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**Strange Beats: How Computers Could Eventually Hack Your Mind**

*Strange Beasts* is a short film by Magali Barbé that is about augmented reality. The film presents some of the possible threats of implementing augmented reality into everyday life. These threats are very important to consider as we continue to advance computer technology and implement it into our daily lives. As computer technology continues to grow, it is important that we approach the possibilities of it carefully because of the many negative effects it can have on our social lives.

The film *Strange Beasts* starts off as an advertisement for an application that allows you to design your own pet. Using contact lenses that create an augmented reality, you would then be able to see and take care of your beast as if it were real. Later in the film, it is revealed that the main character has a daughter who also uses Strange Beasts. They can see each other’s beasts and play with them together. At the end of the film, the main character is shown talking to his daughter when she isn’t there. It is shown to the audience that his daughter isn’t real and is only a part of his augmented reality. He uses his augmented reality device to have a daughter that doesn’t exist. This may be an extreme example, but it still presents a threat that augmented reality has. Earlier in the film, it is mentioned that people should interact with technology instead of just watching. The problem with augmented reality that is completely interactive is that people could have trouble determining what is important; People may forget that their fake pets aren’t important to their lives and could get too used to the world when it is augmented. This could be very difficult to transfer back to the real world. This type of thing is already happening. Computer addiction is currently often considered to be a mental disorder. The implementation of AR in our lives could result in a mass reliance on technology in our society.

Is a mass reliance on technology in our society a bad thing? In the film, Viktor says that Strange Beasts provides a “friend for life” and that it’s like “a dog or a cat but without the life expectancy.” If technology can provide many of the benefits of having a companion or a relationship without many of the downfalls, then why not rely on it? The problem is that technology can’t do this. As computers continue to improve, they will never provide us with the social interaction we need from other human or pets. This is because computers are replaceable. Every interaction with a computer has almost no value compared to that with a human. If you forget to feed your beast and it dies, it doesn’t matter. You can just create a new that acts and looks the exact same way. Obviously, this isn’t true for family and friends. This added value to human relationships causes them to be much more real and important to us than a relationship with a computer. A computer only attempts to mimic this. Human interaction is integral to our existence and must be preserved. The “daughter” that Viktor has in the film would not be same as having an actual daughter. So, it is important that people take caution when using and implementing this type of technology into our daily lives. Another important part of the film is when the main character is shown using his contact technology. Especially when he is looking through his photos, he looks like a zombie that is completely reliant on his computer. This kind of reliance to computers can be problematic. Spending so much of your social life with things that don’t exist make it difficult to return to real life interaction. Getting so absorbed in our digital lives could take away the human to human interaction that makes us “human.” This could be dangerous as computers can’t always provide the social interaction that humans need.

It is obvious that augmented reality has many potential dangers, but why does it matter now? The contact lenses shown in the video won’t be able for a very long time. These potential threats matter because augmented reality is just starting to be used. The new iPhone has begun implementing it and has many apps that use it. Microsoft is creating the hololens which could be used commonly very soon. People should begin to take caution now. Engineers and programmers need to understand the dangers of what they create so they can take preventative measures. Consumers need to understand exactly what they are buying when they get these new devices. They need to understand the technology they are using so it can be used safely. They also need to try not to rely on this technology. Reliance on this type of technology could become very dangerous to the use. People must fully understand the technology they are using and the effect it can have on our social lives, so it can be used correctly.

Overall, augmented reality is a very cool innovation that can be used in many positive ways. As seen in *Strange Beasts,* it could possibly used for very fun activities. It could also be used very productively like for surgeon training programs or car HUDs that present potential threats, but this technology also comes with a lot of threats and dangers. This does not mean that it should be avoided all together. It just means that this technology should be handled very cautiously to prevent some of the possible negative effects. This technology is very important as it presents many possible benefits, but people should understand its dangers, so it is used and innovated correctly.

In my final revisions, I split up the first body paragraph because it was getting too long. There were two points being made in the same paragraph which made it seem like it was dragging on. I made changes to the second body paragraph by adding more evidence and changing the introduction. I also made some grammatical and semantic changes to improve the overall flow of the essay.