



Hubris and Hybrids: A Cultural History of Technology and Science

By Mikael Hard, Andrew Jamison

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Human societies have not always taken on new technology in appropriate ways. Innovations are double-edged swords that transform relationships among people, as well as between human societies and the natural world. Only through successful cultural appropriation can we manage to control the hubris that is fundamental to the innovative, enterprising human spirit; and only by becoming hybrids, combining the human and the technological, will we be able to make effective use of our scientific and technological achievements.

This broad cultural history of technology and science provides a range of stories and reflections about the past, discussing areas such as film, industrial design, and alternative environmental technologies, and including not only European and North American, but also Asian examples, to help resolve the contradictions of contemporary high-tech civilization.

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Editorial Review

Review

"In their excellent book *Hubris and Hybrids*, historians Mikael Hård and Andrew Jamison engage in a cultural assessment of science and technology. They replace the traditional 'heroic tale' of scientific genius with stories of the frequently mixed blessings of science and technology." -- *Nature*

"These new stories of science and social movements, machine-breaking, environmentalism, and the politics of development lay the groundwork for a bold and much needed cultural assessment of technology and science." -- Thomas Misa, author of *Leonardo to the Internet: Technology and Culture from the Renaissance to the Present*

"Hård and Jamison have written a history of modern science and technology with a fresh perspective. Along with the play of ideas that captured the interest of an older generation of historians they have focused their narrative on current concerns -- 'knowledge that could actually be applied for the benefit of man.' It is a tour de force of science writing." -- Harold Dorn, co-author of *Science and Technology in World History*

"*Hubris and Hybrids* is an extremely important book for opening the debate on technology, democracy, science and society, knowledge and responsibility in a period when technology and science are reengineering the earth and our lives." -- Vandana Shiva, author of *Stolen Harvest: The Hijacking of the Global Food Supply*

"*Hubris and Hybrids* is a wise and broadly synthetic work that brings coherence to a tremendous amount of historical research on scientific technology." -- Jeffrey C. Alexander, co-editor of *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*

"Highly Recommended." -- *CHOICE*

"Far from being a critique of the excesses of only modern science and technology, *Hubris and Hybrids* is an extremely wide-ranging historical survey. Its coverage begins with the Scientific Revolution, Britain's Industrial Revolution, and the Enlightenment. More modern topics include technocracy movements, artistic uses of science and technology from William Morris to the film *The Matrix*, appropriate technology, the greening of corporate America and Europe, film and industrial design, and Asian developments. The richness of the authors' observations on these historical phenomena is exemplified by their comments on the medieval period: 'eyeglasses and mirrors created opportunities to experience a technically mediated reality'." -- *Nature*

"Hård and Jamison wisely offer no simple historical lessons, much less any silly predictions. What they provide instead are provocative and perceptive reflections that deserve to reach a wide general audience." --

Nature

"Hård and Jamison, have published an ambitious and necessary book about the history of technology." --
Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Sydsvenska dagbladet*

From the Publisher

"In their excellent book *Hubris and Hybrids*, historians Mikael Hard and Andrew Jamison engage in a cultural assessment of science and technology." *Nature* 12/2005

"What they provide is provocative and perceptive reflections that deserve to reach a wide general audience." *Nature* 12/2005

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Visit Professor Jamison's website at www.plan.aau.dk/~andy

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