



Lovelace-Hodgkin
SYMPOSIUM ON AI ETHICS

The role of disability, religion and belief in ethics of AI

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Overview

- Ethics committee membership
- Disability models
 - Role of AI
- Religion and belief
 - Role of AI
- Ethics structure (legislation)
- Questions we can raise



Who is an academic?

- Left leaning
- Labour voting
- No faith / religious belief – or belong to the ‘right’ religion
- Believe the same thing about BAME
- Dare not say anything different!

Who are the members of Ethics Committees?

- Academics!
- The membership is homogenous
- Similar views (if different, don't say it)
- No ToR for ethics committees or frameworks
- Legal issues led vs. genuine debate



What guides ethics?

- Data protection
- Privacy
- Legislation
 - Who is responsible for monitoring
 - What is the responsibility of media – do they communicate responsibly and realistically?
 - Can AI help and would this lead to replacing humans?
- Equality of access
- Realistic expectations and limitations

Medical Model of Disabilities (Local Authority websites)

- People are disabled by their impairments or differences.
- These impairments or differences should be 'fixed' or changed by medical and other treatments, even when the impairment or difference does not cause pain or illness.
- Looks at what is 'wrong' with the person and not what the person needs/context.
- Creates low expectations and leads to people losing independence, choice and control in their own lives.



Social Model of Disability (Local Authority websites)

- Disabled people developed the social model of disability because the traditional medical model did not explain their personal experience of disability or help to develop more inclusive ways of living.
- Disability is caused by the way society is organised, rather than by a person's impairment or difference.
- It looks at ways of removing barriers that restrict life choices for disabled people.
- When barriers are removed, disabled people can be independent and equal in society, with choice and control over their own lives.

How does AI help those
with Disabilities?



Examples of AI removing barriers

- Vision
 - Google Lens
 - Mainstream product, ask for object and text recognition using camera
 - Be My AI
 - Extension to Be My Eyes where 60% of items are identified by AI
- Hearing
 - Ava/ RogerVoice
 - AI based captioning and translation to transcribe group conversations in real time, text-to-speech including correcting regular words from friends and family
 - Signapse
 - AI based real time signing software

Communication

- Speech recognition
- Google
 - Project Euphonia/Relate – AI used to improve speech recognition models for eg. speech disabilities like cerebral palsy or tricky English accents
- Alexa / Siri / Google
- Google Lens – using AI for visual search



How does AI exclude disabled users (Part 1)

- Fin Tech / Digital Finance – data based on disabled users. eg.
 - Memory issues and carer control
 - WCAG compliance
- Recruitment
 - Personality tests
 - Facial disabilities
 - Accessibility of tests
 - Diversity of data

How does AI exclude disabled users (Part 2)

- Generation of visual images of disabled
 - Glamourized images eg. cybernetics vs. cochlear implants



Bias vs. Discrimination

- Bias is built unconsciously or consciously from experience (human) or data (AI)
- Discrimination is what results from bias



How has AI impacted religion (examples)

- Delivers sermons
- Delivers religious teachings
- Performs rituals
- Takes confessions
- Can provide companionship as a responsive statue

How does AI cause problems / discriminate against religion and belief

- How the soul is perceived
- The role of Gods replaced
- Religious teachings are stepped on



Some definitions


- Dis – false and misleading information with intent to deceive
- Mis – false and misleading information with/without intent to deceive
- Deepfake – is false and misleading information or image (with/without intent to deceive)





How AI impacts on political belief

Example: AI fake news / elections

- Influences your views with with mis/dis information / deep fakes
 - Intersectionality (with disabled users)
 - Those who cannot visually see the difference
 - Those who are less ‘streetwise’ online
 - There are tools to help navigate
 - [Eg. www.ask-silver.com](http://www.ask-silver.com)
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Drones in War

- The AI informed drones in war
 - Decision making
 - Creation
 - Power/agency we give AI



Questions from religious perspective (Christianity)

“Love one another”

- How does AI impact on our relationships?
- What is our relationship with AI?
- Criteria for relationships (embodiment)
 - Relationships (placeholder for authentic relationship)
 - Speak to and hear the other – communication (permission to use)
 - Aid the other – agency – how much agency do we want to give / have?
 - Do it gladly – can AI have emotions? It can recognize and analyse




Example: AI generated music

- Music can be a relationship between collaborations
 - Relationship between the instrument and the musician
 - Musician to musician
- What is AI's role?
 - AI doesn't work in isolation (rarely)
 - AI works with repository of huge number of artists



AI as Teachers

- What makes teachers important?
 - Emotional intelligence
 - Empathy
 - AI has as much or more knowledge / information than teachers
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Other faith based questions

- Programming something that hasn't lived or not alive - creation
- We are building for people and other living things - stewardship



Truth - importance

- Truth is described as a way of life in many religions
- Truth is a value in societies as a moral compass
- Aims of deceit
 - Financial gain
 - Winning a war
- Values of a society can be embedded in truth



Ethics - disability

- 23% of the working population in the UK is not in work
- 17% of us will gain a disability during our working lives
- 72% of productivity goes up when reasonable adjustments are made
- AI can amplify human ability
- AI can learn and get better



Legislation: Disability

- Equality Act 2010
- Public Sector Bodies
Accessibility Regulation 2018
- Down Syndrome Act 2022
- European Equality Act 2024



Legislation: AI

- EU AI Act 2024
- UK – a Private members bill went to House of Lords in March 2024 – is currently at 3rd reading



Current state of ethics

- Legal model
- Risk driven
- We are stuck here





Frameworks

- Ethics
- Human Rights
- Law



Faith and belief

- opportunity to deeply explore the role of faith communities in AI stewardship
- an area where collective ethical reflection and community involvement are crucial



Ethical Frameworks: 4 basic categories

- We should do good
- Minimise harm
- Respect human autonomy
- Be just or fair



Concerns (IT perspective)

- Data governance – where does your data go?
- Is the data used to train AI?
- Do they meet standards of information security?
- How do you address bias?
- How do you make AI transparent and responsible?

Questions

- Are current accessibility standards sufficient for AI?
- How does our legislation have to change to include AI?
- What do we involve our communities in thinking about AI?
- How do ethics, rights and legislation connect?
- What does AI have to do to be more inclusive?
- Is an ethical framework sufficient?



Summary

- Ethics committees
- Disability and AI
- Religion and belief and AI
- Legislation and ethics
- Questions

