Chapter 10
Closing Thoughts

ABSTRACT

In this chapter, the authors present final observations and concluding thoughts about the future social implications of artificial intelligence (AI). One of the major reasons why humans stand out from other creatures is because of our mental capacity and demonstration of intelligence. However, AI has the potential to eclipse human potential with the same and potentially greater capacity as it matures towards 'general' and 'super' intelligence. However, the immediate challenge remains our capacity to feel safe with AI innovations and to have faith in their capacity to conduct themselves without prejudice, to eliminate any mistakes, and to conduct themselves in an equitable manner. It is expected that humanity will have a better understanding of what principles of awareness and aptitude are. Thankfully, these are issues with a lot of relevance in the modern world; the opportunity to develop an AI future society with positive benefits is achievable – if we act collectively and multi-laterally on a global scale.

"By far, the greatest danger of Artificial Intelligence is that people conclude too early that they understand it." –Eliezer Yudkowsky

INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt that artificial intelligence (AI) has already impacted our daily lives and the ways we operate in Industry 4.0, manufacturing, healthcare, online security etc. AI and its sub-components of computer vision, natural language processing, machine learning (ML) and intelligent algorithms have had a great impact on new digital technology, quantum computing, data analytics and consumer services. It is likely that the upward trends of capabilities of AI systems will continue, in which systems eventually become capable of solving a wide range of tasks rather than a new system having to be built for each new problem. Additionally, the adoption of AI within many industries will continue. Evidence suggests that AI is currently unable to reproduce human behaviours or surpass our thinking capabilities. It is likely to stay a complementary workforce tool for a very long time. However, continuous improvements could reach a point where AI exceeds current expectations. The continued development of AI will depend on moral public opinion regarding its benefits and acceptability, on businesses continuing to gain competitive advantages from it and continued funding for its research and development. Simultaneously, AI is inspiring both fear and enthusiasm in equal measures. Some have likened the advances in AI to an inevitable dystopian future, perhaps because of the science fiction notion that machines will take all of our jobs, will 'wake up' and do unintended things. However, where some see danger and unimaginable disruption, others see great promise and positive social implications.

One of the greatest dilemmas we wrestle with is being able to incorporate AI-powered innovations in the most equitable, balanced and accountable manners possible. Each time there is an intense deliberation on the morals and ethics of AI innovation, we find ourselves in a stalemate that discourages advancement. The boundaries of decency, morality and good ethics should always remain at the core of human society. Our enduring search for discerning what is good and fair predates history and continues to be strongly debated by spiritual, traditional leaders and thinkers across industry, institutions and governments. However, when we consider the way AI is fast-becoming an inextricable part of our society, the study of the opportunities, ramifications and unintended consequences must continue.

When considering an AI future, perhaps the most deplorable scenario will be the one in which AI becomes sentient and self-serving with total

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