Contesting the ethics of AAIS: against the pursuit of profit

Damon Mackett

University of Johannesburg, South Africa
201431353@student.uj.ac.za

The role of automation presents a double-edged sword as it directly benefits one side as it disadvantages the other. Artificial intelligence allows for increasingly more sophisticated automation. In my essay, I argue that the use of Automated Artificial Intelligent Systems (AAIS) create ethical implications that impact negatively on the "average worker"[1](Ford, 2015: 34), whilst having a positive impact for corporations/manufacturers. I argue that ethical implications of automation are not exclusive to the fourth industrial revolution, or entirely new development. In addition, the use of A.I. in automation means the ethical implications have only worsened. A.I. and the ethical implications of its use exist in the literature but these deal mainly with issue of privacy (Ford, 2015) accountability (MacNamara, Smith and Murphy-Hill, 2018) and how to build A.I. ethically (Hagendorff, 2019) to name a few. There is a lack of literature that focuses on the relationship that exists between A.I. and the economic. My essay argues that the relationship exists, and it is one that harms and benefits all at once. My essay explores who and how AAIS specifically harms and benefits. My essay presents two arguments. The first is an argument by analogy to argue that the first and the fourth industrial revolutions share similar trends. This allows certain inferences to be drawn from the first that are applicable to the fourth mainly that the creation and implementation of AAIS will impact negatively on the "average worker" (Ford, 2015: 34), the case against profit. The second argument presents the case in favour of developing and implementing AAIS, the case for profit. I use the work of Milton Friedman (1970) to argue that a business exists only to fulfil the wishes of its shareholder or owners, which is more often than not, profit (Friedman, 1970: 2). Though Milton's work is old I believe his position is tenable if C. Soares (2003) is used in conjunction with his. Soares (2003) argues that corporations can be worthy of praise or blame as an individual. Thus a corporation acting for its own benefit will find itself closer to Milton's position.

I argue that the ethical implications of automation have existed since the first industrial revolution. I draw on the work done by Emma Griffin (2013) to demonstrate this point. I use the work of Griffin as she illustrates how automation during the first industrial revolution affected the "average worker" (Ford, 2015: 34). Griffin's (2013) book documents the lives of people who lived during the first industrial revolution in the form of biographies. This presents the perspective of the "average worker" and illustrates the negative impact automation had on their lives. Whilst at the same time man-

[1] The term average worker in this context refers to an employee of a company who is in any non-managerial, non-supervisory role (Ford, 2015: 34).

ufacturers “amassed great wealth” (Griffin, 2013: 24). This allows me to draw an analogy between the first industrial revolution and the fourth industrial revolution. The work of Martin Ford (2015) presents an overview of the impact the fourth industrial revolution has on companies and the “average worker” (Ford, 2015: 34). Whist Ford (2015) present an opposing methodology to Griffin (2013), taking a large overview of the situation instead of documenting individual cases, the trends of both are similar in nature. Both industrial revolutions show that automation, and AAIS, illustrate the same this, it is positive for companies yet negative for the workers. There are trends both works identify that are not directly tied to the economy, one such trend is how both revolutions disrupt the wat knowledge is passed (Griffin, 2013: 29) (Ford, 2015: 50). Secondly, I argue for the implementation of AAIS, the case for profit by using the works of Friedman (1970) and Soares (2003). Friedman argues that corporations have no social responsibility, and exist solely to fulfil their owner’s wishes (Friedman, 1970: 2), which is usually for the corporation to be a profitable one (Friedman, 1970: 2). Friedman extends this and argues that anyone who takes care of a corporation, can only act ethically by fulfilling the wishes of the owners (Friedman, 1970: 3). Doing anything else would be considered unethical, even acting socially responsible (Friedman, 1970: 3). Sociably responsibility can extend for a corporations consideration for its workers. As mentioned above, Friedman’s work is rather old, and however, I believe his position is a tenable one if the work of Soares (2003) is used to supplement it. Soares argues that a corporation is able to act, and its actions can be blameworthy or praiseworthy, corporations are therefore able to act an individual’s (Soares, 2003: 2). I apply Soares (2003) position to Freidman (1970) arguing that as an individual a corporation should look after its own interest which would be to make a profit. Lastly I present a counter-position to the pure pursuit of profit by arguing that the “Nike case” (DeTienne and Lewis, 2005) demonstrates how a corporation can be profitable and socially responsible, even when forced to do so (DeTienne and Lewis, 2005).There are a number of possible objections to my position, such as increased productivity making goods and services cheaper and job reskilling and creation. I address these concerns toward the end of my paper. I present a solution to the issue of my paper in the form of an “episodic career” (Chideya, 2016). Lastly I conclude by reiterating the main argument within my paper, namely that there is an ethico-economic aspect in developing and implementing AAIS that needs to be considered. From the point of the “average worker” (Ford, 2015: 34), as well as on the side of business.

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