
admirable book narrating Google's boom can benefit librarians, library managers, Web researchers, digital scholars, educators, professors and end-users. Shall we stand on the shoulders of Google?

Book reviews

Soodabeh Omidkhah

Islamic Azad University, Hamedan Branch, Islamic Republic of Iran

393

Control: Digitality as Cultural Logic

Edited by Seb Franklin

The MIT Press

Cambridge, MA

2015

240 pp.

US\$35.00 hard cover

ISBN: 978-0-262-02953-7

Review DOI [10.1108/EL-02-2016-0039](https://doi.org/10.1108/EL-02-2016-0039)

It is generally accepted that the emergence, present ubiquity and normalisation of the electronic digital computer and its following conditions and implications are socially, culturally and technically constructed. Posing some questions including “What kinds of assumptions are required to understand people and their multiple, heterogeneous social interactions in terms of digital information and its processing and transmission?”, “What historical process would be necessary to operationalise these assumptions at the level of social and political orthodoxy?” and “What would be the socioeconomic and cultural implications of such a version of the world functioning as an unmarked norm?”, this book takes an epistemological approach theorising *control* as a set of technical principles having to do with self-regulation, distribution and statistical forecasting that is extended to the conceptualisation of sociality through a series of subtle historical transformations. It consists of five chapters distributed under two foundational parts. Taking an analogical approach to digitality and outlining a genealogy of so-called digital culture, Part 1, *Digitality without computers* (two chapters), first untangles the dense web of relations between control, digitality and capital, analyses related concepts with an emphasis on the emergence and implications of the control episteme, and then revolves conceptually around cybernetics as an interdisciplinary field and as a logical framework for understanding self-regulation (control and management) in biological life and machines. Building on theoretical and historical foundations concerning specific epoch-making events, socioeconomic implications of control and material technologies, Part 2, *Digitality as cultural logic* (three chapters), examines the penetration and power of the control paradigm that originated in the logical and technical principles of computing machines. In a nutshell, reading this book is like a several-century journey of discovery. Showing a part of scientists' thoughts and investigations about the relationship between information, labour and social management; the development and diffusion of human-

EL
35,2

computer metaphors; and the breadth and penetration of informatics principles in certain socioeconomic and cultural practices, Franklin has successfully responded to his questions particularly “Is there a cultural logic of what we have come to call the information age?”. Although the book has a retrospective view drawn on some traditional-to-modern-to-post-modern theories, it has potentially some significant remarks for prospective researchers in the fields of computer science, communication, information science, media studies, science and technology studies, history of science and cultural studies. It is instructive and inspiring to occupy yourself with this rewarding book. It can present readers with good opportunities, horizons and understandings.

394

Alireza Isfandyari-Moghaddam

*Department of Library and Information Studies, Islamic Azad University,
Hamedan Branch, Hamedan, Islamic Republic of Iran*