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OF THE  
PULITZER  
PRIZE

**THE SOUL  
OF A NEW MACHINE**

**TRACY KIDDER**

"RIVETING...A WELL-PACED  
STORY OF CORPORATE INVENTION  
AND INTRIGUE...COMPELLING  
ENTERTAINMENT AND MUCH MORE."  
—WASHINGTON POST BOOK WORLD

**NATIONAL BESTSELLER**



## ACCLAIM FOR TRACY KIDDER'S THE SOUL OF A NEW MACHINE

“Will a computer ever be able to think? The question is as old as the computer itself. Yet the possibility continues to unnerve the nervous. The answer, as gleaned from Tracy Kidder’s magnificent book, is an emphatic no, and the reason is simple. The people who build computers up from a skein of wires, a box of silicon, and an odd assortment of nuts, bolts, and screws, are so in love with making their machines work that they will never hand over the option to the computers. The soul of a new machine, says Kidder, is nothing more than the collective soul of those who put the machine together. . . . For him, the computer is a fascinating piece of technology, but even more fascinating is the profound obsession of the engineer. . . . Kidder does a fine job explaining the complexities of a computer. . . . He never loses touch with the engineers — their quirks, their bleary eyes, their nervous giggles, their stunning insights, and, above all, their singular devotion to their cause.”

— Natalie Angier, *Discover*

“Superb . . . a book that computer engineering has deserved for a long time. . . . All the incredible complexity and chaos and exploitation and loneliness and strange, half-mad beauty of this field are honestly and correctly drawn here.”

— Robert Pirsig,  
author of *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*

“Tracy Kidder can turn the most unlikely story into riveting drama.”

— Anne Tyler

"*The Soul of a New Machine* was first published when mini-supercomputers were still the stuff of science fiction. . . . It still serves as an interesting history of the machine that conquered the world."

— *Library Journal*

"Tracy Kidder is a virtuoso of lucid and compelling narrative."

— R. Z. Sheppard, *Time*

"*The Soul of a New Machine* is a near-novelistic suspense story drawn from the actual development of a new high-performance computer. . . . Even a curious outsider can get a feeling for the difficulties [the engineers] faced and the ingenuity and inspiration they brought to bear on a highly doubtful assignment."

— Frederick H. Guidry, *Christian Science Monitor*

"Even someone like this reviewer, who barely understood the difference between computer hardware and software when he began *The Soul of a New Machine*, was able to follow every step of the debugging mystery, even though it involves binary arithmetic, Boolean algebra, and a grasp of the difference between a system cache and an instruction processor. . . . I also found it exciting. . . . Kidder's prose could make you visualize a boras-nadafras doing a cherbstorg, if there ever were such things."

— Christopher Lehmann-Haupt, *New York Times*

"Brilliant, concise, and original. . . . If you like the writing of John McPhee, you'll love the work of Tracy Kidder. . . . He has written *The Soul of a New Machine* with a reporter's eye, a novelist's heart, and a technician's understanding. . . . What makes Kidder's book so rich is that he describes the human psyche as well as the computer industry."

— *Playboy*

THE SOUL OF A  
NEW MACHINE

*Also by Tracy Kidder*

The Road to Yuba City

House

Among Schoolchildren

Old Friends

Home Town

*Edited by Tracy Kidder*

The Best American Essays 1994

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THE SOUL

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OF A NEW

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MACHINE

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*Tracy Kidder*



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*To Richard Todd*

