



The Terror of the Machine: Technology, Work, Gender, and Ecology on the U.S.-Mexico Border (Cmas Border & Migration Studies Series)

Devon G. Peña

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Born of thirteen years of field research, this interdisciplinary work explores the complex intersections of technology, class, gender, and ecology in the transnational milieu of Mexico's *maquiladoras*, foreign-owned assembly plants located along the U.S. border.

Devon Peña examines workplace and community struggles from the perspective of the women who work in the *maquiladoras*. He describes the workers' struggles for workplace democracy, social justice, and sustainable development. He also observes the circulation of struggle from the factory to the community, highlighting the efforts to establish worker-owned cooperatives in the border region during the 1970s and 1980s.

Female *maquila* workers are typically portrayed as passive, apolitical, and easily exploited. This book, however, presents an opposing view, investigating the "subaltern life of the shop floor"—the workers' informal methods of resistance to hazardous conditions, sexual harassment, and managerial tyranny. Using survey research, oral history, discourse analysis, and site ethnography, the author develops a cogent critique of labor-process theory, a critique grounded on his extensive study of actual workplace politics in the *maquiladoras*.

The Terror of the Machine is a trenchant analysis of the political, cultural, and environmental effects of *maquila* industrialization and an eloquent and persuasive call for alternatives in the direction of ecologically sustainable and culturally appropriate modes of development.

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