



The Big Disconnect: The Story of Technology and Loneliness (Contemporary Issues)

Giles Slade

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Smart phones and social media sites may be contemporary fixations, but using technology to replace face-to-face interactions is not a new cultural phenomenon. Throughout our history, intimacy with machines has often supplanted mutual human connection.

This book reveals how consumer technologies changed from analgesic devices that soothed the loneliness of a newly urban generation to prosthetic interfaces that act as substitutes for companionship in modern America. The history of this transformation helps explain why we use technology to mediate our connections with other human beings instead of seeking out face-to-face contact.

Do electronic interfaces receive most of our attention to the detriment of real interpersonal communication? Why do sixty million Americans report that isolation and loneliness are major sources of unhappiness? The author provides many insights into our increasingly artificial relationships and a vision for how we can rediscover genuine community and human empathy.

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