



Known unknowns of technology.

(Technology as a threat to future generations)

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Two the most imminent threats to our future generation that are going to be caused by technology is loss of jobs caused by automation and our willingness to accept the loss of personal privacy. These topics that I have picked for this essay are graspable problems that we can already notice but we are not realizing the scope of the problem thus “Known unknowns of technology”.

The most imminent and real threat facing us today is automaton. Scientists today are aware that dangers of automation is not science fiction anymore, for example: “Professor Moshe Vardi, of Rice University, in the US, claims that many middle-class professionals will be outsourced to machines within the next few decades leaving workers with more leisure time than they have ever experienced”. *(Knapton, 2017)*

This claim is supported by the opinions of many respected technology entrepreneurs such as Elon Musk. In November 2016 Elon made a statement in CNBC interview where he warned about the dangers of automation and also hinted one of the possible solutions of socio-economic impact: “There is a pretty good chance we end up with a universal basic income, or something like that, due to automation.”

Automation is already here; large companies like Nissan, Uber or Google are leading in technological race of automobile automatization and all of them have managed to develop self-driving autonomous prototypes that are able to navigate properly in the streets. With this point I’m trying to indicate one significant problem that is bound to happen in transportation industry.

Last year, the Obama White House released a report that said 1.3 million to 1.7 million truck drivers could eventually lose their jobs; that means from 80% to 100% of all truck-driving jobs.

If you count taxi drives, service trucks drivers, chauffeurs and bus drivers as well, automated vehicles could replace as many as 3.1 million people only in United States.

Loss of Privacy

There are many people who would argue that this isn’t a problem posed by future technology, but one which is already present. But with the introduction of new devices such as Google Assistant, smart appliances that interconnecting every aspect of our home with “smart” technology; the conversation about loss of privacy sparked again. To many people losing privacy as such without their explicit knowledge of that fact doesn’t seem bad. Just think about it yourself, how many terms and conditions do you accept every day without reading them? *(Morgan, 2014)* Every information has a certain value – It has value to the police, but it also has value to big corporations. The police want the details of your browser history because certain patterns can help them in finding child pornographers. But Google uses the same data to promote specific advertisements suited for you. Scale and usage of collecting information was first brought to light by Edward Snowden, a former contractor for the CIA, who leaked to the media details of extensive internet and phone surveillance by American intelligence. Since then Mr. Snowden is persecuted by US Government for treason charges. *(Brown, 2014)*



Dystopic imagination of the future could become reality if we will let our loss of privacy eventually grow into loss of our personal freedom. In this case, we might be living in Orwell-esque future. As Edward Snowden said: "If we don't have privacy, what we're losing is the ability to make mistakes... Privacy is the fountainhead of all other rights..." (*Schrodt, 2016*)

Privacy will become more futile with every device connected to the web. In the next few years appliance and device connectivity is going to come standard with coffee makers, toothbrushes, alarm clocks, watches, wallets, and anything else you can think of.

If we will put this in larger context; we as humanity have come across many points in our history where we have tackled similar threats from setting down and developing agriculture or to first industrialization revolutions around the world. We're at the point where we're going to be serving technology, instead of technology serving us.



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