

**Speaking of Faith, "Holding Life Consciously."
American Public Media
Excerpt from transcript of show aired June 24, 2010**

<http://speakingoffaith.publicradio.org/programs/2010/holding-life-consciously/transcript.shtml> (accessed July 1, 2010)

“Professor Arthur Zajonc. ... [A] physicist at Amherst College and a leading figure exploring the relevance of contemplative traditions for higher education.

“... there's a long lineage of technology and craft that has become increasingly dominant and in certain ways overshadowed many of the, I would say, overt spiritual dimensions of our lives. So we live within a world that has become increasingly technical but also increasingly secular, increasingly a technology without recognition of its inherent human and even spiritual possibilities. And so as a consequence, it seems to me that the technologies that are developed are developed in a certain sense blindly, without a real understanding of their full effects, their full power, not only in practical ways like environmental problems and so on that they may cause, but also psychologically in their effects on human consciousness, especially the consciousness of children.

“Technologies are kind of brilliant also in their ability to capture, I think, emerging spiritual capacities. Say, for example, when you're working with meditation, one of the things that arises are images. And in some ways, you work with the imagination inwardly. You are actively engaged with the imagination. And virtual reality, 3-D movies, all the rest, also work with that, but they work with it in a way which leads to a more passive engagement; not an active imagination but one where all the work is being done for you by the technology itself. ...

“It's like reading a good book, you know. You're engaged at a certain level through the reading but you're also stimulated to imagine yourself. Now, I hasten to say I'm no Luddite. ...

“Everything is invisible. Everything is down there in the micro world. So the old ways of analysis and taking things apart no longer suit. But I think, you know, that hidden nature of technology that's everywhere, that's pervasive but hidden, the inherent complexities of it, have become such barriers that, yes, most people are no longer able to imagine how things work.

“So how is it that you confront those technologies? I mean, I think part of it is realizing this lineage and tradition that I mentioned in the beginning, **that everything depends on how you hold what you do and how you hold, therefore, also the technology. You know, if you are unconscious about it then the technology itself will, as it were, create that world for you, will say, OK, here are the values of our world.**

We see them on television and we see them displayed in the movies and so forth. You're being manipulated in a certain direction by the technologies and even by the means — not just the content, but even by the type of technology that's there. **But if one's self-conscious about one's engagement with the technology, if one sees it as a part of a human development and a kind of outgrowth of a particular form of human awareness and capacity, and frames it as such, then it becomes more of a servant to us and we know when to make use of it and we know when not to make use of it. We know how to make use of it. It becomes, indeed, more of a tool. You know, the word "technology" stems from the word *technae*, which means art. It doesn't mean machine; it means art. So if technology can become much more of an art than a machine that's deriving a particular purpose, commercial or otherwise, I think we'll salvage what technology does have to offer for us.”**