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Adriano Fabris: Ethics of Information and Communication Technologies.
Cham: Springer International Publishing AG, 2018.
ISBN: 978-3-319-75511-3.

UDC: 17:004.451.62

In the era in which technologies determine new matrices of thought, of habits, and, indeed, of actions, what we now consequently find emerging are new ethical issues requiring extremely articulate reflection. Communication technologies used up until the last century have been completely replaced by others which are more immediate, more ubiquitous, technologies that have us believe we are living in the eternal present. Philosophical investigation, therefore, must rethink its ethical paradigms, overturning the traditional primacy of "general" ethics in favor of a more concrete approach, one requiring continual adjustment in tandem with the development of new technological systems.

This book reflects upon these important new paradigms, outlining them via an in-depth analysis. In the first section the author explains the basic concepts necessary in order to analyze these challenges. Firstly, he discusses the etymological distinction between technique and technology as well as the fundamental difference between information and communication. He then goes on to investigate a particular area of applied ethics with

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its newly emerging problems for our contemporary society: the ethics of information and communication technologies. The author focuses on ethical and deontological issues concerning the use and level of diffusion of the most common information and communication technologies. He also discusses the challenges of the uninterrupted and interactive circuit which constitutes the relationship between the virtual sphere and the real world.

In the second and third section of the book the focus lies on two other specific areas: communication devices and communication environments. Every aspect is investigated from a methodological perspective with practical examples of considered, ethical choices. In the second part, in fact, attention is concentrated on the ethical issues of communication devices (computers, smartphones, and robots). Firstly, the author analyzes technological devices from a historical and structural viewpoint. These are the devices that we use in everyday communication and that are, as the author writes, "external" to the human being. Next, the focus is on our relationship, as human beings, with machines that enhance our ability to communicate and to access new environments, modifying our perception of space and time. All of these situations need to be addressed in an ethical manner. It is vital to raise awareness of the consequences that the use of these devices can have on our behavior and on our actions.

From this analysis, several aspects emerge that pose multiple deontological and ethical questions. Choices and dilemmas come to light that human agents (manufacturers and users) are called to answer. Indeed, deontological codes established by various professional associations have already been drawn up for this purpose and, as such, are required to be respected by all association members involved in internet and computer processes. However, though these codes give precise indications, calling upon our sense of responsibility, they do not provide neither the concrete motivation nor the justification to force users to act accordingly. Thus, the author moves on to identify and justify ethical principles that would convince us to behave correctly in the technological contexts of information and communication in which we live, taking account of the relationship of the convergence between media. Another interesting

question, often underestimated, concerns what the author defines as the "impossible immediacy" in our relationship with apps, selfies, and our perception of space and time. The phenomenon of the selfie, in particular, can be understood as an attempt to remain within a pseudo-immediacy. Moving on to the relationship between robots, communication, and ethics, the author reflects on the possibility of an ethical code for those robots with autonomy of communication and action.

In the last section, the central topic is the ethics concerning issues of communication environments. Communication is intended here as something that we experience in the particular environment in which we move and interact. The "virtual" environment, which the new devices have created, opens up various possibilities, in the same way as does the "natural" environment with which it interacts. The author focuses our attention on issues concerning the relationship between ethics and virtuality. Particularly, the concept of the "virtual" is explained in its various nuances. "Virtus" in Latin means "virtue," but it does not only indicate the characteristic that makes a human being a good person. It also indicates the "capacity that is proper to something."

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Subsequently, the author turns our attention to ethics and the internet in relation to three aspects of the internet: firstly, the internet of net-surfers; secondly, the internet of social networks; thirdly, the internet of things. Regarding the first aspect, what emerges is an original reflection about the ethics *of* the internet and the ethics *in* the internet. The former is described as "the reflection on issues related to the impact of the Internet on society, the world we live in, our way of thinking, regardless of whether we actually relate to the Network professionally or not," while ethics *in* the Internet "refers to the set of behaviours, considered good and right, which are taken on by those who work or, more generally, act within the Network." Regarding the ethics of social networks, the questions are twofold: the transformation of the idea of "community" that social networks produce, as well as the issues concerning the treatment of personal identity. Two further questions arise. Can social networks really be regulated? Can social networks really offer horizontal participation? Finally, ethics and the internet of things, as intended by Ashton, refers to a relationship between devices other than computers. It is difficult in this scenario to speak of an ethics of the "thing." The ethical issues that arise

here, are linked to the so-called Big Data. Hence, the author reformulates the ethical questions thus: "What should be done with all of this data? How can it be handled? Furthermore, is it legal to collect and store it?"

In conclusion, the author identifies the criteria and principles of behavior that enable people to move in these environments in a correct manner. People seem to forget that not everything related to the network is necessarily good. However, some questions necessarily remain open. The author believes that we consciously assume responsibility for that which we are not entirely responsible for. "How can we maintain our status of moral beings if we live in environments that are organised independently from our intervention and where we are no longer in full control over the consequences of the actions that are being carried out?"

Veronica Neri