



Television: Technology and Cultural Form

Raymond Williams

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Television: Technology and Cultural Form was first published in 1974, long before the dawn of multi-channel TV, or the reality and celebrity shows that now pack the schedules. Yet Williams' analysis of television's history, its institutions, programmes and practices, and its future prospects, remains remarkably prescient.

Williams stresses the importance of technology in shaping the cultural form of television, while always resisting the determinism of McLuhan's dictum that 'the medium is the message'. If the medium really is the message, Williams asks, what is left for us to do or say? Williams argues that, on the contrary, we as viewers have the power to disturb, disrupt and to distract the otherwise cold logic of history and technology - not just because television is part of the fabric of our daily lives, but because new technologies continue to offer opportunities, momentarily outside the sway of transnational corporations or the grasp of media moguls, for new forms of self and political expression.

Television: Technology and Cultural Form Details

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John says

Read it my first year of graduate school, referred to it repeatedly over the years. The finest discussion I've ever read of the relationship between technological properties of a medium, the social uses of the technology, and the meaning of media texts. It's specific conclusions about television have become somewhat dated as cable, TiVo, and high definition have changed both TV technology and social practices, but it remains a model for the clear-sighted, rigorous examination of these kinds of questions.

lucy says

Dated and can be summed up as post-structuralist. Good tho

Christian says

Some great insights, but I had lots of trouble following his writing. It took me months to get through his little book.

Vanobberghenwim says

one of the greatest books ever written. although outdated on some aspects, still makes you think about technology

Ketchup says

CP.1 / CP.5
