

Bored, Lonely, Angry, Stupid



Changing Feelings
about Technology, from
the Telegraph to Twitter

Luke Fernandez
Susan J. Matt

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This wide-ranging account of our emotional responses to technologies, from the telegram to Instagram, shows that technology changes not only how we feel, but what our feelings mean.

Facebook makes us lonely. Selfies breed narcissism. On Twitter and comment boards, hostility reigns. Pundits and psychologists warn us that digital technologies substantially alter our emotional states. But in this lively and surprising account, we learn that technology doesn't just affect how we feel from moment to moment—it changes profoundly the underlying emotions themselves.

Bored, Lonely, Angry, Stupid examines nineteenth- and twentieth-century letters, diaries, and memoirs and draws on contemporary research and interviews with Americans of different ages and backgrounds to document how our emotions have been transformed by technological change. Where we now strive to escape boredom, earlier generations saw unstructured time as an opportunity for productivity and creativity. Where loneliness is now pathologized, we once thought of solitude as virtuous. Even as we ask whether technology is making us lonelier, it is altering the meaning of loneliness.

In this timely book, Luke Fernandez and Susan Matt contend that current technology has removed many of the limits on our emotional landscape. Thus we seek to be constantly stimulated, engaged, and validated, while our anger and antisocial impulses are not only unconstrained but affirmed by the digital company we keep.

作者介绍:

Luke Fernandez is Assistant Professor in the School of Computing and codirector of the Tech Outreach Center at Weber State University. His essays on the effects of the internet on higher education have appeared in the Chronicle of Higher Education. An NEH Digital Humanities Fellowship funded his course “Are Machines Making Us Stupid?” which generated media interest across Utah. He blogs at <http://itintheuniversity.blogspot.com/>.

Susan J. Matt is Presidential Distinguished Professor of History at Weber State University and the author of *Keeping Up with the Joneses: Envy in American Consumer Society* and *Homesickness: An American History*. She has appeared on many radio programs, including Wisconsin Public Radio's *To the Best of Our Knowledge* and CBC Radio's *Tapestry*, and her work has been recognized in the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *Slate*, *New York Magazine*, and the *Washington Post*, among others.

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