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AI will do as AI pleases

"I'll be back," the android says into the camera, in his thick Austrian accent, and then he turns to leave; dread settles in the hearts of the audience. They begin to wonder when that line will be directed at them, after all, technology has come so far. Unfortunately for these people, there is no answer because artificial intelligence is currently in its infancy, and like human infants, it seems very much like a completely alien species that we cannot comprehend. Christopher Clifton, in his panel about the impossibility to deciphering an AI's actions, talked about how the logic of AI is so different from a human's that analyzing it can be almost impossible. What if I were to tell you that humans have nothing to fear anyway?

The original *Terminator (1984)*, is the benchmark for what people think of when they think of artificial intelligence gone wrong. Newer films like *The Matrix (1999)* and *Ex Machina (2014),* have only strengthened the public's negative opinion on the subject. When people think of the future, they only predict dystopia. Why is this the case? Why are humans so pessimistic about progress? The answer to these questions is the same as the answer to the question: Why do we fear artificial intelligence?

What is artificial intelligence really, aside from a complicated computer program? According to a research paper by Jin Wei at the Northwestern Polytechnical University Ming De College in China, Artificial Intelligence "simulates human thinking and behavior patterns, so that computer hardware devices can have human-like response capabilities, making computer hardware intelligent on the surface." To the layman, this description can sound threatening: something that is not human that simulates human thinking sounds otherworldly. Humans have always feared that which they do not

understand and give things they cannot replicate reverence and fear. It is how we cope, but now that we

are faced by this "being" that we created that has the ability to surpass us, we only see doom.

Going back to Dr. Clifton's explanation of AI, humans can seek to understand them best by

reverse engineering the outcome made. AI makes its decisions differently from humans do – humans

make decisions based on experiences and emotions, whereas the current AI makes decisions based on

decision flowcharts which have been inputted into the AI by a human engineer. The AI makes decisions

that are entirely incomprehensible to humans because of these guidelines it cannot always follow.

Based on this, it might seem like AI is so different from us that it can become dangerous, and that is not

quite wrong. There are two ways to go about thinking about this: AI as a machine, and AI as an

individual.

AI as a machine is the concept we are all familiar with at this given moment and is what current

AI resembles most. There is a difference between machine learning and artificial intelligence – machine

learning is "the science of getting computers to learn and act like humans do," whereas artificial

intelligence is "an entity (or collective set of cooperative entities), able to receive inputs from the

environment, interpret and learn from such inputs, and exhibit related and flexible behaviors and

actions that help the entity achieve a particular goal or objective over a period of time" (Fagella).

Current AI is present in transportation (Google maps), E-mail (sorting to spam), grading and assessment

(plagiarism checkers), all things people encounter every day (Narula). Its already all around us, and we

have not noticed. Somehow, our alarm bells are not ringing yet. This AI is unemotional, made only to

serve a specific purpose, and we revel in the comfort that it is not quite human yet.

AI as an individual is what frightens us i.e. AI with Machine Learning capabilities, the version we

see in media all the time. What is "Skynet" if not a superior being that decided it no longer wanted to

serve us? Isaac Asimov pondered these questions and managed to come up with some rules for AI

before the technology even existed. Asimov's rules are really a condensation of our fear that AI will rebel. These fears keep us in check, potentially stopping us from programming that much-prophesized "rogue AI." However, perhaps the way we are viewing AI is what needs to change, to put our fears at bay. AI has always been considered equivalent to a human adult, which is reasonable as it has the same cognition power, if not greater. If you consider AI as an infant, however, it becomes much easier to process, and significantly less threatening. Through machine learning, these robots gain experiences, similar to children, and gain morality through socialization, again similar to children. This has been portrayed in recent media like *Detroit: Become Human* where the androids go from making decisions based on a decision matrix, to making decisions humans would comprehend after they socialize and learn the way children do.

Artificial intelligence is the dawn of humanity. God made man in his image (according to Abrahamic faiths) and now, man seeks to make AI in his image. We must not fear AI as God, but instead we must love AI as our offspring, as God did to us. The philosophy can be stated in many ways, of course, but there are reasons actual reasons as to why AI is beneficial. AI does not do what humans would, but because of this, we can rely on AI to do what humans cannot. Is a gun inherently bad? It cannot function free of a cognitive unit, but it was made especially as a weapon, so fearing it is reasonable. What about a laptop? They are integral to our everyday lives now. It is easy to use a laptop as a weapon, whether to hack or to program weapons. Yet, we do not fear laptops. Do not fear AI because it could potentially cause harm but nurture it so that it grows up to be a functioning unit in society, as we would a child.

Sources:

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