economic zones, the Philippines has participated in the globalization that paved the way for the influx of various technological infrastructures. In information technology, for example, an area like Metro Cebu has become an information technology (IT) hub that sundry call centers, both big and small, are spread all over the metropolis. In industrial technology, manufacturing industries in CALABARZON, Subic Bay, and Cebu areas address the industrial requirements of other countries such as harnesses, microchips, electronic circuitry, etc. In agricultural technology, the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) has pioneered the generation of rice varieties to increase production. The Philippines' media or communication technology does not lag far behind with its wide Internet connectivity, increased cellular phone subscribers, and so on. In medical technology, the Philippines is slowly becoming a medical tourism destination. All these infrastructures attest that the Philippines is now a technological society.

What does this mean? "That the world is technological means... that it is radically novel," Borgmann declares.¹ And, it means a radical change in the life of every human being. The Philippines then by extension has become entirely transformed as a society whose life is being radically altered by technology. In transforming the society through technology, what is being replaced? What is being gained? What is the end of such transformation? Have our lives been improved by technology? As citizens, how can we understand our technologically altered way of life?

This article will explain one of the philosophies of technology. Specifically, it will explicate Albert Borgmann's view and will explore some possibilities for understanding a way of life amidst technology. At the end, I hope that the article will enhance our understanding of technology and nudge us to actively participate in shaping the direction of our technological society.

The conquest of nature has not gone down as a mere reckless display of domination or an unprincipled attempt to put nature on her knees.⁵ Noble intentions glaze the task of "liberating humanity from disease, hunger and toil, and of enriching life with learning, art, and athletics."⁶ With these tasks, the employment of tools or technology seeks to uplift human existence. The discovery of steam power and the subsequent harnessing of coal energies and their employment in industrial machinery ease human beings of their toil. Thus, in the earlier period, the initiation to technology provides telling clues for understanding technology.

For Borgmann, this telling clue for the true understanding of technology, the character which totally describes the life of human beings, is found in the quotidian life. Borgmann calls this as the pattern or paradigm of technology. This paradigm is discovered in the imaginary divide between the pretechnological and technological society. Suffice it to say that the pretechnological society is beset with problems and that in dealing with these problems, the society employs technological means. Thus, the technological world is born.

The Device Paradigm

A clear and relevant theory of technology can be drawn from the day-to-day activities of human beings, that is, from their "characteristic approach to reality."⁷ Nowadays, the life of human beings is characterized by extreme complexity as regards to how they surround themselves with technological gadgets. Various devices such as televisions, refrigerators, microwave ovens, radios, stereo sets, home viewing sets, blenders, and many others sustain a typical urban dwelling. This technological environment defines the character of human life.

There is, for Borgmann, a way to understand the kind of life in this technological environment and, subsequently, the proper cognition of technology itself. This is found in the devices themselves since they hold the pattern of a technological life. Borgmann thus proffers the "device paradigm." Owing much to Thomas Kuhn on this notion, he admits that the paradigm has a force which helps us understand the form of life in the everyday world and set clear examples regarding the pattern of technology.⁸ In this sense, the device paradigm has theoretical and practical sides. The first explains the conceptual elements of the phenomenon, while the second describes the "form of life" the phenomenon introduces.⁹

Several approaches explicate the device paradigm. One, the best way to appropriate the technological phenomenon is to examine and expound it *ab ovo*. This means that a historical account is needed to show

the background from which such a phenomenon has emerged.¹⁰ Two adequate examples must clearly illustrate the patterns outlined in the account of such development. Three, an explication must provide the abstract pattern of the technological phenomenon.¹¹

In its inception, technology emerges as a phenomenon addressing the problems of the human world. As mentioned above, the unprecedented rise of mechanical devices in the early modern period is not a mere attempt of human beings to display their brute power over nature and the world. The endeavor, accompanied by intellectual liberation, has the noble intent of eradicating the "scourges of humanity" and liberating human beings from excessive toil, poverty, hunger, and suffering.¹² Even in the present, human beings have similar goals in mind when they employ technology. The use of genetic engineering in corn breeds, for example, intends to increase productivity in order to meet the increasing demands for food and thus address hunger and poverty.¹³ The employment of the same technology in a genetically modified organism like fish has the same end in mind. Hence, since the beginning technology has been sought continuously to help in procuring human needs with ease and enriching the quality of life.

But all human endeavors ennobled by ideal intents do not always end up achieving the goals. Oftentimes, intentions guide further actions but have no control over them. There remain, therefore, several ways of not attaining the end. Some of these are found within modern technology itself. For instance, technology is unable to solve the problems when its devices are defective.¹⁴ There is this irony in modern technology, Borgmann admits. Modern technology has reneged on its promise when "liberation by way of disburdenment yields to disengagement, enrichment by way of diversion is overtaken by distraction and conquest makes way first to domination and then to loneliness."¹⁵

The device paradigm illustrates better the irony in modern technology. For Borgmann, modern devices characterize contemporary life. They hold the key to the understanding of modern technology. A clear view can be had when devices are seen against the background of a "thing" — an attempt that exactly jibes with the account of the take-off from the pre-technological to the technological.¹⁶ A thing, for Borgmann, is one which offers various commodities and includes the " manifold engagement" with its world.¹⁷ An example is necessary to elucidate the point.

Borgmann offers one of his famous examples: a stove. A stove or hearth is a thing which gives warmth to a family living in a cool winter place. In procuring the commodity, one engages in a lot of activities. Father and son need to go out and gather firewood. Another has to start a fire. Since the stove does not evenly distribute warmth — not all parts of

the dwelling are warm—the family gathers together near the hearth. In this sense, the stove is the center of all activities.

The stove as a thing offers more than warmth.¹⁸ In order for it to deliver, it engages the whole family in various activities and is even the center from which other activities may find their significance. The stove greets the family in the morning. When unlighted, it marks a cold morning; when lighted, a bustling morning. Often it provides the family with a venue for leisurely activities in the evening. In its light and warmth, old lore finds its echo, poetry holds its rhymes and epic tales win applause and adulation. In this manner, the hearth, the stove, is a focal thing.¹⁹ Hence, a thing like a stove offers more than just a commodity and solicits manifold engagement.²⁰

In contrast, a device is not exactly the mechanical or electronic artifact found in one's surroundings. Thus, it does not exactly refer to the gadget. A device like a central heating plant, for example, may deliver the required function in lieu of the traditional stove. For Borgmann, a device is one that has a machinery and a commodity. In the given example, the central heating plant itself, its system of use, its intricate vents and its machine constitute the machinery.²¹ On the other hand, the commodity refers to the function of the device, that is, to "what is the device there for."²² The commodity of the central heating plant is warmth. These two, machinery and commodity, form the device.

The distinctive character of the device discloses a disturbing facet of modern technology. In contrast to the focal *thing*, the device, in delivering its promise, can efficiently furnish the commodity. The machinery procures the latter through availability. In the given example, the central heating plant need not provide warmth to the center of the house alone. Ducts or air vents, insofar as they can be conveniently connected, warm almost every part of the house. Unlike the hearth, the heater just needs electricity, or—in the case of older models—fossil fuel; it is always available without hassles. In this sense, the device sustains the facile delivery of the commodity. Its use leads to the delivery of the commodity, the subsequent liberation of human beings from toil, burden, and struggle, and the significant uplift in the quality of life. The almost instantaneous presence of the device significantly supports the promise of technology. However, there is more than what meets the eyes here. In an attempt to hastily produce the commodity, the machinery precludes the manifold engagements concomitant to the thing's offering of commodity. In our example, while efficiently delivering the commodity, the central heating plant ignores the pre-technological engagements of the family.²³ While it seems that the only purpose of the stove is to provide heat, the practices that lead to the availability of the heat are equally essential to the hearth. Through the wood-gathering phase for the stove, for example, the father assumes his role as the

provider and the son is to consider this place of the father in the family. In the same way, the mother equally acts out her role in managing the household. Here, through the hearth, familial engagements are initiated.²⁴ Sadly, these are engagements no longer found in the modern heater setting. Often, morning greets the family members today in their own bed. And the evening retires without the powwow that usually stays with the last glow of the fading campfire. To be sure, such short cut to the commodity disturbs – to put it mildly – social engagements.²⁵

In addition, the machinery must recede into the background while delivering the commodity in order not to inconvenience human beings. If it encumbers them, such burdening element will, in all likelihood, be removed. The device “disburdens” them, Borgmann claims. But by increasingly minimizing the interference of the device and unloading their toil, human beings have neglected the machinery itself and subsequently become “technological illiterates.”²⁶ In this sense, skills have become technologized, that is, the phenomenon has bred skilled technicians who deliver repair as commodity.²⁷

The primacy of the commodity over a thing’s manifold engagements has structured the machinery of the device.²⁸ It follows that availability is also radically altered. Insofar as technology efficiently dispenses the commodity, it remains in existence. However, when another machine provides the same with far less disburdenment, the other becomes obsolete. This means: nothing in the modern world is irreplaceable. Also, this implies that availability can take any form as long as the commodity is instantaneous, “ready at hand,” and hassle-free. Availability is possible by making an artifact disposable, “care-free,” beyond repair, replaceable, and, ironically, user-friendly.²⁹ Such availability introduces the culture of consumption.

The Pre-Shrunk World

The pattern of modern technology has shrunk the world to devices. The efficiency of a commodious way of life engenders generations of improved and radically altered machinery. The means-ends relation of machinery and commodity leads to the proliferation of artifacts and this in turn to the transformation of the natural world into a technological world, the world of devices.³⁰

The device paradigm exemplifies the phenomenon. The “radical variability of *machinery* and seeming stability of commodity” have shifted the orientation from pursuing ends to constantly acquiring innovated means. The blurring of the commodity makes possible the procurement, till eternity, of machinery. In securing transport, for example, one starts to think of buying an ordinary multicab. After a few attempts at a wise decision, however, one may end up acquiring a flashy car with unnecessary features and commodious style. In just a few years

the vehicle is traded for reasons other than securing a transport.³¹ Slowly but surely therefore the accumulation of devices goes beyond imagination.

The "rise of machines" is always predictably imminent. With technology holding the rule, the world has been reduced to something like a fix-all convenient store; all commodities are available. The reason is: technology has become the basis of choice.³²

In what sense has technology ruled and become the basis of choice? Oftentimes, when human beings decide, the choice is not whether to employ or not to employ technology, but rather what efficient technology to use. A problem about excess fats, for example, is not usually resolved by regular and disciplined eating habits. In such a problem, the casual response is the latest innovation in aesthetic surgery or the most modern fat-burning gadgets, like the electronic butterfly advertised on television. This might be challenged by a self-imposed discipline, but technological reality will always contest such orientation. For one, restaurants and fast-food chains are always ready to serve food for some equivalent currency. Two, eat-all-you-can food businesses enervate the resolve to avoid such mouth-watering spiel. And they exist in plenitude. Borgsmann avers:

What moves one to take the step, so firsthand experience tends to show, is the persistent glamour of the promise of technology; the relief that one looks forward to in having the burden of preparing another meal lifted from one's shoulders; the hope of a richer engagement with the world on the basis of greater affluence; the desire to provide one's child with the fullest and easiest means of development; the impatience with things that require constant care and frequent repair; and the wish to affirm one's existence through the acquisition of one's property that commands respect.³³

The promise of liberation, disburdenment and enrichment dangles whenever technology presents itself to human beings. Machines supposedly rid human beings of heavy toil, lighten their burden, and afford them time to pursue leisure and thereby raise the quality of life. But technology in the device paradigm has consistently reneged on its promises.³⁴ There are several instances of this. The machinery's efficiency disengages human beings. A food chain around the corner may well replace each family member's role in preparing a meal; and instant, disposable food and plastic spoon and fork may prevail over the "culture of the table."³⁵ Meanwhile, work becomes mere adjacent to machinery. Because of technology, the worker's role is oftentimes reduced to

keeping watch over the function of the machine, if not to turning it off or on.³⁶ As a consequence, the worker sees only his/her job as work and never as an opportunity for self-creativity. In his book, Borgmann compares it to a pre-technological wheelwright who has social engagements with his clients. The wheel, the product, shows his loyalty to his craft. This is the stamp of his integrity.³⁷

Furthermore, in delivering the commodity instantaneously, human beings are deemed to have much time for leisurely activities. In the ancient setting, leisure was important for pursuing excellence and happiness. The Greeks relegated work and labor to their slaves and, having rid themselves of toil, they dedicated their free time to fulfilling their duty to the *polis* as a citizen, pursuing excellence and beauty through arts, and attaining wisdom through contemplation.³⁸ At present, leisure is supposedly the time for enriching the quality of human life. With the aid of technology, more time for leisure is supposedly guaranteed by efficient machines. This is all the more reason for one to claim that the quality of life has improved tremendously through modern technology.

However, Borgmann sees the opposite. In the technological society, devices have blurred the manifold engagements of human beings. They have created a vacuum which the devices themselves try to fill through the consumption of the commodities.³⁹ Such void seeks solace in the assurance of the machine. But, the machine—a strange design and oftentimes too technical for user's understanding—breeds boredom as fascination for it fades.⁴⁰ In this sense, leisure has taken its toll, through consumption.

How human beings seek leisure may illustrate this point. In several cities in the Philippines, for example, Sunday is the appropriate time for engaging in leisure. After a six-day work, now comes a day for leisure, a time for enjoying the fruits of one's toil. How is such a day spent? In the remote past, the cathedral of worship would signal the day of leisure and families would flock to the church for worship.⁴¹ Now, with church service held inside the malls, the cathedral of consumption has wrested the focus from the cathedral of worship. The populace crowding inside the shopping malls is proof enough as to how such a day is spent. Window-shoppers have their eyes feasting on the latest and most advanced gadgets. Others amuse themselves in the virtual world of machines. Still others seize the moment to try savory foods. All these point to one thing: leisure itself is a form of consumption.

The world, with technology deemed as the only remedy to its problems, has become a tee shirt: pre-shrunk and ready to wear. One size fits all. Each problem requires only a technological solution. The consequence of this phenomenon is a bottomless pit called boredom.⁴²

With technology at the helm, the manifold human engagements remain a vacuum rarely filled and the technological promise stays unfulfilled.

Focal Practices and Reform in Technology

Borgmann does not romanticize the pre-technological world to the extent that he would live the illusion of that period of human history. Not only is such an attempt impossible, it would also be an escapist attitude toward the technological reality.⁴³ No one can deny the importance of technology, but it need not be pursued at the expense of things beyond the commodity. Thus, Borgmann proposes an orientation to technology.

The key to this technological orientation is found in the paradigmatic example of the stove. The stove is a *focus*.⁴⁴ As previously noted, the pre-technological stove does not only deliver a commodity; it calls for the manifold engagements of human beings, too. It "gathers the relations of its context and radiates into its surroundings and informs them."⁴⁵ In this sense, the center of the technological orientation is the focal thing.

What characterizes the focal thing is that "it provides a center of orientation; when [human beings] bring the surrounding technology into it, [their] relation to technology becomes clarified and well-defined."⁴⁶ There are several points here to ponder. First, the focal thing as the center is the basis of choice. As such, the focal thing profoundly articulates human engagements. In this kind of setting, the object of attention is no longer the consumption of commodity since the focal thing dethrones commodious consumption as the apparent end of technological revolution. Second, as a corollary to the first, it is human beings that bring technology to their relation and not technology that brings human beings to its relation. The critical comprehension of the device paradigm can help human beings to honestly evaluate technology's status in their lives and prudently make decisions on matters not essentially determined by technology. Third, to a certain extent there exists a means-ends relation but not a machinery-commodity relation. More profoundly, this is the means-ends relation between the world of devices containing the machine and commodity — as means — and the focal things and practices — as ends.⁴⁷

One example of a focal thing is the culture of the table, which refers to the meal. Here, Borgmann observes that oftentimes human beings make technology the basis of choice for the meal. Having dinner for example, when taken in the context machinery-commodity dichotomy, has become a mere act of food consumption. With microwave oven, dinner has denigrated to a private affair or perhaps to a mere telephone affair.⁴⁸ However, as a focal thing, the culture of the table can turn this around and technology may be used to gather the

surrounding contexts of such a culture. Here, food processors, blenders and gas ranges may still be used to engage family members in food preparation. Simple chores of chopping and slicing ingredients may come as an enriching act in lieu of being a couch-potato. At the end of which, the family can relish the food they have prepared and dine with the whole family gathered around the meal.⁴⁹

There are other focal things which can be allowed to exist among which are "running, fly-fishing, music, gardening and backpacking," Borgmann points out.⁵⁰ These and other focal things enrich the quality of human life, and hence, unlock the door for the reform of technology.

Thus, the reform of technology "must make room for focal things,"⁵¹ starting outside the technology, with the focal things which have only "flourish[ed] at the margins of public attention."⁵² To exemplify the resolve for ameliorating contemporary life, "what must be shown is that focal things can prosper in human practices only."⁵³ Thus Borgmann notes,

It is certainly the purpose of a focal practice to guard in its undiminished depth and identity the thing that is central to the practice, to shield it against the technological diremption into means and ends. Like values, rules and practices are recollections, anticipations, and, we can now say, guardians of the concrete things and events that finally matter. Practices protect focal things not only from technological subversion but also against human frailty.⁵⁴

In this sense, the focal practice safeguards the very source of quality life and promotes the genuine well-being of things and human beings.⁵⁵ Thus, the recovery of the good life.

More importantly, however, is the prevention of focal things and practices eroding into the device paradigm of technology. Restraint of the paradigm must be constantly borne in mind. In this way; technology is no longer a way of life but only a manner through which, and ceases when, human beings attain the good life.⁵⁶ Certainly, the good life needs to be preserved. It must be cultivated. And this is only possible through the age-old activity of the philosophers that has permeated through the society; the good life must be taken care of through reflection.⁵⁷

Conclusion

At this point, there is no doubt that we can cast a glance at our technological society using Borgmann's notion of Device Paradigm and

(Focal) Things. We can now question some of our technological practices and examine them using Borgsmann's conceptual frame.

As regards communications technology, we ask ourselves: Have our lives been improved by the widened possibilities for communication? Have we become closer to one another, and have we been involved, directly or indirectly, in regulating the use of multimedia and short messaging services? Or as often the case, have we wasted valuable resources on messages far less important than a joke or a gossip? With most Filipinos who are cellular phone subscribers, have we become more active in our roles as citizens of the country? Have we used the technology to communicate our grievances to or support for the government?

With regard to information technology, the question stays: Have we become more informed, and perhaps, more discriminating and intelligent decision makers? The information technology is here. We have the World Wide Web at our disposal. In most towns across the country, the Internet is already available through various cafes. Filipinos can now avail themselves of information to be more active as political members of the society. If knowledge is power, then they can now assert their political rights with the vast resource of information to be better informed as citizens. It remains to be seen, however, whether we are more informed than confused.

On the vital level, have we pursued the good life leisurely? Broadcast technology has already offered some forms of entertainment, some forms of leisure. But using Borgsmann's example, we ask: When it is time for meal, do TV News compete with our dinner companions? Do they allow us to consume our food well and regale (or share) the events of the day just passed? Do we still have the "culture of the table"?

On the level of culture, we observe that in almost all parts of the country some form of festival is being organized. As the television shows, each festival is in some way a copycat of another: *Sinulog*, *Dinagyang*, *Atiatihan*, *Paraw*, *Magayon*, and other festivals are essentially the same. With all these tourist promotions, have we gained profound appreciation for our cultural tradition? Or have these activities made cultural practices secular and profane?

Perhaps, this ordinary story will help us discern our relationship to technology. In one of the *barangays* of Bicol, long before the water district was established, the people of the *barangay* organized and made an artesian well. As soon as the well was made, it became the source of vibrant activity. People doing their laundry—men and women—stayed there, engaging in discourse, while those who would only fetch water joined intermittently. The well was also the place where one could get information about one's neighbor, where one could let one's problems

out, and where one could know about one's community. And, the water is free; everyone can share water.

After several years, the water district was established, and all those who could afford had access to water at their most convenient place. Most household got water connections; water became available at home. Meanwhile, the well had metaphorically run dry. Only a few went there for their water needs. Not everyone bothered to be there, and the well lost its vibrancy.

In this light, what is the *telos* of our technological society? What devices are we going to employ to embody our ultimate end? What steps are we going to reform our current technological path? This article offers Borgmann's viewpoint on technology. In the end, it will only help us rethink our position on technology in the same way as we rethink Borgmann's position.

ENDNOTES

¹ Albert Borgmann, "Orientation in Technology," *Philosophy Today* 16 (1972): 135. Henceforth will be cited as "Orientation."

² Andrew Feenberg, "Critical Evaluation of Heidegger and Borgmann," In Robert C. Scharff and Val Dusek, *Philosophy of Technology. The Technological Condition: An Anthology* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 329.

³ Borgmann, "Orientation," 135.

⁴ Cf. Carl Mitcham, EPT.

⁵ Albert Borgmann, *Technology and the Character of Contemporary Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 36. Henceforth will be cited as *Technology*.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 36.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁸ See Borgmann, *Technology*, 71-72.

⁹ Sergio Sismondo, *An Introduction to Science and Technology Studies* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 12-13.

¹⁰ Borgmann, *Technology*, 75.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ It is interesting to note that the potential benefits of technology are highlighted while risks are considered lightly by others. Cf. Miko Santos, "Greenpeace, Farmers Oppose Genetically Engineered Corn" September 14, 2003 *Sunstar Online*; [newspaper online]; available from <http://www.sunstar.com.ph/static/man/2003/09/14/newa/greenpeace.farmers.oppose.genetically.engineered.corn.html>; 22 June 2005.

¹⁴ Here, the defect in the device does not refer to the defect only of the machine but of the whole context in which the device is used.

¹⁵ Borgmann, *Technology*, 75.

¹⁶ The influence of Heidegger is very apparent here. He is known for his 'thinging' of thing. For him, "thing things." See Heidegger, *Question*, 41-42.

¹⁷ Borgmann, *Technology*, 41-42.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 41.

¹⁹ Borgmann develops the notion of a thing from his paradigm that is the stove or hearth which comes from the Latin word *focus*. In the ancient parlance, the *focus* provides

the center of activities and orientation. While in the current usage *focus* denotes optical center, the notion of *focus* as hearth is still apparent insofar as the hearth is the center of family activities. See *Technology*, 196-197.

²⁰ Borgmann, *Technology*, 41-42.

²¹ Stephen Kline contends that technology can mean the mechanical hardware or artifact. In Kline's analysis machinery merely belongs to the artifact. See Stephen Kline, "What is Technology?" in Scharff, Robert and Val Dusek, *Philosophy of Technology. The Technological Condition: An Anthology* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 210-211.

²² Borgmann, *Technology*, 42.

²³ In developing the device, the tendency is oftentimes to segregate the commodity from the manifold engagements. As a consequence, what is given more importance is the efficient procurement of the commodity.

²⁴ Borgmann, *Technology*, 42.

²⁵ Borgmann argues that "the problem was not that the advancement of technology burdened the family with new tasks to which the parents were unequal; rather, the tasks that once gave the family weight and structure and the parents genuine power were one by one taken over by the machinery." Borgmann, *Technology*, 137.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 47.

²⁷ This dulling of the skills of others put into question the aim of uplifting the quality of life.

²⁸ Cf. Drew Leder, "The Rule of the Device: Borgmann's Philosophy of Technology" *Philosophy Today* 32 (Spring 1988): 18.

²⁹ In this sense, "user-friendly" supposes facile interaction with the machine, but the extreme complexity of the machine hardly makes it friendly to the user. See Borgmann, *Technology*, 47.

³⁰ Borgmann claims that the relation of machinery and commodity is that of means-ends relation. See Borgmann, *Technology*, 63-65.

³¹ For William Kuhns who views this differently, the vehicle becomes a persona of the owner. See William Kuhns, *Environmental Man* (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), 59.

³² Borgmann, *Technology*, 103.

³³ *Ibid.*, 105.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 76.

³⁵ This is also Borgmann's example as a focal thing. See *Technology*, 200.

³⁶ For Borgmann's discussion of work, refer to *Technology*, 115-117.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 45.

³⁸ Arendt, *Human Condition*, 13.

³⁹ Borgmann, *Technology*, 125.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 140.

⁴¹ Cf. Orlando Ali Mandane Jr., "Toward a Filipino Orientation in Technology" *Ad Veritatem* 3 (March 2004): 442.

⁴² In *The Sane Society*, Fromm asks if boredom explains the high rate of suicide in highly urbanized societies. See Erich Fromm, *The Sane Society* (New York: Fawcett Premier Book, 1955), 19.

⁴³ Borgmann asserts that the "turn to things cannot be a setting aside and even less an escape from technology but a kind of affirmation of it." See *Technology*, 200.

⁴⁴ *Focus* is the Latin word for hearth. See Borgmann, *Technology*, 196 and 41-42.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 197.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 220.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 204.

⁴⁹ A segment in Oprah Winfrey's program gives an illustration of this practice. The show's producers asked parents to try having dinner together. The show offered

