How users matter: The co-construction of users and technologies

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Abstract

Users have become an integral part of technology studies. The essays in this volume look at the creative capacity of users to shape technology in all phases, from design to implementation. Using a variety of theoretical approaches, including a feminist focus on users and use (in place of the traditional emphasis on men and machines), concepts from semiotics, and the cultural studies view of consumption as a cultural activity, these essays examine what users do with technology and, in turn, what technology does to users. The contributors consider how users consume, modify, domesticate, design, reconfigure, and resist technological development—and how users are defined and transformed by technology.