

Modern Technology and the Human Future A Christian Appraisal

Available December 11, 2018 | \$25, 254 pages, paperback | 978-0-8308-5220-8

"Craig Gay is neither a luddite nor a technophile. He's something much different—a thoughtful, engaged theologian grappling with some of the core questions raised by modern technology and its apparent move toward disembodied life. Like Ellul and Postman before him, Gay notes many of the ills of technological society, but he moves beyond these seminal voices by offering a constructive rather than merely descriptive account. . . . Gay offers a helpful corrective that is as incarnational as it is hopeful. I recommend it."

Kutter Callaway, assistant professor of theology and culture at Fuller Theological Seminary, author of *Watching TV Religiously* and *Breaking the Marriage Idol*

Technology Is Not Neutral

How did you come to write a book about how technology shapes human life?

Craig M. Gay: The book is part of a larger intellectual project that has sought to appreciate the impact of “modernity” on Christian faith and practice. More specifically, the book emerged out of a graduate course at Regent College (Canada) called “Christianity and Modern Technology.” The course was premised on the assumption that modern technology is a significant social fact that Christians need to take care to understand if they are to be “salt and light” within contemporary culture.

How has your trajectory as a scholar and professor impacted your research and writing for this book?

Gay: My scholarly focus has been on unpacking “modernity” (and “postmodernity”) for the sake of trying to discern just how and why contemporary societal conditions are impacting Christian faith and practice. I’ve researched and written on money and capitalism, on the process of “secularization,” and on modern media and the demise of genuinely personal communication. Modern technology is obviously a crucial piece of this larger puzzle.

What makes your particular focus unique among other literature available?

Gay: The book’s thesis is that modern technological development is, for a variety of reasons, trending away from—and thus diminishing—ordinary embodied human existence. Problematic in and of itself, the diminishment of ordinary embodied human existence by automatic machine technology must be seen—and must be declared—to be at odds with the Christian confession of the incarnation of Jesus Christ. The problem is not simply the technology, however; rather it is the way we moderns view the world and our purposes within it. Both now stand in need of correction and renewal by way of basic Christian convictions.

What do you hope readers take away after reading *Modern Technology and the Human Future*?

Gay: The book explains that much of the momentum of technological development owes chiefly (though not exclusively) to economic requirements and the logic of money, a *crucial* connection that is very often overlooked and/or misunderstood.

The book also offers a concise and lucid account of what sets “modern” technology apart from its premodern antecedents, i.e., that peculiar way of “seeing” our world such that it appears to us as a neutral field of objects that stand ready for whatever uses we might devise for them. And the book moves beyond analysis and criticism of modern technological development to suggest a way of evaluating and constructively disciplining this development. It encourages Christian readers to remember *what*, from the point of view of basic Christian theology, *the world is* as well as *who we are* and *the kind of work we have been called to do* in this world.

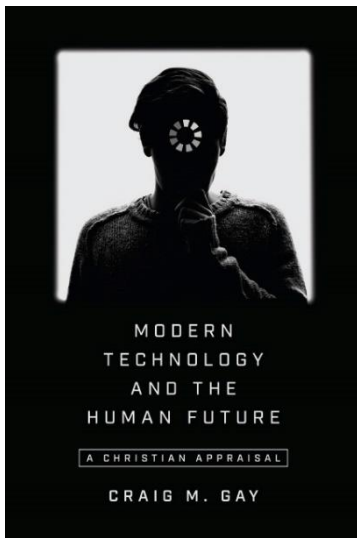


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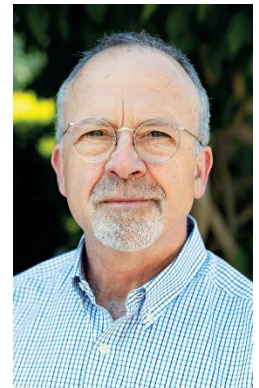
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Craig M. Gay (PhD, Boston University) is professor of interdisciplinary studies at Regent College in Vancouver, Canada. He is the author of a variety of books, including *Dialogue, Catalogue and Monologue: Personal, Impersonal and Depersonalizing Ways to Use Words*; *Cash Values: The Value of Money and the Nature of Worth*; *The Way of the (Modern) World: Or, Why It's Tempting to Live as If God Doesn't Exist*; and *With Liberty and Justice for Whom? The Recent Evangelical Debate Over Capitalism*.

Gay has contributed chapters to a number of collections on the subjects of modernity, secularization, economic ethics, and technology, and his articles and reviews have appeared in *Christian Scholar's Review*, *American Journal of Sociology*, *Crux*, and *Markets & Morality*.



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