



# Mind, Machine and Morality

Toward a Philosophy of Human-Technology Symbiosis

Peter A. Hancock, University of Central Florida, USA



July 2009  
202 pages  
978-0-7546-7358-3

234 x 156 mm  
Hardback  
£55.00

Technology is our conduit of power. In our modern world, technology is the gatekeeper deciding who shall have and who shall have not. Either technology works for you or you work for technology. It shapes the human race just as much as we shape it. But where is this symbiosis going? Who provides the directions, the intentions, the goals of this human-machine partnership? Such decisions do not derive from the creators of technology who are enmeshed in their individual innovations. They neither come from our social leaders who possess only sufficient technical understanding to react to innovations, not to anticipate or direct their progress. Neither is there evidence of some omnipotent 'invisible hand,' the simple fact is that no one is directing this enterprise.

In *Mind, Machine and Morality*, Peter Hancock asks questions about this insensate progress and has the temerity to suggest some cognate answers. He argues for the unbreakable symbiosis of purpose and process, and examines the dangerous possibilities that emerge when science and purpose meet. Historically, this work is a modern-day child of Bacon's hope for the 'Great Instauration.' However, unlike its forebear, the focus here is on human-machine systems. The emphasis centers on the conception that the active, extensive face of modern philosophy is technology. Whatever we are to become is bound up not only in our biology but critically in our technology also. And to achieve rational progress we need to articulate manifest purpose. This book is one step along the purposive road.

Drawing together his many seminal writings on human-machine interaction and adapting these works specifically for this collection, Peter Hancock provides real food for thought, delighting readers with his unique philosophical perspective and outstanding insights. This is theoretical work of the highest order and will open minds accordingly.

## Contents

Preface; The science and philosophy of human-machine systems; Teleology for technology; Convergent technological evolution; The future of function allocation; The sheepdog and the Japanese garden; On the future of work; Men without machines; Life, liberty, and the design of happiness; Mind, machine and morality; References; Index.

## About the Author

Peter A. Hancock is Provost Distinguished Research Professor in the Department of Psychology, the Institute for Simulation and Training, and the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of Central Florida. Previously, he was the founder and Director of the Human Factors Research Laboratory at the University of Minnesota where he held appointments in the Departments of Computer Science and Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Psychology, and Kinesiology as well as at the Cognitive Science Center and the Center on Aging Research. He currently holds as an Adjunct Senior Research Scientist at the Transportation Institute of the University of Michigan. His work has garnered over \$15 million dollars in externally funded research awards and he is the author of more than 600 refereed scientific articles and publications as well as writing and editing a number of books. He has received various awards for his work, among them the Franklin V. Taylor Award of the American Psychological Association, the Liberty Mutual Medal from the International Ergonomics Association, the Jack Kraft Award of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society and the Sir Frederic Bartlett Medal of the Ergonomics Society of Great Britain for lifetime achievement. In 2006 he was named the Norbert Wiener Award winner of the IEEE Systems, Man, and Cybernetics Society, its highest technical award. Peter is a Fellow, and past President, of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society.

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