Marcus Domingo

Rhetorical Analysis

09/27/16 N12

What does the future of the world we know look like in the face of technology? The human race has come to rely on technology a lot more than they should. Anywhere from handheld devices to robots sorting and storing merchandise at an Amazon distribution center, people count on 1s and 0s to handle everyday life. Technology is continually evolving in every shape and form…even scarier, artificial intelligence. Artificial intelligence (AI) is the ability for an agent to adapt to its environment and act accordingly. Now the concepts are easily understood, but the designs behind AI are very complex algorithms.

Now take into perspective a machine that can perform humanly tasks, a robot for instance. Robots can be programmed to do specific tasks or they can be programmed to adapt and learn from their environments. Then again they are only programmed to do what we want them to do…aren’t they? Designing a robot to adapt to playing a soccer game is one thing, but a robot to adapt to everyday life, that’s a whole different story. One aspect that makes humans able to adapt to the world as we know it is the ability to predict the future. Predicting the future and what may happen next guides our decision making. For example, when a light turns yellow we know that the street orthogonal to the road we are currently traveling on will soon get a green light as soon as ours changes from yellow to red. For AI to process and adapt to all the possible events in the world may seem impossible at this point in time but advances are being made with promising results. An experiment on an evolutionary algorithm created by Cully *et. al* has shown that robots can adapt similarly to animals if programmed correctly. In the experiment they take a robot that has knowledge of all its possible movements and “injure” the robot to see if it can adapt to this injury. Meaning the robot has a distinct walking pattern when it is healthy. Once injured the robot recognizes the injury and adapts to it in any means it needs to. Cully *et al.* states that “Experiments reveal successful adaptations for a legged robot injured in five different ways, including damaged, broken, and missing legs, and for a robotic arm with joints broken in 14 different ways.” (Cully et al., 2015). Thus, they have already gotten the limbs of a humanoid/animal robot down. Think about if they could make a fully body robot.

There is different version of AI out there as well that aren’t as physical as a robot. Most video games nowadays have some sort of aspect of an AI which may be referred to as CPU (computer). They have restricted intelligence to them. Meaning they only have a pool of choices to choose from because of the video games restrictions. There have been AI that have been made to learn video games rather than just be restricted in the design of them. Deep Blue was a computer that won a chess game against a world champion. DeepMind created “a single computer algorithm that can learn how to play 49 different arcade games” (Gibney, 2015). There are even AI’s out there that predict which ads and search results to show us on YouTube and Google based on our search histories. IBM’s Watson can have full conversations with human beings as if he were one himself and he can learn new information. Soon enough AI will be creating other AI themselves, it is just a matter of time.

The world of AI is quickly progressing in this day and age. The results are promising but something to think about is does AI have too much presence in our lives? An amazing topic with very broad horizons but success doesn’t come without consequences. After all, let’s not forget Ultron from *Avengers: Age of Ultron* where Tony Starks made an AI that created an imminent threat to society. Only in our reality we don’t have The Avengers to save us.

References

Adami, C. (2015). Robots with instincts. *Nature*, *521*(7553), 426–427.

Crawford, K., Whittaker, M. (2016). Have we given artificial intelligence too much power too soon? Retrieved from http://qz.com/787302/artificial-intelligence-holds-growing-power-over-our-everyday-lives-but-we-have-no-idea-how-well-it-works/

Cully, A., Clune, J., Tarapore, D., & Mouret, J.-B. (2015). Robots that can adapt like animals. *Nature*, *521*(7553), 503–507. http://doi.org/10.1038/nature14422

Gibney, E. (2015). DeepMind algorithm beats people at classic video games. *Nature*, *518*(7540), 465–466.