

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: A Peril In Disguise

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“Predicting the future isn’t magic. It’s Artificial Intelligence” -Dave Waters

Artificial intelligence or the expert systems, is among the avant-garde we often onlook in our daily lives. Who doesn't love to witness the action and thrill of the Sci-fi movies like the Terminator, Matrix, Iron Man, Robo, Ra-One, etc., wishing to get their hands on Jarvis, Marvin or the Red Queen someday? While the idea of Artificial Intelligence and virtual technologies is utterly fascinating, these charms have a peculiar veiled side, full of drawbacks and detrimental effects.

“Our predecessors endeavored to make men into machines; we are endeavoring to make machines into men.”

We've seen advancing technologies that eliminated the traditional methods, tools or machinery. From bricks and mortar stores, from barter system to e-Commerce; we don't need to run errands anymore, we literally can press a button and have most of our first world problems solved in an instant. But we don't always recognize how these innovations are making us lazy, too. Some believe that the latest innovations like automation, augmented reality, Virtual reality, IoT, Artificial Intelligence, etc., is making us work-shy, but others believe the benefits outweigh the potential risks.

According to John McCarthy, Artificial intelligence is the science and engineering of making intelligent machines, especially intelligent computer programs. AI's are trained via deep learning which involves processing vast amount of data. “In order to learn something as complex as language, these models have to be large”, says Strubell.

Although Artificial Intelligence is bestowed with speedy execution algorithms, advanced applications and higher availability, but there are few immediate risks of AI worthy to be considered.

“Artificial Intelligence is about replacing human decision making with more sophisticated technologies.”

As AI systems continue to improve, they will become far more adept at tasks than humans. This could be in pattern recognition, providing insights, or accurate predictions. The resulting job disruption could result in increased social inequality, tremendous unemployment issues and even an economic disaster. AI can be programmed to do something malicious or can possibly do something destructive while achieving its goal as it lacks an emotional thinking which only exists in the living entities.

In 2020, the UK government commissioned a report on Artificial Intelligence and UK national security, which highlighted the necessity of AI in the UK's cybersecurity defenses to detect and mitigate threats that require a greater speed of response similar to human decision-making. This also begs the question of how we make AI systems secure themselves. If we use AI algorithms to defend against various security concerns, we need to ensure that the AI itself is secure against bad actors. Moreover, it could also be used in privacy breaches and data thefts. The risk is that

this technology could be expanded to authoritarian regimes or individuals/groups with malevolent objectives.

Newer smart technologies (like self-driving cars, virtual assistants, etc.) have been assessed as a high-risk target for this kind of attack, with the potential for bad thespians to cause car crashes or gridlocks. Wealth inequality will also be created as the investors of AI will take up the major share of the earnings. AI has the potential to degrade the environment due to its high carbon emissions, huge energy demands, it can high-powered GPU's to run for days at a time. New estimates suggest that the carbon footprint of training a single AI is as much as 284 tons of carbon dioxide equivalent- five times the lifetime emissions of an average car. As we become more and more reliant on internet-connected smart technology, more and more of our daily lives will be impacted by the risk of disruption.

“You can have data without information, but you cannot have the information about data”

Joseph Weizenbaum, a pioneer of AI once said, “we must not let computers make important decisions for us because AI as a machine will never possess human qualities such as compassion and wisdom to morally discern and judge.”

A versatile invention like AI was brought into this world as a result of human hard work, creativity and intelligence. We must try to enforce the AI bioethics of beneficence, value upholding, lucidity and accountability. As AI and Machine Learning advance, bioethical frameworks need to be tailored to address the problems that these evolving systems might pose. Since AI is without a soul as it is, its bioethics must be transcendental to bridge the shortcoming of AI's inability to empathize. Thus, the cautious progression of AI technology is directly reliant on our approach and actions. The ultimate paradox is that this technology may become a powerful catalyst that we need to reclaim our humanity!