

Foreword

Artificial intelligence (AI) has a way of dazzling us one moment and unsettling us the next. It is hailed as a tool that can save lives on the battlefield, streamline healthcare systems, and predict natural disasters, yet it can just as easily be abused to escalate wars, widen inequality, and reinforce systemic bias. That is the paradox at the heart of this book: the use and abuse of AI across the most vital aspects of our collective future: *warfare, human development, and social justice*. You will not find a cheerleading celebration of AI here, nor a doomsday dismissal. Instead, you'll find a nuanced exploration that insists we wrestle with the messy middle ground. And frankly, in my humble opinion, that's where the most important conversations live.

In my own work, I have learned that progress without reflection can be dangerous. Our book, *Pitfalls of AI Integration in Education: Skill Obsolescence, Misuse, and Bias*, confronted the ways algorithms might promise efficiency in learning while quietly undermining equity and human connection. This volume takes that spirit of critical inquiry further, showing how AI is transforming not only classrooms but also war zones, communities, economies, and even global struggles for justice. It raises the haunting question: what happens when the same tools we use to detect autism or conserve wildlife are also used to target enemies or silence dissent? That double-edged nature is not hypothetical because it is already upon us.

One of the strengths of this collection, *Use and Abuse of AI in Warfare, Human Development, and Social Justice*, is its breadth of focus. Here, AI appears in the hands of farmers seeking sustainability, city planners confronting urban chaos, and doctors navigating ethical minefields in healthcare. At the same time, it lurks in autonomous weapons, predictive policing, and resource extraction, where its abuse can amplify harm. The chapters in this book remind us that “development” and “destruction” often share the same technological roots. How we decide to apply or restrain AI technologies may well determine whether it becomes an engine for human progress or a mechanism of control. Reading through these varied perspectives feels like moving across a chessboard where every move carries both promise and peril.

We owe this intellectual journey to Ndwakhulu Stephen Tshishonga of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (South Africa) whose editorial leadership gathered an impressive constellation of voices. Each contributing author brings both urgency and depth, refusing to sanitize the realities of AI's impact. They illuminate the uneven global landscape: nations racing to militarize AI, communities struggling to harness it for social justice, and researchers searching for ethical guardrails. What ties their work together is a willingness to challenge power, whether political, corporate, or technological, and to ask who truly benefits from AI's rapid spread. Their collective scholarship makes it clear that the debates surrounding AI are not abstract but directly tied to the future of humanity itself. That alone makes the volume essential reading.

What I especially admire is that the book is unafraid of controversy. It does not sidestep uncomfortable questions about accountability in autonomous warfare, inequality in access to AI-driven development, or bias embedded in supposedly "neutral" algorithms. It dares us to imagine a future where the same technology that prevents climate disaster might also fuel surveillance states, or where innovations in smart cities could either empower citizens or monitor them into submission. These tensions are not theoretical, for they are playing out right now in battlefields, classrooms, and city streets. To pretend otherwise would be the real abuse of intelligence, artificial or otherwise. And in that sense, this book challenges us to confront the uncomfortable truth that the boundaries between use and abuse are thinner than we like to admit.

So, dear readers, I encourage you to engage with this book not just as an observer but as a participant in the urgent dialogue it represents. This book offers no easy resolutions, but it does sharpen our awareness of the stakes at hand. As you turn these pages, consider where you stand: on the side of AI as a tool for human flourishing, or AI as a force that risks eroding the very values we hold dear. Either way, the choice is not the machines', it is ours. Read closely, argue passionately, and above all, let your humanity be the compass in navigating this AI-driven age.

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