

Bibliography

Lanier, J. 2010. *You Are Not a Gadget*. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group.

Summary

In this book, Jaron Lanier describes the current problem with evolving technology and the impact it has on human and internet development. Technology now has a stronger influence on society than ever before, shaping our culture and the exchange of ideas. Lanier mentions that the internet has been a beneficial feature for creators and original ideas and streamlines the process of interacting with everyone all over the world. However, this comes with its setbacks. Control is now given to the companies that have access to our data. Crowdsourcing has the potential to devalue creativity and lower the yield of new content. The separation of jobs can lead to a stronger divide between a minority of technology owners and the poor majority. He ends by stating that it is not too late to make changes to technology that can protect human intelligence and individuality.

Notable Quotes

“Different media designs stimulate different potentials in human nature. We shouldn’t seek to make the pack mentality as efficient as possible. We should instead seek to inspire the phenomenon of individual intelligence.”

“I long to be shocked and made obsolete by new generations of digital culture, but instead I am being tortured by repetition and boredom.”

“Is it conceivable that a new digital humanism could offer romantic visions that are able to compete with this extraordinary spectacle? I have found that humanism provides an even more colorful, heroic, and seductive approach to technology.”

Personal Response

I found the book very informed and straight to the point. I really enjoyed the large number of analogies he uses to interpret his understanding of technology. He also uses many animal examples that I found entertaining and helpful in understanding the nuances of technology from his perspective. In general, I agree with a lot of his points that cover the problems of computing and what the future could and should look like. I also appreciated the way he phrased a lot of his arguments so flow in a way that readers can understand his priorities.