

Technology and Worldliness: Nature and the Technological Artifice

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In the mid-twentieth century, many political thinkers came to identify modern technology as 'catastrophic'. These critics of technology identified fundamental political problems in almost every form of technological activity in the contemporary world. Because of this pervasiveness, technology comes to form a new kind of world; it moulds the spaces in which we live: our environment. This chapter outlines the ways in which the critics of technology argue that technology is influencing worldliness, in constructing an increasingly all-dominating world of technological artifice, and the nature of that transformation. Despite differences in perspective, a common claim can be found among the critics of technology: that technology is divorcing humans from 'nature' as the basis or grounding of the human condition, and that this holds unpredictable and extraordinary ethical, political and existential risks. From their technology critique, therefore, a common claim emerges about a changing natural environment and the role of human action within and upon that process. This chapter seeks to read this re-evaluation of nature in modernity as a political issue for these thinkers that demands and necessitates a political response.