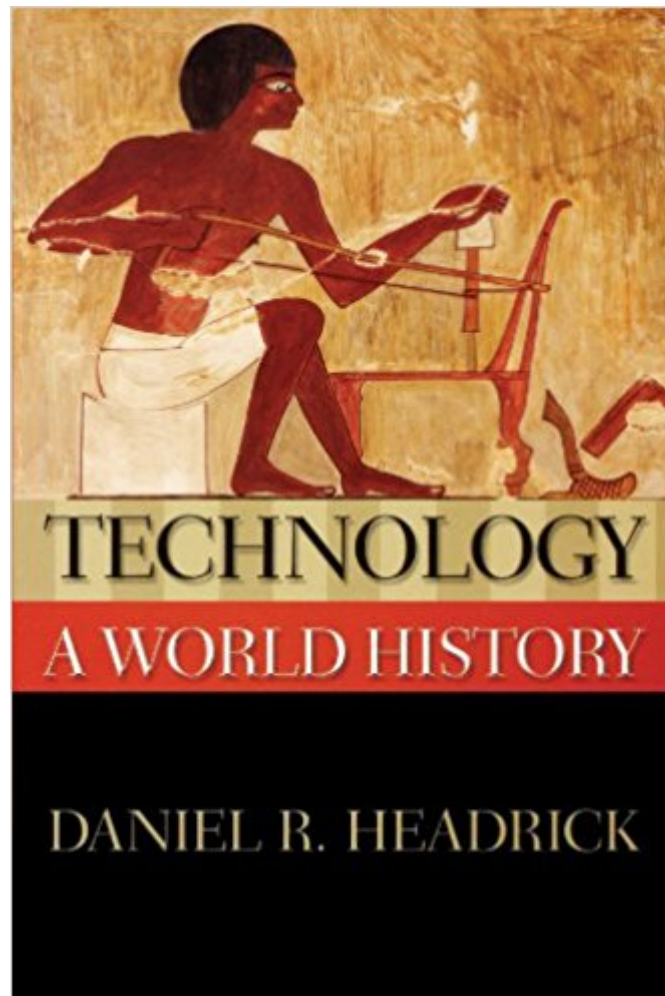


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# Technology: A World History (New Oxford World History)



## Synopsis

Today technology has created a world of dazzling progress, growing disparities of wealth and poverty, and looming threats to the environment. *Technology: A World History* offers an illuminating backdrop to our present moment--a brilliant history of invention around the globe. Historian Daniel R. Headrick ranges from the Stone Age and the beginnings of agriculture to the Industrial Revolution and the electronic revolution of the recent past. In tracing the growing power of humans over nature through increasingly powerful innovations, he compares the evolution of technology in different parts of the world, providing a much broader account than is found in other histories of technology. We also discover how small changes sometimes have dramatic results--how, for instance, the stirrup revolutionized war and gave the Mongols a deadly advantage over the Chinese. And how the nailed horseshoe was a pivotal breakthrough for western farmers. Enlivened with many illustrations, *Technology* offers a fascinating look at the spread of inventions around the world, both as boons for humanity and as weapons of destruction.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Headrick restores a broad definition [of technology] that enhances the value of this wide-ranging survey....[I]t suits the New Oxford World History series goals of highlighting major trends and stimulating thinking."--CHOICE

Daniel R. Headrick is Professor of History and Social Science at Roosevelt University in Chicago.

Very interesting read. I would have never read it if my world civilizations professor hadn't have had us order it for our class. I might use it later in my homeschool coop when we have social studies projects.

Daniel Headrick has provided a slim (179 pages including index, notes, etc.) overview of the history of technology, from the Stone Age through today. Essentially it's an executive summary of six thousand years of the history of technology (not counting the Stone Age as history). This is the book's strength and weakness. The strength is that you can quickly read a top line review of the evolution of technology and the societies that invented or exploited it. He looks at where certain technologies were invented, how they moved from one civilization to another, and how they were exploited and by whom. Another good thing about the book is that although it's about technology the author addresses the fact that technology is not necessarily the driver in whether or not a civilization is successful. He points out that geography, climate, governments, religion, and peoples' attitudes towards technology often impact invention and exploitation. At the same time he doesn't focus on any one civilization. He reviews technologies as they impacted, or not, all the major civilizations around the world. It's not Euro-centric, but it also goes beyond China and the Arabs to discuss early American and African civilizations - all at a very high level. The weakness is that it lacks depth and rarely provides context. In fact, the last chapter, covering WWII through the present, is nothing more than a laundry list of technological advances in the last 70 years without any historical analysis or context. The author acknowledges that, "it is difficult to draw conclusions from events that are still happening," but it's almost as if it's an excuse to not provide any analysis of the period. Is the book worth the money? Tough call....you either have to be very interested in the subject and have a desire to keep up with the literature, or you're new to the subject and want nothing more than an abridged version for you to want to have this book.

A good overview of the history of technology, but at 148 pages it can't cover anything in depth and necessarily leaves a lot out. Seems to be addressed to younger readers.

Great little book! Smart and clearly written. A great addition to World History courses.

I found the text well researched, composed, and the author conveyed the progression of human technology from primitive beginnings to our current information age dominated by PCs and the

Internet. There are some points that I'd like to make: PROs: The text was informative, useful for both students/academics and lay people with an interest, highlighted major events in technological history, and provided for a general summation of technology. CONS: As a diver, I was surprised not to find any mention of submarine technology, SCUBA diving, or any of the discoveries in oceanography. Though it is a worthwhile introduction, I feel some readers may want a bit more depth from a title which embraces such a big field.

This book is a good overview but is not suited for a textbook. This book would be greatly improved by the addition of drawings showing new types of technology; charts showing changes in production, disease spread, slavery, etc. that resulted from the introduction of new technological devices. There is nothing really wrong with the book, but it is not what I needed as a text for a class

I sent this as a gift. It was a bit disappointing and I haven't heard how the recipient liked it. It seemed more like a text book than what I'd wanted to send, but for the purpose of classroom work, it would probably work well.

I am on Chapter 4 using this book for my class and there is great discussion throughout the book. great!

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