



The Shock of the Old: Technology and Global History since 1900

David Edgerton

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From the books of H.G. Wells to the press releases of NASA, we are awash in clichéd claims about high technology's ability to change the course of history. Now, in *The Shock of the Old*, David Edgerton offers a startling new and fresh way of thinking about the history of technology, radically revising our ideas about the interaction of technology and society in the past and in the present. He challenges us to view the history of technology in terms of what everyday people have actually used-and continue to use-rather than just sophisticated inventions. Indeed, many highly touted technologies, from the V-2 rocket to the Concorde jet, have been costly failures, while many mundane discoveries, like corrugated iron, become hugely important around the world. Edgerton reassesses the significance of such acclaimed inventions as the Pill and information technology, and underscores the continued importance of unheralded technology, debunking many notions about the implications of the "information age." A provocative history, *The Shock of the Old* provides an entirely new way of looking historically at the relationship between invention and innovation.

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