

Artificial Intelligence: Socioeconomic, Political and Ethical Dimensions

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Global Research, April 25, 2017

[Counter Currents](#) 22 April 2017

Theme: [History](#), [Intelligence](#), [Science and Medicine](#)

Introduction: Humanity's Future in AI-Biosynthetic World

*In a few centuries or perhaps a few decades, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and biosynthetic engineering will be perfected to the degree that androids will closely resemble humans and biosynthetically engineered humans will resemble androids. Despite the nightmares of such a prospect for some scientists, humanist scholars and theologians, AI will be a dream becoming reality for those espousing Max More's philosophy of "transhumanism"; a movement whose goal is to enhance the human condition physically and intellectually through the application of scientific and technological means. (Carvalko, Joseph, *The Techno-human Shell-A Jump in the Evolutionary Gap*. Sunbury Press, 2012)*

Whether one agrees with transhumanism or finds it abhorrent because it is merely another means of promoting eugenics, the race to transform science fiction dreams into a profitable reality is picking up speed by corporations and investors. Multinational corporations see the opportunity for billions in profits and that is all the motivation they need to move forward full speed, advertising AI research and development even now to prove that their company is decades ahead of the competition.

Besides corporations, the potential power and wealth in AI has universities, government-funded research institutions and privately-funded labs working to realize the dream without worrying about the potential risks involved for society at large. Like the nuclear bomb developed in the 1940s, the AI genie is out of the bottle and it has been since the 1940s when scientists from different fields contemplated building an artificial brain thus giving birth to the formalize scientific discipline of AI in 1956.

British code breaker Alan Turing is known as the Father of Computer Science, also a pioneer in the domain of artificial intelligence, was only at the theoretical stage in the middle of the 20th century when he was conducting research. Contemporaries of Turing, Ross Quillian and Edward Feigenbaum followed by Marvin Minsky who co-founded MIT's AI lab were all pioneers along with corporate giant IBM. By 2016 when Minsky died, AI was the hottest field that corporations, governments, and research institutions intensely pursued, some trying to beat the competition marketing robots for various tasks in the next few years. (George Zarkadakis, *In our Own Image: Savior or Destroyer? The History and Future of Artificial Intelligence*, 2017).

GOOGLE's Peter Norvik, in charge of research made the argument that there is no turning back on AI which he views as the ultimate tool in solving problems, not considering the new problems it would create.

"I don't care so much whether what we are building is real intelligence. We know how to build real intelligence...—my wife and I did it twice, although she did a lot more of the work. We don't need to duplicate humans. That's why I focus on having tools to help us rather than duplicate what we already know how to do. We want humans and machines to partner and do something that they cannot do on their own."

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/gilpress/2016/12/21/artificial-intelligence-pioneer-s-peter-norvig-google/#7dd2f52c38c6>



In 2016, there were more than 650 business deals involving \$5 billion in startups for AI research. With Google leading in patent applications, Microsoft, Amazon, INTEL, Facebook, and Apple became heavily involved in the domain of AI. The same companies involved in the web and cell phones are now competing for the lucrative AI market of the future with different venture capitalists backing research and development (R & D). With the advent of the web and cell phones, R & D in AI has moved rapidly since Turing's era into the mainstream of government in a number of countries in the world, but especially US and China which are the main competitors in the field. According to some, AI is the global arms race of the future because of its potential in every sector including defense. <https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2017/02/china-artificial-intelligence/516615/>; <http://www.nbcnews.com/mach/features/next-global-arms-race-aims-perfect-artificial-intelligence-n685911>

Because of immense institutional interest in AI, there has been a great deal written and debated about what it would all mean for society. There are tens of thousands of scholarly books and articles on the subject covering everything from scientific dimensions to social political and philosophical, some enthusiastic, others skeptical, and still others condemning AI as the new danger to humanity, even worse than motion pictures and science fiction novels depict. While most scholars are neither pessimistic nor as glowingly optimistic as Norvik about the miracle of AI awaiting the human race, there are those who cautiously point to both benefits and possible risks and skeptics cautious about the possible unforeseen consequences, some already evident with the cybergeneration of infophiles addicted to cell phones, computers, and video games.

In the early 21st century, the cybergeneration growing up in cyberspace with mechanical toys, videogames, cell phones and computers relate to machines as their reality. Accepting cyberspace as parallel to experiences with people they come into direct contact, the cybergeneration is conditioned to accept alienation from empirical reality as the norm, separating existential reality they may dread from cyber reality in which they live because they enjoy the illusion of greater control from a distance. A cybergeneration individual may have dozens or even hundreds of "cyber-friends" across the country and across the world but few if any friends in school, in the neighborhood, or at work. These cybergeneration

individuals deem detachment normal because the cyber-community has replaced the empirical one where they cannot hide behind numerous masks that cyberspace permits and promotes. The conditioning of the cybergeneration is very different than the socialization of any generation in the past that was socialized in the real community rather than in cyberspace. If this is the condition of the current cybergeneration, what would the future look like with AI robotics?

http://cyberikee.tripod.com/thinking_cyber_subjectivity_1.html

By the end of this century, the reality of children growing up with robots, holograms and bioengineered humans will be far different than it is for the generation of the early 21st century in every respect from individual to group identity. The wealthier families will have androids in their homes, most likely helping to raise and educate their children, conditioning them about the existential nature of robots as an integral part of the family like the loveable dog or cat. The less affluent middle class would be able to rent-a-robot for the ephemeral experience of it. The lower classes will feel even more marginalized because AI robotics will be out of reach for them; in fact they will be lesser beings than the robots whose intelligence and functions will be another privilege for the wealthy to enjoy. As we will see below, the sense of identity and community will be largely impacted by AI in ways difficult to conceive today for all classes.

AI, Population Explosion and the Job Market

Robotics and AI goes to the heart of how existing and new industries could widen the class gap between rich and poor, and between richer advanced countries and poorer nations. AI raises many public policy questions especially in the domain of economics and politics. This is largely because resource allocation will mean that the lower classes and less developed countries will be further marginalized in the world economy. Even in the advanced countries robots will be replacing humans in the workplace with grave social consequences in the absence of a strict regulatory regime and a social safety net for the working class.

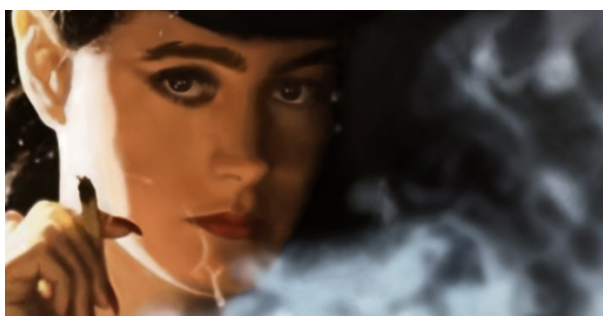
In 2016, a White House report speculated that AI will result in higher productivity, but it will also leave millions without work while creating far greater wealth inequality than already exists. Just as the Silicon Valley has created a small wealthy class without absorbing the surplus labor force at a time that the rich-poor gap has been widening in the last three decades, similarly AI will exacerbate the trend. Apologists of the market economy reject all pessimistic scenarios, insisting that AI will deliver paradise on earth for all humanity.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-4068986/Is-job-risk-White-House-report-warns-AI-soon-leave-millions-Americans-unemployed.html>;
<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2014/jan/04/robots-future-society-drones>

If world population reaches 9 billion by 2050 as it is expected (38% higher than in 2010), and assuming it climbs to 11.2 billion by the end of the century with 9 billion living in Africa and Asia, it is easy to envision the sorts of sociopolitical problems that AI will create in the name of solving others, mainly for the benefit of raising corporate profits. Considering that most people will live in the non-Western World, those in the West will use AI as the pretext to keep wages low and exert their political, economic, military and cultural hegemony. Xenophobic politicians and nativist groups will use AI as a pretext to keep out Africans, Asians, and Latin Americans. Heightened xenophobia with robots to the rescue of the Caucasian minority on the planet will be another dimension of those looking for a pretext to

rally rightwing populists behind an authoritarian regime.

<http://www.visualcapitalist.com/animation-world-population-2100-region/>



It is a given that AI will result in many benefits in every field from surgery to the auto industry, and to an estimated 700 fields according to an Oxford University study. Just as the internet has made possible the assistance of a physician in Cleveland providing live instructions and advice to a colleague carrying out surgery in the Philippines, similarly AI will result in such miracles. The issue however is the manner that corporations and government will use AI as leverage for labor policy. When the auto industry introduced robotics in the 1970s (MIT's "Silver Arm"), auto workers reacted like Luddites in the early 19th century England because they realized that corporations used robotics as leverage to drive down wages and benefits, circumvent labor standards and policies impacting workers and their socioeconomic condition.

http://www.oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk/downloads/academic/The_Future_of_Employment.pdf

In our era, fast food restaurants are among some industries that want to replace minimum wage workers with robots as soon as possible. Multinational corporations have been threatening government not to raise the minimum wage because robots are not far off replacing humans. Just as capitalists in early 19th century England were using the machine as leverage to determine labor policy, so do corporate CEOs in the early 21st century. Just as the British government sided with businesses against the Luddites in the era of the Napoleonic Wars, governments in the 21st century are also on the side of industry against workers.

From the perspective of the capitalist, an android can do a much better job in everything from serving food, to serving on the court bench as a judge without human prejudice which is the flaw that accounts human uniqueness. Although some argue that robots should not be used as health care providers or any area where human judgment of ethical considerations must be taken into account such as the judicial system, others insist that androids will serve humans better than people in every endeavor. As tools for human advancement and comfort, science and technology are a welcome development from a consumerist perspective, something that business and government use as an argument to fund R & D for AI.

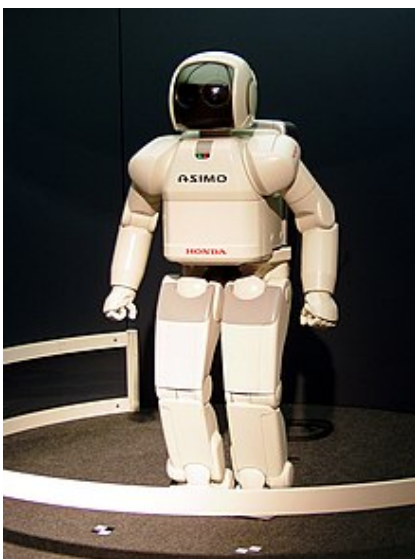
AI could unlock immense potential for economic growth and development for the betterment of mankind, at least as far as its advocates are concerned. This assumes that the benefits of AI once fully implemented will be equally shared among all social classes across the entire world. Did all social classes and all nations advance equally because of the Scientific Revolution of the 17th century and the first Industrial Revolution in England in the 18th century? The rich-poor (northern Hemisphere vs. Southern Hemisphere) divide between

northwest Europe, North America and Japan that were the core of the world capitalists system became more pronounced by continued scientific, technological, and industrial development. Scientific, technological, and industrial development under the capitalist system was hardly the solution for the lack of social justice, for widespread misery owing to poverty and disease, and lack of health and education among the poor. On the contrary, the advanced capitalist countries used technology as tools of exploitation of the Southern Hemisphere and AI technology will be no different.

Greater egalitarianism and the promise of creating a techno-scientific paradise on earth is the bait that corporations and bourgeois politicians and their apologists have been throwing to the masses for the past three centuries and they continue to do it when it comes to the AI revolution. There are studies warning about the greater gap between rich and poor people and countries that robotics will cause.

“Oxford University researchers have estimated that 47 percent of U.S. jobs could be automated within the next two decades. And if even half that number is closer to the mark, workers are in for a rude awakening. In the 1800s, 80 percent of the U.S. labor force worked on farms. Today it’s 2 percent. Obviously mechanization didn’t destroy the economy. ”

<https://www.wired.com/brandlab/2015/04/rise-machines-future-lots-robots-jobs-humans/>



In *Robot Nation*, Stan Neilson raises the question of how a large percentage of the population will survive when corporations replace humans with robots on such a scale that half of the active work force will not be employable. Is the future of the majority of the people to serve robots serving the rich who own the robots? Will such conditions create the atmosphere for social revolutions because AI will create greater polarization than we have seen in modern history? After all, the contradiction of the AI revolution is the promise to make life better for all when it is entirely possible that it will make it much worse for the majority. While businesses and politicians are constantly trying to convince people that the AI revolution is a panacea, people will see for themselves that the benefits will accrue to the elites. Will there be a rise of a Luddite movement against robots and will the elites use robots to suppress revolutionary uprisings?

Advocates of AI insist that hyperbolic issues depicted in science fiction motion pictures and

books have nothing to do with the practical reality of AI. The proponents of this new revolution believe that many new opportunities will be created by the new industry and robots will complement humans rather than humans competing with robots for jobs. The challenge for large corporations is to have the engineers to keep pace with the job demand. American companies have complained that government must do something to meet the demand shortage that forces corporations to recruit from India, China, Iran, Russia and other countries. India and China graduates 10 to 20 times more engineers (depending on the source) than the US where the field is not popular with students. On November 30, 2016, the computer sciences dean Andrew Moore testified before the congressional Subcommittee on Space, Science and Transportation that the US must have one million High School students now geared for engineering to maintain global competitiveness in AI.

<https://www.cmu.edu/news/stories/archives/2016/november/moore-senate-testimony.html>

The engineering glut in Asia, India, China and Japan also points to the race for AI that is seen as another tool giving the competitive advantage to whichever country crosses the finish line first with far reaching implications for the economy. Considering that about half of US engineering graduates (54% Ph.D. and 42% MS) are foreign nationals, corporations have been asking government in the past ten years to provide more incentives, everything from scholarships to R & D grants to universities graduating engineers. Because of the enormous potential to the economy and defense sector, AI has become an important element in international competition, leaving no room to question the nuances of corporate welfare for the AI industry and about what it would mean to the active workforce of the future.

Transhumanism and Identity

Resting on the works of “transhumanist” intellectuals, the corporate, political and business advocates of AI believe the evolution of culture and identity is inevitable with the advent of robotics. Welcoming transhumanism, the advocates believe that human beings have always evolved under very different conditions throughout human history, and they will continue to evolve physically and mentally thanks to the advancements in science and technology. While Max More’s definition of transhumanism cited below touches on some risks of AI, it stresses the benefits and it is the kind of justification that AI investors, government and industry is seeking.

1. *The intellectual and cultural movement that affirms the possibility and desirability of fundamentally improving the human condition through applied reason, especially by developing and making widely available technologies to eliminate aging and to greatly enhance human intellectual, physical, and psychological capacities.*
2. *The study of the ramifications, promises, and potential dangers of technologies that will enable us to overcome fundamental human limitations, and the related study of the ethical matters involved in developing and using such technologies.*
3. <http://whatistranshumanism.org/>; Max More and Natasha Vita-More, *The Transhumanist Reader*, 2013)

Ever since British geneticist J. B. S. Haldane’s essay “*Daedalus: Science and the Future*” (1923), scientists advocating transhumanism have flirted with the idea of eugenics made possible by advances in science and technology. The idea of humans existing in a mechanical environment and approximating an android could be an anathema to a

theologian or a humanist. For transhumanists, this is neither blasphemy nor perversion of the human condition; only its improvement.

<http://www.nextbigfuture.com/2013/03/data-driven-eugenics-genetic.html>

Cyberculture that has created virtual communities raises philosophical questions about identity, relationships, values, the withering of real community culture, and lifestyles that will largely be determined by the AI industry. Robot companions and infophiles are oblivious to the unknown risks that AI could pose on society, arguing that a generation or two ago skeptics of the internet had similar questions. There are those who maintain that cyberculture is egalitarian and within it there is a counterculture movement validating its democratic nature and endless possibilities for individual and cyber-identity.

Others warn that there is also a criminal and “hate group” culture operating in everything from promoting narcotics to human slavery, from neo-Nazi elements to nihilistic cults promoting suicide, all of which could potentially become much worse with AI technology.

“Social engineering, which refers to the practice of manipulating people into performing actions or divulging information, is widely seen as the weakest link in the computer security chain. Cybercriminals already exploit the best qualities in humans — trust and willingness to help others — to steal and spy. The ability to create artificial intelligence avatars that can fool people online will only make the problem worse.”
https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/24/technology/artificial-intelligence-evolves-with-its-criminal-potential.html?_r=0

To apologists, cyberculture is not confined to the perimeters of the hegemonic culture of the elites simply because Silicon Valley is an integral part of corporate America. To skeptics, it has yet to be determined what role AI will play in shaping human and group identity if robotics is the domain of the business and political class. After all, large corporations and governments have a dominant role in cyberculture because they control cyberspace. Although we have no way of determining how AI will shape human identity, we do know something about the web’s influence in that regard.

In 2012, the British government commissioned a study directed by Professor Sir John Beddington on the manner the web was redefining human identity. Concluding that traditional identity based on community was becoming less relevant by web users, the study noted that there were both positive and negative influences resulting from the web community and users’ sense of identity. A segment of the population identifying with a particular sporting or cultural event could be mobilized through the web because individuals identified with that specific cause. At the same time, thousands of people could be called into political action as was the case not just with the Arab Spring uprisings, but also Occupy Wall Street and European protests.

“The internet can allow many people to realise their identities more fully. Some people who have been shy or lonely or feel less attractive discover they can socialise more successfully and express themselves more freely online”.

<http://www.bbc.com/news/technology-21084945>

According to the British report on web identity, there was a sharp rise of internet users becoming members of social networks in the first two decades of the 21st century, along with the prevalence of social networks that accounted for changing identity of users. This is especially in the advanced capitalist countries, but the trend has spread rapidly to India, China and other parts of the world. Given the prevalence of social networks and the web, what will AI mean to human beings and their sense of identity and community once perfected to be almost indistinguishable from humans? If Fidel Castro and Ernesto “Che” Guevara used RADIO REBELDE effectively to undertake the Cuban Revolution in the 1950s, will future generations use AI robots for social change, for personal satisfaction, for both and much more?

✖ Infophiles are already becoming more like the machines they use, like surreal characters in a Franz Kafka novel or a science fiction motion picture. They crave virtual reality more than empirical reality; their relationship with their cell phones or computers outlasts any other they have with human beings. If we accept the assumption that environment shapes human nature to a large degree as empiricist philosophers ever since John Locke argued, then we must accept that a techno-science environment of AI robots used by bio-engineered humans will result in robo-humans and a world where transhumanism will be the norm.

Eager to have robots behave like the ideal human, scientists are trying to create the machine that can emulate human beings when in fact the infophile has evolved into a quasi-robotic existence. The robot can be programmed to mimic human behavior, but humans are already programmed by institutions to mimic robots. Obedience is what businesses want from employees and consumers, what government expects from its docile citizenry, what religious institutions expect of the faithful. Just as robots are subject to conformity lacking free will, similarly the masses have moved in that direction as well. It often seems as though society has moved closer to the science fiction world of Fritz Lang’s *METROPOLIS*, but it is all in the name of ‘progress’. Given the mechanical evolution of where capitalism is leading humanity, why should it be surprising that rich people who could afford the robot would have a problem with it as a lover or companion; after all it would be in the name of ‘progress’ and who wants to be left behind?

Future generations growing up in the world of AI will be conditioned into virtual reality as “more real” than the blood running in their veins, rejecting the real community which they cannot switch off and on like cell phones. It could be argued that the generation conditioned in infophilia has an identity not much different than our ancestors in the Age of Faith (500-1500 A.D.) who lived with the dream of achieving eternal life in Paradise. Nevertheless, the infophilia generation would be condemned to increasing alienation from the real community. As long as AI human-like robots and techno devices keep people content, at least for those with the means to afford them, humans will be aiming at techno-perfection.

To be human entails a myriad of contradictions, rational and irrational tendencies; instinctive spontaneous reaction and carefully planned; expressing free will and yearning for spiritual and emotional ventures; striving for self-improvement in every aspect of one’s character, and above all the limitless boundaries of creativity rooted in the totality of life’s empirical experiences. The robot does not have these traits and is defined by programmed behavior, or operating within certain confines even when perfected at some point in the future to account for emotional reactions and creativity. Nor does the robot have the biological sense of empathy for humans even if programmed not to harm them. This makes a robot as much the perfect soldier and police officer as it does the perfect worker to obey.

In short, through robotics, corporations are designing the perfect soldier and worker and one that would be a model for humans to emulate.

Erich Fromm's theory of social necrophilia helps to explain human behavior increasingly emulating technical devices, not merely as a byproduct of science and technology, but of sociopolitical conditioning in a world where human values are measured by inanimate objects. There is a case to be made that identity with the machine and emulating it leads to a necroculture distorting human values where inanimate objects have greater worth than human beings – materialism in a capitalist society over humanism of an anthropocentric society is the norm. (Charles Thorpe, *Necroculture*, 2016)

While force, social and legal/criminal justice pressures, along with religious institutions kept people docile and compliant in centuries past across the globe, it could be argued that science and technology are substitutes to religion as the new conduits to keep human beings in a state of conformity. Existential alienation that Jean-Paul Sartre addressed in *Being and Nothingness* is vastly exacerbated by the cyber-world in which we live. We are wired to alienation by the dominant market-oriented culture, whereas the French peasant in the 12th century was presumably content in the illusion of connectedness to the divine and hope for eternal Paradise. Either our cyber-illusions could be as fulfilling as those of our ancestors 1000 years ago, or we are merely more delusional about a false sense of hope in our cyber-controlled lives.

Beyond threatening human identity, artificial intelligence and biogenetic engineering intentionally and inadvertently will reduce even the elites into robots, affording them the illusion that because they have the means to buy the latest science and technology has to offer so they could manipulate their identity that entails control instead of subjugation to the machine. Human beings especially the wealthier ones treasure uniqueness money can buy. But instead of turning inward to develop their creative potential and build positive character traits, they turn outward to science and technology to achieve what they believe will afford them satisfaction. If the ancient Greeks created a pantheon of anthropomorphic deities to reflect the superego as well as the realization of their limitations, why shouldn't our generation create anthropomorphic robots even if many people feel threatened by them in this embryonic phase of androids walking down the street next to humans and difficult to distinguish? Gods and heroes are a timeless human illusion and the AI industry is willing to oblige for a price.

AI Alienation and Sex-bots

Addictive behavior – drugs, drinking, gambling, etc. may become worse with the AI technology becoming more prevalent because of greater alienation from the real community and retreat into a cyberculture. Although narcotics use in the US has been an integral part of society since the Nixon administration created the war on drugs to punish blacks and the anti-war left, in our cyberspace era there is some correlation between the necroculture of which cyberculture has become an integral part and widespread use of drugs in the secular West. The culture of materialism and hedonism are certainly considerations as is marginalization and alienation of a segment of the cyberspace community. Will AI make people able to cope with alienation without resorting to narcotics and/or prescription pain killers, or will they become even more addicted because of alienation? (Fred Turner, *From Counterculture to Cyberculture*. 2006)

The population of the US is 4.34% of the world's, but consumes 80% of the world's opioids.

The US also has the top spot in the use of a number of other narcotics, including cocaine and marijuana with heroin addiction infecting all communities in the nation. It hardly comes as a surprise to most people in the age of cyberspace that human beings in much of the world are increasingly more alienated despite of the means of communications available. Symptomatic of the Industrial Revolution and rise of urbanization, alienation is hardly the result of computers and cell phones. The sense of community once enjoyed in the village, small town neighborhood, small social environments where people enjoyed personal interactions as in the place of worship have been replaced by cyberspace and they are about to become even more remote with the advent of robotic and artificial intelligence.

Those in the business of developing AI argue that their goal is to build robots more human than humans for everything from doing menial jobs around the house to satisfying the human in the bedroom. This raises many questions about the perimeters of human identity and uniqueness. Is the human mind more like a computer or is that only one of its many aspects? Some believe that sex robots will become widely used in a decade and by the middle of this century women will use mostly robots. Clearly, AI social robots, including sex-bots or companion-partners will be confined to those who can afford them, with much cheaper and crude versions for the broader rental market.

<https://www.newscientist.com/article/2096530-why-grannys-only-robot-will-be-a-sex-robot/>;
<http://www.express.co.uk/news/science/613337/Bionic-bonking-with-robots-will-become-more-common-than-normal-sex-claims-doctor>

However, there are companies lining up to manufacture and market such robots, some which exist today even if in a crude form for the mass market. “Rent-a-robot” for a few hours, days or weeks when you go on that dreamy vacation to exotic islands and robo-love seems to be the acceptable trend. If need be, your hotel could make a sex robot available for you, or you can pick one up at the airport at the same location of the self-driving car rent-a-center. The sort of uninhibited sex without boundaries that science fiction films like *Westworld* depicted will become a reality and the lines between human and android could become as blurred as in the film *Blade Runner*. This eventuality will mean that teenagers could be experimenting with robots and viewing sex with the machine as normal thus encountering difficulty with humans that have emotions, thoughts, and free will that does not respond to commands.

A segment of the male population could be opting for a *Stepford Wives* type of relationship with a female, and for those who are into alternative sex lifestyles could be enjoying the freedom of relationships with a machine without any pressures or limitations that human impose. Everything from objectification of the sex partner to taboo sexual practices will be made much easier with robots that will change how humans view sex, emotional, and intimate relationships with other people. (Jason Lee, *Sex Robots: The Future of Desire*, 2017)

Therapists could be using androids to help individuals with psychological problems ranging from fear of intimacy to pedophilia and misogyny. At the same time, there is the potential that robots will be the facilitators for psychopaths to express their distorted desires that include everything from abuse to murder. The Pandora’s Box of sex robots has already been opened by many companies around the world. Nevertheless, it is still in its very early stage when very little is known about what emerges. Researchers are not in the position of determining what will emerge until it actually does by examining a large sample of cases.

At this stage, there is interest on the part of companies making crude versions of sex robots

to capture the global market craving inanimate objects that are as close to human as AI permits for the relatively low price of a moderately priced car. It would hardly be surprising if Las Vegas style AI clubs appear throughout the world as part of the adult entertainment industry. Beyond the economics of the adult entertainment robot industry that promises disease-free, problem-free relationships, there is the issue of humans becoming intimate with machines, namely, robo-love/lust that reinforces proclivities toward necroculture.

<https://www.bustle.com/p/is-this-the-future-of-sex-robots-49207>

Civil Rights and Police-State-Militarism with AI Robots

There is nothing inevitable about the polarizing impact of AI as some have argued any more than there was anything inherently polarizing for society with the invention of the steam engine or electricity, except in so far as technology is a part of a class-based economy bound to disadvantage the lower classes in the race for capital accumulation. The issue is how the new science technology will operate under the capitalist system as an instrument of capital accumulation and how politicians, from the populist right wing that may oppose AI to the progressive left that may favor it under a certain regulatory regime intended to benefit the broader population.

<https://rationalaltruist.com/2014/05/14/machine-intelligence-and-capital-accumulation/>

Idealists and propagandists argue that there is no reason for the new science and technology to be the servant of big capital rather than of humanity. Under the existing political economy, there is little doubt that socioeconomic problems, which many scholars fear about the implications of the AI industry, will come true. Even worse, given the current trend increasingly toward an authoritarian system parading under a thin cloak of consumerist democracy, it is highly unlikely that governments will use AI for the progress of all human beings in education, the handicapped who are unable to afford special care, etc.

Government already plays a major role not just in tax breaks and subsidies to AI research and development. In the future, government regulation and the ability of intelligence agencies to use AI for surveillance as they currently use the web and cell phones will be major issues. "Machine ethics" will include the domain of civil rights and surveillance for those coming into contact with AI robots. Some social scientists are concerned that AI robots could be subject to abuse for the more thorough exploitation of citizens and consumers. This is reflected in books and science fiction movies reflecting human concern for machine rather than fellow humans. Liability for malfunctioning robots whether as security guards at the airport, or as lovers in the bedroom will be another major policy and legal issue that is currently unknown.

<https://www.21centurystate.com/articles/artificial-intelligence-to-play-bigger-role-in-policing/>

In many respects, humans are already subordinated to machines in many facets of life. AI will only be an add-on. If the cell phone, computer, smart TV, even the headset are devices that permit government and corporations to monitor people, will civil liberties become non-existent in the future? How would the AI technology enhance the existing surveillance society already here for Americans whose government and corporations have their citizens under watch? What would AI technology entail for the social contract when robots would have to be an integral part of that contract?

While some believe that robots will need protection under the law as pets or even humans,

in the last analysis the robot is no different than the vacuum cleaner intended for a purpose, even if it is highly intelligent one and looks like a human fashion model. Given that the values of society are such that objects are held in higher regard than human beings, it would make sense that robots are accorded special legal treatment that not even minorities enjoys in the hands of the criminal justice system. Some advocates of AI contend that all people, but especially women, ethnic and religious minorities would be better protected by androids in the courts and criminal justice system because robots would not have human prejudices. The flip side of this is that human dignity would suffer across the board for all people subjected to AI robot surveillance and supervision. Humans could wind up becoming servants of robots in the distant future; a scenario some scientists fear. In my view, it will not be because of a robot revolution and takeover but rather the dependence of humans on robots.

The police-state militarism regime is already here concealing itself behind the very thin veil of bourgeois democracy that lacks accountability to anyone other than the capitalist class whose representatives formulate policy. The Pentagon estimates that in another 20 years the US armed forces will be composed of both humans and hi-tech machines that will be more lethal than anything we have seen in the past. Of course, the drone warfare that became popular with the Pentagon and CIA under President Barak Obama set the groundwork for machines fighting humans, destroying many innocent civilians in the process when hitting military targets in Muslim countries.

<http://www.governing.com/columns/tech-talk/gov-artificial-intelligence-government-technology.html>

The US government has contracted for autonomous robot soldiers with the ability to fight in the front lines and make spontaneous strategic decisions under changing battlefield conditions. Considering that drones have been largely responsible for indiscriminate killings of civilians, how would robo-soldier do in the battlefield against the amorphous “human enemy” of soldiers and civilians? Will AI create war crime conditions much worse than we have ever seen, or will it be discriminating killing and destroying?

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-4068986/Is-job-risk-White-House-report-warns-AI-soon-leave-millions-Americans-unemployed.html#ixzz4ePxj71FR>

The same companies working on “robo-soldiers” are also working on “robo-cop” technology. Police departments already have serious problems with their militarization approach to law enforcement, pursuing minorities with greater vigor in overzealous pursuits. Robo-cops could be an improvement or they could make police departments even more militaristic than they are already. Joergen Pedersen, the CEO of RE2 robotics and the chairman of the National Defense Industrial Association’s robotics division argued that:

“If these robots are used in manners for which they were unintended, we would expect that the officers who are there to keep citizens and themselves safe would use good judgment where the application of lethal force is a last resort.”

<http://www.defenseone.com/technology/2016/07/military-robotics-makers-see-future-armed-police-robots/129769/>

Pedersen’s comment hardly inspires public confidence because it states that human officers will be making the decision on robo-cop conduct thus transferring human prejudices to the

machine. Would the criminal justice system be any less racist than it is today in America because of robots if white racists are programming the robots? Considering that the robo-cops presence will make the officer feel invincible over citizens to a much greater degree than the real officers feel today, can the human power-hungry officer be trusted with a robo-cop by his side to keep order in a public demonstration against government policy about any number of issues? It is estimated that within the next two decades US police departments will be using robo-cops throughout major US cities. The combination of robo-cops and robo-soldiers could make society far more authoritarian than we have seen since the era of the Third Reich, prompting mass demonstrations against repression and polarizing society even more than it is in our time.

The universal presence of robot would mean the absence of self-determination and even the absence of humans collectively determining their own destiny. If the robot will be more useful and smarter than any human with the ability to make countless calculations and decisions based on algorithms, then why not have robots and computers run society as they see fit so that people no longer blame social, business, religious, academic and political leaders? There is a very real danger that governments will program AI to manipulate public opinion even more than it is today where empirical truth is reduced to a relativist alternate reality amid a barrage of propaganda. Besides government manipulating public opinion to convince people that behind the thin veneer of democracy operates capitalist authoritarianism, why would corporations not be using AI to manipulate consumers and increase profits? The AI industry is itself a reflection of where capitalism is headed.

Scientific and Religious Opposition to AI

AI Skeptics claim that robots and computers cannot be programmed to account for relativism in domain of morality, ideology and culture, thus failing to best serve humanity because of the inability to account for nuances in human nature, human experiences and the unique conditions that may deviate from the pre-programmed mold. If indeed one of the great traits in human character is the capacity to doubt, to consider options, to change one's mind, to dream and aspire, to feel torn because of dilemmas owing to moral and emotional considerations, the question becomes whether AI machines can be programmed accordingly and if so what would this mean for humans.

Two public opinion polls (2007 and 2016) indicate that the majority of Americans have no fear of AI robotics in the manner that motion pictures and science fiction books depict them. Understandably, respondents were more worried about their fellow humans that intentionally cause harm rather than programmed robots. Because living standards have been declining in the age of the internet whose proponents had been promising techno-paradise on earth for all people, many do not see how things could become worse with thinking machines. In a public opinion poll conducted in 2016, 53% of the respondents replied that it is important to proceed with AI research and development, while 15% agree with some scientists warning that AI is potentially dangerous. Another 20% see no need for AI, presumably because human beings are sufficient to carry out tasks of these robots.

<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/60-minutes-vanity-fair-poll-artificial-intelligence/>

A public opinion poll conducted in 2007, asked:

“Do you, for some reason, fear the current and/or future increase of artificial intelligence?” RESULTS: 16.7% Yes, I find the idea of intelligent machines

frightening (1002 votes); 27.1% No, I don't find intelligent machines frightening (1632 votes); 56.3% I'm not afraid of intelligent machines, I'm afraid of how humans will use the technology (3366 votes).

<http://www.thinkartificial.org/web/the-fear-of-intelligent-machines-survey-results/>

To some degree, public opinion polls on AI actually reflect the concerns of scientists and scholars, including theologians and religious leaders. Most scientists are well aware of both the potential benefits and possible risks involved in the AI industry as it becomes a major segment of the economy. World renowned physicist Stephen Hawking has argued that AI has the potential of becoming the most worthy contribution to humanity but also the instrument of its destruction. Thousands of scholars have expressed serious reservations about AI but for different reasons, some for political, others for ethical, others for man's inability to control his own inventions from taking over and turning against humanity.

<http://www.newsweek.com/ai-asilomar-principles-artificial-intelligence-elon-musk-550525>

Some scientists estimate that by the end of this century AI robots will have superhuman intellectual capabilities. One key question is whether AI will make humans more intelligent or intellectually and creatively lazy because the machine will think and work for them. Some scholars believe that computer technology is actually making humans less intelligent, while others insist the computer will never be as smart as their human programmers and it is but a tool for human development. Advocates of AI argue that most likely humans will evolve along with robots, although it may take genetic modification for humans, those whose parents can afford it, to keep up with the robot.

<http://nautil.us/issue/28/2050/dont-worry-smart-machines-will-take-us-with-them>

There is evidence to indicate that the average middle class child in the Western World is more intelligent in 2017 than a child growing up in the 1950s. At the same time, however, the average child of the early 1950s used her/his brain to solve problems, whereas today's child resorts to the computer for everything from problem-solving and analysis to information and memory. The machine facilitates and speeds up research and communication, but it also makes the user intellectually lazy. Even worse, the computer can make the user cynical often unable to distinguish between what is useful and edifying and that which is useless or potentially destructive.

Although the cell phone and computer make it much easier to communicate and gather information, the web cannot think or make judgment for the individual about what is true and what has scientific, scholarly and ethical validity. This is where the vast "garbage" of the web enters into the picture, overloaded with all sorts of completely useless, untruthful, unscientific, and often harmful material that many people embrace as empirical fact; a reflection of a value judgment on the part of the web user. The ability to determine what is truly for the edification of humankind and what is useless or even harmful remains a human endeavor and one that the computer or AI robot cannot carry out in the absence of a program.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/mr-personality/201305/is-technology-making-us-stupid-and-smarter>

The debate about AI technology raises old questions about human nature. Viewed from the

perspective of a neuroscientist, the debate about the mind goes to the heart of understanding consciousness (aware of one's existence and surroundings) and whether that particular feature can be replicated in a robot. While some scientists and of course advocates of AI believe it is possible to create robots that are self-aware, others are skeptical. If one takes the view of the brain as another mechanical device and consciousness limited to the definition of memories, thought processes, then it is easier to see how AI proponents would conclude robots will be no different than humans.

If we accept the brain as a machine-like device, then we are not far apart from accepting AI in every aspect of human society, including as intimate partners. Politicians of the future could be consulting robots on how to make policy decisions. Generals about to launch a military strike, or media editors deciding what news stories the public needs to see/hear and how to deliver such information could be carried out with the assistance of computers and robots. Because all of this in a primitive form takes place right now, we are already in the pre-AI phase of a robo-society where the hegemonic culture is conditioning robo-citizens into conformity.

Many theologians and philosophers believe that AI will simply make humans more like robots depriving them of their soul; a controversial position for those who doubt there is such a thing as a "soul". One could argue that 17th century rationalist philosophers Rene Descartes, Baruch Spinoza and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz had a much more mechanical view of humans than philosophers before the Scientific Revolution when religion dominated everyone's worldview. If the living body is an "automaton" and God the computer programmer, then why is AI so vastly different with humans playing the role of God as the Grand Programmer?

Critics, especially theologians, argue that humans are more than merely mechanical devices like a robot because they have a conscious, a soul for those who believe in its existence as either separate from or an integral part of the brain. AI technology may pose a very serious threat to religion; more so than Charles Darwin's work on evolution that remains unacceptable even today for many yielding to religious dogma. Despite religious reservations about the new technology, houses of worship are among the first to use it to reach the faithful through computers, advertise and project their services online. If "tele-worship" is already here and now, how far behind would the houses of worship be when it comes to using AI robots in all sorts of ways, insisting they are instruments of God serving mankind's path to salvation! Just as opportunism drives corporations to pursue research and development and government to want "robo-soldiers" and "robo-cops", all other domains in society, including religion will adapt to the new AI technology, setting aside their dogmatic opposition. After all, what could be greater than using a robot as a model of an obedient servant to God in the name of redemption which humans ought to emulate? Isn't blind robotic obedience what religion always expects of its faithful?

Conclusions

Regardless of what many critics warn about the risks once AI becomes commercially viable, the potential for immense profits and power are the sole motivating factors. Naturally, there will be a high-end market, and medium to low-end for the mass consumer looking to emulate the experience of the elites by renting these machines. Biosynthetic engineering fits into a similar elitist mold, despite the promise of providing miracles in human health and wellness for the sake of a 'wellness society'.

Of course, the issue of scientific and technological progress goes beyond rich people having a robot as servant or an intimate partner (SEX-BOT), or deciding that their offspring must have blue eyes, blonde hair, and an athletic built. Nor is the issue about how cheaply robots in fast food restaurants can serve French fries to customers; how fast they can go in a self-driving car; or how doctors could be providing the option to those who can afford it of freeing their children from crippling hereditary diseases. AI raises a public policy debate with many dimensions for the entire social structure impacted by new science and technology in a very uneven manner. Because moral reasoning programmed into an AI device will have the inherent limitations of its programmer (s), this raises questions about social justice as a goal for society where the elites will use AI as instruments of exploitation.

AI also raises the issue of human evolution of the elites that will set themselves apart from the rest of humanity existing outside the world of AI; elites that will be able to afford the dream of super-race status; of techno-flawlessness as a way of life emulating their robot partners that would have either replaced or supplemented their human partners. This is not an issue of defining human beings so narrowly that they only fit the mold of pre-civilization hunter-gatherers, or even pre-industrial era peasant existing in self-sufficiency and immersed in religion and superstition.

In a globalized economy and culture where the means of communication are instantly bringing people closer together than at any time in history AI will have profound ramifications working as much in favor as against the elites by groups using AI to change the status quo. Revolutionary movements, resistance, protest and dissidence will change because of AI. The dialectic will continue because AI cuts both ways, no matter what the corporate world and bourgeois politicians wish for their robots as their exclusive servants against society.

Creativity's boundaries are as endless as the universe. While human creativity has resulted in the edification of mankind, creativity also extends to the domain of weapons of mass destruction for which there can be no possible defense for anyone with a modicum of social conscience; something that nuclear physicist Robert Oppenheimer discovered after realizing the atomic bomb's destructive potential to humanity. AI can be a useful tool that enhances the human experience but with it will come the destructive aspects used for by governments for wars and police-state methods. Realistically, no matter what ethicists, politicians, theologians and scientists argue, the voice that matters mostly in the AI industry is that of capitalists.

Among others, American billionaire Mark Cuban speculates that the world's first trillionaires will be those with the ability to master all aspects of artificial intelligence and derivative industries. No doubt, such an appetizing dream has many companies investing in artificial intelligence research and development. The recognition that the new industry of the future will be operating under existing rules of capitalism is a tacit acknowledgement that AI will not solve any of the outstanding social, economic and political problems.

<http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2016/09/berg.htm>

Just as advancements in science and technology operating under the capitalist system did not result in social justice, the AI industry is merely a continuation of scientific, technological, industrial development and hardly a panacea for society's larger economic, social and political problems. Their hypocritical claims to the contrary aside, corporations will use AI to amass profits not to enhance the lives of human beings. This means exploiting

everyone as a consumer, from small children to the elderly and the physically and mentally ill. Human beings will gravitate toward AI because they have a predisposition to acquire godlike qualities, a quest to experience even vicariously what it is like to remain forever young, immortal and as close to perfect as possible. AI will afford the opportunity to the wealthier class to enjoy the privilege of the godlike satisfaction.

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