



Ways of Perceiving

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The Future Unveiled: Exploring the Transformative Role of AI in Communications and Its Implications

AI and Communication Technology

The concept of artificial intelligence, hence shall be known as AI, is something most of earth's population were introduced to via works of fiction. I remember clearly that my first introduction with the concept of AI was when my older cousin told me that the opponents in the video game we were playing was the 'computer' playing against us. It seemed incredibly impressive to me at the time as we kept soundly being beaten. I could not have foreseen that in the future AI would be so intertwined with daily life that once could not go a day without escaping it being mentioned, be it through browsers or through software AI has seemingly been integrated everywhere most especially in the communication technology sector.

It is not that surprising in hindsight, man has always been a social creature, that cannot be denied. It is thus fitting that in the field of science communication technology has always been on the forefront of innovation, most notably in recent years. In the corporate workplace especially businesses are choosing to be more digital. This prompts tech giants such as Apple and Microsoft to constantly devise ways to be innovative in an attempt leading us to AI. AI in its current form is foremost being used as a what is known as prompt generation where a user types a question and gets a neat and formatted answer. Google who's search engine is considered the de facto for many has added an AI assistant known as Gemini to enhance their user's experience, this has lead some to think whether search engines maybe one day be replaced with AI completely. (Goode 2024)

The fact that Google is giving such technology credibility is alarming as evidence shows that programs such as ChatGPT has been shown to generate false information (Tucker 2024). This is especially dangerous as the average person is more likely to have trust in tech companies and treat their products with face value leading them to unhesitatingly believe what the program has generated much like one would believe the top result of a Google search without reading the source.

There is also the noted fact that with AI being such a worldwide talking point companies suddenly all integrating AI in more or less the same time frame can be seen as simply following the leader and not truly having an interest to innovate. It can also be compared to how YouTube it's competitors such as TikTok by adopting it's key features I.E short form videos. (Hutchinson, 2024)

The timing of AI's rise is also unfortunate as it coincides with what many consider is a crisis of decreasing attention spans. This crisis is discussed in further depth by journalist Mullen of The Nation in an article titled "The Use of "Attention Capture" Technologies in Our Classrooms Has Created a Crisis" (Mullen 2024) Mullen positions the aforementioned crisis by discussing how tech companies are trying to capture as much of their customer base's as possible, some even attempting to digitize classrooms completely. AI can be seen as another attempt of this form of attention capture strategy, especially in regard to how heavily it is being advertised to students and teachers alike.

The Targeted Demographic of AI

The chosen demographic that AI companies choose to advertise, students and those entering the professional field, should also be scrutinised. These companies such as

ChatGPT are shown to mainly focus on helping students or office workers write in a more professional manner. Indeed, the language structure of AI is often known to be fairly structured and regulated in a way that can be considered as 'corporate speak'. The fact that AI was built in this way could be used as evidence that AI was made for what can be considered the middle to upper middle class where such speak is common especially in academic and corporate fields.

This puts the motivation of these companies to scrutiny. Is this technology being made to improve upon the lives of humanity as a whole or those who work in such jobs in which knowing how to sound professional in an email is a major advantage? AI has been seen as a tool meant to benefit society, even before the recent boom and yet with the main focuses being consistently aimed on this specific demographic it can give off the message of AI being reserved for those to a specific set of society with the aim of supporting this demographic exclusively, with only that demographic being able to reap the benefits these companies say AI will give you.

It can also be seen as a form of setting a status quo for those expected to use it. Carl Jung calls the persona, a mask in which one wears to help navigate the world (McLeod 2024). A persona in the professional world is the expected norm, and with the use of AI programmed with the exact ideal of a professional worker one could theorize that this is an attempt by companies to force a specific persona of an ideal worker onto the workforce and perhaps into the world of large.

The Consideration of Humanity's Pursuit of Beauty

It is then we must talk about AI's influence in the world of art. Indeed, one cannot look for a portrait of Mona Lisa on a browser without first having to go through waves and waves of AI creations first before finding a genuine photograph of the original. AI's inherent ability to produce artwork is incredible. As someone who is personally interested in the arts as an artist and art history enthusiast my feelings in regards to this could be described as dubious.

Ignoring the known fact that AI has been using the art of creatives without consent for years (Banerjee 2024) the use of AI in art at all seemed odd to me. On a personal level, I make art to put myself into it, my painting had every stroke of myself in it, every mistake an awkward line was mine and mine alone. In his book 'Co-Intelligence: Living and Working with AI' Ethan Mollick shows an example of AI generating an art piece of a plane based on one he already drew (Mollick 2024). The picture shown was indeed graphically impressive and reminded me of an old desktop background I had when I was younger. I paid more attention to the pencil drawing the author already did, and in my perhaps biased mind I enjoyed it more due to how it showed the character of the author in the way it was clumsily drawn and yet still showed how Mollick at least attempted to put some effort in if only for the benefit of his readers is an example of why I feel the idea of AI art ever becoming something mainstream seems unlikely.

Indeed, the idea of AI replacing artists is indeed ludicrous because it is based on the idea that humanity would stop wanting to pursue beauty, perfection, vulnerability and the other myriad of reasons on why an individual chooses to pick up a pencil. It may give an image easily and accurately, some have already done better than humans in creativity tests. It however does not take into the account that for most what they like seeing in art is the innate humanity of an artist, and the vulnerability one unconsciously puts into an art piece. The most compelling part of human art is the ability to connect with your fellow man.

The future of AI when interest wanes

In consideration of how AI is now a mainstream speaking point and how much the current news cycle focuses on it, one has to keep in mind that for many years trends in the tech sector have often been seen as outdated as fast as they have arrived.

I remembered how Apple's Siri was considered groundbreaking at the time of its creation, and how Amazon, Google and Microsoft followed suit with their own digital assistants. None of these assistants with the exception of Amazon's Alexa have been nearly as popular as Siri was in its prime. I myself am a dedicated Windows user and while I am aware of the digital assistant program Cortana, I have to date never used it professionally or otherwise in my day to day life. These digital assistants have not been considered cutting edge in a while, but with how much of an investment these companies had made into and how integrated they are in the conscious of the population it would be safe to say that tech companies are not going to suddenly discontinue these programs in the near future.

AI may be heading the same route. It could be the job and industry disruptor many fear it is and disrupt tens of industries, but there is a small chance that it may just be the next Siri. A feature that is not entirely unique nor something the average person uses, just something that was programmed into your pre-packaged device.

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