

## K. Industrialism and Anti-Industrialism

1. Because of the obvious life-giving benefits of technology, most people automatically accept new technologies as part of life.
2. This generally positive attitude to technology is part of a kind of social contract that can be called “industrialism.” Industrialism is the general agreement to make use of industrial technology as part of our lives.
3. Even though there has always been a general agreement about it, there has also be anti-industrial criticism of technology for different reasons.
4. The first of these criticisms is known as *Luddism*. The Luddites, **c.1811**, were upset because the factories were loud, dirty, dangerous, and provided only the most repetitious, almost robotic kinds of work. They tried to destroy the factories.



The difference between the intimate life of craft making in pre-industrial times and the mechanical setting of industrial factories motivated the *Luddites* to reject technology.

5. The next form of rejecting industrialization is known as *transcendentalism*. As the word suggests, it means to want to “transcend,” or go beyond—in this case: to go beyond material concerns like food and clothing.
6. One famous transcendentalist, Henry David Thoreau, went to live in the woods in **1854**. He built himself a small cabin, and lived in nature. Anyone that goes to church, goes hiking in nature, enjoys yoga or meditation, or listens to music or poetry to relax and get away from the “rat race” is practicing some form of transcendentalism.
7. Some people worry about running out of things like trees and water and oil. One view, called *conservationism*, says we need to avoid using too many resources, because we need to *conserve* them for future generations. Another view, called *preservationism*, says we need to preserve nature by itself.
8. One of the outcomes of the combined efforts of *conservationists* and *preservationists* has been the creation of national parks in order to prioritize safeguarding the resources in them. This is largely because of the efforts of president Theodore Roosevelt, a noted conservationist, and founder of the Boone & Crocket Club in **1887** and John Muir, a noted preservationist, and founder of the Sierra Club in **1892**.
9. In the advanced industrial era, there has been a new kind of anti-industrialism called *environmentalism*, which sometimes becomes *environmental alarmism*.
10. Environmentalism points out that powerful technologies like nuclear weapons and chemicals can have an impact on the “environment” (the natural world that surrounds us) on a scale never before witnessed.
11. Environmentalism can help us to see the unintended consequences of our use of technology, like pollution, and decided what to do about them.

12. One famous early environmentalist, for instance, named Rachel Carson, noticed that the widespread use of chemicals in agriculture was killing lots of mosquitoes, which is what people wanted, but that it was also hurting birds (which normally eat those bugs!). Her book *Silent Spring*, written in **1962** is considered the start of the modern environmental movement.
13. *Alarmism* is a version of environmentalism that is very negative. It says that the effects of technology on the environment are so bad that our future is going to be terrible. So far, all the predictions of alarmists have not come true.