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Drivers and Self-driving cars

It is evident that self-driving cars will inevitably be widely available. Testing of self-driving cars is actively being done around the world. Various automobile and technology companies are competing to be the first to produce a fully functioning self-driving vehicle that is safe enough to be introduced to consumers. Despite the imminent technological milestone, there exists several valid concerns around autonomous vehicles. The topic of self-driving cars is discussed amongst scholars in the various fields such as technology, law, and ethics. As self-driving cars become more prevalent, society will need to find answers to pressing questions surrounding the use of autonomous motor vehicles.

In Daily, Medasani, Behringer, and Trivdei's article, they indicate that self-driving cars have been in development for many years and are currently being tested today in several countries. Their article along with Greenblatt's article, "Self-Driving Cars and the Law" indicate that the emergence of self-driving cars is leading to legal issues. Companies producing self-driving cars may face liability lawsuits and easily subject to design-defect laws. While Greenblatt proposes solutions to what he believes is the most pressing issue for manufacturers, problems still remain for self-driving car providers. The authors Coeckelbergh, Fournier, Nyholm and Smids delve into ethical issues surrounding self-driving cars such as the allocation of responsibility in accidents and how to make moral decisions in critical situations. Although some of the aforementioned authors suggest answers to their proposed ethical problems, it is still unclear on how to handle issues surrounding self-driving cars.

In order to answer the questions proposed by the aforementioned scholars, I would like to propose a survey to gather information on how people feel about self-driving cars. This survey would quickly brief participants on the current events surrounding the development of self-driving cars around the world. The format of the survey would be multiple choice. Some questions would consist of choices for given scenarios or have participants indicate how strongly they feel about a particular issue. An example of question containing a scenario would be similar to Fournier's hypothetical situation in his article "Will My Next Car Be a Libertarian or a Utilitarian?" When given a choice of hitting two children running into the street or hitting a bystander, what action should a self-driving car take? An example of a question would be: On a scale of 1-10, 10 being strongly agree and 0 being strongly disagree, should autonomous cars mimic the actions of their drivers during critical situations or should the decision be left entirely to the manufacturers. For a concluding question, I would include an open ended question asking for any concerns a participant has about self-driving cars. Overall the questions provided will be made in order to gauge how participants respond to ethical issues and their opinion on self-driving cars.

By surveying a large sample of individuals, manufacturers and researchers could better understand how the average person views self-driving cars. Understanding how end-consumers want self-driving cars developed leads to several benefits for both companies and drivers. Rather than just proposing thought provoking scenarios for scholars, a survey gets in contact directly with people who may one day end up purchasing a self-driving car. Consumer opinions can dictate how manufacturers decide to create their autonomous vehicles. Manufacturers tailor their products and put emphasis on issues that survey participants feel strongly about. The proposed survey also serves to find an answer on the legality of self-driving cars. Public opinion

additionally has the power to shape the laws surrounding self-driving cars. By actively informing participants about the issues and discussion of self-driving cars, participants can express their opinions to lawmakers.

In order to conduct this study there are certain limitations to be wary of. While self-driving cars appears is an innovative technology not all people may be particularly interested in the topic. In order to achieve the highest amount of participants I would like to conduct my survey in local Departments of Motor Vehicles (DMV) in the Long Island area. Because it is often time consuming and difficult to navigate, most homeowners on Long Island will typically own one or more motor vehicles. Because self-driving cars will coexist with other drivers, targeting existing drivers with a survey is a logical starting point. By offering the survey to those waiting at a DMV, the survey does not detract time from a participant's daily routine. In addition, participants are likely to be knowledgeable of road laws and are likely to be concerned with how self-driving cars may affect driving. To ensure a sufficient amount of data is collected, I would like to conduct the study over a course of a year. Although results may be skewed as participants will consist only of Long Island residents, costs are kept minimal by targeting a smaller set of individuals.

A world of self-driving cars is becoming more likely each passing day. It's important for current drivers to be aware of them and contribute to the discussion. Scholarly discussion is important to stimulate ideas and point out issues around topics but at some point self-driving cars will leave the possession of a car manufacturer and will be owned by an average consumer. For this reason, the following research proposal offers participants a starting point on dictating how they want self-driving cars to behave in the future. Overall the following study will help answer questions proposed by scholars and further promote the discussion of autonomous cars in our

society. More discussion will help isolate issues until society sees the integration of self-driving cars into our daily lives.

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