

## Parents of the Future

Abraham Lincoln once said, “All that I am, or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother (Brainyquote).” In Kevin Durant’s MVP speech he calls his mother, “the real MVP,” because of her sacrifice (Bieler). Many would consider their parents to be their greatest influencers and biggest supporters. Homeschoolers push the importance of having their parents guide them. Parenting is one of the oldest jobs and, arguably, the most essential one. So, in the bold age of technology is there a new area where parenting is needed? Artificial intelligence is an exciting development. But this new phase is just beginning, and this technology should not be left to its own devices. AI, just like humans, may very soon need “parents.”

Although it has recently been gaining more attention, artificial intelligence has been around for many decades. The term was coined in the 1950s, but before that, in 1949, Edmund Berkeley published *Giant Brains: Or Machines that Think*. Berkeley paralleled machines and human brains, believing machines are gaining the ability to think (Press). It can be frightening already to witness the success of these computers. In 1997, IBM’s computer became the first to conquer a chess champion. In 2011, the computer Watson beat two past champions in *Jeopardy!* (Lewis). Artificial intelligence has been making leaps and bounds, growing in incredible strides.

AI is in its developmental stage and therefore it needs someone to guide, or “parent” it. This is a job that will be extremely necessary in the future. Artificial intelligence is like a sheltered child that needs a caretaker. First, many people, such as Elon Musk and Stephen Hawking, fear AI will take over the world (Tretikov). Therefore, humans should work to train AI, in order that it helps, rather than hurts us. It must be trained in right and wrong and be given limitations. Maria Yao, Adelyn Zhou, and Marlene Jia write in their book,

...Engineering education alone is insufficient to ensure that AI technologies are built safely and successfully. “Ethics training should be a mandatory part of engineering and computer science education,” emphasizes Rana el Kaliouby, founder of Affectiva, a company that makes machines more emotionally intelligent (Yao, Zhou, Jia, location 733).

One important distinction between humans and technology is humans make decisions based on past experience and the ability to relate to others; an ability computers lack. Robots are developing to the point that they are able to identify emotion, but they still have far to go. Someone must monitor their influences. Google’s facial recognition struggled when identifying different races. It correctly identified white people, however, had more difficulty identifying other ethnicities. This was due to a lack of exposure to other races during training (Tretikov). AI must be given its information and trained by people (Krishna). It is unable to base situations on past experience, gather its own data, and explain its reasoning. All these reasons showcase how this future job of teaching robots will be essential to create helpful, safe AI.

There is a major fear that AI will be developed so well, that it will become greater than humans. But those who have concerns about this disregard one important fact: AI is not created in the image of God. It does not have the perfect design of God’s work. It does not have a soul. Artificial intelligence has no moral compass, and will have to have its whole-being created artificially. It states in Genesis 1:26, “**26** Then God said, ‘Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule...(*New International Version Bible, Genesis 1:26*)’ God has shaped man and given us dominion over His earth. One similarity is the fact that just as man is dependent on God, AI is dependent on man. Man is created in the image of God and AI is created in the image of man, but lacks the perfect all-powerful creator.

The future of artificial intelligence is uncertain. We have yet to know how mighty AI will become. Will it take over our jobs? Will it take over our world? One thing we do know is humans must shape it to be an amazing tool. It needs to be respected, but not overestimated. Humans have a great task ahead of them parenting their AI.

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