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Guest Authors: Richard Maxwell & [Toby Miller](#)



TOBY MILLER

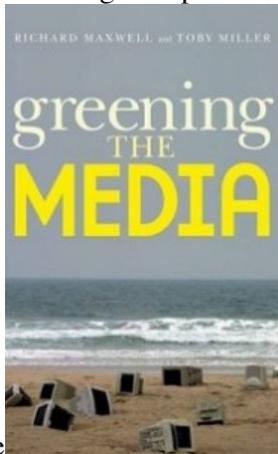
We're all enamored of the many new technologies that enrich our lives as students, consumers, and



RICHARD MAXWELL

workers. The internet brings knowledge and fun to the desk, the sofa, and the office. But a dark side exists, as well. In [Greening the Media](#), we offer a new approach to thinking about these gadgets through a revisionist view of media history. Starting with the earliest days of print and moving through the advent of film, radio, and television and on to the world of modern telephony, we criticize the dominant narrative of progress and pleasure. In place of this happy tale, we suggest a corrective that looks at these media technologies' impact on workers and the Earth.

The media come to us at terrible human cost, such as the health impact on women, whether they were recycling rags in 19th century New York so we could have paper, or recycling phones in 21st century New Delhi so we could have new circuit boards; whether it is young Congolese enslaved and murdered so coltan can endow our cell phones or pre-teen Chinese suffering lead poisoning so the gold in computers can be reused. The same applies to the natural environment,



from the town of Rochester, New York—polluted beyond all measure during Kodak's decades making film stock there—to the municipal dumps where carcinogens from computers are burnt or buried.

But there are hopeful signs of change as well. Pressure from activists, unions, and image-conscious governments and corporations is helping to improve working conditions in the global supply chain of media technologies. Electronic

waste has become an unavoidable policy issue, and major efforts to minimize it and its impact on the planet are embodied in new regulation in Europe and elsewhere. The most advanced policy-making targets are the origin of the toxic waste, and pressure is mounting on manufacturers to exclude by design the poisons and wasteful by-products now embodied in these technologies.

A hopeful as well as realistic book, [Greening the Media](#) offers ways to challenge our love affair with these gadgets and the unthinking throw-away culture of consumerism.

Authors' Bio: [Toby Miller](#) is a British-Australian-US interdisciplinary social scientist. He is the author and editor of over 30 books, has published essays in more than 100 journals and edited collections, and is a frequent guest commentator on television and radio programs.

*Based in New York, [Richard Maxwell](#) is a political economist of media and Professor and Chair of Media Studies at Queens College, City University of New York. He has published widely on a range of topics: media and the environment; broadcast reform during Spain's democratic transition; Hollywood's international dominance; media politics in the post 9-11 era; marketing research and the surveillance society; and the impact of political economic forces in daily life and culture. His most recent book is *Greening the Media* (Oxford 2012, with Toby Miller).*

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