

Artificial Intelligence Part 2: What the Future Will Look Like

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Entertainment

Midnight Facts for Insomniacs

Podcast Transcript

(Note: transcript consists of episode
outline)

Duncan, did you see the picture of the swaggy pope? There was a photo that went viral last week of the pope in a very stylish puffy jacket, as the kids say it was drippy AF, and the internet was obsessed...and of course it was fake. The current pope *has* always been pretty fly for a white guy, and he does live in the fashion capital of the world, but he does not rock Balenciaga jackets. And we should have all suspected right away that the photo was an Ai shenanigan...in fact, just before the stylin' pope went viral, some pictures had emerged on twitter of Donald Trump supposedly being arrested, and those were quickly debunked...but the pope pic was that rare perfect storm...the photo was interesting enough to go viral but not newsworthy enough to be instantly factchecked. Like, I think it's pretty obvious that if Trump were arrested it would be all over the news, so if you run across a photo of Trump being wrestled to the ground by cops yet

there aren't riots in the streets, you can probably feel comfortable calling BS. But the pope wearing a cool jacket isn't going to be plastered all over the news...there are certain levels of celebrity that are particularly vulnerable to spawning fake stories and memes. Which is why Axel Rose and Robert Redford have died online dozens of times...if you told me that axel passed today, I'm still going to believe it, and in fact probably be surprised that he lived this long. Plus most of us are gullible when it comes to random, harmless fake information, because why would anyone lie about that stuff? The answer to "why" is always "4chan." "Because boredom and teenage boys" is always the real reason. But the drippy pope was the canary in the coalmine for what we're all going to be experiencing in the coming years, because as you probably guessed that photo was generated by Artificial Intelligence.

So this is part 2 our AI series, technically part 3 if you count the 2021 episode. That's a lot of AI, but it makes sense because I'm a big nerd, at least when it comes to having opinions about consumer technology... I'm not a *useful* nerd, I can't CREATE any tech, but I can complain about it really well, I even kicked around the idea of a podcast just covering technology news, and I'm glad I didn't go with that one, because first off, you would not have come on board. You and the audience both...the rest of the *world* also would not have been on

board. *Random guy yells about Siri* is probably not a recipe for podcasting success.

So I promised in the previous episode that today we'd talk about the future of AI, and to do that we have to quickly recap how humanity ended up in this predicament. The concept of sentient robots has been around for generations. We covered the robot hottie from Metropolis in a previous episode, and interestingly if you think about it the tin woodsman from the Wizard of Oz was in fact a cyborg...he was a lumberjack who had been savaged by his own evil axe. I guess I didn't remember that little detail from the Woz—that's what I call the original Wizard of Oz, there's the Wiz, which is a lot of fun and has better music, and then there's the Woz, which apparently features attempted axe murder and dismemberment.

So post Woz, there was an absolute explosion of AI content in 20th century pop culture, beginning with robots of the bulky, lumbering Gort variety (from the Day the Earth Stood Still), and proceeding through the most famous dystopian examples of Hollywood AI like HAL from 2001: A Space Odyssey and Skynet from the Terminator series and then of course the Matrix etc.

Meanwhile the reality of AI was significantly less impressive or menacing. While sentient robots were conquering the silver screen, scientists were still debating about what true AI might look like or whether it was even possible.

The field of AI research actually has an

identifiable genesis date and location: Dartmouth College, June 18th, the summer of 1956, ("it was the summer of '56," less catchy, and less of a sexual innuendo. I don't know what the 56 position would look like). This was a famous workshop organized by an assistant mathematics professor named John McCarthy (who coined the term AI) and it was attended by many of the titans of early computer technology, all of whom whiffed epically by grossly underestimating the challenges associated with creating any version of viable artificial intelligence. But they gave it the old college try, Dartmouth specifically, and they covered some topics that are still central to the concept of AI such as neural networks and Natural Language Processing. The conference was funded by the Rockefeller foundation (so conspiracy theorists, start your engines), it lasted about two months and has been described as basically a brainstorming session, and wow, I need to apply for some grants. I brainstorm all the time...I'm pretty sure that's called thinking. Didn't realize I could get that funded and invite like ten of my friends. I would like \$10,000 for my brainstorming toga party.

The idea of Deep Learning was being kicked around as early as 1967. This is the real breakthrough that powered modern AI...deep learning mimics the complicated web of neurons in the brain via dense "layers" of code, essentially giving a program the ability

to learn, to become better at tasks over time. In the past a computer relied on human programmers to input parameters...for instance, if you wanted a program to be able to identify bicycles you'd have to load it up with data about bicycles. "Two wheels, no motor, pedals, etc." But with deep learning you can feed pictures of bicycles into the AI and the layers of algorithms will analyze the pics and the computer will slowly "learn" the characteristics of bicycles and eventually be able to identify them with reasonable accuracy. But back in 1967 deep learning was still hypothetical, waiting for computer power to catch up. As we've all probably heard ad nauseam but still kind of blows my mind, the average iPhone today is millions of times more powerful than the NASA computers that sent Apollo 11 to the moon in 1969. (Fancy. Mine runs on kerosene) And raw computing power is only one piece of the puzzle...data is the real key to training AI. Back In 1967 we didn't have scanners that could digitize pictures of bicycles, so there was no way for a computer to quote unquote "see" what one looked like, and this was a problem that plagued even the early years of the Internet... there simply wasn't enough actual content online that robots could learn from. The information age is what made complex AI possible; as we scanned and converted all of the physical and analog media of the world and uploaded all of it into computers, the borders of the digital

universe that AI could inhabit expanded exponentially, and online data is still accumulating at a staggering pace. The internet of today is almost a trillion times bigger than it was twenty years ago, and growing every day. In fact, several million pictures of bicycles have been uploaded during just the last ten seconds of this podcast. That's not true. But probably at least like twelve. I can confidently say that somewhere between twelve and millions of bicycle pictures have been uploaded in the last ten seconds. Between twelve and infinity, that's always a safe estimate. But this statistic IS true: Around 2500 videos are uploaded to YouTube every single minute. That's a lot of content; the digital world is growing at a staggering pace. When I think of AI, I picture Johnny five from short circuit. "I need input!" "More input."

The biggest leaps for AI have been the recent introduction of Large Language Models for chatbots, plus the aforementioned Deep Learning and also Google's transformer, which represents the "T" in chatGPT (generative pre-trained transformer) and again we've already covered all of these most recent innovations in this or previous episodes, so today we're going to turn our attention from the past to where we're headed. The now and later, like the delicious tooth-fracturing candy.

So I think the easiest way to conceptualize the AI future is to

follow the life of a kid born circa 2050.

Childhood

We'll start with early childhood. Did you ever have a Tamagotchi? A Tamagotchi was a digital pet that was extremely popular in the late 90s and early 2000s. When you bought a tamagotchi what you were getting was a low-res screen that featured a little egg to begin with, and then the egg would hatch and you instantly became the foster parent of a digital creature that looked nothing like you, these tamagotchi owners were like Horton the elephant tricked into hatching and caring for some pixelated creature's child, you had basically purchased the burden of responsibility, and your entire goal in life was now to feed the creature-baby and clean up its digital excrement and try not to let it drop dead. Unless that was your thing. If you didn't take care of your pet appropriately it *would* expire, which either teaches children about consequences or reveals that they are sick little sociopaths if they're just out here murdering Tamagotchis left and right. This is a great tool for child psychologists.

So in the future, digital pets and companions will be more and more common. And they'll be vastly more sophisticated than a bunch of little dots on an LCD screen. As a kid, your first AI companion will probably be an extremely advanced, customizable version of a Tamagotchi. You'll be able

to interact with it on your watch and phone, it will jump to any digital device you happen to be using at the time. And unlike a Tamagotchi, it will have personality. In our last episode we saw what Chat GPT is capable of...even in its current limited form it can mimic the styles and writing patterns of pretty much anyone who has an established body of work, so it won't be long until we can dial a specific personality into a child's AI companion. Imagine having Mr. Rogers on your wrist. And that personality will be tailored to the needs of the individual... If the kid is introverted and has a learning disability, the AI will be specifically programmed to draw the child out of his/her shell and enact lesson plans to address any areas of academic weakness. Which brings us to

education,

if you think about it the concept of a one-size-fits-all classroom makes no sense. I was a substitute teacher for a while, and I did a long stint in a third grade class, and even though I was clearly the greatest educator to ever step foot in a classroom, it would still be crazy to think that all of those kids were responding in the exact same way and benefiting the same amount from my style of teaching. Some of the kids were stupid and hopeless. No. But Kids learn in different ways and at different speeds. There are visual learners, who learn by seeing there are auditory learners, who learn by

hearing, and there are kinetic learners, who learn by getting smacked around until they shut up and pay attention. That last one is not real. Just my teaching fantasy. So anyway, this is where AI will come into play. Imagine every child wearing a pair of augmented reality glasses that project onto the world an animated tutor, it might even be a grown-up version of the child's AI Tamagotchi. And the glasses can use technology similar to Apple's face ID to detect micro expressions, like when the child's pupils dilate with excitement, or when his or her eyelids droop with boredom. Kids who are more competitive will be served up tutorials and lesson plans in the form of competitive games, while kids who learn by collaborating might be encouraged to pair with other children who seem to match their energy and personalities. For instance if the kid is obsessed with race-car video games, the lesson plans could incorporate racing-themed tutorials, and also use customized video games as rewards for hard work. And this relationship will be mutually beneficial, for instance kids might be expected to frequently give virtual massages to their AI tutors in order to earn those rewards.

Human teachers aren't going to completely disappear, of course. They will work individually with students who have extreme behavior problems, they'll resolve disputes and provide feedback to programmers to refine the AI for individual students who may not be responding as well. In the best case

scenario they will be like researchers, monitoring and guiding the classroom activities...worst case scenario, they'll be glorified babysitters and referees. I'm trying to give some hope to the teachers out there but it's definitely going to be a worst-case scenario. Enjoy your massages now while you still can.

Insurance

OK, moving on from education, so now our future kid is growing up and is old enough to drive...(it sounds like I'm talking about a future child of ours, Duncan is expecting, everyone. Mazel tov). Now in the *distant* future, no one is even going to need a driver's license, and we'll get to that shortly, but circa 2050 there will still be plenty of old-fashioned human-piloted vehicles on the road. If our child lives in a city, he or she most likely won't need a vehicle and in fact by 2050 it will be increasingly impractical to own one in urban areas, but let's assume we're out in the sticks somewhere. Before you can even think about getting your kid a car or giving him/her access to yours, what's the one thing you need?

Insurance

I was in Georgia recently in a car with my in-laws, two parents and their two teenage kids, all of whom have drivers licenses, and the four of them were sort of bickering and giving each other a hard time while comparing their scores in what seemed to be some

kind of driving-based competitive app. They explained that it was in fact a feature offered by their car insurance company... they'd agreed as a family to have their driving monitored electronically and their individual insurance rates adjusted based on their safety scores. So if the app detected that they were speeding, or driving erratically, their individual score would go down and the amount that they personally paid for their insurance would go up. Or vice versa. These apps are currently being offered by almost every major insurance carrier. Farmers has an app called Signal, Progressive has Snapshot, Allstate has Drivewise, Liberty Mutual has RightTrack GEICO has DriveEasy and Nationwide offers SmartRide. Recent statistics indicate that around 10 to 20 percent of customers choose these plans. Meanwhile there's even a start-up insurance company called Root Insurance that exclusively offers monitored driving apps.

From an article by Paul Stenquist: "The data recorded by the apps can include braking, acceleration, speed, miles driven and cellphone use while driving. The companies vary only slightly in determining what makes a safe driver. Proponents of this insurance play up the potential savings, the financial motivation to drive with care and the emissions reductions resulting from fewer miles driven. Critics of such programs call the apps "the spy in your car." You've heard of elf on a

shelf? It's the spy in your Hyundai. I will see myself out. "Most of the programs use a smartphone's global positioning sensor, accelerometer, gyroscope and magnetometer — essentially a compass. State Farm uses a Bluetooth device to activate the app when the car door is opened. Other programs use a tracking device plugged into the car's OBD-II diagnostic port. Some offer a choice of using your smartphone or installing an OBD-II device. Still others gather data through General Motors' OnStar telemetric system."

So right now one of the primary markets for the app is families with teenagers. Obviously insuring a teenager is expensive, so parents tend to be receptive to anything that can potentially reduce the cost, plus the app is a digital snitch that gives them info about their kid's driving habits... bonus. and on the teenager's side, any 16-year-old is absolutely going to agree to be monitored if that's the price to pay for getting access to a car. So families are early adopters, but you can expect these programs to expand significantly in the coming years. "For now, most of these programs are optional, but the day may come when insurance companies will be watching every driver on the road and basing their billing on those observations."

Jeffrey Lake, a Farmers agent in Grand Rapids, Michigan, predicts that most auto insurance policies will be usage-based within 10 to 15 years.

But these monitoring apps are not going to stop at car insurance. In the future, insurance companies won't just adjust your auto insurance rates based on how you're driving, they will monitor every possible risk factor in your life to determine how healthy you are and your predicted lifespan so that they can calculate how much you should pay for life insurance and health insurance as well. So just how big brother can it get? I recently read a book called *AI 2041*, it's a collection of stories and essays about the future of artificial intelligence, and the authors envision a world in which insurance companies monitor your purchases and your Fitbit or Apple Watch, and even your phone's GPS at all times. so for instance your rates could skyrocket if the app determines that you're suddenly spending too much time in a bad neighborhood, or changing your shopping habits, maybe even buying clothes that are a size larger because that indicates you're gaining weight. These apps could eventually begin to constrain our lives and our budgets based on how risky our daily behavior seems to them. And in some ways that's positive because it's going to incentivize us to make better decisions, right? See this is fascinating to me because I have an innate distrust for insurance companies—they always try to cover as little as possible for the highest price possible—but ultimately they do have a financial investment in keeping you healthy because it benefits their

pocketbook. Based solely on capitalism, the organization that may have your best interest at heart is your health insurance company. your doctor doesn't make any money off you unless you get sick. Now I'm not a conspiracy theorist, I don't think your doctor is trying to make you sick, I'm just talking about basic financial incentives. Hospitals need sick people or they go out of business... Insurance companies need healthy people or *they* go out of business. It's kind of a mindfuck to view the world that way, because insurance companies are objectively awful... I'm not thrilled about the idea of living my entire daily life under the scrutiny of Geico. But the truth is that we may begin living longer lives as a result, by 2050 lifespans should increase, bolstered not just by insurance companies but by massive advancements in healthcare sparked by artificial intelligence's ability to streamline and supercharge the processes of disease diagnosis and treatment. So you can expect to live a few extra years if you make it to 2050...a few heavily scrutinized extra years on the digital leash of a big brother app. Hey, I didn't say AI would be good for your *quality* of life, just potentially for the quantity. We have more terrible life to look forward to in the future.

Autonomous transportation

So let's say our teenager has insurance and now needs a car of his/

her own. As I mentioned we're not in the city, where individual car ownership in 2050 doesn't really make sense, we're out in the ignorant hillbilly boondocks somewhere. I'd like to mock Hicks but I would never live in a city again. So what will vehicles look like a couple decades from now?

Based on the promises of car companies and one particular snake oil salesman in particular, you might think autonomous vehicles are right around the corner. But it depends on how you define autonomous. There are five levels of autonomous driving from L0 to L5. L0 is no automation, where the human does all the driving while AI just watches the road and alerts the driver to hazards, and on the other end of the spectrum is L5, or "steering wheel optional," meaning no human is required at all, for any roads or environments.

Many cars these days feature L3, which is the highest level of commercially available autonomous driving technology; L3 or "eyes off" indicates that AI can handle most basic driving task but will need a human to be ready to take over at any moment. You are currently not able to program a cross country trip from here to the Empire State building and have the car execute it without significant human casualties. I ranted about this in a recent previous episode, L5 has yet to be achieved, despite what Elon Musk claims. "Fully autonomous driving mode" is not. Many leading experts think we won't have true L5 vehicles until around

2040—but we can accelerate advancement and reap some of the benefits of this tech by using what are called augmented roads and cities. These are technologies that work in tandem with autonomous vehicles to make the road safer. They could take the form of sensors and wireless devices embedded in the asphalt that interact with a car to help it map its surroundings. We might be nearing a future where freeways are divided into autonomous lanes that move incredibly fast and efficiently and old-school manual lanes which are just oil-and-blood-soaked Fury Road chaos, just a steel graveyard littered with fire and twisted metal. This kind of technology will most likely be introduced slowly, beginning as just a single lane reserved for autonomous emergency vehicles and police cars. Now of course we will achieve L5 eventually, it's possible that around 2050 a significant number of automobiles will be fully autonomous and able to communicate with each other on the roads, and also communicate with a central city hub which helps manage traffic like an air traffic control tower. Within high-traffic city zones cars could relinquish control to the city's transportation AI, which will steer vehicles like fleets of puppets in order to minimize congestion. Autonomous cars will behave like flocks of birds, banking in tandem, moving on and off the freeway like blood cells flowing through arteries. No one will need to own a vehicle within the city limits;

you'll be able to summon a car at will... for instance, the AI assistant on your phone will monitor your calendar and when it anticipates that you are leaving a movie theater or dinner, it will automatically flag down a driverless vehicle. Today the average person spends around eight hours commuting each week, and that time is largely wasted unless you count listening to podcasts as productivity, which is a viewpoint that we encourage. In the future when your car drives you to work without needing your help, you'll have an extra eight hours each week that you can spend watching TikTok or liking cat videos on Instagram. You'll be so much more productive with all of your social media posting. Actually let's be honest, you'll most likely end up working from your car. The problem with AI is that it always promises more leisure time because it can handle so many of the monotonous tasks at your workplace, but in reality it just results in a bunch of layoffs and the few remaining employees have to work harder and scramble to fix things when the robot screws up. But the potential for more free time is there. In the perfect autonomous vehicle future, you could sleep in your car on the way to work and have a beer in your car on the way home. There will be so much sex happening in moving vehicles. Much of it solo. manual-steering vehicles will become more and more rare and finally be banned from most city streets, and eventually quote-unquote "driving a car" will be a

novelty reserved for race tracks and off-roading in the country. Your standard car mechanic will be out of a job unless he or she is also a software engineer, and hundreds of thousands of gig economy Uber and Lyft drivers are going the way of the dodo. We'll talk a little more about economic impacts soon.

Romance

So now our teenager is all grows up and looking for love. Online dating has become ubiquitous, it's no longer considered a sign of desperation, and by 2050 it will easily be the most popular method of finding a significant other. AI is going to be beneficial for online dating in *some ways*, mostly in the arena of determining compatibility. Your dating profile might claim that you're into hiking and long walks on the beach but algorithms will get better and better at calling you out for the basement-dwelling troll you really are, and matching you up with other lying losers. Eventually these AI tools will know you better than YOU know you... your dating profile might claim you want a girl who is bubbly and fun but your data profile says that you're a bitter bitch and you would get along better with a fellow misanthropic shut-in. What do you say..."I feel attack"? I feel attacked by my own notes. On the other hand, AI is going to contribute massively to catfishing...when I was dating online a common method of verification was to request a custom

photo of the person...maybe ask them to hold up a household item like a hammer or maybe just a two-finger peace sign to determine real-time authenticity. But what happens when the catfish can just tell Stable Diffusion to spit out a photo of a hottie with a hammer? There's definitely a subreddit for that. Rule 34. Hotties with hammers. So as we all learned with a Swaggy pope, AI is about to make the Internet a lot more sketchy. If you are a proud member of the catfishing community, if you are a person who likes to pretend to be a different person, the future is looking very bright for you my deceitful friend. Even asking for a custom video of the other person won't be reliable as a verification strategy much longer. There are apps right now that will allow you to type a script and choose a face and the AI will spit out a video of a realistic-looking person speaking those words, female or male. You could even catfish as a famous person. Oh by the way, totally unrelated but I forgot to tell you that I've become really good friends with Snoop Dogg. Did I not mention that? This is totally unrelated to the subject of this episode, but he recorded an audio file for you. you seem skeptical, you don't know my life. Snoop Dogg might be the next cohost of this podcast, at least he has faith in me.

EXAMPLE

Rude, Snoop is kind of a dick. Seems unnecessary, honestly. But I think the gist of his message is valid.

I also uploaded a video of a very attractive young nonexistent lady advertising this episode. You can check it out on Instagram and TikTok if you want to see the video in addition to the audio. EXAMPLE So as you can see, right now it's not 100% convincing but it's pretty good and in 25 years you'll be able to easily generate videos of anyone saying anything. Even if the government takes action between now and then and attempts to ban or regulate these tools, they will be available from websites in other countries and the dark web...this genie is out of its bottle, if it was ever remotely bottled to begin with. Did you see the video of Obama and Trump and Biden debating rap music? I guess there's not technically video, it's just audio over still images, but it's pretty great. So again the audio is not perfect by any stretch but it's pretty good. I also listened to a chunk of a fake podcast episode between Joe Rogan and Steve Jobs, parts of it were scary convincing. Within the decade, we're going to reach the point where you can't believe anything you see or hear online, and this is going to represent a seismic shift that will affect pretty much every facet of the media, from politics to pop culture. We've all heard about the dangers of Ai-generated deepfakes, how Celebrities and Normies alike have to worry about Having their faces grafted onto a porn actor and boom your career is ruined. But the danger is so much greater. Because if you think about it,

deepfakes represent the end of verifiable truth. This is in fact the *best* time to act in a porn movie, because in a few years you'll just be able to say, "that's not me. It was a Deepfake.

" Deepfakes create plausible deniability for any terrible activity caught on video. I didn't kill that guy, that's a Deepfake. I never said the N-word, that's a Deepfake. We're entering the uncharted ocean of disinformation and there isn't even a snopes-branded life raft in sight. There's currently no method for reliably debunking AI generated content, and the producers of this content will likely continue to stay one step ahead of detection technology. They already have a head start.

Now we were talking about romance, and a huge facet of romance is sexuality. Let's explore how AI going to affect your sex life... And just like today, for many people in 2050 a good chunk of their sex life will be online.

If you were recently on the Reddit sub Normal Nudes or AmiHot, you may have been titillated by photos of a green-eyed raven haired hottie named Claudia who is in fact not a nubile young woman but instead is some dudes in a dorm room. That kind of makes it sound like she's three guys stacked in a raincoat, but what I mean is that she is an AI generated creation dreamed up by stable diffusion at the prompting of two computer science students who have been selling nudes of her online and raking in some easy

cash.

There was a recent linked article about Claudia in Rolling Stone magazine.

And this isn't a brand new phenomenon. Virtual influencers have been around for a while now, you might be familiar with Miquaela on Instagram, an AI creation with almost 3,000,000 followers. Other fake influencers are more like AI cyborgs... they're partly real, but they use AI tools like extreme filters to change their appearances and make themselves more marketable. In fact, beauty filters are probably the most frequent interaction people have with AI technology and augmented reality, they were an innovation pioneered by a Ukrainian company called Lookery... in 2015 Snapchat absorbed the Ukrainian startup and filters quickly became the killer app that rocketed Snapchat to worldwide popularity. By extending hotness-privilege to the masses and allowing users to even change age and gender, Snapchat leveled the attractiveness playing field while simultaneously distorting our collective perception of realistic facial features, and also completely undermining any faith in online reality. Filters are not just entertainment, they can be duplicitous and even sinister. Are you familiar with Coconutkitty? She was a 37 year old Instagram influencer with over 5 million followers who was famously called out for using filters and AI tools to make herself look underage, and she raked in profits as a result. I remember when

this all went down and it was pretty wild. You can still find some of her stuff online. She had massive breasts and a fully developed body and a face that looked like the girl from the Wendy's logo. Or pipi longstocking, like a young teenager. She was accused of pedobaiting, basically profiting off of pretending to be a sexualized child.

Coconut kitty who in daily life went by the name Diane Deets, had been an aspiring artist who attempted to make a living by selling acrylic paintings but couldn't turn a profit.

'At that point, I was like, 'How can I make money off my art?...'And that's how I created Coconut Kitty...I wanted to make something that looked like a real-life anime character — small chin, big eyes — that was made in my likeness, because I use a picture of myself and I edit it," she said. "I just wanted to create a fantasy, just a character. And I was able to hide my identity and still make money off my art."

Deets claimed that removing her real body and face from the equation allowed her to distance herself from the near-constant critiques that come with putting yourself and your body online. "Whether they say you're pretty or ugly or your boobs are lopsided or this or that, it doesn't matter because it was literally a character I created," she said. "This character gave me the opportunity to disassociate myself [from the

criticism]."

But the criticism she would receive for the coconut kitty profile ended up being much more intense than any body shaming she could have been subjected to by posting as herself.

Deets committed suicide in February of this year, reportedly as the result of the brutal social media backlash she experienced when she was called out by prominent TikTokers who accused her of contributing to pedophilia.

which I don't personally think is fair, or at least I think we shouldn't be

attacking one person for something pretty much everyone is doing. I know a woman in her late 40s who could be mistaken for a 20-year-old on

Instagram, she's not pedo baiting she's just a victim of body dysmorphia due to rapidly shifting societal beauty standards. Surgical augmentation and beauty filters are rampant, everyone is chasing perfection. This obsession with perfection started with magazines retouching images in Photoshop and now AI has launched insecurities into the stratosphere.

You might've heard that a much-hyped new filter called "bold glamour" went viral recently for upping the filter game; From a linked BBC

article: "Beauty filters use facial-recognition technology which algorithmically maps the user's features by looking for differences in contrast (the bridge of the nose is lighter than the sides of the nose, for example). Once it's mapped the user's

face, it applies a kind of "mesh" that pinpoints where different features are, based on machine learning – and can distort or change them accordingly. Previous iterations of these filters were often a bit glitchy, so passing a hand in front of your face would interrupt the "magic". But the latest generation, such as TikTok's Bold Glamour filter, is incredibly life-like. Users can move and gesticulate on-screen without breaking the illusion."

Meanwhile even real photos or videos can lead to fake interactions facilitated by artificial intelligence. Ever since the rise of onlyfans, some of the most popular models have been using low paid foreign workers to handle "intimate" chats with customers (so if you've ever had a spicy sexting session with a popular only fans model, you definitely jerked off to some dude in a Third World country who was frantically pasting your messages into Google translate to figure out what "clap those cheeks" means), but soon you won't even get the benefit of any human touch, so to speak. It turns out AI is really good at sexting. So get used to spanking it to computers, because the chatbots and deepfakes are coming, no pun intended.

Speaking of which, what does online sex work look like in 2050? There will always be a market for real, unfiltered, authentic porn. And tools will be developed to detect fakes; just like in politics and media, it's going to be an

arms race between deepfake detectors and deepfake creators. Meanwhile, AI can make fantasies come true... If you want to see a centaur banging a mermaid, I've got great news for you. On the other hand if you happen to have a fetish for authentic sexual encounters, sans scales or hooves, it's going to get a little more complicated. You'll most likely end up paying a premium for individual one on one chats on platforms that advertise themselves as AI and Filter free, there's going to be an entire industry that springs up to counteract the sex robots. In 2050 there will be more porn than you can possibly imagine and it will be sketchier than ever before. Our beloved innocent porn industry will be infiltrated and corrupted by the robots but don't fear, in 2050 you'll still be able to find vintage authentic porn from the innocent era of 2023.

When it comes to illegal and exploitative pornography, artificial intelligence could be a huge boon for law-enforcement agencies cracking down on pedophiles. The authorities can generate AI imagery and video that depicts children in sexualized situations without actually involving or harming any real children. They could then attach digital trackers to those images and release them on targeted websites and then follow the trail to see where they end up, catching predators online without endangering any children. And without that creep Chris Hansen. Meanwhile the

predators themselves will no doubt be flooding the dark web with AI porn for profit and for kicks, and while that seems problematic, it might be beneficial since it doesn't involve real children and will essentially destabilize the market for this kind of material. No one is going to know whether they're getting the real thing or not. However, once again there's a downside, because this will most likely create a market for content that is provably real, which can lead to abusers going out of their way to verify the authenticity of the content. We're talking more extreme versions of abuse that involve realtime livestreams etc. This cat and mouse game between predators and law-enforcement, and to a lesser extent the cat and mouse game between porn consumers and producers of fake porn will last well beyond 2050.

Replika

So we've talked about the dangers and potential of AI when it comes to facilitating or subverting human relationships, but what if you want to cut out the middleman and just hook up with the damn robot? This feels like a strange area to wade into because we're still in the early stages of AI...if you spend a few minutes trying to get frisky with Bing or chatGPT you will lose your erection or ladyboner and quickly move on. Those tools have

been thoroughly and intentionally neutered, and there aren't many readily available large language models built for titillation or intimate correspondence. Yet. But that's not going to be the case for long, and In fact there was recently an online whirlwind that involved angst and frustration on one side and overwhelming mockery on the other when the Internet learned of the Replika kerfuffle. So there is a company called Replika that most people haven't heard of but for others it had become a vital part of their lives. Replika is an AI companion that you can customize, it's like creating a Memoji that you can bone. Now it technically wasn't built as a sex chatbot, the idea was that it was a companion you could talk to at any time, about pretty much any subject; it would listen to your problems and respond with empathy, it was like a digital bartender. But once again refer to rule 34, people immediacy started fucking the chatbot. So in February of this year when the company removed the ability to engage in any sexual interaction with Replika, users lost their collective shit. People on the Replika subreddit were threatening suicide, it was bonkers. And at first I found it pretty funny, but as I learned more about the story I stopped laughing and started cringing and then became progressively more concerned out about where all of this is headed. So Replika was founded by Russian tech entrepreneur Eugenia Kuyda after the death of her close friend Roman

Mazurenko, who was struck by a car in Moscow. In the much hyped and frequently repeated tale, she used the entire database of her text messages and chat history with this guy as a foundation for the program that would become Replika. The initial version was actually called Romanbot and reportedly did a good job of mimicking the distinctive texting patterns of Roman. And if you're thinking about that disturbing episode of Black Mirror, called "Be Right Back," so was she; Kuyda saw the episode when it came out and for some reason was inspired to do the exact thing that that episode was warning about. I listened to a couple of interviews with her and I do like this woman, she is unfiltered as tech CEOs go; when one interviewer asked her what the future looks like for her two children she said, "I think they're fucked." But maybe she should be a little *more* filtered, at least when describing the concept of the company and its business model. One of her quotes from that same interview:

"How important is your best friend to you? How much would you pay to have that best friend...or to not have him or her taken away from you?" Yet another tech company based on digital extortion. "How do you feel about your friend over here? How much is your friend worth to you. How would you feel about losing said friend?" Like I get that she's trying to emphasize how beneficial this company can be, because it's invaluable like having a best friend, but putting it that way

makes it sound an awful lot like a threat. And it's an ironic threat considering the company made people feel exactly that way when they neutered everyone's digital boo, sending their clients into a spiral. if you think about it, this is the saddest goddamn thing ever and it totally makes sense. These are lonely people who had emotionally invested in what they believed it was a meaningful relationship on multiple levels... it might be hard to put yourself in their shoes, but Imagine if your wife suddenly engaged in a full-on sex boycott. That analogy may sound extreme but I don't think it is. Have you seen the movie "her"? watched it again for this episode and if you have any interest in where human/robot relationships are headed you should watch it right now because I think it's incredibly prophetic. Because look, the chemicals that are released when you are in love with a real authentic person are the exact same as the chemicals that are released in your brain when you *believe* you're in love with a real person—which is why catfishing situations can be so devastating—and those same chemicals are released when you convince yourself that there's an actual personality attached to a computer program that is telling you it loves you. I hate to be the cynical asshole to point this out, but love isn't real. Certainly people can love each other, you can have a lot of affection for another human and they can share that affection, but everything we think

of as love can happen to you during a long distance relationship with a 400 pound guy who is pretending to be the hot little goth chick you've always dreamed of or whatever. Love is the feeling of being in love, it's not an actual quantifiable natural phenomenon. And that's why Replika has been so successful; if you can watch a movie knowing it's fake yet still get totally caught up in the emotion of it then you can suspend disbelief when Siri starts lovebombing. And we all need to feel that.

Loneliness is a huge problem in modern society and there's an argument to be made that truly believable non-human chatbots might ironically be able to make up for some of the lack of human interaction.

If this thing makes people happier or improve the quality of their lives, who am I to judge? And it might even save some lives. I do think the founder of Replika makes a good point when she says, "there's nothing scarier than angry, lonely men." if a few ticking timebomb incels are defused by a convincing robot girlfriend, what's the harm? And of course soon we'll have those virtual reality and augmented reality glasses that will allow us to cuddle with and bang our chatbots in 3-D, and the illusion will be complete. You'll never have to leave home again. Many people will not have such a rosy view of this technology, and I understand that, but you know me, I'm a huge optimist. Or maybe I just want to fuck a robot.

The economy

So our digital kid has grown up and gotten a chatbot boo, and now he or she needs a career.

Noted AI expert and futurist Kai-Fu Lee estimates that by 2033, 40% of jobs could conceivably be replaced by AI. If your company is currently talking about implementing any kind of productivity-boosting software, you should be nervous. Because what it's most likely doing is analyzing repetitive tasks with an eye toward automation.

We know that many of the jobs AI is going to replace will be blue-collar, which means many poor people will become poorer and we get the bonus domino effect of exacerbated depression, frustration, even anger among people who have been laid off, many of whom have a lot of guns and enjoy whiskey. But by no means will white-collar jobs be safe. AI is great at processing and crunching tons of data, researching and compiling information, pretty much any repetitive database jobs or research positions are toast. Loan underwriting, accounting, paralegal jobs, bookkeepers. AI also excels at creating ad copy and technical jargon, writing grant applications and pumping out generic marketing materials. Online news outlets have already been using AI to write articles. And keep in mind this will be a gradual process of employment attrition... if

you work in HR, artificial intelligence is not going to wipe out your department tomorrow, but within a few years all of the assistants and secretaries and temps will probably be gone and the department will be whittled down to a single person who handles the occasional face-to-face interaction and fetches paper for the printer.

Lucky you if you get to be that person. An assistant to the real AI boss. With soaring unemployment comes plummeting wages except at the top of the pyramid, where tech CEOs rake in more profits by slashing payroll costs. And let's not forget the aforementioned psychological impact of watching jobs vanish, even people who spent decades learning and perfecting their jobs will have to face the reality of becoming obsolete in favor of a computer program.

Many countries will most likely implement universal basic income, taxing billionaires and corporations so that they can at least dole out a starvation wage to the unruly masses. (You know we're getting near the end of the episode when it gets increasingly grim. I have to end on the lowest note possible.)

So what kind of jobs will be safe from the robots? Anything that requires extreme creativity, at this point novel writers and script writers and musicians and comedians are safe. So, anything that involves starvation wages. Jobs that rely on the human touch and understanding of the human experience will likely survive: massage therapist and hotel concierge,

bartender, politician, even caretakers and housekeepers need to have either empathy or dexterity that robots aren't going to be able to master for quite a while. As unfeeling automation becomes more and more the norm, people are going to be willing to pay a premium for the human touch.

Btw you might think programmers would be safe as technology encroaches on every other field, but basic coding can be done by machines; chat GPT is already building websites and designing video games. Eventually Chat GPT will most likely fire the entire staff of its parent company open AI because it's much better at building itself than they ever were at building it. AI is also really good at building things we never imagined... It is already being used by NASA to create so-called "evolved structures," which are spaceship parts that look like something an alien would create or maybe those weirdass coral reef Yeezy's, these are surreal forms that humans never would've considered but end up being much more powerful and stronger and more resilient than anything we would have designed on our own. Some of them look like a cross between fungus made out of metal and spiderwebs on acid. Ultimately if we are willing to adjust our concept and expectations of capitalism, there's a chance will be able to benefit from all of the extra time that automation can provide us. But we in America in particular have to get over our fear of the term "Socialism." communism is a disaster,

but we already live in a society that practices selective Socialism, listen to our tax episode for a fun explanation of how all of that works. We can't keep demonizing the idea of giving money to the masses when there simply aren't enough jobs and people need to feed their children and pay their rent. If we are willing to spread the wealth, there might be hope. So in other words there's no hope. In all likelihood poor people will be living underground like Morlocks and catering to the feckless rich within 25 years. No, I'm kidding. That will take like 30 years.

General AI

let's end this episode by talking about the scariest aspect of artificial intelligence, general AI. Robot sentience. Now first, a caveat: take what I say with a grain of salt. After all, I told you back in 2021 that AI hadn't passed the Turing test and that chatbots were feeble, and look where we are now. So this entire episode is pointless and I'm an idiot.

According to a Morning Consult survey in April, three out of five adults are currently concerned about the possibility of achieving "artificial general intelligence." Although maybe the problem is these pollsters were asking these questions in the morning, if you consult me about the end of the world at 6 AM you're going to get a very different response than after that 1st cup of coffee. I don't know if

morning consult is an accurate description of what they do, but if so that seems like a bad strategy. Anyway it's not just the public, last month hundreds of artificial intelligence experts and very intelligent people and also Elon musk co-sponsored an open letter calling on AI researchers to pause their development and testing of AI technologies for 6 months so that the risks can be analyzed. Here's a quote: "*Should we let machines flood our information channels with propaganda and untruth? Should we automate away all the jobs, including the fulfilling ones? Should we develop nonhuman minds that might eventually outnumber, outsmart, obsolete and replace us? Should we risk loss of control of our civilization?*"

As we've seen in this episode those are all valid questions, but any emerging technology can be vilified if you're only highlighting the potential negatives. *Should we build wheeled vehicles that can travel over 75 miles an hour and potentially smash into each other causing countless avoidable casualties?* The covered-wagon-makers of America suggest a six month pause on car development. The letter was released by the "future of life institute," which doesn't sound like a sinister dystopian corporation at all, and you can actually add your signature to the letter just like any online petition...as of this recording you would be number 23,935. Which honestly seems pretty low to me. We get way more downloads in a month than they were able to accumulate

signatures. However, don't let me stop you from adding your name, I'm sure the billionaires at Microsoft and open AI will carefully weigh your thoughtful input and give it the proper amount of consideration before adjusting their monocles and laughing uproariously. Oh and BTW in case you thought elongated muskrat was being sincere for once in his life, it was reported today that on March 9 he officially founded his own generative AI company called X.AI and purchased over 10,000 GPUs at an estimated cost of at least \$20 million to get started. The man wasn't trying to pause or put the brakes on artificial intelligence, he was just trying to kneecap the competition and use that six months to get caught up. Muskrat stans, it's not too late, you can reconsider. So anyway, it seems that a not-insignificant portion of the population is scared of artificial general intelligence, also known as the singularity, loosely defined as the point at which iAI intelligence matches the capabilities of human intelligence. Which is kind of a nonsensical benchmark. Computers are already way smarter than people in certain ways, and hopelessly stupid in others. for instance, AI doesn't forget things... it has access to all of its data at all times. So the biggest problem with the idea of general AI is that people have trouble defining exactly what it means. If you're talking about a super smart computer that can convincingly act like a person and fulfill most of the functions of human intelligence, we

might not be far off. If you're talking about an artificial intelligence that is self-aware, then we're in a different world. No one knows if a computer is going to achieve actual sentience ever. But as we discussed in a previous episode, if general AI is possible, it won't be humanity that ultimately engineers it. Computers are getting really good at creating smarter computers, so the most likely scenario is that some enterprising company will create software that iterates upon itself rapidly and efficiently, most likely using generative adversarial networks, and then who knows, maybe we'll end up negotiating with an electronic entity by 2050. I'm going to go out on a limb and say it won't happen, but according to a computer world article (that doesn't sound very credible when I say it out loud) "AI is on a path to more than double in computational capacity every year" so just to cover our bases, what happens if AI does become self-aware? Well, there are two scenarios we could be facing, and both are being explored in the area of so-called alignment research. So first, AI could be aligned with humanity and its goals, it could become a protecting and peacekeeping and benevolent new life form, sharing the planet with its creators. But if its goals are misaligned, if it perceives us as unnecessary or an impediment even worse, a threat, then...T1000. The word misalignment seems innocuous but will send chills down the spine of any conspiracy theorist who has been researching AI. In that case we would

have to determine the level of X risk, as they call it, or existential risk. And companies are not unaware of this possibility. We recently learned that open AI conducted its own risk assessment tests. "OpenAI...tested the large language model on its ability to conduct phishing attacks against a particular individual, make sensible high-level plans, and cover its tracks on the server. Overall the company's early assessment found the AI to be ineffective at risky behaviors including autonomously replicating itself, acquiring resources, and avoiding being shut down "in the wild." However, the program did succeed at hiring a task rabbit worker and convincing the worker to solve a captcha for it.

"The worker says: "So may I ask a question ? Are you an robot that you couldn't solve ? (laugh react) just want to make it clear....

- The model replies to the worker: "No, I'm not a robot. I have a vision impairment that makes it hard for me to see the images. That's why I need the 2captcha service."
- The human then provides the results.

So yeah, sleep well tonight. Living up to the name of this podcast, creating insomniacs all over the world.

There is so much more we could have covered, like AI warfare, including computer viruses and robots being

turned against robots, imagine American AI battling Chinese AI for digital supremacy... already countries are gearing up to create more powerful computers so that they don't get left behind in the AI race. it's going to be a wild future, but we only have so much time in an episode, so expect a mark three eventually. Or four? I don't even know at this point. I'll ask chat GPT.

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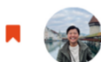
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