INTELLIGENT LIFE

DILEMMAS

CREATIVE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

The use of AI in creative spaces is complex, and has the potential to transform the industry just as the use of digital illustration tools did when they were first released.

Some artists see AI as a tool to make their process easier. Others are concerned with how AI might take already-limited paying work for artists, while at the same time using past artists' work to generate its own, without compensating them.

Artists play a critical role in society. What policies, systems, and values should we consider to ensure that a world shaped by AI better supports the arts and artists, and doesn't harm them?

FACIAL RECOGNITION

Facial recognition technology advocates make promises of security and convenience, mirroring the rise of surveillance cameras in the 80s.

While some praise its efficiency in crime prevention, others decry an invasion of personal privacy. Researchers have also already found evidence of some technologies being more likely to falsely identify people with darker features.

As our faces become keys to unlock doors and phones, and AI is used to aid in law enforcement, how do we balance security with individual rights and ensure that no group is further marginalized by the technology?

EDUCATION

AI tools have the potential to completely alter our educational systems and force us to rethink how and what we teach and learn.

AI could lead to more tailored education for individual students, more dynamic and engaging interfaces, and streamlined lesson planning for teachers.

It could also lead to ease of cheating given the way we typically structure assignments.
In an evolving classroom and an evolving society, how might we change what we teach and how we assess learning to make sure students are being prepared for the world they'll live in?

AUTOMATED DECISIONS

As AI systems become integral to sectors from banking to hiring, their role is as transformative as the shift from manual bookkeeping to digital databases. Everything from college admissions to job interviews to insurance claims could be highly informed by automated decision-making.

However, flawed datasets without careful ethical and social considerations can lead AI to make biased decisions, perpetuating societal prejudices. How can we harness AI's efficiency while ensuring fairness and transparency?

What do we need to do to steward AI to be a tool that increases equity and access, rather than furthering our divides?

HUMAN-AI RELATIONSHIPS

With AI's progress, we've seen the emergence of synthetic relationships, like apps being tested around virtual friendships with chatbots. Some see these AI companions, from chatbots to humanoid robots, as revolutionary tools for combating loneliness, supporting learning and mentorship, or honing social skills.

Others argue that these relationships might be superficial, potentially leading to emotional detachment from genuine human interactions.

As we blur the boundaries between the digital and real worlds, how can we ensure that AI relationships enrich, rather than replace, our lives and human connections?

AI IN ALIGNMENT WITH HUMAN VALUES

The philosophy of human values—our morals, ethics, and principles—has been debated since ancient civilizations. In today's digital age, we're trying to instill these complex values into complex algorithms that we can't entirely predict.

Some technologists believe that with the right guidance, AI can be a beacon of fairness and impartiality. Yet, skeptics warn of potential misalignments, where AI might inadvertently prioritize certain values over others or interpret them differently.

With a diverse tapestry of human beliefs, who decides which values guide AI? And as we guide AI through the maze of human morality, what are some potential challenges?

GENERAL ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Throughout history, many societies have been fascinated by the quest for universal knowledge. Today's AI researchers dream of creating a General Artificial Intelligence (GAI) that possesses broad knowledge across many domains. Current AI models are much more specific – they are trained to complete specific tasks that, even if complex, don't replicate human intelligence.

While the potential for a collaborative human-AI partnership is exciting, there's also apprehension.

Many experts believe that GAI isn't possible, but critics who believe it is are concerned about what happens if becomes uncontrollable or develops intentions misaligned with ours. As we edge closer to this potential future, how do we ensure we're prepared for all possible outcomes?

MEDICAL BIAS

The Hippocratic Oath has long guided medical professionals to treat all individuals impartially, but research shows that it isn't always the case. Black women, for example, are well-evidenced to receive poorer treatment and have much higher maternal mortality rates than other demographics.

In the era of AI-assisted healthcare, there's hope that machines could lessen those human biases, offering more universally consistent diagnoses and treatment plans.

However, if AI is trained on biased data, it could perpetuate or even amplify existing prejudices. As AI's role in medicine becomes more commonplace, how can we ensure it champions the principles of equity and fair treatment for all patients?

ADVERTISING & CONSUMERISM

The Mad Men era of the 1960s unveiled the art of targeted advertising, capturing the attention and desires of consumers. Fast forward to the 21st century, and AI algorithms curate what we see, shaping our buying habits and even our worldviews.

While many appreciate the personalized experiences, concerns arise about being trapped in echo chambers or having one's data and psychology exploited.

As AI-driven marketing evolves, reminiscent of the transition from radio ads to TV commercials, how do we ensure that our agency is not overly influenced by highly effective tools designed to manipulate our minds and behaviors towards someone else's bottom line?

TECHNOLOGY & FOOD SYSTEMS

From the ancient Egyptian shadoof to modern tractors, innovations have continuously transformed agriculture.

Today, AI-driven drones and sensors promise to optimize yields and conserve resources. But with this digital revolution, there's also the risk of traditional farming wisdom being sidelined, and small-scale farmers facing economic challenges. Some also believe AI could streamline and make food systems more efficient, minimizing waste and maximizing productivity. These systems also risk further depleting biodiversity, and the technology can be energy inefficient.

How can we merge the best of the old with the new, ensuring that AI solves the problems of the current system, rather than simply making them more efficient?

LABOR RIGHTS & WORKER DISPLACEMENT

The industrial revolution brought machines that changed the employment landscape forever. Now, AI promises to automate tasks across diverse sectors, from customer service to manufacturing.

This automation could boost productivity, but it might also lead to job losses and skill redundancy. Recent promises of just transitions in fields like green energy have produced disappointing results, with very few fossil fuel workers being fully supported to thrive in the new jobs created.

As we steer into this new era, echoing the societal shifts of the 19th century, how do we ensure that displaced workers are retrained, supported, and integrated into the future workforce?

ENTERTAINMENT
INDUSTRY

When the Lumière brothers showcased their motion pictures, they revolutionized entertainment. Now, AI can script, edit, and even compose music, reshaping the creative domain.

The recent writers' and actors' strike in Hollywood speaks to growing concerns about people's right to their images and the need to think about how entertainment workers will be protected by the industry.

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How might we think about bringing in a new era of entertainment that properly values human contribution and creativity in the age of AI?

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AUTONOMOUS TRANSPORTATION

The horse-drawn carriage gave way to cars, altering urban landscapes and lifestyles, and resulting in the design of highways and cities built around cars. Today, we're on the brink of another transport revolution with autonomous vehicles.

These AI-driven cars promise to reduce accidents, ease traffic, and provide an opportunity for massive industry-wide shifts to electric vehicles and infrastructure. However, they also introduce new challenges, from ethical decisions in emergency scenarios to potential job losses in driving professions.

As we shift gears into this new era, how do we ensure a smooth transition for all of society?

UNIVERSAL BASIC INCOME

To differing degrees throughout history and across cultures, we've developed systems to support people holding different roles in society and work towards wellbeing for our communities. The idea of social support has evolved over the centuries, from feudal alms to modern welfare states.

With AI potentially displacing numerous jobs, discussions about Universal Basic Income (UBI) have gained momentum. Advocates argue it could be the cushion against AI-induced economic disruptions and support a transition to role-based and community-centered (rather than work-centered) society, while skeptics question its sustainability and impact on human motivation.

As AI reshapes our economy, what are the pros, cons, and complexities of experimenting with UBI as the next evolution in pursuing community-wide wellbeing?

MISINFORMATION & MEDIA

The Gutenberg press democratized information, but it also led to the spread of rumors and unverified tales.

Today, AI can generate convincingly realistic fake news and deepfakes, exacerbating the challenge of discerning truth in the digital age.

While AI tools can also detect and counter misinformation, there's a continuous cat-and-mouse game.

In an era where seeing isn't always believing, how do we maintain trust and integrity in our information sources?