



# Technology as Experience (MIT Press)

*John McCarthy, Peter Wright*

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In *Technology as Experience*, John McCarthy and Peter Wright argue that any account of what is often called the user experience must take into consideration the emotional, intellectual, and sensual aspects of our interactions with technology. We don't just use technology, they point out; we live with it. They offer a new approach to understanding human-computer interaction through examining the felt experience of technology. Drawing on the pragmatism of such philosophers as John Dewey and Mikhail Bakhtin, they provide a framework for a clearer analysis of technology as experience.

Just as Dewey, in *Art as Experience*, argued that art is part of everyday lived experience and not isolated in a museum, McCarthy and Wright show how technology is deeply embedded in everyday life. The "zestful integration" or transcendent nature of the aesthetic experience, they say, is a model of what human experience with technology might become.

McCarthy and Wright illustrate their theoretical framework with real-world examples that range from online shopping to ambulance dispatch. Their approach to understanding human computer interaction -- seeing it as creative, open, and relational, part of felt experience -- is a measure of the fullness of technology's potential to be more than merely functional.

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