

# Depiction of Technology as 'Other' in Duffer Brothers' *Stranger Things*

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The idea of super-human is often shown as beyond 'normal' human functionalities, a chance occurrence that is then embraced as part of one's identity. In the digital age, ideas of super-human in popular culture seem to cater towards a portrayal of what is termed 'technomancy', defined as "Magic or sorcery that involves machines and technology in its use or effects" (Urban Dictionary, 2004). This approach in casting super-human characters merged with magical technological abilities expands the notion of the 'other' in literature. The traditional reading of the 'other' as outside the 'norm', an unknown, and one that should be feared/cautious of merges with technological human beings in contemporary popular culture. Existing literature reviews technology as socially shaped and cautionary (Landrum 138; Cohen 273; Haslam et al. 248), but it lacks a discussion on the portrayal of the 'other' within technology in popular culture. Therefore, this research explores how, despite the idea of 'othering' existing primarily around race, modern television series have conceptualized a 'technological other', cautioning against technology's 'intrusions' into human matters. The study focuses on the 'other' as depicted in the popular Netflix series *Stranger Things*. The research looks at how the series creates caution against the merging of humans with technology and how the protagonist's abilities are used to dehumanize the 'other' as an unknown. The study looks at Seasons 1 and 5 of *Stranger Things* in terms of Bleeker's thoughts on visuality. Visual culture provides the conceptual framework, and the study employs textual analysis as the analytical framework. The findings of the research indicate that the digital culture has resulted in new fears regarding what is considered 'other' and that parallel to the embracing of technology runs humanity's inherent fears of the 'unknown' it brings.

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