

Donald MacKenzie

Essays on  
Technical  
Change

A person wearing glasses is looking at a computer monitor. The monitor displays a technical interface with various graphs, charts, and data. The person's face is partially visible on the right side of the frame. The background is dark, and the overall tone is professional and technical.

# Knowing Machines

# Knowing Machines Essays On Technical Change Inside Technology

**Maria Mirabelli, Natália Brasil  
Dib, Sinan Mihelčič**



## **Knowing Machines Essays On Technical Change Inside Technology:**

*Knowing Machines* Donald A. MacKenzie, 1996-01-01 Ranging from broad inquiries into the roles of economics and sociology in the explanation of technological change to an argument for the possibility of uninventing nuclear weapons this selection of Donald MacKenzie's essays provides a solid introduction to the style and the substance of the sociology of technology The essays are tied together by their explorations of connections primarily among technology society and knowledge and by their general focus on modern high technology They also share an emphasis on the complexity of technological formation and fixation and on the role of belief especially self validating belief in technological change Two of the articles won major prizes on their original journal publication and all but one date from 1991 or later A substantial new introduction outlines the common themes underlying this body of work and places it in the context of recent debates in technology studies Two conceptual essays are followed by seven empirical essays focusing on the laser gyroscopes that are central to modern aircraft navigation technology supercomputers with a particular emphasis on their use in the design of nuclear weapons the application of mathematical proof in the design of computer systems computer related accidental deaths and the nature of the knowledge that is needed to design a nuclear bomb [Knowing Machines](#) Donald

MacKenzie, 1998-07 Ranging from broad inquiries into the roles of economics and sociology in the explanation of technological change to an argument for the possibility of uninventing nuclear weapons this selection of Donald MacKenzie's essays provides a solid introduction to the style and the substance of the sociology of technology Two conceptual essays are followed by seven empirical essays focusing on the laser gyroscopes that are central to modern aircraft navigation technology supercomputers the application of mathematical proof in the design of computer systems computer related accidental deaths and the nature of the knowledge needed to design a nuclear bomb [Inventing the Internet](#) Janet Abbate, 2000-07-24 Janet Abbate recounts the key players and technologies that allowed the Internet to develop but her main focus is always on the social and cultural factors that influenced the Internet's design and use Since the late 1960s the Internet has grown from a single experimental network serving a dozen sites in the United States to a network of networks linking millions of computers worldwide In *Inventing the Internet* Janet Abbate recounts the key players and technologies that allowed the Internet to develop but her main focus is always on the social and cultural factors that influenced the Internet's design and use The story she unfolds is an often twisting tale of collaboration and conflict among a remarkable variety of players including government and military agencies computer scientists in academia and industry graduate students telecommunications companies standards organizations and network users The story starts with the early networking breakthroughs formulated in Cold War think tanks and realized in the Defense Department's creation of the ARPANET It ends with the emergence of the Internet and its rapid and seemingly chaotic growth Abbate looks at how academic and military influences and attitudes shaped both networks how the usual lines between producer and user of a

technology were crossed with interesting and unique results and how later users invented their own very successful applications such as electronic mail and the World Wide Web She concludes that such applications continue the trend of decentralized user driven development that has characterized the Internet's entire history and that the key to the Internet's success has been a commitment to flexibility and diversity both in technical design and in organizational culture

Governing Molecules Herbert Gottweis, 1998-12-10 Scientists investors policymakers the media and the general public have all displayed a continuing interest in the commercial promise and potential dangers of genetic engineering In this book Herbert Gottweis explains how genetic engineering became so controversial a technology that some seek to promote by any means and others want to block entirely Beginning with a clear exposition of poststructuralist theory and its implications for research methodology Gottweis offers a novel approach to political analysis emphasizing the essential role of narratives in the development of policy under contemporary conditions Drawing on more than eighty in depth interviews and extensive archival work Gottweis traces today's controversy back to the sociopolitical and scientific origins of molecular biology paying particular attention to its relationship to eugenics He argues that over the decades a number of mutually reinforcing political and scientific strategies have attempted to turn genes into objects of technological intervention to make them governable Looking at critical events such as the 1975 Asilomar conference in the United States the escalating conflict in Germany and regulatory disputes in Britain and France during the 1980s Gottweis argues that it was the struggle over boundaries and representations of genetic engineering politics and society that defined the political dynamics of the drafting of risk regulations in these countries In a key chapter on biotechnology research industry and supporting technology policies Gottweis demonstrates that the interpretation of genetic engineering as the core of a new high technology industry was part of a policy myth and an expression of identity politics He suggests that under postmodern conditions a major strategy for avoiding policy failure is to create conditions that ensure tolerance and respect for the multiplicity of socially available policy narratives and reality interpretations

*Beyond Imported Magic* Eden Medina, Ivan Da Costa Marques, Christina Holmes, 2014-08-15 Studies challenging the idea that technology and science flow only from global North to South The essays in this volume study the creation adaptation and use of science and technology in Latin America They challenge the view that scientific ideas and technology travel unchanged from the global North to the global South the view of technology as imported magic They describe not only alternate pathways for innovation invention and discovery but also how ideas and technologies circulate in Latin American contexts and transnationally The contributors' explorations of these issues and their examination of specific Latin American experiences with science and technology offer a broader more nuanced understanding of how science technology politics and power interact in the past and present The essays in this book use methods from history and the social sciences to investigate forms of local creation and use of technologies the circulation of ideas people and artifacts in local and global networks and hybrid technologies and forms of knowledge production They

address such topics as the work of female forensic geneticists in Colombia the pioneering Argentinean use of fingerprinting technology in the late nineteenth century the design use and meaning of the XO Laptops created and distributed by the One Laptop per Child Program and the development of nuclear energy in Argentina Mexico and Chile Contributors Pedro Ignacio Alonso Morgan G Ames Javiera Barandiarán Jo o Biehl Anita Say Chan Amy Cox Hall Henrique Cukierman Ana Delgado Rafael Dias Adriana Díaz del Castillo H Mariano Fressoli Jonathan Hagood Christina Holmes Matthieu Hubert Noela Invernizzi Michael Lemon Ivan da Costa Marques Gisela Mateos Eden Medina María Fernanda Olarte Sierra Hugo Palmarola Tania Pérez Bustos Julia Rodríguez Israel Rodríguez Giralt Edna Suárez Díaz Hernán Thomas Manuel Tironi Dominique Vinck

*Inside the Communication Revolution* Robin Mansell, 2002 What does it mean to live and work inside the information and communication technology revolution The nature and significance of newly emerging patterns of social and technical interaction as digital technologies become more pervasive in the knowledge economy are the focus of this book The places and spaces where digital technologies are in use are examined to show why such use may or may not be associated with improvements in society Studies of on and off line interactions between individuals and of collective attempts to govern and manage the new technologies show that the communication revolution is essentially about people social organization adaptation and control not just technologies This book contains original empirical studies conducted within a programme of research in the Information Networks and Knowledge INK research centre at SPRU University of Sussex The authors draw upon cognitive economic management political and sociological theories to provide insights into the acceptance of and resistance to interactions made possible by the Internet information and communication systems in the newspaper insurance and banking industries electronic commerce services and other applications such as geographic information systems

*Vulnerability in Technological Cultures* Anique Hommels, Jessica Mesman, Wiebe E. Bijker, 2014-03-28 Analysis and case studies explore the concept of vulnerability offering a novel and broader approach to understanding the risks and benefits of science and technology Novel technologies and scientific advancements offer not only opportunities but risks Technological systems are vulnerable to human error and technical malfunctioning that have far reaching consequences one flipped switch can cause a cascading power failure across a networked electric grid Yet once addressed vulnerability accompanied by coping mechanisms may yield a more flexible and resilient society This book investigates vulnerability in both its negative and positive aspects in technological cultures The contributors argue that viewing risk in terms of vulnerability offers a novel approach to understanding the risks and benefits of science and technology Such an approach broadens conventional risk analysis by connecting to issues of justice solidarity and livelihood and enabling comparisons between the global north and south The book explores case studies that range from agricultural practices in India to neonatal intensive care medicine in Western hospitals these cases spanning the issues addressed in the book illustrate what vulnerability is and does The book offers conceptual frameworks for empirical description and analysis of vulnerability that elucidate its ambiguity context

dependence and constructed nature Finally the book addresses the implications of these analyses for the governance of vulnerability proposing a more reflexive way of dealing with vulnerability in technological cultures Contributors Marjolein van Asselt Martin Boeckhout Wiebe Bijker Tessa Fox Stephen Healy Anique Hommels Sheila Jasanoff Jozef Keulartz Jessica Mesman Ger Palmboom C Shambu Prasad Julia Quartz Johan M Sanne Maartje Schermer Teesta Setelvad Esha Shah Andy Stirling Imrat Verhoeven Esther Versluis Shiv Visvanathan Gerard de Vries Ger Wackers Dick Willems

*The Long Arm of Moore's Law* Cyrus C. M. Mody, 2016-12-09 How beginning in the mid 1960s the US semiconductor industry helped shape changes in American science including a new orientation to the short term and the commercial Since the mid 1960s American science has undergone significant changes in the way it is organized funded and practiced These changes include the decline of basic research by corporations a new orientation toward the short term and the commercial with pressure on universities and government labs to participate in the market and the promotion of interdisciplinarity In this book Cyrus Mody argues that the changes in American science that began in the 1960s co evolved with and were shaped by the needs of the civilianized US semiconductor industry In 1965 Gordon Moore declared that the most profitable number of circuit components that can be crammed on a single silicon chip doubles every year Mody views Moore's Law less as prediction than as self fulfilling prophecy pointing to the enormous investments of capital people and institutions the semiconductor industry required the long arm of Moore's Law that helped shape all of science Mody offers a series of case studies in microelectronics that illustrate the reach of Moore's Law He describes the pressures on Stanford University's electrical engineers during the Vietnam era IBM's exploration of alternatives to semiconductor technology the emergence of consortia to integrate research across disciplines and universities and the interwoven development of the the molecular electronics community and associated academic institutions as the vision of a molecular computer informed the restructuring of research programs

The Future of Engineering Albrecht Fritzsche, Sascha Julian Oks, 2018-07-02 In a world permeated by digital technology engineering is involved in every aspect of human life Engineers address a wider range of design problems than ever before raising new questions and challenges regarding their work as boundaries between engineering management politics education and art disappear in the face of comprehensive socio technical systems It is therefore necessary to review our understanding of engineering practice expertise and responsibility This book advances the idea that the future of engineering will not be driven by a static view of a closed discipline but rather will result from a continuous dialogue between different stakeholders involved in the design and application of technical artefacts Based on papers presented at the 2016 conference of the forum for Philosophy Engineering and Technology fPET in Nuremberg Germany the book features contributions by philosophers engineers and managers from academia and industry who discuss current and upcoming issues in engineering from a wide variety of different perspectives They cover topics such as problem solving strategies and value sensitive design experimentation and simulation engineering knowledge and education interdisciplinary collaboration

sustainability risk and privacy The different contributions in combination draw a comprehensive picture of efforts worldwide to come to terms with engineering its foundations in philosophy the ethical problems it causes and its effect on the ongoing development of society

*Fascist Pigs* Tiago Saraiva, 2018-08-28 How the breeding of new animals and plants was central to fascist regimes in Italy Portugal and Germany and to their imperial expansion In the fascist regimes of Mussolini's Italy Salazar's Portugal and Hitler's Germany the first mass mobilizations involved wheat engineered to take advantage of chemical fertilizers potatoes resistant to late blight and pigs that thrived on national produce Food independence was an early goal of fascism indeed as Tiago Saraiva writes in *Fascist Pigs* fascists were obsessed with projects to feed the national body from the national soil Saraiva shows how such technoscientific organisms as specially bred wheat and pigs became important elements in the institutionalization and expansion of fascist regimes The pigs the potatoes and the wheat embodied fascism In Nazi Germany only plants and animals conforming to the new national standards would be allowed to reproduce Pigs that didn't efficiently convert German grown potatoes into pork and lard were eliminated Saraiva describes national campaigns that intertwined the work of geneticists with new state bureaucracies discusses fascist empires considering forced labor on coffee rubber and cotton in Ethiopia Mozambique and Eastern Europe and explores fascist genocides following Karakul sheep from a laboratory in Germany to Eastern Europe Libya Ethiopia and Angola Saraiva's highly original account the first systematic study of the relation between science and fascism argues that the back to the land aspect of fascism should be understood as a modernist experiment involving geneticists and their organisms mass propaganda overgrown bureaucracy and violent colonialism

**Developer's Dilemma** Casey O'Donnell, 2014-11-21 Step inside the shoes of video game creators in this fascinating look at game development and how it can inform our understanding of work Rank and file game developers bring videogames from concept to product and yet their work is almost invisible hidden behind the famous names of publishers executives or console manufacturers In this book Casey O'Donnell examines the creative collaborative practice of typical game developers His investigation of why game developers work the way they do sheds light on our understanding of work the organization of work and the market forces that shape and are shaped by media industries O'Donnell shows that the ability to play with the underlying systems technical conceptual and social is at the core of creative and collaborative practice which is central to the New Economy When access to underlying systems is undermined so too is creative collaborative process Drawing on extensive fieldwork in game studios in the United States and India O'Donnell stakes out new territory empirically conceptually and methodologically Mimicking the structure of videogames the book is divided into worlds within which are levels and each world ends with a boss fight a rant about lessons learned and tools mastered O'Donnell describes the process of videogame development from pre production through production considering such aspects as experimental systems socially mandatory overtime and the perpetual startup machine that exhausts young initially enthusiastic workers He links work practice to broader systems of publishing manufacturing and

distribution introduces the concept of a privileged actor intra internetwork and describes patent and copyright enforcement by industry and the state

**Models of Innovation** Benoit Godin, 2017-02-24 Benoit Godin is a Professor at the Institut national de la recherche scientifique Montreal Models abound in science technology and society STS studies and in science technology and innovation STI studies They are continually being invented with one author developing many versions of the same model over time At the same time models are regularly criticized Such is the case with the most influential model in STS STI the linear model of innovation In this book Benoit Godin examines the emergence and diffusion of the three most important conceptual models of innovation from the early twentieth century to the late 1980s stage models linear models and holistic models Godin first traces the history of the models of innovation constructed during this period considering why these particular models came into being and what use was made of them He then rethinks and debunks the historical narratives of models developed by theorists of innovation Godin documents a greater diversity of thinkers and schools than in the conventional account tracing a genealogy of models beginning with anthropologists industrialists and practitioners in the first half of the twentieth century to their later formalization in STS STI Godin suggests that a model is a conceptualization which could be narrative or a set of conceptualizations or a paradigmatic perspective often in pictorial form and reduced discursively to a simplified representation of reality Why are so many things called models Godin claims that model has a rhetorical function First a model is a symbol of scientificity Second a model travels easily among scholars and policy makers Calling a conceptualization or narrative or perspective a model facilitates its propagation

**Emerging Technological Risk** Stuart Anderson, Massimo Felici, 2012-01-03 Classes of socio technical hazards allow a characterization of the risk in technology innovation and clarify the mechanisms underpinning emergent technological risk Emerging Technological Risk provides an interdisciplinary account of risk in socio technical systems including hazards which highlight How technological risk crosses organizational boundaries How technological trajectories and evolution develop from resolving tensions emerging between social aspects of organisations and technologies and How social behaviour shapes and is shaped by technology Addressing an audience from a range of academic and professional backgrounds Emerging Technological Risk is a key source for those who wish to benefit from a detail and methodical exposure to multiple perspectives on technological risk By providing a synthesis of recent work on risk that captures the complex mechanisms that characterize the emergence of risk in technology innovation Emerging Technological Risk bridges contributions from many disciplines in order to sustain a fruitful debate Emerging Technological Risk is one of a series of books developed by the Dependability Interdisciplinary Research Collaboration funded by the UK Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Rationalizing Medical Work Marc Berg, 1997 Advocates argue that they will make medical practice more rational more uniform and more efficient and that they will transform the art of medical work into a science Critics argue that formal tools cannot and should not supplant humans in most real life tasks

European Objects Brice Laurent, 2022-02-01 How interventions based on objects



including chemicals financial products and consumer goods offer a path to rethink European integration Interventions based on objects Brice Laurent claims have become a dominant path for European policy making In European Objects Laurent analyzes the political consequences of these interventions and their democratization He uses the term European objects to describe technical entities that are regulated and thereby transformed by European policies To uncover the bureaucratic and regulatory intricacies of European governance Laurent focuses on a series of these objects including food products chemicals financial products consumer goods drinking water and occupational environments Laurent argues that taking European objects seriously offers a way to rephrase the dreams of harmonization and eventually rethink the constitutional strength of European integration Laurent doesn't just clarify how European regulation works but also explores ways to realize long term objectives for European integration such as a harmonized market or an objective expertise Regulation is best understood as regulatory machinery bringing together various types of legal constraints material interventions on objects and the imagining of desirable futures Analyzing European objects enables Laurent to explore what regulation has become after years of evolution have made it a central component of the European policy world He offers practical illustrations of how the regulatory machinery functions today If Europe succeeds at reinventing the terms of its legitimacy with objects that matter for the European publics it will provide a telling demonstration that the opposition of expertise and populism is not the unavoidable fate of liberal democracies

**Privacy in America** William Aspray, Philip Doty, 2011-07-11 In this collection of essays that represent original and interdisciplinary work respected scholars address a number of privacy issues These include how governmental and private sectors develop and deploy technologies that can pose serious compromises to the privacy of individuals and groups how information and communication system designs pose threats to privacy how we manage private concerns child care job leave and identity as public issues amenable to political action and shared awareness and the fundamental asymmetry of power that exists between individuals and small groups on the one hand and large governmental and corporate entities on the other Arranged in three sections law and policy information technology and information studies history and sociology Privacy in America Interdisciplinary Perspectives will be useful to scholars practitioners and students in a variety of fields including information science library science and information systems

Power Lines Jennifer L. Lieberman, 2017-07-14 How electricity became a metaphor for modernity in the United States inspiring authors from Mark Twain to Ralph Ellison At the turn of the twentieth century electricity emerged as a metaphor for modernity Writers from Mark Twain to Ralph Ellison grappled with the idea of electricity as both life force illumination and death spark electrocution The idea that electrification created exclusively modern experiences took hold of Americans imaginations whether they welcomed or feared its adoption In Power Lines Jennifer Lieberman examines the apparently incompatible notions of electricity that coexisted in the American imagination tracing how electricity became a common though multifarious symbol for modern life Lieberman examines a series of moments of technical change when electricity

accrued new social meanings plotting both power lines and the power of narrative lines in American life and literature While discussing the social construction of electrical systems she offers a new interpretation of Twain s use of electricity as an organizing metaphor in A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur s Court describes the rhetoric surrounding the invention of electric execution analyzes Charlotte Perkins Gilman s call for human connection in her utopian writing and in her little known Human Work considers the theme of electrical interconnection in Jack London s work and shows how Ralph Ellison and Louis Mumford continued the literary tradition of electrical metaphor Electrical power was a distinctive concept in American literary cultural and technological histories For this reason narratives about electricity were particularly evocative Bridging the realistic and the romantic the historical and the fantastic these stories guide us to ask new questions about our enduring fascination with electricity and all it came to represent

**Social Science, Technical Systems, and Cooperative Work** Geoffrey Bowker,Susan Leigh Star,Les Gasser,William Turner,2014-05-12 This book is the first to directly address the question of how to bridge what has been termed the great divide between the approaches of systems developers and those of social scientists to computer supported cooperative work a question that has been vigorously debated in the systems development literature Traditionally developers have been trained in formal methods and oriented to engineering and formal theoretical problems many social scientists in the CSCW field come from humanistic traditions in which results are reported in a narrative mode In spite of their differences in style the two groups have been cooperating more and more in the last decade as the people problems associated with computing become increasingly evident to everyone The authors have been encouraged to examine rigorously and in depth the theoretical basis of CSCW With contributions from field leaders in the United Kingdom France Scandinavia Mexico and the United States this volume offers an exciting overview of the cutting edge of research and theory It constitutes a solid foundation for the rapidly coalescing field of social informatics Divided into three parts this volume covers social theory design theory and the sociotechnical system with respect to CSCW The first set of chapters looks at ways of rethinking basic social categories with the development of distributed collaborative computing technology concepts of the group technology information user and text The next section concentrates more on the lessons that can be learned at the design stage given that one wants to build a CSCW system incorporating these insights what kind of work does one need to do and how is understanding of design affected The final part looks at the integration of social and technical in the operation of working sociotechnical systems Collectively the contributors make the argument that the social and technical are irremediably linked in practice and so the great divide not only should be a thing of the past it should never have existed in the first place

**Digitalization, Economic Development and Social Equality** Maria Mirabelli,Natália Brasil Dib,Sinan Mihelčič,2020-05-19 This book represents one of the outcomes of the World Complexity Science Academy WCSA Conference held in Rome in the Autumn of 2018 titled Turbulent Convergence It reflects the fruitful discussions developed by a number of papers presented at the event

by scholars from several different countries In particular the volume represents a great effort on the part of the WCSA to gather research carried out in Europe and beyond and to provide a forum for valuable discussion at international level in a cosmopolitan way

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