



Me and My Cell Phone: And Other Essays On Technology In Everyday Life

Crystal Powell

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Cell phones and the Internet have been the recipients of in-depth research on their increased and rapid integration into everyday life and the innovative appropriations associated with them in many societies. The cell phone has attracted particular attention in its perceived abilities to both enhance and destruct social relationships. Our increased access to social media and to the cell phone has taken social networking to an unprecedented level. These communication technologies are revered by many as great, all-purpose, all-positive communication devices in spite of their flaws. They are overwhelmingly bestowed with agency and superiority. Too often, they are idolized with little regard to how they affect and are affected by their users on a personal level. The mutual shaping between technology and society is not adequately acknowledged. Technologies, in spite of the seemingly endless possibilities offered by their many functions, can quite literally be sterile and useless objects outside of conscious and tangible human effort. Cell phones and the Internet, though undoubtedly capable of providing myriad beneficial opportunities for their users, need at long last to be put in their place.

This book is a contribution in that regard. Kindled by her own intimate history with her cell phone and a growing curiosity about ICTs in general, this book is a culmination of Crystal Powell's thoughts, reactions to and interpretations of some of the literature on these technologies. The book draws on and critically reviews contributions by some leading authors on the social shaping of ICTs and social media to offer a more nuanced and complex understanding of technology in relation to those who use and are used by it.

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