

# Made to Break

*author: Giles Slade*

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## Synopsis

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If you've replaced a computer lately - or a cell phone, a camera, a television - chances are, the old one still worked. And chances are even greater that the latest model won't last as long as the one it replaced. Welcome to the world of planned obsolescence - a business model, a way of life, and a uniquely American invention that this eye-opening book explores from its beginnings to its perilous implications for the very near future.

*Made to Break* is a history of 20th century technology as seen through the prism of obsolescence. America invented everything that is now disposable, Giles Slade tells us, and he explains how disposability was in fact a necessary condition for America's rejection of tradition and our acceptance of change and impermanence. His audiobook shows us the ideas behind obsolescence at work in such American milestones as the inventions of branding, packaging, and advertising; the contest for market dominance between GM and Ford; the struggle for a national communications network, the development of electronic technologies - and with it the avalanche of electronic consumer waste that will overwhelm America's landfills and poison its water within the coming decade.

History reserves a privileged place for those societies that built things to last - forever, if possible. What place will it hold for a society addicted to consumption - a whole culture made to break? This book gives us a detailed and harrowing picture of how, by choosing to support ever-shorter product lives we may well be shortening the future of our way of life as well.

## Reader's comments

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