# The Internet Imaginaire
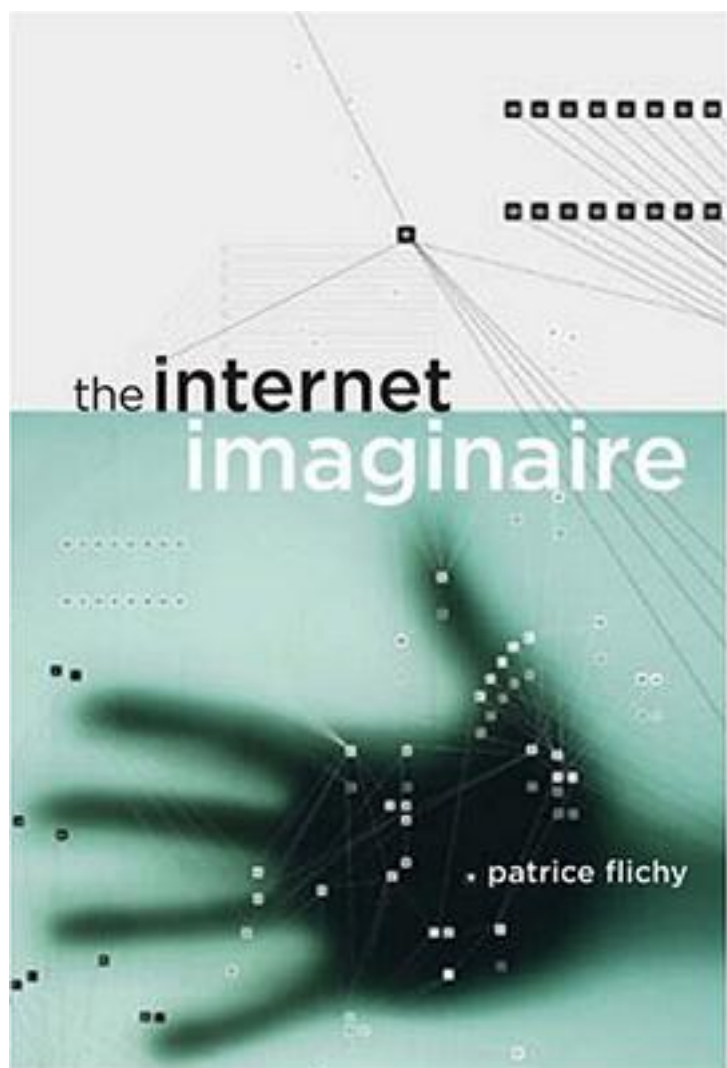


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In The Internet Imaginaire, sociologist Patrice Flichy examines the collective vision that shaped the emergence of the Internet--the social imagination that envisioned a technological utopia in the birth of a new technology. By examining in detail the discourses surrounding the development of the Internet in the United States in the 1990s (and considering them an integral part of that development), Flichy shows how an entire society began a new technological era. The metaphorical "information superhighway" became a technical utopia that informed a technological program. The Internet imaginaire, Flichy argues, led software designers, businesses, politicians, and individuals to adopt this one technology instead of another.Flichy draws on writings by experts--paying particular attention to the gurus of Wired magazine, but also citing articles in Time, Newsweek, and Business Week--from 1991 to 1995. He describes two main domains of the technical imaginaire: the utopias (and ideologies) associated with the development of technical devices; and the depictions of an imaginary digital society. He analyzes the founding myths of cyberculture--the representations of technical systems expressing the dreams and experiments of designers and promoters that developed around information highways, the Internet, Bulletin Board systems, and virtual reality. And he offers a treatise on "the virtual society imaginaire," discussing visionaries from Teilhard de Chardin to William Gibson, the body and the virtual, cyberdemocracy and the end of politics, and the new economy of the immaterial.

作者介绍:

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