Technology Autobiographies

HU 330, Publications Management
Fall 1999

MTU

Created for HU330 by Dickie Selfe, based on PageMaker's
automatically generated "manual" template.

Table of Contents

In NO Particular Order

Amy Graham
Atari

My earliest experiences with technology are with my brother's Atari Computer. I hated the thing. I couldn't (still can't) play video games. After the Atari, my family purchased a Commador 64. It was used primarily for playing games. So again, I had little use for the thing. In the eigth grade, we were forced to take a computer program-ming course. We learned limited DOS. I have never again used the skills from that course. That is aside from identifying the parts of a computer. When I was in high school, my family purchased a Tandy computer. I had limited use for this computer. It was okay for writing papers. I used the database in an extremely limited manner. In my senior year of high school, I was again forced to take a computer course. This tim it was a word processing, general computer use course. In addition, we were using Apples, IIci's. Nothing fancy, but easier and much more user friendly. My next com-puter experiences were in the Michigan Tech chemistry department. Once again, an MS based system. Needless to say, this did not help my view of comput-ers as a nui-sance.

All of this changed when I took HU244. Anne Wysocki taught the course. This was also the time when the internet began to develop into what it is today. Email and browsing where becoming easier and more enjoyable. I now own an iMac and would

like to own a new G4 PowerMac. On my desk, next to the iMac, is an Epson color printer, a zip drive and piles of paper. For me, computers have not reduced the amount of paper in my life. My iMac has, however, made these piles more organized. I use my email to stay as up as I can on new technology. I am subscribe to a few news orientated email newsletters, some are industry focused, and others are technology focused. The most technology literate person I know is Ken Irwin. I miss him being the Apple Sales guy. I have been out of the CCLI for a while and am sure there are folks there who I will get to know who are quite literate. I consider myself to be fairly competant on computers in general. However, you would probably never find me taking one apart. My experience is almost entirely in using computers. I can switch easily from a mac to a pc to a unix machine. I am happiest on my Mac.

The most technology I ever carry with me is my watch and a zip disk. My watch is not really that fancy, it has an alarm and a stop watch. It might even keep the date, I've never looked. One day, I'd like to carry a powerbook. However, I think it'll be a while. Documentation that works best for me is documentation that gives me choices. I can easily reference a topic, which can be found in a through index or I can read the whole document.

Katherine Reeh   HU330 September 14, 1999

Technological Biography

I remember returning old light bulbs and buying new light bulbs at the GE store. The day we got a color TV was a big day for our family, and even for a few

*Katherine Reeh
(cont.)*

of the neighbors. I remember my Dad buying an early desktop calculator. I think it cost over a hundred dollars. The advertised price was significantly less in a very short period of time. After buying the calculator he said, "never again" and the thing is still on top of my Mother's desk. It's a bit dustier, but it still runs the way it was built to run.

My Mom's calculator must be nearing 31 or 32 years of age. I can't remember who built it. Maybe Texas Instruments. I bet an engineer would get fired if one of today's new products lasted that long. I remember that a lot of people used to fix stuff in their spare time. Stuff like bicycles, door locks, window jambs, and the handle on a frying pan. I don't like throwing everything out, but it has become an economic necessity to do so. Technology has inspired some painful values.

My boyfriend is probably the most technically literate individual I know. He is an electrical engineer and lives on his computer day and night. Sometimes I wonder, who the hell is this person who can love his plastic box so much?

I guess I define technological literacy by a person's ability to interact with electronic media. If I had more time, I'm sure my interest and drive would increase. I don't have the time to match my electronic/computer drive as it is though. I have a hard time throwing off other, maybe older, values for the sake of my computer literacy. I recognize that it takes a tremendous time commitment to stay fluent. I don't know what other part of my life I want to give up so that I can learn yet another piece of software. I will probably manage the learning of future skills by crisis, doing only what I have to do to remain literate enough.

Brenda Polk
bjpolk@mtu.edu

My family had a computer in our house since 1984, when we got our Apple IIe, which was used as a word processor and in-home arcade, but was most often the English and math tutor for "the kids." We've since purchased other computers as our demands grew, but my parents are still internet-free. Back in the day, I also had my own Speak and Spell, which was used so much for entertainment that a few buttons wore out. The only other electronic gadget we had, besides our radio, was Merlinóa prehistoric, multi-game handheld calculator-looking toy. Merlin, too, had a few buttons worn out. Back then, I was completely happy to entertain myself with "technological" toys just because the idea of such toys was still new to me. I don't recall asking for them, but I also don't believe that I preferred them to more traditional toys. As the electronic game systems became more widespread, and the technology grew more sophisticated, I abandoned the idea that such toys were interesting. They weren't a new idea anymore; the old ideas were just being picked apart to perform better. So, today's "wish list" would contain an absence of technology. I wish I could get rid of my stereo, calculator, pocket dictionary, cell phone, and even my watch. I've weaned myself from TV/VCR and computer dependence, but haven't solidified my stance enough to get rid of everything yet. I can't convince myself that I need technology to survive, to learn, or to communicate. At the core of every person, there is no power button.

Deana Otto

What were your earliest experiences with technological devices or artifacts? What do you remember about using them?

Deana Otto

My earliest memories of using technological devices was way back in 1st grade, when my teacher set up a computer in our classroom and we all gathered around to do adding math problems to try to get "Gertrude" the goose through a maze. I remember being excited about actually seeing a computer (I don't come from a very well to do family), but it seems computers left my life again until I was in 7th grade. I had finished the 7th grade math book in a semester and my math teacher allowed me to play in the computer lab for the last semester. Once again I was using learning software. I was using it to learn basic algebra, and learning about geography, though a series of games that hid that you were learning. When I reached 8th grade, I received a graphing calculator for Christmas. It was top of the line for the time and very exciting for me. That calculator was my only real link to technology until I managed to actually touch computers again in college. I was overwhelmed when I got here. I had no clue what computers could do. At the time I was an electrical engineering major. Now, I'm a computer science major and I write programs that manipulate memory, create graphics, and even allow me to change a programming language into a language the computer can understand. I've come a long way in the past 4 years to stand where I do now on the technology front.

Who do you identify as being most technologically "literate" in your life? What does it mean to be technologically literate? How do you measure up?

I think the most technology literate person in my life is an online friend of mine. He has a much broader range of understanding than I currently do. He understand the inner workings of computers, how to set up machines, how to run numerous programs, and

even what different devices are monetarily worth. He doesn't have the programming background I do, but his understanding is beyond anything I figure I'll ever reach. I'm technologically literate, but only in certain areas. I'm slowly learning and picking things up along the way.

What's on your technological "wish list"?

Currently I don't really own too many technological devices. I don't even own a calulator, let alone a computer. I have a long and varied wish list though. I'd love to have a box that I could run graphics programs, desktop publishing programs, and program development tools on. I'd also love having both a scanner and a digital camera, along with a CDR. I'd like to be able to print photo quality documents out and also be able to use my machine as a webserver. Essentially, what I would really like to have is a huge system that I could never afford.

Do you think there are social consequences or potential impacts on your lifestyle that depend on your technological capabilities?

I've found that my capabilities have made me more and more addicted to computers and what they can do. My life revolves around computers. All the jobs I've held in the past few years involved computers in some way, weather it was testing computer operating systems at IBM or just helping someone print in the computer lab, there is always a box on my desk. I've also found that most of my friends are involved with computers in some way. Many of them are also in the computer science department and often what we talk about in our social cluster is, you guessed it, computers. While I've noticed that a lot more people are impersonal now that they can deal with you through the web, I haven't steered away from interpersonal relationships. I don't think I've fallen into that hole.

Deana Otto

Does good documentation help you adapt to techno-logical change? What type helps most?

Good documentation is essential to being able to use any form of technological improvement in this day and age. Often what helps me most is documentation that can walk you through the situation once and has a good quick reference. Once I've been walked through a situation, I usually remember how to deal with it, or make notes somewhere that I can refer back to. If my notes aren't good enough, I look back to the documentation's quick reference. In my field, documentation is indespensible. Often times we stumble onto technology that is several years old that needs to be brought up to date. Often times, the way the code is written makes it impossible to understand what is happening, this is where the documentation steps in and aids the person rewriting the code. Without documentation, the programming world would be lost.

Eva Smith
**www.hu.mtu.edu/
~eva/HU330.htm**

 HU330 Publications Management Technol-ogy Autobiography

I remember in second grade that we obtained a new computer in our classroom. Every one of us wanted to see what it was all about. Our teacher, Mrs. Lapp, told us that this was to be used in our free time. Of course, free time being limited for a second grader, a large crowd grew during those chances, all of us wondering what this gray box was all about. I quickly realized that the boys were the ones who were always going to have time to copy weird codes in with the "typewriter thing" and form some kind of neat design on the "T.V. thing," so I gave up, thinking

this was just a fad. Well, that computer was a fad, because none of us could see its purpose. However, when Atari video games reached the homes of everyone, now we could see just how fun these machines could be. I spent countless hours on all of those games. They were recreation, just a fad until the new Nintendos and Segas of the world would surface. Until I was in about eighth grade, technology was a latest trend to play on. To be "technologically literate" meant that you knew how to make it to Koopa's castle and get the princess. All of this however, did make all of us functional and unscared of technology. Once I actually took a computer class, all of this recreation turned into a useful tool. I enjoyed those neat IIGS apple computers because they gave me a chance to write in a different way: on spreadsheets, word processors, and databases. I could make a mistake-and actually erase what I had typed! This was so fascinating to me, and I took more classes. By the end of eighth grade, I was technologically literate because I could log on to a computer, type correctly at 30 words per minute, and use some software. Today, most of these things are essential as well, but to be up on the latest trends of the technological world, I need email, internet access, know how of developing a web page, knowledge of several different types of software, and an knowing how a computer actually works in the hardware. I am getting by, knowing how to use a computer as a tool for communication. However, I can't install hardware, hook up a modem, or know all of the computer languages to make me technologically literate. Also, with all of the neat gadgets that I know on a computer there are still many I don't have. I am one of the growing few that doesn't have a pager or cell phone because I don't feel that people really need to get in contact with me all of the time. I don't like to buy

Eva Smith

**www.hu.mtu.edu/
~eva/HU330.htm**

products off of the internet due to the fact that I like to buy from a person. I don't like the fact that some people want to stop being personal. It is impersonal to stop sending letters in the mail, when you want to thank people, just because it is easier to fax or email. I suppose that my attitudes toward these new technologies stop me from becoming literate. To become computer literate is no longer my goal, because I don't believe that it is for everyone. I am happy knowing that I can email people and keep up a website. I will adopt new technologies, as they are relevant to me. If I had my way, I would actually have a "wish list" of more software for my computer, a new CD player, and a DVD player. I would love to own a HDTV even, because I love movies and it is more practical for me to spend money on movie technology and rent movies than to pay movie theatre prices. These technological devices would be saving me money in the long haul. However, I do believe that I am accepting of technology. I do embrace new ideas of all sorts, knowing that some I can use personally and some are just not practical. That is what I consider technologically literate. It is the ability to make a device fit your own personal lifestyle.

Renee Marion

HU 330 Technological Autobiography

I was born at the end of a decade when television would visually communicate world news, humor, and ingenious ways to market new products to nearly every home in America.

My father, an iron ore miner, followed new technologies that enhanced his hobby with equipment such as, state of the art fish locators and electric reels. My

mother, the daughter of a Finnish immigrant, practiced old fashioned methods and shied away from new kitchen devices that sat untouched on our counters.

One Christmas I received a portable cassette tape recorder, which I used to secretly tape family, friends, and myself practicing flute in my room. Mainly due to overuse, the device lasted a year before I curiously disassembled the entire unit observing every part, wondering what function it performed, how it used electricity for that function, and how I could possibly fix it.

Through the years, my interest in photography, video, and electronics lead me to a career in telecommunications where I've learned a great deal from my peers and those friends who already knew aol.com before it became a household word. Presently, I manage my life in an interesting balance between new technologies using interactive communication and offering my share to support a fourth generation business on the verge of extinction in dairy farming. My days consist of a full phase shift in technology from home to work and wishing the best of both worlds for our children.

As a telecommunications technician, I didn't worry much about the rapid change in information technology knowing everyone would depend on use of a phone or computer. However, in videoconferencing, I must keep informed of new technologies such as video streaming, applications of Internet 2, and web course delivery and try to stay on the leading edge of what is available and carefully monitor the direction of compressed videoconferencing and its vulnerability for change as a new technology in this digital revoloution.

Crucial to any technology, documentation plays a key role in the success of understanding the application

for both users and technical support staff, maximizing its potential, and constantly improving on the technology. The easier it is to understand and use the documentation for the technology may decide it's popularity and longevity.

Kristen Bigari   What I Think About Technology

As I sit in my bedroom and look around, I can't help but to notice all the technological advancements that encompass me. A phone, an answering machine, a digital clock radio, and last but not least a computer. Where would I be without these remarkable innovations?

These advancements are instruments that I have come to use in my common everyday life. It is not to often that we think about all the modern conveniences that we take for granted. We depend upon these instruments just to make it through the day. Without the convenience these advancements provide, there would be turmoil, for me at least. For instance I would have to take an hour out of my day instead of 10 minutes to transport myself to work. These advancements are no longer just conveniences, they are requirements for society to survival.

I have chosen to pursue a career in technology. My career choice is a Science and Technical Communicator. I believe that technology is the bridge to our future, and I want to participate in the construction of that bridge.

Studying technology you come across many questions about social consequences. This is something that I take very seriously. I believe that a technologist has a responsibility to the public. There has been

a huge increase in teen murders, deaths, pregnancy, and crime. Sure we can blame this on the parents, but I have a strong conviction that technology has played a big row in this increasing statistic. Look at one of our largest technologies, Media. Media is a technology that socially influences everyone. It is very powerful, and it can easily be misused. Movies today are made so realistically and exciting that they seem conceivable. This is amazing at one standpoint, and dangerous at another. What is comes down to is power. Technology is powerful source that influences the social elements in our society.

Do not get me wrong, technology is amazing. It inflames the human mind to produce and create, without it the world would be simple and what some may call boring. As you can see I support technology and the many advancement that have been made for human kind. I just want to state that it should be taken seriously. We should not let technology enslave us, nor should we let it influence our social attitudes in our daily lives. Power is good, if it is used righteously.

Melissa Woida   Technological Autobiography

What were they? The technological device that I first remember having an experience with is a TV, and then probably our VCR.

What do you remember about using them? I remember feeling frustrated because I didn't know how to use them. If I couldn't figure it out, I would give up and I would lose interest in them quickly. I remember trying to program our VCR, my parents were having problems figuring it out, so I sat down with

the controller and started hitting buttons until I got things to work. It frustrated me at first, but once I sat there and played around with it it became almost a game and I was determined to figure out how to get rid of the blinking 12:00.

What were the popular gadgets in your house while growing up? Microwave, TV, VCR (only after everyone else had one), electric garage door opener, stereo, answering machine

What's on your desk at home? Desk lamp, pens, pencils, highlighters, pictures of friends/boyfriend, candles, cordless phone (with answering machine), kleenex, chapstick

What technological devices are you carrying now? Tech ID card, TI85 calculator, credit cards, bank card

What's on your technological "wish list"? A computer-I'm a simple girl :), possibly a DVD player.

Do you think there are social consequences or potential impacts on your lifestyle that depend on your technological capabilities? Yes I do, because in my house we have never had a computer. My mother finally broke down in the last couple of years and purchased a word processor. It can do email and has many other similar features of a computer, but my mother is hesitant about getting into that. She sat down and read parts of the manual to learn how to use the processor. I used my limited knowledge of computers and just turned it on and experimented with it, and I was able to figure out more that way than she did with the manual-unless the manual was poorly written. Because I was thrust into learning how to do things on the computer with an experimental approach, that's how I tackled the word processor, and that's how I continue to learn new programs on the computers here. My mother on the other hand is used to reading the manual, and then trying to figure

it out that way-she doesn't know any other way to learn new technologies.

How do you expect to deal with new technologies in the future? I think I will probably go about learning how to use new technology the same way I always have-very hesitantly. But once I adjust to it, I will probably just jump in and play around with it until I can understand it. If I can think of learning how to figure out how to use the new technology as a game, it doesn't seem so dismal to me, like something that I have to do, rather than something I'm going to enjoy doing.

What advantages and problems do you see with the way you approach technology? I approach technology very cautiously. It usually takes me awhile to finally break down and learn how to use the technology. I have only recently obtained a credit card, and only 3 years ago I purchased a CD player and my first CD's. Computers were my enemy until I came to school here, but now I don't know what to do with myself if I can't check my mail or go online. So it took me some time to become comfortable with computers, and now, even though I don't know a lot about them, I am still able to learn new things fairly quickly. Change is bad, but once I have the initiative to sit down and learn something I come to realize that it's not so bad. And after that I wonder how I ever managed without that knowledge.

Olivia Bartlett

I was one of the lucky kids in the neighborhood. At the age of eight I already was submerged in the computing world, and I made many neighborhood pals through owning a Commodore 64. My childhood friends would come over and we would dual it out on

pinball and horse racing programs my dad had written using BASIC. Before the age of 10, I had already mastered the BASIC programming basics and was learning from my dad each day what it takes to be a computer programmer. The brown computer sitting in our family room was our first computer with it's own monitor. Prior, my dad kept an old Atari 2600 hooked up to the television set, where we would play games with very hard-to-control joysticks. Later, my dad purchased a brand new dot matrix printer, which would print about one line a minute. I was one of the few students who would turn in my homework on printed paper.

After the Commodore, a couple new computers entered the house and left, including the IBM PS1, which I accidentally erased DOS on while experimenting behind the scenes. Next came the Gateway 2000 with Pentium 75. I was a freshman in high school at the time and always bragged about my new technology advancement in my house. The same computer still sits in my house, although advancements in Pentium processor speeds have tripled already.

It amazes me that within a 10 year period, so much has changed in the technology of computers and keeping up-to-date with them is definitely something our generation will encounter. All my life, I told myself that I never wanted to end up in a job where I would be looking at a computer screen all day. Tough luck, Olivia. This is the information age, and nearly everything somehow relates to a computer. So much for my graphic designer dreams and working in a darkroom. Now all designs are done on 20-inch monitors and darkrooms are becoming obsolete as digital cameras and negative scanners replace Dektol chemicals and enlargers. This huge technology swap

has occurred right in my lifetime, and it gets more noticeable every day. For example, the Daily Mining Gazette, where I work, now lays the paper out completely by sending files. No more printing stories, gluing them to flats and sending them to be photo-graphed. The darkroom also has undergone changes. What used to be a sink used for rinsing prints and holding chemicals is now serving as a shelf for the Color C-41 processor's chemicals. What used to take over two hours now can be done in less than a hour, and images go straight from the camera, into a developing machine, press a button and they are done. Then they get scanned and are ready to be printed in the paper. It amazes me.

I am scared to live in this technology age because by blinking an eye, it seems I have missed something new. Information is being thrown at me in a rapid rate and catching only a fraction is a handful. Being a student in "Generation X" is very difficult because we must learn new technology advancements daily. I remember showing my grandmother my web site a few months ago. She was stunned, yet confused when I told her the graphics were coming through the phone lines. She got so frustrated trying to grasp the concept, she walked away before I could even show her my complete site!

Technology is submerging us, choking us, and it never lets up. New information is brought about every day and as an S.T.C. major I know the learning does not stop after college. This is just a warm up routine for the real world, where I will have to undergo a life long learning if I want to keep a job in the technology field.

Stacey Rex

Recall you earliest experiences with a technological device. What were they?

I remember the first computer I had. It was a Commodore 128. My parents bought if for the family when I was about eleven and it was the first time I had ever used one. Basically, we only turned it on to play games. The word processing program we had for it worked basically like a typewriter. The program did not even have a spell check. My view of computers did not change much then until after I graduated from high school. Since our school did not have computers, it was not until my graduation gift (a Power Mac) arrived that I understood that computers were more than advanced video games.

What is on your desk at home?

On my desk at home I have a Power Mac 7100, a canister of pencils and pens, a lamp, and an empty picture frame.

What is on your technological wish list?

The number one thing on my technological wish list is an upgrade for my computer. Right now it has the minimal capability of running only a simple program like Claris and cannot run programs like Word.

How do you expect to deal with new technologies in the future?

In the past, and even now, I have been extremely hesitant when confronted with a new advance in the technological field, including the use of computers. For instance, I still use a typewriter and I bought my first CD player three months ago, but I won't get rid of my record player. Therefore, my prediction for any future encounters with technology is parallel to

that of the past in that I will have to practically force myself to become comfortable with it. This is, I know, quite a disadvantage in a world that relies so heavily on technological advances. In fact, I cannot see any advantage to my "fear" of new technology.

Jessica Hartman

Technical Autobiography 9/13/99

I remember when I was really little (probably five or so) my dad had brought home this big, strange, boxy looking thing. My older sister and I were curious to see what it was. After watching our father, on and off, for several hours play with this thing, he called us in there to see it. I remember he flicked on a button and put this large black floppy thing into a hole and a black TV screen with bright green lettering (which was the only color) lit up our faces. This was our first computer, a Tandy (I can't remember the model number) from Radio Shack. This experience still sticks vividly in my mind as my first encounter with these beastly creatures, and many more followed. Now, things have changed very much from the Tandy of that time. That computer blew many years ago. Today, I have a Macintosh Performa sitting at my desk (along with a fax machine, a printer, a scanner, and a grayscale Connectix video camera) and I do not use it for playing a black and green rendition of Monopoly as I did with the first one. This one is used for word processing, scanning, email, Internet, etc... most of which would have seemed to be foreign languages or miracles back in the day of the Tandy. From the day he brought home that first Tandy it was like an obsession. My father always tried to stay abreast with the newest technologies from computers to fax machines and GPS devices. He was just like a little boy always needed the bigger, better, and faster

Jessica Hartman

developments so that he could tell all his friends. I feel that because of always having "new" technologies in our household, it has helped me to cope with new advances. I like to think that I will go forward into the future with an open mind and willingness to accept change due to the impact of technology, as I have so far. In order to continue to adapt to change, I feel that it is thoroughly important to have good documentation of the advancements. Although the Internet is a growing source of documentation, I like hard copies like the good old, easy to read and understand manuals myself, because it's all right there in front of me. I guess that that is the old Tandy in me!

Jessamine Clemente

Technology Autobiography

The question I chose to address is: Write and/or draw an autobiography in which you recall your earliest experiences with technological devices or artifacts. What were they? What do you remember about using them?

There is one technological device that engraved a place in my heart during my childhood. It is the Speak and Spell. I was jealous of my younger brother because he received a Speak and Spell for his birthday and he was way too young to even get any real use out of it. I was always convincing him he did not want to play with it. I would hide the batteries or put them in the wrong way and told him that it was not functioning properly.

I would spend hours and hours playing with it. There were four or five different games that one could play. There was the obvious where the computer would say a word and you would have to spell it. There was

one where you would have to unscramble the letters to guess the word. There was its version of Hangman. Of course there were three levels: beginner, intermediate, and advanced. There was always something to look forward to.

I enjoyed the challenges it had to offer. I was always getting myself in trouble as a youngster, so I was grounded often. When I was grounded, I would be grounded on different levels, such as no television privileges or telephone privileges. How far I could venture outdoors was also limited, as well as whether or not "I could come out and play." There is not much a little girl can do except immerse herself in available resources. I read a lot and I played games a lot.

Perhaps that is why I loved the Speak and Spell so much. I did not have to compete against anyone else but myself. If I lost I became that much more determined to win the next time around. I was bettering myself through more learning. I won my third grade spelling bee as a result. I was a spelling machine!

That Christmas, my younger brother received a Speak and Math (the descendent of Speak and Spell). I was more willing to share because he and I could take turns with each one. I enjoyed the Speak and Math, but not quite as much as the Speak and Spell. Perhaps because I did not do as well with the Speak and Math as I did with its predecessor.

I only recently have begun wondering whatever happened to the Speak and Spell? My nephew is almost ten and he is very interested in computers. However, his father does not permit him the use of the computer when he is not present to monitor my nephew. I thought that he would enjoy using a Speak and Spell or the Speak and Math. He is having trouble with mathematics so the Speak and Math

Jessamine Clemente

would definitely help.

My sister got him Math Blaster, a software program that incorporates learning math with the fun and excitement of today's video games. When I had gone home to visit, I played Math Blaster with my nephew. I was disappointed with the program because it caters to the ADD generation of today's youth.

I think my experiences with the Speak and Speak and Speak and Math machines helped shape my attitude of computer nowadays. Perhaps the Speak and Spell became extinct because of the new V-Tech products. They are sort of like an upgraded version of Speak and Spell. I also saw that Gateway also has a PC available for children. I think it is great that children have even more opportunities to use a computer. If one begins learning about technology at a young age, I think that the adaptation to new technology is easier for those that do.

Jill Dlubala

HU330-Tech. Autobiography

One popular gadget in my house was the remote control for the television. It was always fun to play with that. I also enjoyed playing with my mom's calculator.

I consider myself fairly technologically literate. I have learned a great deal about computers in my time at Tech. In high school, I used our home computer (a Mac) to type reports and search for information on the Net. When I started MTU, I became much more familiar with PCs and the Windows operating system. The School of Business computer lab and the place where I work have PCs. After working in the MTU Telcom Customer Service department for three years, I became fairly good at using them and navigating in

the Windows environment. Also, after helping many students with their computer connections, I became familiar with terms, etc. involved in an Ethernet connection. I am familiar with many programs including Word, Excel, Power Point, Netscape, Eudora, and ICQ. In HU244, I was given a little taste of what some of the graphics programs were like (Adobe PhotoShop, a scanning program—can't remember name, etc.).

Some technological devices that I carry in my backpack at all times are a scientific calculator and computer disks.

Some things on my technological "wish list" are a CD burner, a scanner, a microphone for my computer, and a new home computer (right now I have an old outdated Mac).

Rachel Pobocik

Technology Autobiography

I remember when I was young; a day with Dad always meant video games. We would pull out the Atari and try our best to master Frogger or Pac-Man. As time went on, the technology advanced around our house to our first Atari computer. It still took cartridges like the old Atari, but now there was a keyboard as well as the traditional joystick. This first computer really shaped my approach to computers and all technology today. I remember my dad saying to me, "Butterfly wings, Rachel, butterfly wings," reminding me that I need to treat the keys on the keyboard gently. He instilled in me early a respect for computers. I learned that although they were fun, they were also powerful tools.

Well, technology around my house has advanced a little further since those days. The computer that is a

Rachel Pobocik

staple of my desktop no longer accepts cartridge games, and it is a far more powerful tool than my dad ever suspected. I am now able to create documents, programs and images that would have been impossible on that first Atari. My computer also has far more accessories. I never had a zip drive, printer, or scanner back then, nor would I have dreamed of having them. But, now my wish list of computer goodies seems to be never ending. Gee, I sure wish I had a 21" monitor, a CD burner, a digital camera, etc, etc, etc.

I like that technology continues to advance, because I can see how far it has come. Sure, it is fun to pull out the Atari every once in a while, but I wouldn't trade it for the power and versatility of my computer.

September 12, 1999

Lisa Freitag

Technology Autobiography

Growing up in a small town in the UP, I was never really exposed to a great deal of technology ñ at least not until long after it had become a common factor of society. Of course we had a television and a telephone growing up, but I can rather vividly remember getting our first microwave and I still have a small collection of vinyl records my sister and I used to play on our enormous record player that sat on our living room floor.

As for high school, the only experience I ever had using an actual computer was my basic keyboarding/ typing class in the 9th grade. If I remember correctly, our school offered two additional computer classes. I believe they were called "Computers I" and "Com-

puters II". Imagine what a generic "computer" course could cover today.   There are an endless number of computer-related topics, and a class like that would take years to teach.

I also recall my art teacher, Mrs. J, telling us about the new Macintosh computers and all their wonderful graphical capabilities. We tried for years for the school to give the art department a grant to get one of these computers for the art students to use, but of course our school was not financially equipped for such a luxury.

While I am proud to say that I have come an unbelievably long way in the last four years just coming from a 6 month co-op with IBM, I still believe that I am far behind where I could (and should) be. I remember being a freshman here at Tech starting out as an ME. It took me nearly three weeks to get up the nerve just to go into the computer lab and learn how to log on and do email. Up to that point, I had never even learned how to surf the Internet. The whole idea of computers scared me to death.

Then I remember making a trip to see Bill Tembreull, the head of MTU Publications. This became my first real interest in graphic design. Bill gave me a tour of his office, described his responsibilities, briefly showed me the four-color printing process, and introduced me for the first time to Photoshop. I remember him taking my picture, scanning it, and changing the color of my eyes. I thought it was magic.

Now Photoshop has become part of my everyday life. I use it in school, for my co-op, and just for fun too. Today, we can walk into Shopko, develop a film, and magically make everybody's red eyes disappear ñ all within an hour. How far we've come.

I am now beginning my fifth year of school and will

Lisa Freitag

soon be graduating with more than enough technical experience to begin a career in the graphic design industry. My little brother, who is four years younger than I am, just graduated from high school with more knowledge of computers and technology than I will ever learn. He just built himself a computer from scratch and is currently attending Ferris State to study computer networks and systems. My sister, on the other hand, is only two years older than I am. She spent 4 years in college without ever having to turn a computer on. She and her husband have just purchased their first computer and they are scared to death of it. Luckily my brother is living with them this year to help them out.

Technology is funny that way. Your life goes on just fine without it until you get a taste of it. Then all of a sudden, it becomes a need. It takes over your life and becomes something we believe we could never survive without.

Matthew Mazyck

Technology Autobiography

Technology has always played a large and deciding role in my life. I have always been called a tech-nut, a gadget man or something like that. Ever since the I was three, when I was given my first Lego set, to today, were I get to play with more expensive toys, my interest and focus has been set around the development and use of technology. I started out with Lego's then moved up to a computer and soon after a programming kit for C++.

Lately through the help of technical based magazines I am able to keep up with the latest technology and news.

I used to set in my room all day and make believe I was an astronaut and build anti-gravity bikes and have light wars with men from outer space. With Lego's I couldn't find an end to my imagination. My Lego creations soon over flowed into conceptual designs which, in my mind, could really come to life. By the age of nine I was creating 2D designs with the Windows Program Paintbrush. These designs were crude but I was limited to the software. Where I was limited with my designs, I was not so when I received my first computer.

1993 I was given an IBM PS/1 486, 75MHz PC. With a Windows 3.11 interface and a 9600bps modem I quickly learned that there were others with computers calling each other and meeting in this place called the Internet. I was fascinated with the idea that I could logon to someone's PC or Chat line and get to know him or her without ever meeting face to face. I could never get enough information. I couldn't wait to learn about the different connection protocols, when I did there was always something new. So I decided to create my own Bulletin Board System. I learned how to script and control what people got to read or write. My whole technological utopia came crashing down when someone decided it would be a good idea to upload a virus on to my BBS. For months, after I formatted my hard drive, I was afraid to go online again for fear being infected. But this did not end my interest in computer technology. For my 15th birthday my parents gave a visual C++ compiler, which now I know they regret. I was notorious for playing practical jokes writing programs that did more harm than good. In my junior year of high school I met a man that would set the direction and pace for the rest of my life.

Matthew Mazyck

My Father is commercial loan officer who loans money to manufacturing companies. One night our family was invited over to dinner with one of my fathers clients who just happened to be ex-basketball star for the Detroit Pistons Dave Bing. Dave was the CEO of the Bing Group, which made parts for the Big Three AutoMakers. As we were talking he learned about my interest and offered me an internship over the summer and if all went well I could work part time while I was in school. That summer, as promised, I started work in the MIS department as an intern. I learned everything I needed to know about networking, telephone data switching the difference between the AS/400 and other servers. What my co-workers saw as grunt work I saw as a chance to learn something. That experience was a stepping stone to where I am today.

Now when I am in an interview with a potential employer they are always most interested in that first experience with an internship in high school. I have a 2.5 GPA here at Tech, but when it comes to jobs I've been picked over people with 3.+ GPA's because of my experience. To date I have my own consultant firm where I design and develop web pages for companies.

Jessica Randall

Technology Autobiography

A Packard Bell Computer (which I hate) and its accompanying hardware occupy the majority of my desk space at the moment. Hopefully, one day this beast of a computer will be replaced with an IMAC. Along with this piece of technology one will find a picture of my boyfriend and his family, a lamp, a three hole punch, an electronic pencil sharpener, and a candle (for when I burn the midnight oil). Many

things that I wish could be located at my desk are not found there due to a space constraint.

I at one point in time in my life I carried two calculators for the electrical engineering degree which I was pursuing. At the moment however, I have postponed the graduation date of that fine degree and will acquire it at a university in Missouri. Therefor, there is only one calculator I carry which aides in balancing the checkbook, this does not disappoint me at all.

There are only a few things that I have ever wished to possess that are technology advanced. One of those things already has been mentioned, an IMAC, the other being a cellular phone. I see absolutely no use for the new palm pilots in, my Franklin works just as well. I am a tangible person, I like hard copies of everything.

There are consequences with every action and decision one makes. Many technological advances are only necessary because they were adapted that way, marketing is a wonderful thing, it was possible to live without all of these things at one time. I like to look at technology as a convenience, it makes life easier and this is nice, but I could live without it if necessary. I don't think that it would ever be possible to live without a computer in the field I am pursuing, to be competitive in the working world being computer literate is a necessity. Whether this computer is a MAC or a PC it does not matter but it is beneficial to be able to use both formats. Because I myself, own a PC it is only to my benefit that I choose to use MAC's when I am at the CCLI. Cellular phones have probably become one of the biggest conveniences in technology. It allows you to use car time to make important phone calls, this virtually eliminates all dead time that is usually wasted driving or just sitting on the phone. With cellular phones you are able to multitask two things

which before were the most time consuming things of a day, now we have cut that time in half and freed up the other for any use one desires. Not to mention there is the information convenience, "I'm running late.", or "Help something has happened while traveling." However, due to medical information that I have acquired on cellular phones I don't believe I would ever use one on a daily basis like most of today's society but it is a convenience I wish that I had.

In order to stay competitive I believe that it will be necessary to "roll with the punches" of technological change. It will never be possible to learn every new thing or always keep up but it will only be to my benefit to stay current with those things that pertain to my field or are positioned in it. As technology has progressed however, the materials provided to learn new material have become more complex. Documentation that it is straight forward and written in a manual or pamphlet style are the most useful. I personally like to have a constant reference for those times when I get "stuck". The less frustration and time wasted the better.

The most technologically literate person in my life is Matthew Rankin, my boyfriend. He is a masters student at the University of Illinois Champagne, studying Electromagnetic Compatibility. (This is a special area of electrical engineering.) Whenever I have a problem he is the one I call. When comparing the two of us I fall very short of his technical expertise. Part of this is because he has spent more time in a technical field than I, also his technical knowledge requirements are different than mine, but overall he chooses to put more time and effort in learning new technologies. After measuring up to him I realize it is necessary that I do some catching up of my own.