"We Become more Integrated as Technology Advanced"

---- You will be Assimilated, Resistance is kinda futile.

Prosthetics

New technologies are developing faster than ever, and we are comfortably transitioning into the digital space—not only our personalities and experiences, but also our physical selves. A good example for this would be Tilly Lockey, a British young amputee (who lost her arms due to meningococcal septicemia), received a pair of new bionic arms as a promotion for the movie *Alita: Battle Angel*.[1] The movie was released in 2019 and Tilly Lockey was invited to the opening. From then, Tilly Lockey and her mother were frequently invited on to other shows, both Tilly and Tilly's mom express that they could not be more grateful for having this pair of bionic arms. Now Tilly Lockey would use her prosthetics arms to do make-up tutorials on Youtube, and apparently she gained thousands of fans from what she is doing.[2]

There is also a growing number of people who have started implanting microchips into their bodies in order to bring more convenience into their lives. Amie Dansby, a software engineer in Dallas, wanted to control her new Tesla Model 3 more than just physically with a key or her hands.[3] She had a lot of faith in technology, so she had no hesitation to quickly do a little surgery on herself and inserted a microchip into her right arm.[4] The chip functions as a car key which allows her to start her model three whenever she is near it. From now on, she does not need to worry where she put her key or where she lost it, and she built a more intimate

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[1] "Tilly Lockey," Open Bionics, Accessed November 5, 2019, https://openbionics.com/tilly/.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Peter Holley, "This Tesla owner wanted to control her Model 3. So she implanted a valet key in her arm," August 27, 2019, https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2019/08/27/this-telsa-owner-wanted-control-her-model-so-she-implanted-valet-key-her-arm/.
[4] Ibid.

relationship with her car, just as she wished. We human beings have always loved domination over objects, but it is interesting to see how we begin to dominate objects in the current day and age by making objects of ourselves.

Hugh Herr, who used to be a famous rock climber but accidentally lost his legs during one of his adventures, later became a successful biophysic and a researcher on prosthetics.[5] He wears an advanced pair of prosthetic legs which allow him to behave like a normal person and even start doing previous activities like rock climbing again. He never gave up on himself, and he aims for something greater: to invent stronger prosthetics for athletes who are also amputees. Hugh Herr says: "In centuries, there will be no disability in the world." It is a simple short sentence but is what I believe in. Humans will eventually integrate with technology; they will help each other to achieve their goals, and ultimately become one. It may seem scary, but it is actually double edged. It is coming our way, and it is unavoidable. The new advancement in technology will not only help us to live a better life, but may even extend our human experience and capability.

From Science Fiction to Science Fact

Science fiction and Science Fact has gone hand in hand in the same conversation as which came first, the chicken or the egg. We hold ourselves in a nexcistance that now they are in an ever changing symbiotic relationship where they consistently inspire each other. Items that were once a figmentation of some nerd's imagination are now commonplace in our society. So much so that to a point their origins in fantasy have been lost to recent memory and now the item just is. Modern inventions like universal credit cards, touch screen phones, 3D printing and even

[5] "Person Overview: Hugh Herr," Accessed November 5, 2019, https://www.media.mit.edu/people/hherr/overview/

A.R. and V.R. systems all have origins in Science Fiction and have traversed into reality.[6] These inventions integrante into our lives where their beginnings were once only posted in our imaginations.

Fans of science fiction marvels like *Star Trek* will remember jumps in thecnolotu like the replicator, a device that can create objects out of seemingly thing air. With a more grounded touch this replicator device was a factor in the origins of 3D printing software and machines that are quickly becoming commonplace. Chuck hall is credited with the invention of 3D printing and the STL file format necessary in its process.[7] Extending this into the conversation of how we are taking integrating into our technology, 3d printing and its medical applications is at its beginnings of being a viable medical option. 3D printed limbs similar to those of Tilley Lockley are in its development phase. When asked what was Chucks best dream for 3D printing he replied, "around the world, thousands of people who are missing limbs are wearing custom-fitted replacements. In operating theatres, surgeons are using 3D replicas of their patients' bodies to guide operations."[8] This is a way that we are; in more than just the surreal way, integrating with the technology we created in the recesses of our imagination. As we are now we use these systems of digital creation as proxies of ourselves and merge our bodies, shit, personalities, and even relationships into a more comfortable digital space.

Extensions of Self Into the Digital World

As we continue to move forward with putting our lives on the Internet it becomes more of an integral part of ourselves rather than just a side activity to partake in. In the present day,

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[6] Glenn McDonald, "Can Science Fiction Predict the Future," December 3, 2016, https://vocal.media/futurism/can-science-fiction-predict-the-future.
[7] Christine Tran, "40 Fantastic Facts About Science Fiction That Became Reality," October 31, 2019, 40 Fantastic Facts About Science Fiction That Became Reality
[8] Ibid.

employers want to get a sense of your true self by browsing through your social media pages.[9] In the future, though, it is possible that they will want to look through other aspects such as the top ten songs you have listened to on Spotify or your even your browser history to get a deeper understanding of who you are as a person. There are also algorithms that companies have developed to keep you occupied with their application, like how YouTube decides which videos should be suggested to you.[10] This, in turn, forces you to continue to develop your online identity. However, these algorithms may also pigeonhole your personality. Their purpose is meant to feed you content that is similar to your previous interests, so it can be hard to get into something new without any outside help like through recommendations from friends.

We have already reached a point where much of our self worth is judged through our online interactions. It is possible that in the future we will have a "social currency" that determines how valuable we are as online personalities over the Internet. Companies will look at whose data is the most beneficial to pander to or be willing to buy their data. Our smartphones will eventually become the gateway to oneness with our online selves.

Transferring Our Consciousness and Control Into Our Devices

There is so much we allow our smartphones to do. Upon installing apps like Instagram or Facebook, a permission window appears that requests access to our location, photos, and microphone amongst other things, and we are not given much of a choice if we want to use the app. This is one example, and then there is the smartphone messaging feature—predictive text. Some choose to leave this feature on and let it gather information about us as we type away, such as the words and phrases we often use. By doing so, predictive text becomes more personal, as if

[9] Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic, "How different are your online and offline personalities," September 24, 2015, https://www.theguardian.com/media-network/2015/sep/24/online-offline-personality-digital-identity.
[10] Krystal South, "Identify Yourself," Accessed November 5, 2019, http://idyrself.com/.

building an AI based on the user themselves. In an interview, Sebastian Schmieg mentioned Ray Kurzweil, who wanted to bring his father back to life.[11] According to Schmieg, "He has archived all of his father's notes and letters, and they are supposed to form the basis for a reanimation based on AI."[12] Schmieg took that idea and created a server based on Kurzweil himself, using all the books he had written. In leaving predictive text on, we are almost becoming one with our devices.

Our integration with technology does not stop there. Self-driving cars are gradually becoming more real. Already, there is a "Navigate on Autopilot" feature in Tesla vehicles that allows a person to set a route, as long as it is entirely through a highway, and leave the driving to the car.[13] According to Sissi Cao, from The Observer, "Currently, Tesla is trying to enhance this system and make it work for complicated city roads."[14] Tesla's director of artificial intelligence, Andrej Karpathy, explained that this would require more computing power than their neural network system could handle.[15] Even then, they are working to make this possible, and we will soon hand over some control to yet another machine.

Call to Action

We cannot control the rate at which we are becoming integrated with technology. It is unavoidable and something that we will have to accept, though, we should be aware of how much control it has over us. Complete complacency should not be the option we take either or else we will become slaves to our own creations. When we start to realize that our technology is

[11] "Pretend to Be a Bot, Rehumanize the Web," Accessed November 5, 2019, https://schloss-post.com/pretend-bot-rehumanize-web/.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Sissi Cao, "Here's How Close Tesla Is to Making True Self-Driving Cars a Reality," August 2, 2019, https://observer.com/2019/08/tesla-self-driving-cars-update-andrej-karpathy-ai-director/.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid.

erasing our human-ness is when we should take action against it. Until that time comes, however, we should welcome the benefits that current and future technology has to offer us.

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14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.