Heidegger is now widely recognized as one of the most influential philosophers of the twentieth century, yet much of his later philosophy remains shrouded in confusion and controversy. Restoring Heidegger’s understanding of metaphysics as “ontotheology” to its rightful place at the center of his later thought, this book explains the depth and significance of his controversial critique of technology, his appalling misadventure with Nazism, his prescient critique of the university, and his important philosophical suggestions for the future of higher education. It will be required reading for those seeking to understand the relationship between Heidegger’s philosophy and National Socialism as well as the continuing relevance of his work.

Iain D. Thomson is assistant professor of philosophy at the University of New Mexico, where he received the Gunter Starkey Award for Teaching Excellence. His articles on Heidegger have been published in *Inquiry, Journal of the History of Philosophy*, the *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, and the *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology*. 
Heidegger on Ontotheology

Technology and the Politics of Education

IAIN D. THOMSON

University of New Mexico
For my mother, father, and (in memoriam) Gutcher,

Poets of public policy, healers of human being, teachers.
Time will bring to light whatever is hidden; it will conceal and cover up what is now shining with the greatest splendor.

Horace, *Epistles*

An unlimited text is one that every time gives rise to a new reading while partly escaping it.

What still remains to be read is its one chance of survival.

Edmond Jabès, *The Little Book of Unsuspected Subversion*
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Acknowledgments

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Many of the hermeneutic theses at the heart of *Heidegger on Ontotheology* were tested and refined at annual meetings of the International Society for Phenomenological Studies, and my work benefited immensely from these small but intense gatherings of continental philosophers in serene Asilomar, California. For helpful criticisms and suggestions on these memorable occasions, I would like to thank Steve Affeldt, Ed Boedecker, Taylor Carman, Dave Cerbone, Drew Cross, Steve Crowell, Béatrice Han, Alastair Hannay, John Haugeland, Randall Havas, Piotr Hoffman, Stephan Käufer, Sean Kelly, Cristina Lafont, Jeff Malpas, Wayne Martin, Alexander Nehamas, Mark Okrent, John Richardson, Joe Rouse, Ted Schatzki, Hans Sluga, Julian Young, and – for extremely incisive and valuable critiques of the whole book – Bill Blattner, Bert Dreyfus, Charlie Guignon, and Mark Wrathall.

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Given all the help I have received, I feel a bit less embarrassed by my more than occasional use of the royal hermeneutic "we."
Some of us are footnote people, but many are not. For those who find that copious footnotes disrupt the flow of the text, my (perhaps obvious) suggestion is: Do not feel compelled to read every note as you go. If you want the reference or have an unanswered question, then you should read the surrounding notes; with any luck your question will be answered there (and if it is not, then you will see that in fact I do not have enough notes). Otherwise, I would invite you to read through the notes at your leisure; some supplemental and specialized argument is done in the notes, and a number of Holzwege are preserved there as well. (The received view that by Holzweg Heidegger means “dead-end” is mistaken. In the prefatory epigraph to the collection of essays he titled Holzwege, Heidegger explains these as forest paths made by backwoods loggers and known to backcountry hikers, thus implying that a Holzweg is a path leading to a place in the forest from which trees have been removed – that is, a clearing.)
Abbreviations Used for Works by Heidegger

*(Translations frequently modified)*

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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Abbreviations Used for Works by Heidegger

G

GA3

GA5

GA7

GA9

GA10

GA12

GA13

GA15

GA16

GA19

GA20

GA26

GA27

GA29–30

GA31

GA34
### Abbreviations Used for Works by Heidegger

Abbreviations Used for Works by Heidegger

HC

HCE

HCT

HHI

HJC

I&D

IM

KPM

KTB

MFL

N1

N3

N4

NI

NII

OET

OHF

OWL

P

PAR
Abbreviations Used for Works by Heidegger


PT  “Phenomenology and Theology.” J. G. Hart and J. C. Maraldo, trans. (In P.)


Abbreviations Used for Works by Heidegger

ZS

ZSD