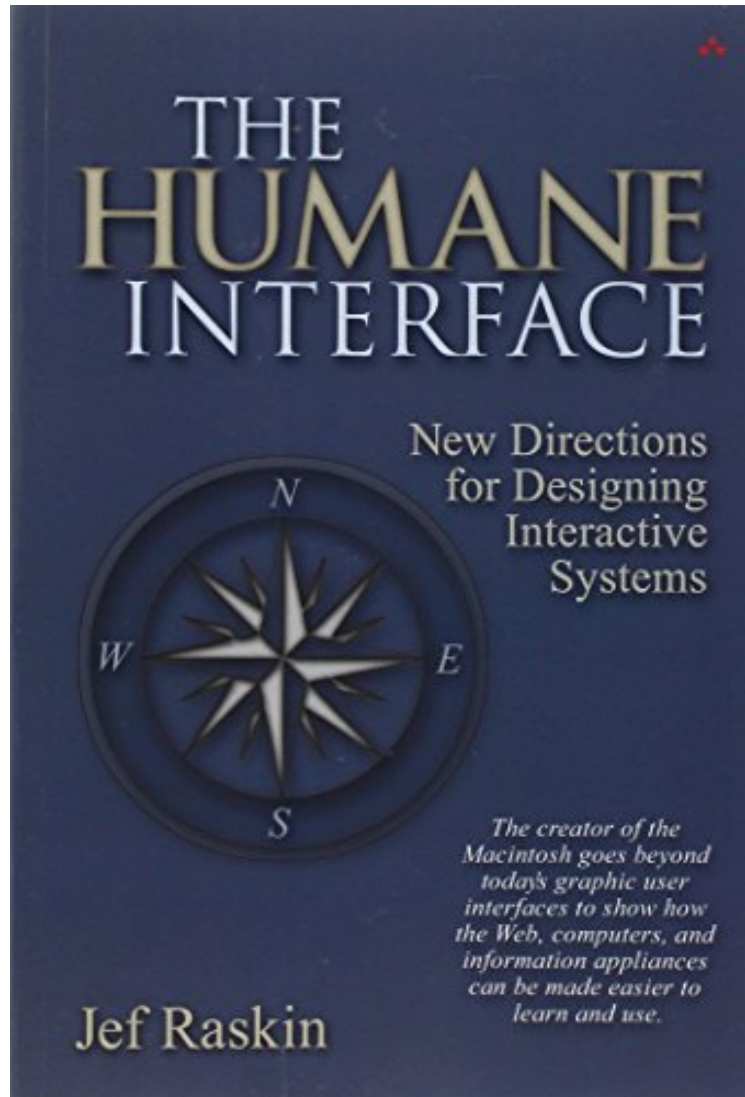


# The Humane Interface: New Directions for Designing Interactive Systems

*Jef Raskin*

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**Jef Raskin : The Humane Interface: New Directions for Designing Interactive Systems** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Humane Interface: New Directions for Designing Interactive Systems:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Outdated, but interesting.By rjpryanAn interesting read, although many of his examples seem quite outdated. Most of the examples of bad user interfaces come from either Microsoft Windows, or a very old version of Microsoft Word running on a Mac. Most of his examples of good use interfaces

come from the ancient Canon Cat computer, or occasionally from the original Macintosh project. The book does spend a fair amount of time describing various laws and rules for evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of user interface designs. This portion of the text is sure to remain valid throughout the years. Although not exactly a page turner, I would recommend this book for anybody who designs user interfaces on a regular basis - even if you don't use the laws described, at least knowing about them is likely to make you design better interfaces unconsciously. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. pouring a foundation in granite By arduido I am currently writing my thesis in interaction design and the man who wrote this book, Jef Raskin is in my mind the father of usability and a strong opinion on how to do things right. There is a lot of reference to the cannon cat an early computer that was built with strong engineering, a well thought out interface both physical and soft. It is my opinion to any designer to look at the ideas of this book to understand why a company like apple has been able to reach its current position and the know that it is more than just creative branding and a pop-cult logo. I found the message here to be a call to designing for the human processor, since the race for hardware speed has already surpassed our bodily capabilities. regards, 7 of 8 people found the following review helpful. A great start... but it falters toward the finish By David E. Rogers When I told a friend I had bought this book, he said he liked it through chapter four--but that it went rapidly downhill from there. He was right. In those first four chapters, Raskin--the "inventor" of the Macintosh--offers what I think is a terrific introduction to the basics of interface design, cognetics and the quantification of interfaces. I lapped it up, despite Raskin's occasionally convoluted writing style. In fact, it gave me some ideas for a project I had worked on last year. I suspect I'll turn to the first four chapters for reference in the future. But Raskin goes afield, I think, in the latter half of the book. He proposes an entirely new interface for PCs--one that dispenses with file names, directory structures and applications. I'm sure we all agree that the current Windows interface is far from ideal or humane, confusing untold millions and making work more difficult than necessary. But while Raskin's heart and intellect are in the right places, I think his proposed cure is nearly as bad as the disease. I am intrigued, however, by his ZIP or "zooming" navigation approach. So--is this book worth your time (and money)? You'll have to make your own call. If you already have a background in interface design theory, The Humane Interface offers you a view of Raskin's dream for a new interface. On the other hand, if you know little about interface design, you might really enjoy the introduction Raskin offers and appreciate the stimulus his dream interface provides.

Deep thinking is rare in this field where most companies are glad to copy designs that were great back in the 1970s. The Humane Interface is a gourmet dish from a master chef. Five mice! --Jakob Nielsen, Nielsen Norman Group Author of Designing Web Usability: The Practice of Simplicity This unique guide to interactive system design reflects the experience and vision of Jef Raskin, the creator of the Apple Macintosh. Other books may show how to use today's widgets and interface ideas effectively. Raskin, however, demonstrates that many current interface paradigms are dead ends, and that to make computers significantly easier to use requires new approaches. He explains how to effect desperately needed changes, offering a wealth of innovative and specific interface ideas for software designers, developers, and product managers. The Apple Macintosh helped to introduce a previous revolution in computer interface design, drawing on the best available technology to establish many of the interface techniques and methods now universal in the computer industry. With this book, Raskin proves again both his farsightedness and his practicality. He also demonstrates how design ideas must be bui

.com "The book that explains why you really hate computers." I've admired Jef Raskin for years. For those who don't know, he is the "Father of the Macintosh," one of the original geniuses who guided the Mac in the early days. But, more than a computer scientist, Raskin is a cognitive psychologist. He studies how the brain works with special emphasis on how that relates to us using computers. His magnum opus was the Canon Cat, which was an excellent and well-thought-out little computer. In The Humane Interface, Raskin goes into detail describing how computers can be made easier to understand and use. Ever want to know why you really don't like Windows? The answer is in this book. In fact, there's so much in this book that makes sense, I really want to send a copy to every employee at Microsoft. I loved reading this book and nodding my head in rabid agreement. Raskin states, "There has never been any technical reason for a computer to take more than a few seconds to begin operation when it is turned on." So why then does Windows (or Linux!) take so darn long to start up? The PalmPilot is on instantly, as is your cell phone. But for some reason, we tolerate the computer taking a few eons to start. (And until consumers complain about it, things won't change.) Computers can be easy to use, and the people who design them and design software need to read this book. Do you ever get the impression that the person who designed a piece of software must have come from the same company that designed the front panel on your VCR? Why should you have to double-click anything? What does Ctrl+D mean one thing in one program and a completely different thing in another? And what's the point of the Yes/No confirmation if the user is in the habit of clicking Yes without thinking about it? Raskin neatly probes all these areas. While I admire everything Raskin has to say, the book is pretty heavy on the psychology end. Myself, I enjoy cognitive psychology (especially books by Raskin's cohort Donald Norman), though some may find that part of the book boring. Even so, Raskin builds and backs his argument in a most eloquent and scientific manner. Especially if

you design software or need to teach or train people to use computers, this book deserves a spot on your shelf. --Dan Gookin  
From Library Journal  
Falling somewhere between Donald A. Norman's *The Psychology of Everyday Things* and Ben Shneiderman's *Designing the User Interface*, Raskin's book covers ergonomics as well as quantification, evaluation, and navigation. Raskin was the original creator of the Apple Macintosh project before Steve Jobs took over and has a background in technology and art, which gives him a unique perspective on usability; recommended for university and large public libraries.  
Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.  
From the Back Cover "Deep thinking is rare in this field where most companies are glad to copy designs that were great back in the 1970s. The *Humane Interface* is a gourmet dish from a master chef. Five mice!" --Jakob Nielsen, Nielsen Norman Group  
Author of *Designing Web Usability: The Practice of Simplicity*  
This unique guide to interactive system design reflects the experience and vision of Jef Raskin, the creator of the Apple Macintosh. Other books may show how to use today's widgets and interface ideas effectively. Raskin, however, demonstrates that many current interface paradigms are dead ends, and that to make computers significantly easier to use requires new approaches. He explains how to effect desperately needed changes, offering a wealth of innovative and specific interface ideas for software designers, developers, and product managers. The Apple Macintosh helped to introduce a previous revolution in computer interface design, drawing on the best available technology to establish many of the interface techniques and methods now universal in the computer industry. With this book, Raskin proves again both his farsightedness and his practicality. He also demonstrates how design ideas must be built on a scientific basis, presenting just enough cognitive psychology to link the interface of the future to the experimental evidence and to show why that interface will work. Raskin observes that our honeymoon with digital technology is over: We are tired of having to learn huge, arcane programs to do even the simplest of tasks; we have had our fill of crashing computers; and we are fatigued by the continual pressure to upgrade. The *Humane Interface* delivers a way for computers, information appliances, and other technology-driven products to continue to advance in power and expand their range of applicability, while becoming free of the hassles and obscurities that plague present products. 0201379376B07092001