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The constructiverse

The Constructiverse, questioning the notion of world in Don Ihde.

In the writings of Don Ihde, four different technological relationships between a person and the world are defined: embodiment relations, hermeneutic relations, alterity relations and background relations. In all of these form technology relates the "I" to the world, moving on a spectrum between the "I" and the world. But when is a piece of technology still separated from the "I". Spectacles can be taken off. But is a laser-corrected eye lens a piece of technology, or a part of the "I"? Is a transplanted kidney an embodied piece of technology, or a body part?

My worry in this paper however, is on the other end of the spectrum. As we entering into the Anthropocene, the notion of the world as something external, with which we engage through technology, seems in some sense odd. For the hikikomori, the only world you engage with is technology. And while most of us have healthier relationships with the outside world than these Japanese recluses, for many an encounter with the unmodified natural world is a rarity. So like the modified human lies beyond embodiment on the one end of Ihde's spectrum, something that might be dubbed a constructiverse lies beyond the background relations on the other end. In the constructiverse the world is no longer distinguishable from technology. Surrounding the "I" is just technology and no world. What are the consequences if we can no longer step away from technology?