Envisioning Technology

Part One: My Interests

The interest that I will be discussing today is golfing. Golfing is a sport which is mainly popular in the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia. Its roots date back hundreds of years in Scotland, but since then the game has evolved a lot. Golf is a sport that the player hits a ball that is approximately one inch in diameter into a hole that ranges from approximately 150 yards to over 400 yards using a club that’s made out of metal. The hole is situated in different positions, for example one might be straight ahead from the starting point of the hole, others might make a slight turn. Within each of the holes there are some hazards such as trees, water, sand, or tall grass. The goal of golf is to shoot the lowest score you can, this is achieved by taking the least amount of shots. Even though it is an individual sport, you can compete in teams.

I first gained interest in golf through my father and grandfather. Both of them would golf almost every week during the summer when I was a child, so being some of my biggest role models I had an interest in the sport at an early age. After starting to actually play when I was around 6 years old, I started gaining a love for going out on the weekends and playing. It was a perfect sport for me because I am a fairly competitive person so being able to try to beat my personal best score, as well as shooting a better round than the people I would golf against made me look forward to going golfing. Another reason that I was drawn to the sport is because I knew that it could be a sport I could play lifelong. Since it is not a physically demanding sport like football or basketball, plenty of people can play into the later
years of their life. Being able to continually build on my skills and get as close as I can to perfecting the sport helped me start playing the sport, and continue playing the sport.

Technology is starting to get more and more involved in the sport of golf. In an article written by the United States Golf Association, also known as the USGA, in the article “How Technology Has and Will Continue to Change Golf”, the author explains how in recent years the sport has evolved a lot due to major advances in technology. Examples of these changes are the implementation of sensors, which allow golfers to track how far they are from a hole using a device that uses a laser to track distance. Sensors are also attached to either golf clubs or golf gloves in order to track swing movements in order to optimize the swing pattern or rhythm to allow the player to have the best swing possible. Another way technology has impacted the game of golf using GPS which allows the groundskeepers of the course to accurately apply fertilizers with extreme accuracy. This allows golfers to have the best conditions possible to play the sport. These advancements allow this historically traditional sport to evolve without compromising the charm that the sport has.

Overall there is not much negative impact from the different technologies that are being introduced to the sport. Many of the older players who play the sport do not want to see change, but the changes that are occurring are not changing the way that the sport is played, it is just building on the how the sport has been being played for hundreds of years. The changes that I have discussed in the prior paragraph just help with making the game easier to play, such as the GPS allowing for the course’s grass to be thicker and create better conditions on the course. And the sensors just increase the ease of play, allowing the golfer to use a laser instead of having to track with markers on the course helps the pace of play to pick up. These changes have not impacted how the game is played in the slightest, just makes it more enjoyable.

In the future I do not see technology really taking over the sport. There is a lot of resistance in the sport to big changes. Overall the sport has not changed much in the past century other than a
change in the materials used to make the golf balls and the golf clubs. Because of this, I believe that small changes that increase the enjoy ability of play such as increased technology in training to allow for players to get better when practicing will continue to develop. But, the actual game itself may see small changes in the technology of the equipment but overall since the game is played in the outdoors and does not use technology during the game itself I do not see many changes in the future.

In conclusion, the game of golf has increasingly used technology to advance effectiveness of playing conditions, and to aid training for the sport. Since it is a sport that is based outdoors, and does not use much technology, like computers, to begin with, the increase in technology in the world will not impact golf like other activities. This is a good thing because of the tradition involved with the sport, it is played basically the same today, as it was in the beginning.
Part Two: In the Media

In this section I will be talking about technology in the media through analysis of the show *Silicon Valley* (Judge, & O’Keefe, 2017) on HBO, season 4, episode 10 named “Server Error”. The show *Silicon Valley* is about an entrepreneur in Silicon Valley, name Richard Hendricks, and the ups and downs of his growing startup. The beginning season is about him getting his algorithm to compress data up and out to the public, and subsequent seasons are about how this algorithm has grown. This specific plot is the finale of the most current season, and in this the use of the algorithm has gotten too big for the company’s servers, and the network that the company relies on is becoming too unreliable. In order to allow the network to reach its full potential the company uses an illegal method to put the software on peoples’ phones who are using a specific Wi-Fi. The problem with this is that the phones that used this Wi-Fi started to explode so the network was continuing to break down. This is important because their main client had put all their data on this network and if it went down the company would probably sink. In an attempt to alleviate the pressure of this unforeseen circumstance, they tried to put all of the network on Stanford University’s servers. But, when they went to deliver their data, they realize it had all been destroyed because they did not close the back of the truck they had been delivering the equipment in. At the end of the episode they were called into the clients office and were expecting bad news, but in the end of the episode the network was saved through a line of fridges that acted as the network instead of phones.

A piece of technology in this episode are the servers. This is a critical piece of equipment for the company because all of the data that the company is using is stored on these servers. The more the company grows the higher the number of servers necessary in order for it to be successful. Servers are readily available in the show and in real life, but in real life they can be very pricy depending on the size of the company and the amount of data that is used. Because of this a lot of smaller companies have servers in a data center where they rent space and use the center’s resources to monitor the servers
and provide a place that is centralized for the servers. Large companies are definitely at an advantage in this sector because they can have their own server network that they maintain, this vastly reduces the costs per server, but the company needs to be very large because these facilities are very costly to set-up and may not be worth the cost depending on how many servers the company uses.

This technology is a vital part of the operation of the economy as a whole, because of the interconnectedness of the different companies, and the increase in the usage of data to analyze certain aspects of a business. Therefore, it is solving problems because it provides a location for a lot of data to be stored, the only problem with servers in the TV show is the cost, which is why the company was trying to shortcut the problem and use Stanford’s servers. In the future though, there might be an issue with large data centers controlling the market and making their services very expensive for the smaller firms that use them. In the tech industry right now there are a few large companies that are controlling a large part of the market. So large companies in the future are going to have a large advantage cost-wise if the prices keep going up.

All in all, servers are benefitting all of society because of the increase in the impact of technology on everyday people, the server allows for the advancements to take place. Even though the impact is not seen directly in the lives of people, in the background it is one of the key drivers of data storage.

I believe that this technology is ethical, but it is up to the users of this technology to use it in an ethical way. This is similar to a lot of different technologies because it is up to the user to use it in a manner that is best for society. For example if the servers contained a lot of illegal content, the usage would not be ethical, but it is not the problem of the manufacturers of the servers to monitor the data unless the data is stored in a data center.

In 5 to 10 years this technology will continue to increase in size, purely because of the amount of data that is being created. Within the past few years the amount of cloud storage has increased
vastly. In the article “How Big is the Cloud” on the website mspalliance.com the company describes the growth of the cloud in recent years. Since 2003, which is when the data about the cloud had been started to be collected, there has been growth every year. The amount of storage used in the cloud increased even during the “Great Recession” which caused a decrease in almost every industry. Because of this, and an expected increase of 24%, according to the article, this seems that there will not be a slowdown. But one thing is certain, within the next 10 years this will be a technology that plays a large role in technology.

In conclusion, servers used in the show Silicon Valley are not something of fiction. Even though the servers may have been used in a more comical sense than they are in real life in the show, they do play a big role in today’s technological world. This is a technology that will continue to impact the world in the coming years.
Works Cited


