ChatGPT as a Means of Understanding Human Freedom

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I am unsure when I missed the info-determinism memo, the one conclusively proving that everything desired by a population is equivalent to the desire of the individual, the one showing once and for all that everything we want is calculable in a matrix of 1s and 0s. Maybe the memo was sent when the term "data economy" was first coined, maybe when Taylorism was first adopted, or maybe when Leibniz outlined his 'perfect' binary numerical system. In any regard, the roots are unimportant to this article. What matters is the fruit: what you want is predetermined. If I can simply access your data, I can tell you what you want.

With the advent of ChatGPT people have been (to put it lightly) freaking out. Some hail the new tool as a miracle, others as a terminator without the chrome: the Ragnarok of human superiority. Others, as merely a neat little chatbox that really is being overblown. Many authors are endeavoring to show how this tool will change the world like [insert communications-technology from the past 30 years], thus ending the professions of computer programmers, copy-editors, and bedraggled and coughing high-school English teachers. Authorial note: I am a high-school English teacher.

In his article for the Atlantic, teacher Daniel Herman writes how the advent of ChatGPT will fundamentally alter high-school English as a profession, industry, and necessity. When faced with the stunning quality produced by ChatGPT, Herman remarks "It's no longer obvious to me that my teenagers actually will need to develop this basic skill [of writing]." Once people no longer need to know how to write their own writings, teachers no longer need to teach people such teachings. If a tool becomes widely available that allows for you to input basic ideas (smattered with mostly coherent grammar) and receive a synthesized, grammatical written output ... well, then the skill of writing requires a very different education. Surely, ChatGPT will change the way humans teach written expression.

Send an email explaining why this job is important due to reason A, B, and C. Write a short memo asking for new hires to meet tomorrow with details from Calendar X. Write five page essay on inescapable nothingness and isolation in DeLillo's *White Noise.* If effective suggestions with sufficient structure are all that are required of my writing skills, then high-school English as we know it will indeed mutate. I take no issue with this stance in the article. If the market does not require a skill, and as education becomes increasingly tied to markets, then that skill will no longer be required for state exams. My issue is not with my job prospects, the commodification of education as career-training, or

the insurgence of market principles into pedagogy. I leave those to be wrung-out elsewhere. My issue is with the lost autonomy.

On one hand, it feels entirely overblown and overanxious to consider artificial intelligence as the usurper of free-will. "LMAO + Bruh + Literally just a chatbot + Cringe + ratiod." Injections of digital language (as shown) may adequately quench such anxieties.

On the other hand, it seems that many recent artistic and creative endeavors are expressions of such overanxious concerns. Blade Runner, Terminator, The Matrix, Ex Machina, Videodrome, 2001: A Space Odyssey, WALL-E are a few that I enjoy watching. The balm of a "fiction" label may be used to soften these worries.

Using ChatGPT to write, as described by Herman or expressed in a triptych of imperatives in p5, smooths over the wrinkles in desire. The action of searching (surfing?) equalizes one's desire to a normalized scale – the ragged edges are made into clean cut arrays of eye-strain-protected pastels. ChatGPT blurs desire, much like Google has been powerfully doing for decades. At what point does *yes that's something like what I was thinking* evolve to *that's pretty much what I intended* becoming *exactly what I was thinking* to finally *I wrote this*? The relinquishing of autonomy begins at the first point. Even the first tendrils of wonder, the ambiguous corner-consciousness proddings streaked with fear and bewilderment poke at the roots of desires. With the thought "I can see myself using that," one sees themselves more as vessels. No matter what stance is taken with ChatGPT, unless one claims that the bot is outputting unintelligible character streams, one must loosen their conceptions over their own autonomous desire. The relinquishing happens with every ChatGPT prompt.

With ChatGPT, it seems obvious that such loss of autonomy would surely mean that one cedes such authority to a God perched between silicon. This is entirely true – there is a current construction underway: the creation, devotion, and integration of a new God. You have most likely joined in this religion, though perhaps you have not had contact with many of your zealots. The creation of God is the most fascinating in the digital for the ways it mirrors onto the user as GodWielderGod. The one who creates God is not nearly as powerful as the one who scrolls through God casually, while taking a shit. As the Wielder of God we ourselves supersede Him and become BeyondGod. Not SuperMen. SuperGods. The authority ceded to the silicon is equivalent to the pure application of personal bias. The relinquishing of autonomy is felt as a strengthening of personal convictions and understandings. This is perhaps more tangible in search-bars, where the feeling of superiority is so well experienced. But make no mistake: even if ChatGPT feels like an AI overlord, even if one projects fears of chromium Schwarzenegger with a metal-gear, ChatGPT is also the most intoxicating daffodil; Narcissus himself would weep if he had a large language processing model bookmarked next to his generative adversarial image generator.

My writing is a chaotic, parenthesized mess consisting of inconsistent punctuation usage and un-necessarily confusing clausal structures. Is this because my fingers are wrinkled and crooked, unable to stab out on my array of buttons the true coherent, beautiful, poetic vision in my mind? Or am I just

fucked? And this is actually the way I think?

Would ChatGPT see the vision in my mind? Would it know what I wanted my writing to look like before I did?

If what I produce is no longer distinguishable from the production of a pattern analysis algorithm, the origin of my writing is unclear. Have I taught this series of logic statements what it means to be an expressive human being? Or, in some perverse chronological basilisk, have I been forcing my expression into a series of logical statements as a predetermined preparation for this day? Are the processes observed in programming equivalently capable of producing human experiences as I am? Does that mean that both silicon and flesh have found 2 paths to the same destination? Or are silicon and flesh no different than the gulf of difference between 1 and 0? These questions bubble up in the wake of the considerations of ChatGPT, yet the usage of that text-box obliterates them all into a hazy malaise, a rushed disregard, a feeling of God-like power.

Personally, I think that looking into the face of ChatGPT indeed captures the feeling of narcissus glancing at an unusually still pool of water. Yes, there is a fear at being confronted with beauty one created, yet somehow had no control over. But there is also, in the edges and peripheries, a numbness. A blur. A lost autonomy as one realizes: "I don't know if I shall ever look away from this mirror."