



The Assault on Progress: Technology and Time in American Literature (Hardback)

By J. Adam Johns

The University of Alabama Press, United States, 2008. Hardback. Condition: New. 2nd ed.. Language: English . Brand New Book. A belief in progress is a fundamental ethos in American history and culture. The Assault on Progress probes American literary works that challenge the prevailing notion of technology as a manifestation of progress. J. Adam Johns argues that the idea of technology-as-destiny has long been explored - and undercut - in American literary works and that literature remains a crucial site for ongoing debates in this area. Johns studies the phenomenon by which each generation comes to regard itself as the hinge upon which history turns. He explores several works by historians of technology, focusing in detail on the works of literary critic Lewis Mumford, whose examinations of Herman Melville's novels provide an early example of critical interest in the abandonment of progress as a value. He goes on to study the works of William Faulkner and Ralph Ellison, focusing on the convergence of technology and race - machines and slavery - and highlights the ways that these writers have portrayed humans as reduced to machines, evidence that technological progress is not always progressive, or liberating to humanity. The conclusion argues for a...



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