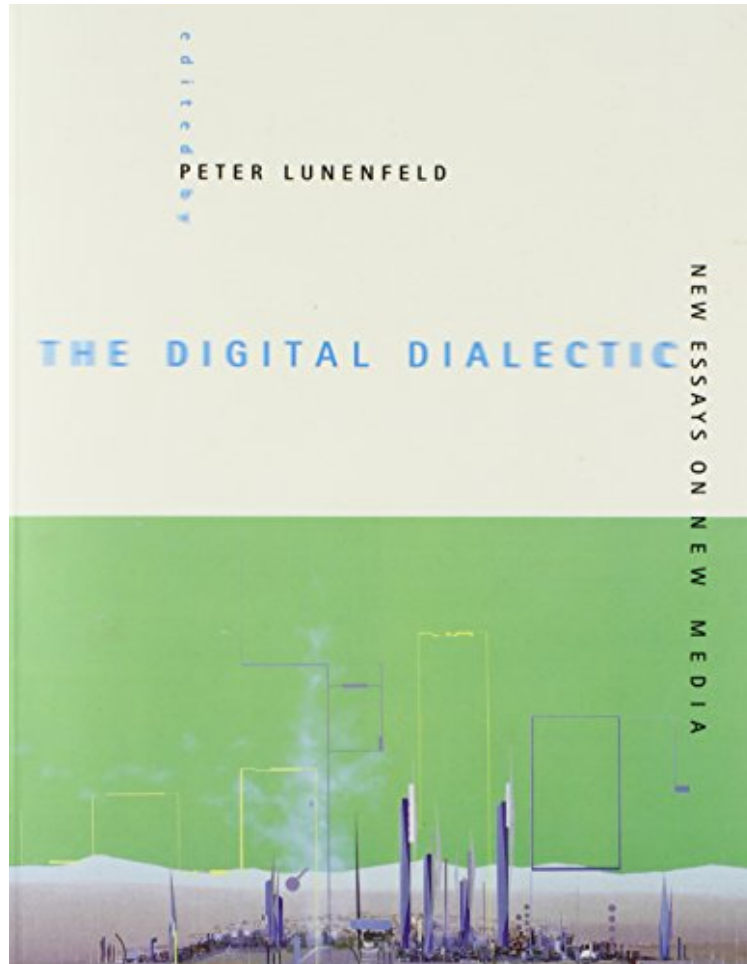


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The Digital Dialectic: New Essays on New Media (Leonardo Books)

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From The MIT Press : The Digital Dialectic: New Essays on New Media (Leonardo Books) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Digital Dialectic: New Essays on New Media (Leonardo Books):

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A more relevant anthology on computing and internet theory By Vinay Varma Books about any medium written when the medium is new, tend to promise the moon with that medium, sing paeans, make doomsday predictions, believe that utopia is just round the corner. In one manner or other the urge to be the prophet overtakes the urge to be an analyst. This also plagues many books about computers and internet. This anthology does not break free from prophesy-mania completely, but many of the contributors like Michael Heim, Katherine Hayles, et al., are far wiser. This book delights the reader by beautifully exploring the meaning of hypertext, meaning of being in a digital world, human reactions to technology etc., without falling back to commonplace platitudes. This makes the book stand-out from the deluge of books in the 1990s which sung paeans to virtual

communities, borderless worlds, MUDs, MOOs, cyborgs, end of money, end of copyright, death of distance and other 'social science fiction' fantasies.¹³ of 14 people found the following review helpful. Fantastic Anthology By A Customer
The title of this collection gives a clue of what the reader is headed for - the term "dialectic" is most often connected with philosophical ponderings or Marxist manifestos - this is not just another puff piece exhorting the brave new world and global village of interconnectiveness, this is a series of eleven well written essays delving into New Media Theory. Grouped into four sections: "The Real and the Ideal", "The Body and the Machine", "The Medium and the Message", and "The World and the Screen", this collection explores the new way of being and thinking that digital technology elicits. An important work that refuses to slip into pedanticism; thought provoking and entertaining. A must read for anyone who wants to be a subject rather than an object in the Information Age.³ of 26 people found the following review helpful. Best techno thinking material. By A Customer
That does not mean it is correct. I know, I know, by using ~{!0~}correct~{!1~}, it shows I'm not dialectically sophisticated enough. However, that is my point: those material force you to think, and force you to justify your logic/thinking as an everyday techie. For example, the ~{!0~}information~{!1~} view of genetics. It is totally justifiable ("justifiable", another sin like "correct"): information is used because the DNA code is perfectly comparable with computer code.~~ However, why computer code is ~{!0~}information~{!1~}? because it is ~{!0~}form~{!1~} related. Why ~{!0~}form~{!1~}? because it is related with the application of math. In general, the prestige or bias for ~{!0~}information~{!1~} is from the mathematic-based exact science. The premises or hidden background of ~{!0~}dialectics~{!1~} is somewhat cynical sociological-philosophical interpretation of concepts. I believe it is an antidote for techies even it simply means you have~~ to put some thinking on it. I love it, because it force me to prove it is incorrect!~

Computers linked to networks have created the first broadly used systems that allow individuals to create, distribute, and receive audiovisual content with the same box. They challenge theorists of digital culture to develop interaction-based models to replace the more primitive models that allow only passive use. The Digital Dialectic is an interdisciplinary jam session about our visual and intellectual cultures as the computer recodes technologies, media, and art forms. Unlike purely academic texts on new media, the book includes contributions by scholars, artists, and entrepreneurs, who combine theoretical investigations with hands-on analysis of the possibilities (and limitations) of new technology. The key concept is the digital dialectic: a method to ground the insights of theory in the constraints of practice. The essays move beyond journalistic reportage and hype into serious but accessible discussion of new technologies, new media, and new cultural forms. Contributors: Florian Brody, Carol Gigliotti, N. Katherine Hayles, Michael Heim, Erkki Huhtamo, George P. Landow, Brenda Laurel, Peter Lunenfeld, Lev Manovich, William J. Mitchell, Bob Stein.

.com By definition, the notion of the dialectic--that powerful philosophical tool for understanding the constant ebb and flow of argument, history, and reality itself--is hard to pin down. And so is The Digital Dialectic: New Essays on New Media, a smart collection of mostly academic essays, which aims to identify a dialectic at the heart of the digital technologies currently reshaping the way we see and know the world. Just what that dialectic might be varies from contributor to contributor--as does the quality of the essays, which originated as presentations at a 1995 conference--but Lunenfeld's elegant running commentary does a nice job of teasing out their common concerns. Grouped in sections with headings like "The Real and the Ideal," "The Body and the Machine," and "The Medium and the Message," such sharp-eyed commentators as philosopher Michael Heim, literary critic N. Katherine Hayles, and new-media auteur Florian Brody grapple with the complicated give and take implied in those opposing terms. They use it to elucidate the pros and cons of cybernetics, Net porn, Neo-Luddism, hypertext, and a host of other ripe cybercultural phenomena. The parts of this book don't necessarily add up to a coherent sum, but their shared commitment to living with the dialectic--i.e., to eschewing the one-sidedness of both utopian and dystopian visions of the digital--sets an invaluable tone. --Julian Dibbell
From Library Journal
Touted as an interdisciplinary jam session about our visual and intellectual cultures as the computer continues to pervade almost every moment of our lives, this book delivers in grand, thought-provoking style. Edited by Lunenfeld (communication and new media design, Art Center Coll. of Design), the volume offers a cornucopia of essays by almost a dozen contributors (including Lunenfeld himself), who draw inspiration from the 1995 Conference on the Convergence of Technology, Media, and Theory. None of the material seems dated (four years can be eons when considering technology), and a clear favorite has to be Brenda Laurels wry, memoir-like discourse on technology and entertainment, Musings on Amusements in America, or What I Did on My Summer Vacation. Other offerings include William J. Mitchell's Replacing Place and George P. Landow's Hypertext as Collage Writing. This effort in toto is an entertaining, unqualified success. Recommended for all collections. Geoff Rotunno, Valley Voice Newspaper, Goleta, CA
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"This book delivers in grand, thought-provoking style... an entertaining,

unqualified success."-- Geoff Rotunno, "Library Journal"