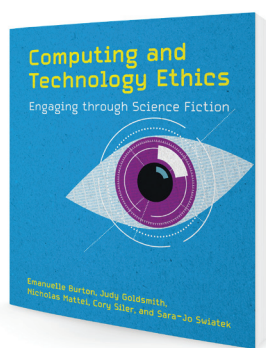


# Pedagogy Guide

Computing and Technology Ethics:  
Engaging through Science Fiction



The instructor's supplement to *Computing and Technology Ethics: Engaging through Science Fiction* supplies you with both grounding principles and specific, concrete strategies for making the most of fiction in your ethics class.



The guide contains:

1. a general introduction to teaching science fiction and ethics together
2. individual guides for all twelve stories anthologized in the textbook

This overview outlines what you'll find in the extensive instructors manual. To access the full pedagogy guide, please visit the [book's page on mitpress.mit.edu](#) and click "Request exam/desk copy."

You will be prompted to log in to your instructor account, or create a new one, after which you can request the supplemental materials.

## General introduction

- What is ethics? Why does it matter that we teach it to technology developers?
- What is the goal of teaching ethics to technology developers?
- Why teach ethical frameworks to technology developers?
- Why read (science) fiction in an ethics class?
- Some general tips for teaching fiction
- Why put all of this into a separate pedagogy guide instead of the textbook?

## Contents of individual story guides

- **Summary geared toward central ethical issues** in the story, with discussion of why those issues are not easily or cleanly resolvable, plus concrete strategies for managing and generating discussion
- **It's not that simple:** this section highlights places in the story where readers frequently assume only one interpretation is possible, when in fact several possibilities exist; it highlights details to help you guide students toward noticing those other possibilities, so that they can contend with the full complexity of the story's questions
- **Distraction warning:** this section enumerates common topics or questions which can become rabbit holes, and will help you judge when the conversation has stopped being productive and offer tips for redirecting
- **Points of clarification:** for stories paired with ethical frameworks, this section discusses common misunderstandings about the framework by addressing how it can work as a lens on the story (*when applicable*)
- **Brief historical background** on relevant subjects (*when applicable*)
- **List of instances** when a key detail or theme recurs in stories in which an important recurrent detail is both important and difficult to notice (*when applicable*)



FROM THE INTRODUCTION TO THE PEDAGOGY GUIDE:

**This curriculum** asks you to do a kind of teaching that may be new to you, possibly on multiple fronts. The purpose of this guide is to offer insight into why such an approach is valuable, and to furnish you with structures and guidelines that will enable you to make best use of this textbook, even if this style of teaching is unfamiliar to you.

**The guide** includes a general introduction to the course as a whole, and individualized guides for each of the stories anthologized in this collection. This introduction discusses the approach to ethics taken by this textbook, offers a justification for that approach, and explains how these justifications can inform your choices in the classroom. It also describes the elements that appear in each of the individual story pedagogy guides.

**The individual story pedagogy guides** provide a window into the crucial issues in the story, and supply key details that can be used to enrich and complicate your students' conversations. All of the stories deal with multiple issues in technology ethics, and thus can be paired with any of several course units. For this reason, each story guide has an endnote explaining which parts of the guide will be best suited to each of the relevant topics.

SAMPLE CONTENT:

## A story isn't reducible to the ideas it contains.

One of the temptations, when using literature in any kind of ethics classroom, is to “shake it down for content:” to approach the material as a bank for storing abstract ideas. But any decent story is much more: a narrative of plot and character that relies on atmosphere, emotional investment, narrative suspense, and other qualities of story to create the effects it may have on the reader.

The result of the “shakedown” approach is not entirely a bad one. It can allow you, the instructor, to frame particular issues in an emotionally vivid way, using the emotional heft of the story to propel your students through a discussion of the ideas that story raises.

But there's more you can do! Stories also furnish you and your students with much of the clutter and realities of experience that can make ethical quandaries so complex, or render them initially invisible.

It's good for your students to get practice in reading through the clutter to distill the core ethical issues at play. But also, by paying attention to that clutter and how it figures into the story, you can help prepare your students for the fact that they will not be making ethical decisions under laboratory conditions, but rather in a manner that is embedded in the rest of their lives.

—from “Some General Tips on Teaching Fiction”