

URL: <https://ecorner.stanford.edu/clips/human-relationships-with-tech-and-ai/>

Andrew Ng, managing general partner at AI Fund, discusses the changing nature of human relationships to technology and AI. He observes that some terms connected to AI are emotional topics, but are vague and difficult to think about in a scientific way.



Transcript

Questioner I wanted to ask you if you think 00:00:04,020 we'll ever reach a threshold on human dependence for AI or if you think it'll just continue to grow exponentially.. - So I think 00:00:13,980 we're already really, really dependent on tech, right? Imagine if the internet were to shut down, I think people would die.. I don't think that's exaggerated.. I mean, but seriously, think about how we get through supply chain, healthcare.. If the internet were to shut down, I think that will lead directly to what will happen to our water system, right, healthcare system.. So, I think that technology is very useful and so long as the supplies remain reliable, I feel like it's okay to depend on technology.. I mean, heck, I wish, I don't know, without dependence on agriculture system, how many of us would build a farm and hunt enough food to keep ourselves alive? Maybe, maybe we could do it, but it's pretty challenging.. So I think dependence on tech, see if it's gonna keep on growing for a while.. - But do you think there'll be a moment 00:01:05,100 where there's a difference in that relationship, not just in degree, but in kind.. You know, the famous singularity point where we don't even know what we don't even know about how technology's developing? Do you think that will occur? - Yeah, you know, the technological singularity is 00:01:20,400 one of those hypey things that I don't even know what it means..

So it is one of those, it's exciting as science fiction, but as an engineering scientist, I dunno how to talk about it.. It turns out there are a few terms in AI that are vague and undefined, but there are a lot of emotions, a lot of excitement about it.. And I don't really know how to think about those things in a systematic, rational way.. But actually there's actually one thing.. I think that our relationship with technology is changing rapidly.. Today, I probably use ChatGPT-4 or Bing or Bot pretty much every day now.. And so the workflow of many people have changed, right? I think people are changing.. - And do you have a view, I know this also 00:02:07,999 might be more of one of these sort of hot topics that's not substantive, but on the consciousness of AI.. That AI, will it become conscious? - Yeah, so the thing about consciousness is, 00:02:17,640 is important philosophical question.. But I don't know of any test for whether something is conscious or not..

So I think it's important philosophy and philosophy is important, but as an engineer and scientist, I don't know.. There is no definition for what is conscious or not, and thus we can kind of debate it at length.. And there's actually one other formula for hype, which is if someone comes up with a very simple definition for consciousness.. So someone says, "Oh, if you can recognize yourself "in the mirror, you're conscious." I made that up.. It's not a good definition of consciousness.. You're aware

of yourself.. You see yourself in a mirror, then it's actually pretty easy to get a robot to recognize itself in the mirror.. And then you can generate newspaper headlines saying AI has achieved consciousness.. What it did for your kind of, you know, silly little, for your very small definition of consciousness, but that gets misinterpreted by the broader public for a grander statement than it is.. So I see some of that hype in AI as well..