

The Soul of a New Machine (Modern Library)

By Tracy Kidder

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The Soul of a New Machine (Modern Library) By Tracy Kidder

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize and the American Book Award, The Soul of a New Machine was a bestseller on its first publication in 1981. With the touch of an expert thriller writer, Tracy Kidder recounts the feverish efforts of a team of Data General researchers to create a new 32-bit superminicomputer. A compelling account of individual sacrifice and human ingenuity, The Soul of a New Machine endures as the classic chronicle of the computer age and the masterminds behind its technological advances.
"A superb book," said Robert Pirsig, author of Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance. "All the incredible complexity and chaos and exploitation and loneliness and strange, half-mad beauty of this field are honestly and correctly drawn." The Washington Post Book World said, "Kidder has created compelling entertainment. He offers a fast, painless, enjoyable means to an initial understanding of computers, allowing us to understand the complexity of machines we could only marvel at before, and to appreciate the skills of the people who create them."
The Modern Library has played a significant role in American cultural life for the better part of a century. The series was founded in 1917 by the publishers Boni and Liveright and eight years later acquired by Bennett Cerf and Donald Klopfer. It provided the foundation for their next publishing venture, Random House. The Modern Library has been a staple of the American book trade, providing readers with affordable hardbound editions of important works of literature and thought. For the Modern Library's seventy-fifth anniversary, Random House redesigned the series, restoring as its emblem the running torch-bearer created by Lucian Bernhard in 1925 and refurbishing jackets, bindings, and type, as well as inaugurating a new program of selecting titles. The Modern Library continues to provide the world's best books, at the best prices.

Tracy Kidder has written a new Introduction to this Modern Library edition.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
The computer revolution brought with it new methods of getting work done--just look at today's news for reports of hard-driven, highly-motivated young software and online commerce developers who sacrifice evenings and weekends to meet impossible deadlines. Tracy Kidder got a preview of this world in the late 1970s when he observed the engineers of Data General design and build a new 32-bit minicomputer in just one year. His thoughtful, prescient book, *The Soul of a New Machine*, tells stories of 35-year-old "veteran" engineers hiring recent college graduates and encouraging them to work harder and faster on complex and difficult projects, exploiting the youngsters' ignorance of normal scheduling processes while engendering a new kind of work ethic.

These days, we are used to the "total commitment" philosophy of managing technical creation, but Kidder was surprised and even a little alarmed at the obsessions and compulsions he found. From in-house political struggles to workers being permitted to tease management to marathon 24-hour work sessions, *The Soul of a New Machine* explores concepts that already seem familiar, even old-hat, less than 20 years later. Kidder plainly admires his subjects; while he admits to hopeless confusion about their work, he finds their dedication heroic. The reader wonders, though, what will become of it all, now and in the future. --*Rob Lightner*

From Library Journal
Pulitzer Prize winner Kidder's 1981 volume was published when mini-supercomputers were still the stuff of science fiction. How the world has turned. Though technology has grown immeasurably since then, this volume still serves as an interesting history of the machine that conquered the world.
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Review
"A remarkable book...Absorbing reading." -- --*Louis Heldman, Detroit Free Press*

"A surprisingly gripping account...fascinating...provacative." -- --*William M. Bulkeley, The Wall Street Journal*

"Brilliant, concise and original." -- --*Playboy*

"Kidder brings a storyteller's eye to a technological subject and makes it dance...a triumph of graceful writing and intelligent reporting." -- --*Ted Valen, Raleigh News and Observer*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Frances Feist:

This The Soul of a New Machine (Modern Library) book is just not ordinary book, you have after that it the world is in your hands. The benefit you receive by reading this book will be information inside this guide incredible fresh, you will get facts which is getting deeper an individual read a lot of information you will get. This particular The Soul of a New Machine (Modern Library) without we know teach the one who looking at it become critical in considering and analyzing. Don't end up being worry The Soul of a New

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Carolyn Brown:

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