Please answer the questions below as fully and completely as you can. Turn in your written answers in class during the next class meeting. As part of this exercise set, you must read the following.


1. Consider your own use of software that you use on a regular basis. Describe three or more examples within these products of your own “abdication of responsibility to exercise judgement” (pg. 320).

2. Consider the fifth “neo-luddite” criticism of computer/software technology on page 335, i.e., “Computers separate humans from nature and destroy the environment.” Make a strong/compelling argument for both sides of this criticism (i.e., for and against it).
3. Consider the third “neo-luddite” criticism of computer/software technology on page 335, i.e., “Computers cause social inequity.” Make a strong/compelling argument for both sides of this criticism (i.e., for and against it).

5. Pick a popular software technology that you are unfamiliar with and analyze its existing or potential societal impact. In particular, answer the following parts regarding the application. As you do each part, exercise your “moral imagination” (i.e., really try to imagine what it will be like for different users of the technology).

(a). Who is potentially impacted by the technology (e.g., individuals, organizations, parts of society; and are the impacts local, national, global)? Are there specific interests of these users that are specifically supported by the technology (e.g., Facebook connects “friends” / the social life of individuals whereas LinkedIn the “business”/“careerist” life of individuals). Provide details.
(b). What are the “explicit” assumptions and values promoted by the technology?

(c). What are the “implicit” assumptions and values promoted by the technology? That is, what aspects from the social and cultural context are “built-in” to the technology that might not be obvious or consciously known by the developers.

(d). What real or potential positive societal changes are created or influenced by the technology (e.g., way of life, culture, community, politics, environment, health, economics, fears and aspirations)? Provide details.
(e). What real or potential **negative** societal changes are created or influenced by the technology (e.g., way of life, culture, community, politics, environment, health, economics, fears and aspirations)? Also consider non-intentional uses of the technology and its impacts. Provide details.

(f). Thinking again about the technical code, how could the application change people’s thoughts and behavior based on the application’s design. For example, what types of thoughts, behaviors, values, etc., could become “**locked in**” by the technology. Also consider how the technology could influence and change the social and cultural context. Extrapolate about the future implications/impacts of the technology.