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Inside the Black Box: Technology and Economics

Nathan Rosenberg

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Nathan Rosenberg : Inside the Black Box: Technology and Economics before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Inside the Black Box: Technology and Economics:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating insights -- now dated and a bit tediousBy John SchuylerThis is an assembly of scholarly papers. I was surprised and convinced by some of his findings. The innovation and progress subjects are immensely interesting, so I kept reading despite some tedium. It seems well researched through 1982 (I bought the book on a friend's recommendation without checking the copyright date). This important work deserves an updating, and I'd prefer to see this rewritten as a single book rather than a collection of articles/papers.5 of 23 people found the following review helpful. thecnology and environmental historyBy maria-

antograde;niaTo know what happens in and out of the black box is to know what is the technological change not only like a quantitative or monetarian problem but like a problem in relation with the natural resources and the environmental problems. The Rosenberg's concept have had a great acceptance all over the historical and economical research -by Deborah Fitzgerald, on the study of the relationship between science and agriculture (the animals are more technoeconomics than real animals), or by Naredo, on the study of the relationship between fertilizers, food and consumers. The book also is in the line of Kranzberg's laws, and the reflexions of the environmental history (Latour, Merchant, Haraway, Keller, etc.) -the technology travel by packages, it depends of the political and institutional factors and his failure or acceptance depends on the reception context -investigation and diffusion.

Economists have long treated technological phenomena as events transpiring inside a black box and, on the whole, have adhered rather strictly to a self-imposed ordinance not to inquire too seriously into what transpires inside that box. The purpose of Professor Rosenberg's work is to break open and examine the contents of the black box. In so doing, a number of important economic problems be powerfully illuminated. The author clearly shows how specific features of individual technologies have shaped a number of variables of great concern to economists: the rate of productivity improvement, the nature of learning processes underlying technological change itself, the speed of technology transfer, and the effectiveness of government policies that are intended to influence technologies in particular ways. The separate chapters of this book reflect a primary concern with some of the distinctive aspects of industrial technologies in the twentieth century, such as the increasing reliance upon science, but also the considerable subtlety and complexity of the dialectic between science and technology. Other concerns include the rapid growth in the development of costs associated with new technologies as well as the difficulty of predicting the eventual performance characteristics of newly emerging technologies.

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