

Should we be worried? Skilled labor and living with Artificial Intelligence.

John Faraca

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

WW-ENGL 123: English Composition

Sher Mustell

February 25, 2024

Should we be worried? Skilled labor and living with Artificial Intelligence.

I have thoughts about continuing my education by attending law school or getting a master's in engineering. The goal is attaining a job in one of these related fields. These jobs are considered skilled labor, but should I be worried about Artificial Intelligence (AI)? This worry translates into more questions orbiting the realm of AI. While I consider the pursuit of a higher education, I do not know whether AI is going to make lawyers obsolete (or other skilled professions). Should we even seek a higher education in pursuit of a skilled profession? What I will attempt to answer is if AI is a tool that will help these professions, or will AI be a force making these professions diminished? I will discuss if AI becomes so prevalent that we will not have to learn anything or do anything for ourselves. I also explain the possibility for supplemental income because there will be no jobs for humans to do.

Will AI become so prevalent that we will not have to learn anything or do anything for ourselves? This is not an easy question to answer. Naude, W. (2021), provides some insight into the stark contrast between the media's portrayal of AI and reality. The media portrays AI as a threat to our existentialism. Think about a movie like *The Terminator* (Cameron, 1984). If you have not seen this movie yet, it is a classic; AI is nasty. Currently, AI has improved efficiency through automation. It is doing jobs that humans used to do, which has not led to massive unemployment. Developers of AI are trying to create a human like intelligence, called Artificial General Intelligence (AGI). AGI is defined as: a speculative type of intelligence that can learn to accomplish tasks with an intellect like humans. For now, AI is far from this capability, and unlikely to reach this point soon. Humans are not out of the woods completely. To remain competitive, humans will have to continue investments in education and skills.

Considering the advancements of AI, and its potential, there is a discussion of Universal Basic Income theory. This is the idea that humans will need supplemental income because AI will be doing jobs, previously done by humans, instead of humans. Are we going to become useless? The article titled

“Useless Class” Or uniquely human?” by Daniel Topf (2020), explored the potential domination of humans by AI. The article does an excellent job explaining the philosophic ideas revolving around AI. It explained programming a Christian viewpoint into AI can contribute a deeper meaning to humans. This viewpoint may be necessary in a realm beyond the classical tradition of paid work. The article provided a deeper understanding of the humans’ role in what is being called the ‘Fourth Industrial Revolution.’ In the future age of advanced technologies like AI and robotics, the idea is presented that many people will be useless and unemployable. People of the future might require Universal Basic Income because of AI. Explaining that for the near-term, AI should produce a balance between job growth and job loss. AI poses a threat to humans, but humans can adapt.

Workers of the future will have less education than previously required and can harness AI to complete skilled labor tasks. These are tasks that previously required highly skilled humans to complete. Now highly skilled workers are being replaced by people with lower qualifications. These workers are using the help of artificial intelligent devices to complete highly skilled tasks. A recurring theme in my research was the mentioning of the historian Harari’s prediction of the future: that most humans will have lost all their economic value and become “useless” (Harari, 2015). Do not fret humans! AI is not yet capable of taking all the jobs away just yet. AI is forecasted to create a surge of skilled jobs, because for now, humans must develop AI. The existential threat to humanity is far away until there is a breakthrough in artificial general intelligence (Su, 2021).

AI originates from computer science and engineering but is strongly influenced by disciplines such as philosophy, cognitive science, neuroscience, and economics. Choosing education in these disciplines will help humans adapt for the future. We need to continue educational aspirations; AI is a good educational tool. AI does not only make good subject matter to learn about, but it also makes a valuable tool for training. In the future, AI will become the primary tool for institutions to provide training in advanced skills. While we are worried about AI making us “useless,” and education

unnecessary, the opposite is true. The advancements in AI provide learning opportunities and a valuable resource for educators (Zawacki-Richter, 2019).

What about AI in the legal profession? I found out that artificial intelligent robot lawyers possess abilities that can replace that of a human. Just like in education, the current state of AI can be used to help lawyers rather than replace them. Human lawyers possess a psychological advantage over robots. Robots excel in data collection, case analysis and prediction, but lack the skills for negotiation, emotion, and morality. The article from Xu, N., & Wang, K. (2021) was paramount in addressing whether AI is going to make lawyers obsolete. The consensus for now is that AI is more useful as a tool (think smart computer) than a total replacement for lawyers.

Should we be worried about AI? I do not think so. As we navigate the Fourth Industrial Revolution we will see miraculous advancements in artificial intelligent technology, “The rise of the robots” (Topf, 2020). As this technology increases, humans will be able to adapt and use AI as a tool to help to solve complex problems and make tasks easier. People have been complaining about technology taking away jobs for hundreds of years. Connecting machines with job loss goes back to the economist David Ricardo 1772-1823 (Dormehl, 2017). That was over 200 years ago. AI has been conceived since the 1950’s (that is 75 years ago). Considering these advancements: we are still striving to attain knowledge, skilled professions are still available, and we are far from “useless.” The point is that currently, and for the near future, AI is here to help. AI provides more benefits than it takes away, ...Until Judgement Day (watch the sequel to *Terminator: Terminator 2: Judgment Day*, Cameron, 1991).

Reference

- Cameron, J. (Director). (1984). *The Terminator* [Film]. Orion Pictures; Hemdale; Pacific Western Productions; Euro Film Funding; Cinema '84.
- Cameron, J. (Director). (1991). *The Terminator 2: Judgement Day* [Film]. Tri-Star Pictures; Carolco Pictures; Pacific Western Productions; Lightstorm Entertainment; Le Studio Canal+.
- Dormehl, L. (2017). *Thinking Machines: The Quest for Artificial Intelligence--and Where It's Taking Us Next*. Tarcher Perigee.
- Harari, Y. (2015). *Homo Deus: A brief history of Tomorrow*. Harper.
- Naudé, W. (2021) Artificial intelligence: neither utopian nor apocalyptic impacts soon. *Economics of innovation and new technology*, 30(1), 1-23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10438599.2020.1839173>
- Su, Z., Togay, G. & Côté, A. -M. (2021) Artificial intelligence: a destructive and yet creative force in the skilled labour market. *Human Resource Development International*, 24(3), 341-352. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13678868.2020.1818513>
- Topf, D. (2020). "Useless class" or uniquely human?: The challenge of artificial intelligence. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*. 32(1-2), 17-38.
- Xu, N., & Wang, K. (2021). Adopting robot lawyer? The extending artificial intelligence robot lawyer technology acceptance model for legal industry by an exploratory study. *Journal of Management & Organization*, 27(5), 867-885. <https://doi.org/10.1017/jmo.2018.81>
- Zawacki-Richter, O. (2019). Systematic review of research on artificial intelligence applications in higher education - where are the educators? *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education*. 16(1), 1-27. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41239-019-0171-0>