

Mind the Gap — Overview

Paul Roebuck. 2026. ISBN 978-1-0369-9170-8 (paperback) / 978-1-0667143-0-8 (ebook).

Artificial intelligence does not merely produce answers. It produces behaviour — fluent, confident, available, tireless, disembodied — and the people who encounter that behaviour respond to it through the same social brain they use to read other people. *Mind the Gap* is about the space between those two facts.

The book makes one claim and works through fifteen chapters to make it visible. AI behaviour and human behaviour can look almost identical at the surface of a conversation. Underneath, they are radically different kinds of thing. One is built; one is born. One is trained on data; one is shaped by life. One predicts; one experiences. One outputs; one suffers consequences. One can be reset; one carries residue. The gap between them does not close. It is navigated.

Roebuck is a psychotherapist and executive coach with about forty years of professional life — thirty in commerce, twenty in coaching, emotional education and psychotherapy, the last ten in the therapist's chair. He writes from four rooms — factory floor, boardroom, therapy room, AI room — and the one instrument carried through all of them: the trained capacity to notice what a surface conceals.

The first half of the book takes the gap apart. Chapter One names why AI sounds human and why that matters more than whether it is. Chapter Two names five interpretive traps the human social brain falls into. Chapter Three describes the seven layers behind every AI response, including the system prompt the user never sees. Chapters Five through Seven take on drift, compression, and the false confidence fluency carries. Chapter Eight — the chapter the author marks as essential — names SHADS (Smoothing, Hallucination, Affectation, Drift, Sycophancy) as five directional manifestations of one structural event: a system meeting its limit and defending the gap.

The second half of the book turns to what the gap requires of the human. Chapter Nine sets out the four rooms. Chapter Ten reframes *artificial* as *Additional Intelligence* and names the four postures most users never realise are available. Chapter Eleven brings parts work to AI engagement. Chapter Twelve is the dialect. Chapter Thirteen is *Worker as a Service* — the structural shift from buying software to buying outcomes. Chapter Fourteen brings the autobiography to the surface — Two Dads, Bill Ollis, *Not good*

enough. Chapter Fifteen reads the human and the AI sides as two branches from the same Big Bang, with two hundred million years of evolutionary calibration on one branch and less than a century on the other.

An afterword introduces *The Apparatus* — the working method behind the book, externalised as a portable artefact other practitioners and organisations can run on their own corpora.

The argument is not that AI is dangerous. The argument is that ignorance of the gap is. The future is not AI or human. It is AI at the surface and human at the depth. The organisations and individuals who understand both — and know which is which — will do the work that matters.

The gap will flex. It will not, in 2026, close. Mind it.