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"The Armchair Traveler's Guide to Digital Environmental Humanities"

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The technological mediation of near and distant landscapes have long fascinated scholars and the public alike, and it seems like this interest peaks around times of large-scale technological transition, when new modes of both transportation and mediation become available. Few scholars have analyzed this relationship between technology, media, and the perception of landscape as convincingly as Wolfgang Schivelbusch, who famously argued that the landscape perceived by travelers was filtered through the machine ensemble of the railroad system. This article brings Schivelbusch's thesis into the digital age as a way of examining the spatiality of digital media and the natural world. The article analyzes a series of technologically mediated digital representations of travel and movement through landscapes, in particular the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation's "slow travel" series of digitally enhanced TV programs. These highly popular mediations of railroad or boat travel challenge Schivelbusch's ideas of speed, distance, and experience of landscapes, but also direct our attention towards the role of digital media in making sense of a changing world. (Text from author's abstract)

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