

AI and Ethics: LIS Pedagogy Chat

April 19, 2024

Moderator: Andrea Baer

About today's discussion structure: Today we will reflect on and share about our own experiences with and perspectives on AI and AI ethics, particularly in the context of LIS and LIS pedagogy. In order to contextualize ethical issues related to AI, we will watch three short video clips, each of which serve as an invitation for individual reflection and group discussion. We will also have the opportunity to share teaching ideas and resources.

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Event description

Since the launch of ChatGPT in November 2022, librarians and educators across disciplines have sought to wrap our minds around the capabilities of generative AI's and its implications for teaching, learning, and the creation and circulation of information. Currently the frequent calls for integrating AI tools into LIS pedagogy and library instruction tend to give short shrift to the complex ethical questions that AI raises (e.g., privacy risks, algorithmic discrimination, labor rights, economic impact, environmental cost, effects on human cognition and social relationships). In this conversation, we will reflect on the potential costs and benefits of using AI tools. We will also consider how we can foster in ourselves and in students *critical* AI literacy, through which we consider the ethics of AI and seek to identify and investigate assumptions that we and others may make about AI and LIS pedagogy.

Welcome and introductions

Opening reflection and discussion

(Individual reflection + brief group discussion)

(~7 minutes)

Please use a row in the table below to respond to any or all of the following three questions.

1. How do you feel about the growing prominence of AI in society at large? How do you feel about its growing roles in LIS and in education?
2. What are some common messages or arguments about AI that you have heard in recent years?
3. What values or beliefs are reflected in common messages or arguments about AI?

1. Feelings about AI's growing prominence	2. Common messages/arguments about AI	3. Values/beliefs reflected in messages about AI
It's another fad that we are jumping on and then eventually it will become normalized. +1+1	Students will need AI for the workforce	Control of AI by private economic interests is in everyone's best interest+!+1 +1
In society at large, I am nervous due to ethics of it all as well as the volume of mis/disinformaton that can be spread +1+1+1	The world is ending and robots are taking over because of AI +1	The adverse effects of AI on the environment and climate +1+1+1
I am concerned about how it is being monetized and forced upon everyone as a necessity, especially given the ethical and environmental issues. I think AI tools can be used for many good applications, but I worry that they will be used more for harm than good, at least commercially.+1 +1 +1+1+1+1	Assumptions that Ai is just so different from how we should have already been evaluating info +1 +1 +1	Societal biases are baked into the AI tools (which is an inherent problem). +1 +1+1
Concerned about faculty	AI is going to make us	Higher ed orgs using AI

allowing students to use it without guardrails or context +1 +1 +1	intellectually uncurious and lazy.	powered enrollment management and financial aid systems should be careful.
wary	"AI is here to stay"	Product is more important than process in education
nervous	Bias and concern about lack of transparency of training data. +1	
I'm curious about what this will mean for society as a whole.	We're already using AI in our daily lives.+1	This shift is inevitable.
Concerned by the ethics and values that tech leaders are embedding into their AI products +1 +1	AI is a force for good, will help us, as a nation, make progress.+1	
I see a lot of hype and it often does not seem very critical. +1+1 +1	Mistaking LLMs as something they are not. They are technically not the AI that we usually think of. This can lead to misunderstanding how to use it to our advantage +1	Fast/easy is better, especially in areas like learning and research - but new knowledge creation usually requires sustained, complex thought +1 +1
Data and information theft feeding the beast.		
Overwhelmed by how much!		
Some real concerns +1. My students have told me about a tool (quillbot) that will paraphrase text so that their ChatGPT answers are reworded to be undetectable / harder to detect. I also saw a CFP that encouraged folks to use a tool that looked really sketchy to reword their text.	"When we all went to school, we learned how the light bulbs work or how the digestive system works or how photosynthesis works. And you teach those things to everybody, not just the botanists or the electricians or the surgeons." "You learn [these things] to have a better understanding of your world. But most people don't know how the internet works, how a smartphone works, how an algorithm works, and they definitely don't know how AI	

	works.” –Hadi Partovi, CEO of Code.org	
Mostly concerned about it being a commercially controlled set of tools, rather than open ones where there is broader engagement and better review of how they function. +1+1	Instructors automatically assuming it is always being used for cheating. Or that any use is cheating. +1+1 +1 +1	That the discourse is focused on being used for business
Resistance, ethical concerns +1		
Honestly irritated that it's taking up so much space in public discourse. +1+1+1	The biggest one I see is that it's "inevitable" - which it isn't. We can choose if and how we engage with it +1 +1+1	That this technology is the "one way" forward for progress
Fear for the labor market for all kinds of information/creative folks going forward +1; fear for a Cylon-style takeover of the earth, lots in between.	"Our students will need to use AI in their jobs so we should teach them to do it well" +1	All technological innovation is inherently good +1
Hype		
Concerned for how we might be able to keep up with issues at the same rate that our students encounter them (for example, using AI to plagiarize and us staying up on how to spot it/prevent it) +1	"Inevitable" and "we're already using it" 2+	Hoping that we can use AI as a TOOL without falling into the negative sides of things (like using AI to replace artists)+1 +1 +1+1
Looking at this as an academic librarian, I am concerned about how many see this as something for us to "correct" or fix +1 +1 +1	<< This might also be a common message	
Concerned about environmental impact of widespread use +1		

Conversation Notes:

- Tone of comments here differs from what we may have seen in other venues, more concerns articulated here (in webinars, Chronicle, tone is often very enthusiastic)
 - Often need to dig deeper to find the more critical voices.
 - Why are some voices getting amplified more than others?
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Video: Opening remarks on “AI in the Workplace: New Crisis or Longstanding Challenge,” Emily M. Bender

(October 1, 2023 at virtual roundtable convened by Congressman Bobby Scott) For the transcript, see [Bender’s related Medium post](#) (~15 minutes)

We will watch this video in two segments, and add notes below throughout and after our viewing:

- Segment 1: 0:01-3:49 - Explanation of what AI is
- Segment 2: Further discussion of how AI works and associated harms

As we watch the segments, please use table column 1 (below) to articulate prevalent messages about AI that Bender challenges. After viewing the video, we will have time to add related comments to column 2.

Prevalent messages that Bender challenges	Related comments
AI is a marketing tool not a technology	
Need to be aware when technology is being marketed as something it is not. AI is a marketing term. Ask what is being automated and why? Who is deciding these things? Who does this benefit?	Thinking of it as “automation” is really helpful/clarifying +1
If algorithms are designed to identify patterns, they may not be the right tool to challenge and alter those patterns.+1	
“Synthetic media machines” (chatGPT) is basically continuous autocomplete	It alarms me how often I need to explain that ChatGPT = autocomplete to folks I consider to be deeply informed about tech.
There is no actual coherent intelligence that is embodied by “artificial intelligence”, it is the human user who is attaching meaning to AI outputs	
<p>Question: why is my posting here identified as “annonymous?”</p> <p>It's not magic Questions of interested parties It's not one thing It's not “objective” - much interpretation is from reader perspective</p> <p>Varying degrees of accuracy, currency Reproduces existing patterns of bias Obscures corporate interests at expense of access</p>	<p>Ai challenges a concise definition</p> <p>It's unclear, though, how Ai requires other/different/more critical engagement from other info</p> <p>“Resistance is futile”</p>
It's not AI, it's automation. Chat GPT is autocomplete.	Thinking about chat gpt as autocomplete is helpful in getting me to remember how it works.
Accountability is on the machines	People/companies should be and are still responsible The marketing background was very interesting.
ChatGPT is more sophisticated than autocomplete; AI does not require human labor;	<p>I love her already. +2</p> <p>Confused by how her description of ChatGPT as “synthetic media machine” is helpful if she's framing this in terms of what and how something is automating</p>

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Accountability is on the machines	People/companies should be and are still responsible The marketing background was very interesting.
She is setting the context for rationally thinking about this technology. Artificial Intelligence is a marketing term.	ChatGPT's job is autocomplete - I never thought of it this way

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<p>Automation, not magic. Marketing as something that it's not. We are trying to make sense of the outcomes, not the other way around</p>	
	“Synthetic media machines”

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	I wonder if she is considering AI uses beyond LLMs
The marketing distracts from the real issues.	

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ChatGPT = autocorrect	

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	AI / artificial intelligence really gives the perception of science fiction / robots. The companies that create these tools benefit from this narrative.
Discusses the commercial motive for naming it AI. Humans are	When commercialized, it's hard not to

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still central to making sense of the “work” AI does.	think about it as something that is going to result in “haves and have nots” and possibly result in more control for those who have access to more sophisticated tools.

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AI as one new discrete “thing” when there are actually many different kinds “automation” that have been around for a while AI/ChatGPT models specifically as “knowledgeable” Computers as objective/fair	

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AI as so new so as to require new legislation	
AI is misunderstood and marketed to make things seems “magical” and “powerful”	AI ready as a term that feels similar to being Y2K ready!

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Reconsidering AI as automation and who benefits, who is harmed. Hype sells	

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Video segment from “[How AI Is Enabling Racism, Sexism: Algorithmic Justice League’s Joy Buolamwini on Meeting with Biden](#),” *Democracy Now*

(clip from 7:03-9:52) (selected clip begins segment from from the documentary *Coded Bias* and with Safiya Umoja Noble)

In light of the material in this video clip, please share below your further thoughts on using or teaching with AI.

(~10 minutes)

I feel the need to teach about AI, otherwise students may not be critical of the tools they are encountering in every day life. Need to teach skepticism.
I will use AI to a degree that I don't feel like I steal from someone. I will explore AI with my students.
We tend to respond to Ai issues as individuals (instructors, citizens) but the larger issues, especially so “early on,” are difficult to engage at systematic/cultural levels. So much of Ai is, as discussed earlier, about <i>marketing</i> /consuming.
Basically, we, as a species, are not ready for AI. In terms of teaching - what do we teach? How to use it? What to use? When to use? Are we teaching our values/attitudes towards AI in our teaching of it?
It seems extremely challenging to push back against the strong marketing and convenience factor of some technologies. Once you feel you are benefiting from a service or product, it's hard to move away or criticize it. Especially if you're not the one being impacted the most (e.g. not my problem, everyone's using it).
I feel that it is necessary to include this in education as a tool, like any other tool. And we should be modeling how to use it ethically. Companies are also going to be looking for employees who can use AI to be more productive and I believe it is a dis-service to not teach our students these basic skills in an ethical way.
This makes me more reluctant to teach with AI, considering the larger ethical issues.
I have enjoyed watching students play with Google's Teachable Machine as it helps them to

understand the limitations of machine learning and how the training data contributes to the inaccuracy or bias of the model. I just finished teaching a course for the first time and students were really very unaware of how prevalent AI is in their daily lives, how AI powered systems and tools could benefit and harm, from college admissions decisions, to health care decision support and prison sentencing. Students expressed a desire for more classes to raise awareness and increase AI literacy.

Very daunted by the prospect of pushing students to stop using tools like ChatGPT, or even to use it critically. Would they even listen at this point? Also wondering how different the foundations are of AI, ethically speaking, from other digital tools and databases, eg Amazon Web Service -hosted services. Not to engage in What Aboutisms? but/and also is this a problem fundamental to the existence/operation of The Internet writ large???

I've had fun having students play with AI to expose bias (we did an exhibit label assignment where they asked ChatGPT or others of their choice to write labels at different lengths about different historical/cultural belongings/objects and then put them in a virtual gallery to discuss the problems –there were many and it was a good discussion)

^I love this exhibit label assignment!!

Students ought to be considering the ethical domain of AI use. How are the systems built, by whom, and what do we not know about those systems that might be of concern? Who is benefiting from the use of these tools and how? If these systems are not transparent can we ever trust them? How much are we willing to compromise for the use of these tools? These are actually well established questions about tech use that need to be taught more often.

Oversimplifying, but “garbage in - garbage out” can really be what happens

I had a great example of this from a class I taught earlier this week. I mentioned how things like ChatGPT could help us verify that we understand what we just read. I found a scholarly article and asked ChatGPT to summarize it for me, to see if it matched my understanding. It did a HORRIBLE job! So I put ChatGPT's summary next to my summary (basically a quote from the article) and showed students that ChatGPT can still mess it up.

Article: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fvets.2023.1128757>

ChatGPT: The article examines the potential applications of artificial intelligence (AI) in veterinary medicine, particularly in diagnosing diseases and predicting treatment outcomes for animals. It highlights how AI tools, such as machine learning algorithms, can analyze large datasets to identify patterns and provide valuable insights for veterinarians. The authors discuss various AI techniques, including deep learning and natural language processing, and their potential to revolutionize veterinary practice. They also address challenges such as data quality and ethical considerations, emphasizing the need for collaboration between veterinarians and AI experts to maximize the benefits of these technologies in animal healthcare.

Me: “Our survey results show that the cat-cat relationship in two cat households is complex

and impacted by many factors such as, cat sex, age, relatedness, outdoor access, resource provision in the home, and aggression directed toward other people and animals in the home.” (Khoddami et al. 8)

I agree with the comments about excavating the foundation of how the tools are created. The foundation is unreliable. Why would BIPOC trust what comes out of AI tools when the biases that are already hurting them make up the very tool itself?

I sometimes feel like the problem is bridging the gap between people who have already bought into the AI hype and people who are thinking critically about AI - it seems like people don't see critical lenses as something to help them better understand how the systems should/shouldn't be used but instead as negative commentary on the systems and people who use them

To the above comment - I feel like bridging the gap will get a little easier once the hype dies a bit. People have a bit of FOMO right now

I think we need to explore how to prompt to avoid some of these issues and adopt/point to AI-driven tools that offer access tools that help students/users access better content and pull from different data sets. EBSCO, Elsevier and ProQuest are adopting AI tools.

Notes from conversation:

- 2 possible domains for engaging with AI - how we engage with AI in the classroom; our responsibility (especially as LIS faculty and librarians who are professionals in information) to address AI's use in society
- We are often acting individually (e.g., teaching about AI in our classroom), so how do we engage on the larger social level, need to do this work collectively (and resist the narrative of inevitability)
- Large environmental cost of AI - often not discussed
- Can we use AI ethically considering the nature of how AI is created and sustained

- Talking with students about making small changes in how they engage with AI
- Connections between harms of AI and epistemicide, epistemic injustice

Sample overviews of identified harms of large language models

- [Sociotechnical harms of algorithmic systems: Scoping a taxonomy for harm reduction](#) (Shelby et al., 2023) - identify five broad categories of harms; see page 727 for the fuller I feel like it helps me to continually ask myself : "what am I trying to teach?" If I center that first, I can then ask "how well do these tools do this?" I feel like it's easy to slip into centering the tool- especially when it's bright and shiny and new. Of course teaching AI literacy is also important- and being aware of how students are currently using it.
- taxonomy
 - Representational (e.g., stereotyping, erasing social groups)
 - Allocative (e.g., opportunity loss, economic loss)
 - Quality of service (e.g., alienation, service/benefit loss)
 - Interpersonal (e.g., loss of agency, privacy violations)
 - Social system (e.g., information harms, environmental harms)
- Weidinger et al.'s "[Ethical and social risks of harm from Language Models](#)": "We structure the identified risks in a taxonomy of ethical and social risks associated with LMs, under 6 risk areas:
 - I. Discrimination, Exclusion and Toxicity
 - II. Information Hazards
 - III. Misinformation Harms
 - IV. Malicious Uses
 - V. Human-Computer Interaction Harms
 - VI. Automation, Access, and Environmental Harms"
- Electronic Privacy Information Center (EPIC)'s "[Generating harms: Generative AI's impact and paths forward](#)" (May 2023 white paper) - table of contents on page 3
- Shared in chat: <https://h5pstudio.ecampusontario.ca/content/51741> and <https://leonfurze.com/2023/01/26/teaching-ai-ethics/comment-page-1/>
- <https://h5pstudio.ecampusontario.ca/content/51741>
- <https://arxiv.org/abs/2402.01659>

Further discussion: Possible questions

Please feel free to suggest additional questions or topics by adding them to the list below, or by sharing your ideas with the group verbally or in the Zoom chat.

Broad questions:

- How are you thinking/teaching about AI and AI ethics? What perspectives would you like to add to today's discussion?
- How can we encourage critical examination of AI tools, both with students and within our own professional communities?
- A common argument for embracing the use of AI in education has been that its prevalence is inevitable and that students must therefore develop the skills to use it effectively. What do you think of this idea? What are potential benefits and costs of using various AI tools in education?

Agency and choice:

- When we ask students, colleagues, or ourselves to use specific AI tools, what might doing so require of them/us? What about the nature of AI tools and using them might we want to make explicit when asking students to use and/or critically analyze GenAI?
- When engaging with AI tools, how can we honor student agency and choice?

Other thoughts/questions?

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- I'm skeptical about entering "ethics" targeted only on/for Ai (ethics are foundational across everything - Ai gets no special pleading)
- In teaching, I'm asking MLIS students to use Ai to generate drafts of surveys and questions for asking library users about service outcomes (assessment/evaluation)
- Ethically and privacy-wise speaking, I would caution students not to enter copyrighted information into any AI tool. They need to understand that information has value and we should not just hand over copyrighted information to a company / tool where we do not know how they will use it exactly.
-
- I am looking for copyright-like or creative commons CC: BY icons that show if something was created in collaboration with an AI tool. I've seen it before but can't locate those badge/icons.
-
- Shared in chat - Here is a really great analysis and overview of AI policies in HE: McDonald, N., Johri, A., Ali, A., & Hingle, A. (2024). Generative artificial intelligence in higher education: Evidence from an analysis of institutional policies and guidelines. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2402.01659>
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Discussion notes:

Selected resources

Selected resources have been organized into two subcategories: [AI ethics](#) and [Critical AI literacy teaching resources](#).

AI ethics

- [DAIR](#) (Distributed AI Research Institute)
 - Homepage includes an introductory video
 - [Research page](#) includes expandable menus that reflect key AI ethics issues and related resources
 - Podcast “[Mystery AI Hype Theater 3000](#)” (e.g., [The Murky Climate and Environmental Impact of Large Language Models](#), Nov. 8, 2023)
- [AI Now Institute](#): research institute studying the social implications of AI and related policy; publications include the [2023 Landscape](#) report
- “[We need to focus on the AI harms that already exist](#)” Oct. 30, 2023, excerpt from *Unmasking AI: My Mission to Protect What Is Human in a World of Machines* by Joy Buolamwini
- “[Signal’s Meredith Whittaker: AI Is Fundamentally ‘a Surveillance Technology,’](#)” Techcrunch, Sept. 2023.
- “[Generating harms: Generative AI’s impact and paths forward](#)” ([White paper](#)). Electronic Privacy Information Center (EPIC). May 2023.
- “[ChatGPT? We need to talk about LLMs](#),” Rebecca Sweetman and Yasmine Djerbal, University Affairs, May 25, 2023.
- “[Ethical and social risks of harm from Language Models](#),” Laura Weidinger et al., *Deep Mind*, December 2021.
- [AI Snake Oil](#), Arvind Narayanan and Sayash Kapoor. (Forthcoming book, Sept. 2024).

Please add more below!

- [Princeton Dialogs on AI and Ethics: Case Studies](#) (CC-BY)
- [The AI Hype Wall of Shame](#) (from Critical AI)
- [Artificial Intelligence](#): open textbook/modules w interactive elements, short chapters, accessible for general readers, links to podcasts. CC-BY

- [Artificial Intelligence and Librarianship, Chapter 9: What are the Opportunities for Librarians?](#) (open textbook)
- [Enrollment algorithms are contributing to the crises of higher education](#) (Brookings Institute)
- Ethan Mollick's One Useful Thing substack
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Critical AI literacy teaching resources

- [AI teaching strategies: Having conversations with students](#), OSU Teaching & Learning Resource Center: Includes conversation starters and class activities on GenAI
- [Teaching AI Ethics](#) (Leon Furze): Teaching ideas organized around nine key ethical areas (bias and discrimination, environmental concerns, truth and academic integrity, copyright, privacy, datafication, emotion recognition, human labour, and power)
- [Prior to \(or instead of\) using ChatGPT with your students](#), Autumn Caines, *Is a Liminal Space* (blog), January 18, 2023
- [One year into ChatGPT: Resources and possible directions for educators in 2024](#), Maha Bali, *Reflecting Allowed* (blog), January 11, 2024
- [What I mean when I say critical AI literacy](#), Maha Bali, *Reflecting Allowed* (blog), April 1, 2023: Includes numerous teaching resources
- [TRU Digital Detox](#) (Open Learning, Thompson River University): frequent posts on the intersections between technology and teaching and learning, includes numerous posts
- [Identity, privacy & privilege: Using data to discuss systemic racism](#), Jeannie Crowley, November 28, 2016: Describes and links to a card game about social identity and digital privacy

Please add more resources or teaching ideas below!

Here is a really great analysis and overview of AI policies in HE: McDonald, N., Johri, A., Ali, A., & Hingle, A. (2024). Generative artificial intelligence in higher education: Evidence from an analysis of institutional policies and guidelines. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2402.01659>