

Face Down, Heads Up

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Abstract

What does it mean to blur lines between human and machine? Technology has been steadily climbing and artificial intelligence have been advancing along with it. But to what point do we begin to see mechanical behavior as organic? When a machine acts and relates to us as human being would to our perceptions, can they then be considered human? We already interface across and behind screens. Consider that there is no one on the other side.

Interaction

The interaction needs to be organic. It takes years of learning in order to program a believable artificial intelligence. I do not have that kind of learning. Instead, I have to craft an illusion of intelligence, which is not all that simple in its own right. Though ultimately, the goal is to have the user connect themselves with human life that is not necessarily human. This does not require me to create life. So long as the user considers the possibility of life, then that is enough.

Connection

There were a couple possibilities. I could create a complex set of paths and word detections on user input and output the proper responses for each. This is perhaps unreliable, depending on the freedom the user is given. If there is perhaps a choice between possible inputs instead, but then the user wouldn't feel like they're truly in control of the conversation. It just wouldn't feel organic enough.

I could also place the user in a position of some power. This could be something like simulating a macro view, much like looking down a microscope, or it could be something like simulating a guide for the user to progress through a trial or puzzle.

There would ultimately be an influence on one or the other. Not only for good, but for harm. There needs to be loss incorporated into the interaction, or the user would never realize that there had been a connection at all.

Interfacing

So how do I craft this?

Working with html, css, and javascript, I will formulate a rather abstract game of some type: a puzzle. The game itself would be fairly irrelevant and would at times just be

completely impossible, just something flashy to keep the user occupied. The point is, there will be someone on the side guiding and interacting with the user. The game's outcome would be superficial.

The way the 'guide' would interact with the user would come in the form of text, to simulate online chatting. The guide would also occasionally take control of whatever the user was working on. The guide would eventually admit to deceptions, pains, and flaws, or any such element we may attribute towards how a human being would act. The guide will not have an artificial mind, but an artificial personality.