



Technologies of the Gendered Body: Reading Cyborg Women

Anne Balsamo

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This book takes the process of "reading the body" into the fields at the forefront of culture—the vast spaces mapped by science and technology—to show that the body in high-tech is as gendered as ever. From female body building to virtual reality, from cosmetic surgery to cyberpunk, from reproductive medicine to public health policies to TV science programs, Anne Balsamo articulates the key issues concerning the status of the body for feminist cultural studies in a postmodern world.

Technologies of the Gendered Body combines close readings of popular texts—such as Margaret Atwood's novel *The Handmaid's Tale*, the movie *Pumping Iron II: The Women*, cyberpunk magazines, and mass media—with analyses of medical literature, public policy documents, and specific technological practices. Balsamo describes the ways in which certain biotechnologies are ideologically shaped by gender considerations and other beliefs about race, physical abilities, and economic and legal status. She presents a view of the conceptual system that structures individuals' access to and participation in these technologies, as well as an overview of individuals' rights and responsibilities in this sometimes baffling area. Examining the ways in which the body is gendered in its interactions with new technologies of corporeality, *Technologies of the Gendered Body* counters the claim that in our scientific culture the material body has become obsolete. With ample evidence that the techno-body is always gendered and marked by race, this book sets the stage for a renewed feminist engagement with contemporary technological narratives.

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