Technology and Social Theory (Themes in Social Theory)

By Steve Matthewman

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From the everyday and unnoticed to the newsworthy and cutting edge, technology is undoubtedly a fundamental element of our daily lives. While saving us time and effort, it can also shape our environment, mediate our relationships, and simultaneously solve problems and create new ones. In studying technology we gain an insight into how society is constructed, maintained and transformed.

Unravelling and explaining the complex connections between technology and the social contexts in which it is used, Technology and Social Theory guides the reader through 150 years of thinking in this ever evolving field. The chapters critically evaluate a broad range of theorists, from Marx to Foucault, Orwell to Elias, alongside empirical examples which show theory in action. The significance of technology is assessed within both public spheres and intimate spaces, shedding light on its integral role in society.

Showing how theory maps the way for further research, and in turn how new advances in research can inform theory, this book is invaluable reading for students and researchers in Sociology, Social theory, Science and Technology Studies and the Media.

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Technology and Social Theory (Themes in Social Theory) By Steve Matthewman Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1926502 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Palgrave Macmillan
- Published on: 2011-10-15
- Released on: 2011-10-11
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.20" h x .48" w x 6.18" l, 1.05 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 224 pages

Editorial Review

Review

"Matthewman's writing is clear, accessible and engaging and the text displays significant intellectual depth in providing such a rigorous, succinct and sophisticated analysis of a such wide body of literature. A useful addition to reading lists across STS, Sociology, Politics and Communications."--David Mercer, Associate Professor, Convener of Science and Technology Studies, University of Wollongong, Australia

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'A well informed and readable account of approaches to technology in sociological thought, organised in a clear and comprehensive way.' - Adrian Mackenzie, Lecturer in Sociology, Lancaster University, UK

'…this book comes as a necessary and delightful addition …[it] is a highly engaging, accessible text that is crucial for anyone writing and researching technology' – *New Zealand Sociology*

'Though aimed mainly at sociologists and other social scientists, this impressive book has much to offer theoretically curious historians of technology and their graduate students.' - Mark Shields, *Technology and Culture*

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