

AI and the Artifice of Self

Outline

Automatic Politics

Autonomous Culture

Artificial Intellects

Unnatural Desires

Cybernetic Souls

Automatic Politics

Where are we?

Increasing Automation

Extent: 47% of current jobs at risk of automation in the next 20 years.

Professions: white collar jobs, including legal and medical professionals.

Services: cognitive/affective labour, including retail and customer service.

Cause: developments in AI, including deep neural networks and other learning systems.

Decreasing Autonomy

Hyper-Taylorism: Amazon warehouse workers, mechanical turk

Precarization: zero hours contracts, involuntary self-employment

Hyper-Employment: work/life collapse, constant connectivity

Bureaucratization: bullshit jobs, perverse incentives

Automatic Politics

Where have we come from?

Humanism

What distinguishes our species is our capacity for (rational) self-cultivation.

Modernism

What distinguishes our society is the opportunities for self-cultivation it enables.

Liberalism

What distinguishes our government is the way it facilitates such opportunities (economic freedom) by formalising consensual interaction (legal and political institutions).

Naturalism

The Natural is the a site of contestation: conservatism (past) and radicalism (future).

The Unnatural is either supernatural or artificial.

Automatic Politics

Where are we going?

Post-humanism?

Trans-humanism? Anti-humanism?

Post-modernism?

Reactionary conservatism? Radical liberalism?

Platform Capitalism

Cognitive Economics: demand side inefficiency and cognitive capture

Platform Economics: sovereign quasi-markets and cognitive monopoly

Autonomous Culture

What can AI tell us about ourselves?

Normative Autonomy: self-legislation, authority.

What can AI tell us about building better selves?

Causal Autonomy: self-direction, authorship.

What is freedom?

Positive / Negative

Quality / Quantity

Cognitive / Non-Cognitive

Artificial Intellects

What is intelligence? (GOFAI vs. ML)

Problem Solving

Implicit / Explicit (The Symbol Grounding Problem)

Particular / General (Frame Problem)

Sentience / Sapience (AI vs. AGI)

What is wisdom?

Problem Reframing

The Capacity to Learn: knowledge as process vs. knowledge as product

The Craft of Ignorance: composition/addition vs. integration/revision

General intelligence is the in principle revisability of our integrated representation of *the way the world is*.

Unnatural Desires

Should we be afraid of AGI?

Shallow Fears

Paperclipper: Automation + AGI = Monomania

Skynet: Survival Instinct + AGI = Extinction

What is desire?

Deeper Questions

Is it *determinate*?

Is it *transparent*?

Is it *fixed*?

Is survival our *deepest desire*?

Unnatural Desires

What is autonomy?

Theory and Practice

Separation: functional analogies

Dualisation: taking true / making true

Problem Choice

The Capacity to Grow: desire as process vs. desire as product

The Craft of Interest: composition/addition vs. integration/revision

Practical autonomy is the in principle revisability of our integrated representation of *the way the world should be*.

Cybernetic Souls

What makes autonomy possible?

Autonomy as Self-Control

Self as Model: a partition of our model of the world

Control as Body-Soul: body as means-in-itself (platform), soul as end-in-itself (art)

Authenticity and Authentication

Exo-selves: data ownership

Meta-selves: data sovereignty

To have a self is to be neither natural nor supernatural, but artificial.