Technocreep: The Surrender of Privacy and the Capitalization of Intimacy

Thomas P. Keenan
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A technologist discusses the "creepiness" of technology in this engaging, fast-paced book.

Many fears of the paranoid may seem well founded, at least when it comes to technology, in reading technologist/cybersecurity expert Thomas Keenan's admittedly creepy book, *Technocreep*. Keenan does a fine job of writing about "the unseen ways in which technology is already changing our lives," but he also offers key insights into future technologies "in our cars, our streetlights, our hospitals, and even inside our brains and bodies."

Technocreep is organized into short, highly readable chapters, each of which addresses a different "creepy" area where technology plays a significant role. "Camera Creep," for example, details some of the remarkable (and sometimes questionable) uses of digital photography for spying and surveillance. "Tracking Creep" offers an eye-opening look at how technology is used to track phone calls, purchases, online activity, and more. Writes Keenan, "Every time you 'Look Inside' a book, 'Like' a Facebook post, 'Friend' someone new, send an email, or log on from a different place, you are leaving a digital trail that is being scrutinized to learn more about you."

While some "technocreep" covered by Keenan may be widely recognized, many of the chapters expose new, lesser known uses of technology, which makes for particularly informative, intriguing reading. Especially fascinating are the emerging technologies that will impact the future, such as genetic testing and engineering, the possibility of "software-based humans," and the impact of 3-D printing. Thankfully, the author ends the book with "Anti-Creep," a chapter packed with authoritative advice for how anyone can become more aware of technocreep and employ specific tactics to guard against invasion of privacy and theft of identity and valuable information.

Keenan writes in a contemporary journalistic style that is rapidly paced to keep the book moving along. He has a critical yet objective eye towards technology, pointing out that "even the most troubling technologies can sometimes be beneficial to us." He cites a wealth of examples and references nearly four hundred sources, also providing a bibliography for additional reading.

In *Technocreep*, Keenan provides a cautionary tale, but it's not so slanted that the reader doesn't appreciate the wondrous things technology can accomplish. This masterful weaving of the negatives and positives of technology makes for a book that is realistic about technology's perils yet optimistic about its great potential. Still, Keenan urges readers to "accept the responsibility to stay informed, speak out, and vote on Technocreepiness."

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