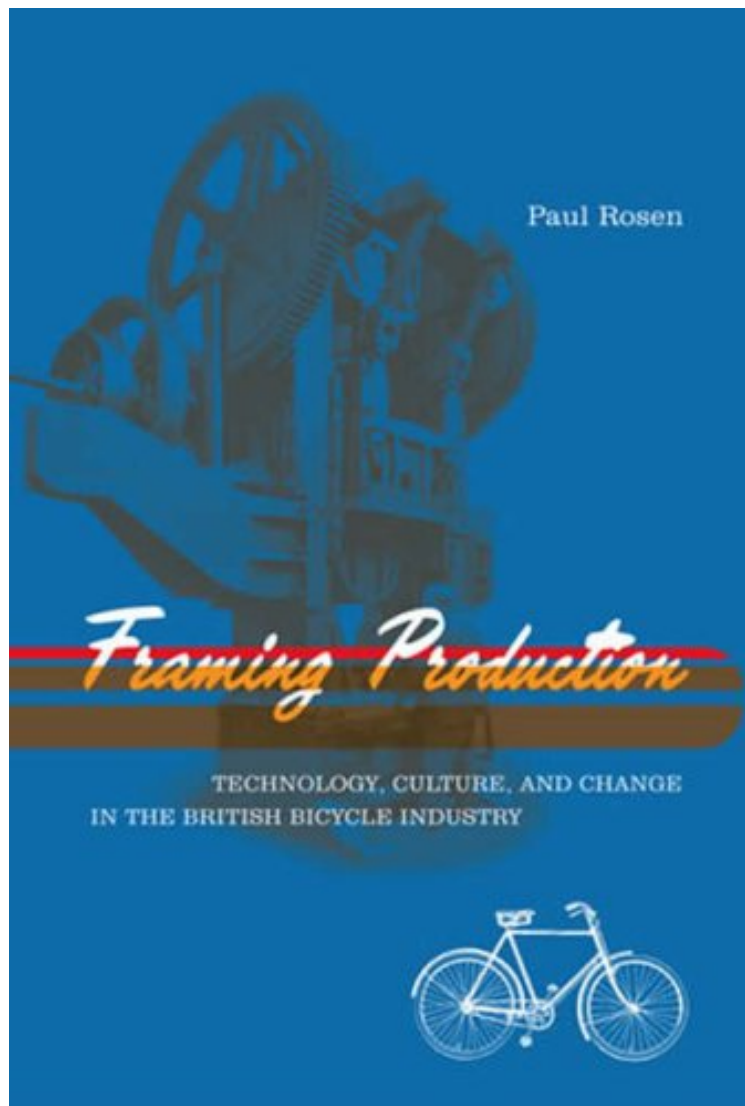


[Free] Framing Production: Technology, Culture, and Change in the British Bicycle Industry (Inside Technology)

Framing Production: Technology, Culture, and Change in the British Bicycle Industry (Inside Technology)

Paul Rosen

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0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. you will like this bookBy Greg Shirley DavisIf you have an interest in the history of the Raleigh Cycle Co. you will like this book.

The production of bicycles in Britain and the United States recently suffered severe setbacks. The renowned American Schwinn brand was downgraded to the mass market by its new owners following bankruptcy, and Britain's Raleigh came close to closure because of high debts and poor returns, saved only by a last-minute management buyout. In both cases, market share and credibility were lost to newer, more innovative firms, as well as to a recentering of the global bicycle industry in the Far East. This book reflects on such changes by setting them within a sociological and historical context. It focuses on the British bicycle industry in the interwar years and in the 1980s and the 1990s -- periods characterized by modernization of production and of industrial organization, by changing relations among players in the industry, by new developments in labor relations, and by changes in interactions between markets and product design. In particular, it traces the fortunes of the Raleigh Cycle Company from its beginnings as an innovative young firm, through massive expansion of its products and markets and the assimilation of many of its competitors, into further innovation amid market contraction and management inertia, and finally into a phase of global restructuring that has transformed and reduced its role within the industry. The book explores the complex ways in which product design, production methods, industrial organization, and the cultures of cycling have interacted to create a succession of sociotechnical frames for the bicycle. At the same time, on an activist level, the book promotes a participatory politics of bicycle technology and a less car-centered view of personal transportation.

A unique and perceptive book, which gives new insights into how we developed, then tried to deny, humankind's most wonderful invention. (Jim McGurn, Former Editor of *New Cyclist* and *Bike Culture Quarterly* and Author of *On Your Bicycle: An Illustrated History of Cycling*) Within the library of cycling (and with a far broader reach than just the bicycle), Rosen has made a significant start toward bridging the gaps between technological, business, manufacturing, and cultural history. (Nicholas Oddy *The Journal of Transport History*) Rosen achieves a formidable amount in *Framing Production*. The book provides a fascinating history, much from primary sources, of the transformations in cycle production over the past century; a distinctive contribution to theories of the social shaping of technology; a much-needed exploration of the links between these and work on such themes as modernity and postmodernity, globalization, consumption and the labor process; and, drawing these threads together, a thoughtful and committed view of the politics of future transport systems -- sustainable or otherwise. (Stewart Russell, Science, Technology, and Society Program, University of Wollongong) Paul Rosen's 'Framing Production' gives us two things in one book: a fascinating social history of the British bicycle manufacturer, Raleigh, and a provocative and critical reappraisal of the social construction of technology perspective. The book draws on a range of theoretical issues from politics, sociology, economics and technology that are clearly explained with reference to the historical changes at Raleigh. As we learn about the key actors, the workers, and the evolution of design and production techniques, Rosen introduces his concept of the 'socio-technical frame' that takes into account users and the general culture as well as engineering and technical innovations. As the bicycle changes from being a plaything of the rich to a mass leisure item, its past and future role as a means of green and cheap transportation is a key theme that gives this well-written and enjoyable book a polemical edge. (Tim Dant, School of Economic and Social Studies, University of East Anglia, UK) About the Author Paul Rosen is Research Fellow in the Science and Technology Studies Unit at the University of York.