

Radical Technologies: The Design of Everyday Life

By Adam Greenfield



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A field manual to the technologies that are transforming our lives

Everywhere we turn, a startling new device promises to transfigure our lives. But at what cost? In this urgent and revelatory excavation of our Information Age, leading technology thinker Adam Greenfield forces us to reconsider our relationship with the networked objects, services and spaces that define us. It is time to re-evaluate the Silicon Valley consensus determining the future.

We already depend on the smartphone to navigate every aspect of our existence. We're told that innovations—from augmented-reality interfaces and virtual assistants to autonomous delivery drones and self-driving cars—will make life easier, more convenient and more productive. 3D printing promises unprecedented control over the form and distribution of matter, while the blockchain stands to revolutionize everything from the recording and exchange of value to the way we organize the mundane realities of the day to day. And, all the while, fiendishly complex algorithms are operating quietly in the background, reshaping the economy, transforming the fundamental terms of our politics and even redefining what it means to be human.

Having successfully colonized everyday life, these radical technologies are now conditioning the choices available to us in the years to come. How do they work? What challenges do they present to us, as individuals and societies? Who benefits from their adoption? In answering these questions, Greenfield's timely guide clarifies the scale and nature of the crisis we now confront —and offers ways to reclaim our stake in the future.





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Editorial Review

Review

"Adam Greenfield goes digging into the layers that constitute what we experience as smooth tech surface. He unsettles and repositions much of that smoothness. *Radical Technologies* is brilliant and scary"

-Saskia Sassen, Columbia University, author of Expulsions

"We exist within an ever-thickening web of technologies whose workings are increasingly opaque to us. In this illuminating and sometimes deeply disturbing book, Adam Greenfield explores how these systems work, how they synergize with each other, and the resultant effects on our societies, our politics, and our psyches. This is an essential book."

-Brian Eno

"A tremendously intelligent and stylish book on the 'colonization of everyday life by information processing' calls for resistance to rule by the tech elite ... a landmark primer and spur to more informed and effective opposition."

-Steve Poole, Guardian (US)

"A systematic analysis of the hazards posed by the most revolutionary of new technologies ... his analyses are extremely proficient at uncovering the risks and contradictions that our enthusiasm for new technology has occluded ... a vital counter-statement to such pervasive utopianism."

—Public Seminar

About the Author

Previously a rock critic, bike messenger and psychological operations specialist in the US Army, **Adam Greenfield** spent over a decade working in the design and development of networked digital information technologies, as lead information architect for the Tokyo office of internet services consultancy Razorfish, Independent User-Experience Designer and Head of Design Direction for Service and User-Interface Design at Nokia headquarters in Helsinki.

Selected in 2013 as Senior Urban Fellow at the LSE Cities centre of the London School of Economics, he has taught in the Urban Design program of the Bartlett, University College London, and in New York University's Interactive Telecommunications Program. His books include *Everyware: The Dawning Age of Ubiquitous Computing, Urban Computing and Its Discontents*, and the bestselling *Against the Smart City*.

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