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# TechGnosis: Myth, Magic, and Mysticism in the Age of Information

By Erik Davis



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**Editorial Review**

*Amazon.com Review*

The gap between the technological mentality and the mystical outlook may not be as great as it seems. Erik Davis looks at modern information technology--and much previous technology--to reveal how much of it has roots in spiritual attitudes. Furthermore, he explores how those who embrace each new technological advance often do so with designs and expectations stemming from religious sensibilities. In doing so, Davis both compares and contrasts the scientific attitude that we can know reality technologically and the Gnostic idea of developing ultimate understanding. Although organized into reasonable chapters, there's a strong stream-of-consciousness component to Davis's writing. His expositions may run, for example, from information theory to the nebulous nature of Gnosticism to the philosophical problem of evil--all in just a few pages. It's as if there are so many connections to make that Davis's prose has to run back and forth across time and space drawing the lines. But the result, rather than being chaotic, is a lively interplay of wide-ranging ideas. His style is equally lively and generally engaging--if sometimes straying into the hip. In the end, he succeeds in showing the spiritual side of what some may see as cold, technological thought. --

*Elizabeth Lewis*

*From Publishers Weekly*

In the new millennium, will we drop our messy bodies and upload our minds and souls into tidy android containers? Why not, argues Davis, a *Wired* contributor whose hip, erudite first book argues for the survival of a kind of gnostic mysticism in the age of information technology, carried over from the specifically Christian movement of late antiquity. Davis marshals an impressive, even exhausting, amount of evidence from Eastern and Western literature, history, philosophy, scripture and popular culture to support his sometimes opaque position on the matter of technology's impact on human spirituality and vice versa. In wave after wave of hybrid vocabulary ("mythinformation," "netaphysician," "cyberdelia," etc.), he offers a dizzying implosion of simulated hypertext, leaping from an authentic Gnostic poem to a '60s rock concert to the *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons Player's Handbook* to the latest cultic catastrophe. This deluge of information and theory manages to be quite entertaining ("Already in Homer, Hermes is a multitasking character"), but, ultimately, readers may be unsure whether to applaud Davis's conclusion that the phallic vector of technological development has been supplanted by a womblike matrix. But it's not always the destination that matters, and readers who hang on will find that surfing Davis's datastream makes for an exhilarating ride.

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*From Library Journal*

Davis, who has written for magazines as diverse as *Wired*, *Rolling Stone*, and *Gnosis*, here tackles the mythological and Gnostic implications of our continual push for new information technologies. He does bring together perspectives from a variety of disciplines, allowing some fascinating insights into the congruence between our quest for religious understanding and our technological progress. Unfortunately, Davis's reliance on unnecessary anachronisms (e.g., "the Gnostics imagined [the afterlife] as a kind of multileveled computer game") and his sometimes jarringly colloquial approach undermine the promise of the material. The book also suffers from a certain lack of critical examination and would have been stronger had Davis paid more attention to contextualizing and analyzing his material. Libraries looking for titles on the theological implications of technological progress would be better served by Jennifer Cobb's *Cybergrace* (LJ 3/15/98). ARachel Singer Gordon, Franklin Park P.L., IL

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## **Users Review**

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#### **Frances Lockhart:**

Nowadays reading books become more and more than want or need but also turn into a life style. This reading habit give you lot of advantages. The huge benefits you got of course the knowledge the particular information inside the book in which improve your knowledge and information. The info you get based on what kind of guide you read, if you want send more knowledge just go with knowledge books but if you want feel happy read one having theme for entertaining for instance comic or novel. The actual TechGnosis: Myth, Magic, and Mysticism in the Age of Information is kind of book which is giving the reader unpredictable experience.

#### **Roy Stoudt:**

The book untitled TechGnosis: Myth, Magic, and Mysticism in the Age of Information contain a lot of information on that. The writer explains the girl idea with easy approach. The language is very straightforward all the people, so do not necessarily worry, you can easy to read it. The book was published by famous author. The author will take you in the new time of literary works. You can easily read this book because you can please read on your smart phone, or model, so you can read the book with anywhere and anytime. In a situation you wish to purchase the e-book, you can open their official web-site along with order it. Have a nice study.

#### **Delmar Stingley:**

Is it a person who having spare time and then spend it whole day simply by watching television programs or just resting on the bed? Do you need something new? This TechGnosis: Myth, Magic, and Mysticism in the Age of Information can be the respond to, oh how comes? A book you know. You are consequently out of date, spending your free time by reading in this new era is common not a geek activity. So what these publications have than the others?

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