



Technology and the Virtues: A Philosophical Guide to a Future Worth Wanting

Shannon Vallor

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The 21st century offers a dizzying array of new technological developments: robots smart enough to take white collar jobs, social media tools that manage our most important relationships, ordinary objects that track, record, analyze and share every detail of our daily lives, and biomedical techniques with the potential to transform and enhance human minds and bodies to an unprecedented degree.

Emerging technologies are reshaping our habits, practices, institutions, cultures and environments in increasingly rapid, complex and unpredictable ways that create profound risks and opportunities for human flourishing on a global scale. How can our future be protected in such challenging and uncertain conditions? How can we possibly improve the chances that the human family will not only live, but live well, into the 21st century and beyond?

This book locates a key to that future in the distant past: specifically, in the philosophical traditions of virtue ethics developed by classical thinkers from Aristotle and Confucius to the Buddha. Each developed a way of seeking the good life that equips human beings with the moral and intellectual character to flourish even in the most unpredictable, complex and unstable situations--precisely where we find ourselves today.

Through an examination of the many risks and opportunities presented by rapidly changing technosocial conditions, Vallor makes the case that if we are to have any real hope of securing a future worth wanting, then we will need more than just better technologies. We will also need better humans.

Technology and the Virtues develops a practical framework for seeking that goal by means of the deliberate cultivation of *technomoral virtues*: specific skills and strengths of character, adapted to the unique challenges of 21st century life, that offer the human family our best chance of learning to live wisely and well with emerging technologies.

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