

Student Essay on Examining Metaphors in Neil Postman's Amusing Ourselves to Death

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Essay

There are many ways authors manipulate language and try to conceive his/her message in a style that will persuade the audience towards their argument more than someone else's. Television has been a piece of technological with great powers but with greater weakness. These weaknesses will overcome onto the American culture and will become unstoppable. In *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, by Neil Postman, the author describes about how mass medias are not only based upon our culture but our way of life. The title of his first chapter is *The Medium is the Metaphor*. Postman is very concise in his diction about the message he wants to send. He explains how it is our language and our minds create this medium we communicate to others. "What I mean to point out here is that the introduction into a culture of technique such as writing or a clock is not merely an extension of man's power to bind time but a transformation of his way of thinking - and, of course, of the content of his culture." The medium human's use creates this cultural society that we live in where the type of information sent is questioned. The culture thrives on a medium until it can develop a new one, which would or could make communication faster. The question is whether the clock human's created is cutting short of our medium causing us to move on to newer and faster mediums? The ultimate concern Postman raises in this book is that human beings are dependant on making so much worth of there lives in "the time they have left," however, when they try to do this many aspects our symbolic culture, such as the language we use to communicate our minds, is lost, which only leads to a disastrous product, such as the television. He calls this chapter *The Medium is the Metaphor* because the language, written and oral, that we communicate is of symbolic importance in our culture that allows us to express of thoughts and ideas with others of our kind. He ends the chapter of by saying, "And languages are our media. Our media are our metaphors. Our metaphors create the content of our culture." If there is no change to preserve this media, not only we have lost our ways to express our ideas and thoughts but also we have lost a symbolic part of our culture.