

# Cyperethics

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Philosophy: Cyber ethics Computer technology according to James Moor is revolutionary due to the nature of the computer itself. Unlike other technological objects, computers have logic malleability. Computers are therefore logically malleable since they can be shaped and molded to do any activity that can be characterized in terms of inputs, outputs and connecting logical operations. Logical operations according to Moor are the precise defined steps which take a computer from one state to the next one. Thus computer's logic can be massaged and shaped in infinite ways through software and hardware changes. Just as the power of the steam engine was harnessed as a raw resource during the Industrial Revolution, so is the logic of a computer as a raw resource of the Computer Revolution. Since logic applies everywhere, the potential applications of computer technology seem limitless and that's the main reason computers have caused a revolution.

2. James Moor discusses the following three kinds of invisibility; first and foremost is the invisible abuse which is the intentional use of the invisible operations of a computer to engage in unethical conduct. The best illustration of this is the case of a programmer who after realizing he could steal excess interest from a bank, instructed a computer to deposit the fraction of cents left over after rounding off in his own bank account. The second invisibility factor is the presence of invisible programming values, which basically are values embedded in a computer program. Writing a computer program is like building a house, there is always room for making numerous decisions about matters not specified in order to construct the house no matter how detailed the specifications may be. Similarly in order, to implement a program which satisfies the specifications a programmer makes some value judgments about what is important and what is not.

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Eventually these values become part of the final product and usually are invisible to someone who runs the program. Sometimes invisible programming values are so invisible that even the programmers are unaware of them. Programs may also have bugs or may be based on implicit assumptions which do not become obvious until there is a crisis. The third invisibility factor which perhaps is the most disturbing is invisible complex calculation. Nowadays computers are capable of enormous calculations which are beyond human comprehension. Even if a program is understood, it does not necessarily follow that the calculations based on that program are understood. Computers today are able to perform and definitely supercomputers in the future will perform calculations which are too complex for human inspection and understanding. Although the above may look like just ordinary cases in the course of computer technology, they are relevant to computer ethics due to the fact that computer technology is essentially involved and there is question about what policies are to be instituted in order to best detect and prevent such abuses. Without access to the programs used for executing such cases, or sophisticated computer programs, such activities may easily go unnoticed.

3. Nicholas Carr statement that we “ begin to take on the qualities of those technologies” basically means that we start behaving like the technologies we are using and leave behind or completely forget our earlier on inherent abilities. Nicholas gives the classic example of the mechanical clock which disassociated time from human events and assisted create them in an autonomous world of mathematically measurable sequences. This later led to the theoretical framework of divided time which became the point of reference for both thought and action. Other examples of the way we have <https://assignbuster.com/cyberethics/>

taken on the qualities of new technology include taking of prescribed drugs such as Prozac and Ritalin, which aid our bodies in proper functioning. Thus pharmaceutical drugs and electronic devices all control the complex biochemistry and micro-cellular structure of our brains. All this affects an individual's behavior, personality as well as other characteristics. This simply means that the latest technological advances could well be changing our identity as humans.

4. The Amish use a number of principles in determining whether to adopt a new form of technology or not. Some of these include; whether the technology will bring them together or draw them apart, in the case of the cell phones, they ask themselves whether they will be used to make a living or just for gossiping and frivolous chatter and finally, the Amish ask themselves whether technology is in any way enhancing their community, and who exactly benefits from it. Does technology value human life? These principles are good since they help in safeguarding an individual's personality, family time and overall community's cohesiveness. I usually do not pick calls as from 7 pm in the evening up to 8 am the next day. I shun the internet as much as possible unless when I am replying to my emails or when there is a news item I want to catch. I employ these principles so that I can have time for myself and family.

5. Christine in her article about people breaking rules of etiquette while using cell phones says that it's more than just a lack of manners: "it amounts to radical disengagement from the public sphere." This simply refers to the habit that develops after constant usage of phone. An individual will thus act unconsciously without him/her even being aware of it and detach himself/herself from the others and get engrossed in phone usage. This

therefore means that an individual removes oneself from the social situation in public space and intentionally concentrates on his/her phone. Christine gives the reason for this as the disruption caused by cell phone technology which has greatly affected our ability to insist on the enforcement of social rules. This has led to people making attempts at etiquette training which has also evaded another reality: the decline of generally accepted social standards for social behavior. Thus there has been a breakdown of manners and hierarchies making all social rules arbitrary (Christine, 2004).

#### References

Christine, R. (2004). Our Cell Phones, Ourselves. *The New Atlantis: A Journal of Technology and Society* , 26-45.