

Dehumanisation and AI



THE LONDON SCHOOL
OF ECONOMICS AND
POLITICAL SCIENCE ■



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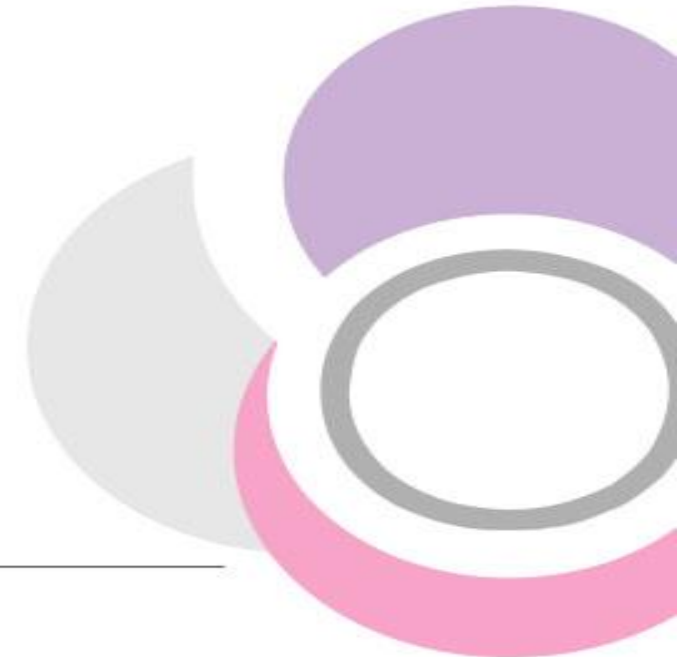
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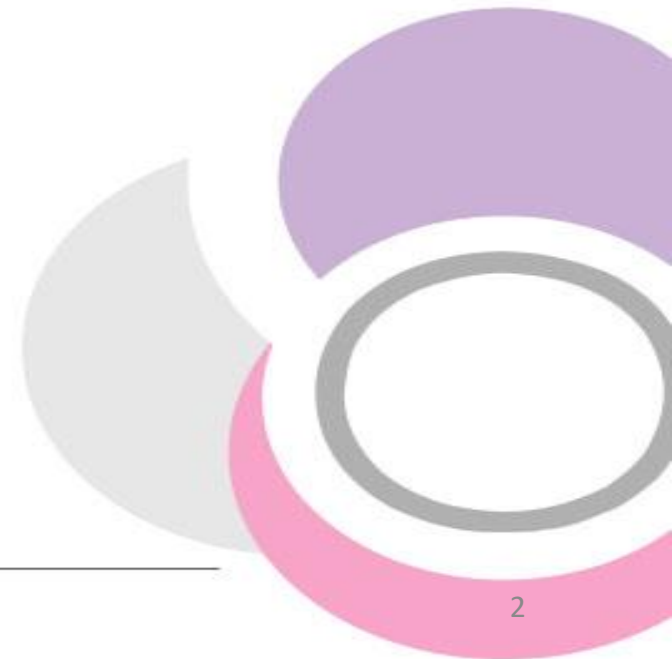
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Communication Gap

- How do we establish a common language to deal with complex concepts
- We end up with a pseudo language – half scientific half emotional
- Language is attached to emotion
- Emotions are what can drive us

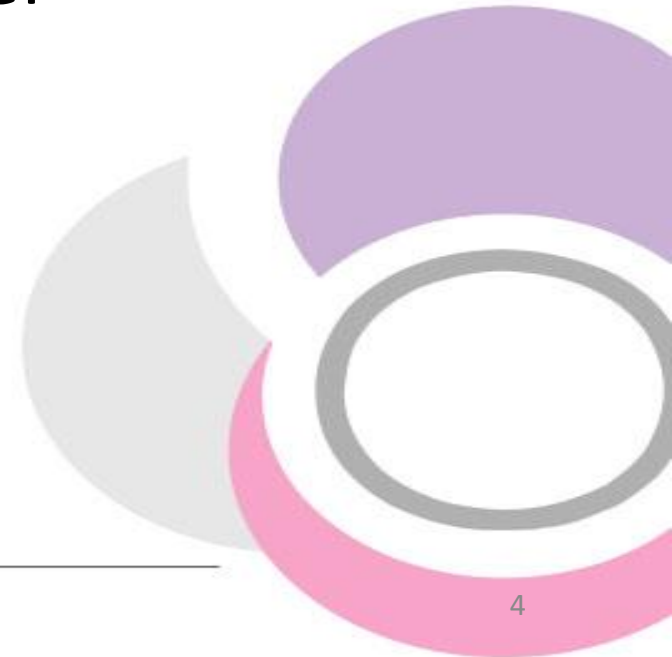


Human Behaviour

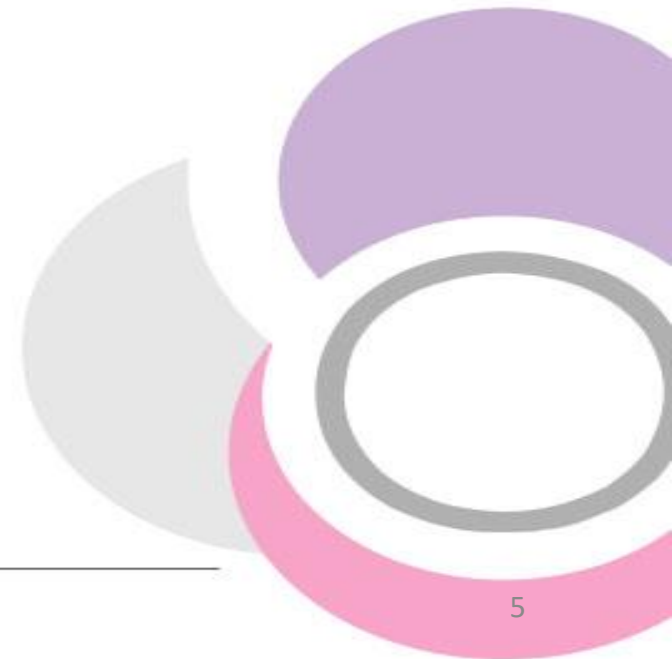
- Anthropomorphism is achieved by ascribing human characteristics and behaviour to a complex concept such as robots or interactive technology.
- It leads to misunderstandings

How does this happen in AI

- AI doesn't exist – but the media have turned technology into an easy to understand concept using a film related device
- Once established it is very hard to change a belief
 - even if it is incorrect
 - especially if the new one is more complex



AI has become one of the most anthropomorphised technological advances in recent history.



- In studies anthropomorphism has been shown to yield a 7% increase on profits. Yuan et al.
- Humans can then ascribe personalities and values to machines – whether they have them or not

>>Exploitation can occur due to a lack of risk perception

“In Garvey et al. it is stated that "artificial agents may bypass human defences against interpersonal exploitation"

- Humans have a basic desire to be distinct and/or part of a group.
- Anthropomorphism of complex concepts and brands is used to attract people to groups and ‘communities’
- A side effect is that when you are distinct everyone else is “less than”
- Dehumanisation can then be used to keep people in groups and ‘communities’ by creating a ‘me vs them’ or ‘us vs them’

Effects on Relationships with Technology

- As devices such as Alexa, Siri and Robots become ever more humanised, it is easier for people to understand but also to trust without a sound basis.

“When they are ‘just like us’ why would we suspect exploitation or manipulation.”

- People also abuse this technology and can use ‘Master Slave’ relationships to establish their idea of a relationship
 - This can lead to being let down if the technology doesn’t perform as requested but also to dehumanising those that do not have the technology

What is Dehumanisation

- It is a way to deprive someone of their humanity
- To make others a target
- To drive hate

>>Or “Behaviour Management”

What is Dehumanisation

- The aim of dehumanisation is to present a group as being 'less than' the self-perceived superior group and to force either increased division to justify an existing belief system, or create a belief system in order to distributed to the population or to force compliance of a perceived inferior group.
- COVID > 'COVID Karen' & 'VAXXER'
- Nazi Germany > 'Jew' or 'Louse'
- South American Slavery > 'Ape Like'

What is Dehumanisation

- Studies of affective polarization support conclusions that members of political groups tend to emphasise the distance between their in-group and members of the out-group.
- Harel et al. “examined social media communication (Facebook posts and comments) to illustrate how the discourse in a homogeneous enclave, or echo chamber reveals affective polarization and dehumanization”

Does it get worse?

- This is all magnified for the vulnerable and socially excluded
- In a study by Chen et al. participants who were induced to feel socially excluded (vs. included) indicated more favourable attitudes and were more likely to actually choose a real brand of candy when it was thought of as a person

Dehumanisation of the Consumer

- Targeted ads based on personality characteristics inferred from the analysis of Facebook likes in combination with online survey questions can increase conversion rates by about 50%

S.C Matz et al.

- In 2018, Facebook's revenues from the sales of such tailored ads was close to \$56 billion

Puntoni et al.



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