Foundations Paper

As the advancement of technology continues to increase at an exponential rate, the discussion of the role ethics plays in said advancement becomes an even more pressing one. While there are many different aspects of ethics in relation to technology, I believe the most important issue is in regards to healthcare. In my opinion, this issue is not only the most pressing, but also seems to have the most controversy surrounding it. In healthcare, ethics becomes a question because we begin to question the morality of some medical decisions that arise with advancements in technology.

Stanford Medicine recently published an article titled “When AI is Watching Patient Care: Ethics to Consider”, where the author, Laurie Flynn, brings up some of the ethical and legal questions that arise with AI’s increasing role in healthcare. In the article, the most important question that arises is the question of the rights and privacy of both patients and healthcare workers. This ethical concern arises around AI technology, “known as computer vision-based ambient intelligence, which uses a video camera or sensors to monitor activity in a physical space, such as a patient room or hospital hallway. The technology analyzes -- in real time -- the resulting video data, which can appear as standard footage, depth or thermal data captured as silhouette-like moving images, or in other forms,” (Flynn, 2). The problem that arises with this type of technology is that it may obtain more information about a person than
he or she may be comfortable with. While this technology may seem problematic and even an
invasion of privacy, there may be some solutions.

The article states that the primary solution to this problem is, “to collect only the
minimal data necessary for a research project or application -- particularly when specific data
points are sufficient,” (Flynn, 7). However, even with this restriction implemented in the
technology, the fear of people’s identities being revealed through video or image still remains.
Even if the goal is to promote better care for patients and workers, many people still may not be
comfortable with their identities being recorded and distributed without their expressed
consent. Ultimately, while many questions and concerns still remain with AI in healthcare, we
are still in the very early stages of the technology, and these are all important questions and
concerns to consider as this technology advances.

Personally, I found this topic interesting to me because I feel as though artificial
intelligence will play a major role in the future healthcare system. Additionally, the field of
healthcare is one I have always been interested in and one I hope my career path takes me into,
so I believe gaining a deep understanding of the future of healthcare is extremely important for
my potential future career. I believe the topic of ethics and technology, specifically healthcare, is
one that comes with a plethora. At this point in time, we are only scratching the surface as to
what technology can do for our healthcare system, which is why it is so important to define the
rights and wrongs of technology so we can better the future of our society.

When addressed with this topic, I find myself to be a bit overloaded. There are so many
things to consider when thinking of the ethics of technology, and there are so many different
types of technologies being created that these questions of ethicality need to be applied to.
That being said, I believe as we become more informed with technology and obtain a better understanding of how technology can be implemented within our society, we will be able to answer some of these ethical concerns much more easily. At this point in time, we are still discovering new technologies that have potential to become mainstream within our society, which is why I believe the ethical concerns of technology is so cloudy. However as time progresses and we become more acquainted with these technologies, I believe the answers to some of our most perplexing ethical concerns will become much more clear.

I found this article to be particularly informing because it brought up an ethical concern that I had not even considered prior to reading it. According to an article published by Duke’s computer science team, ambient technology is, “using computer vision-based human activity understanding in the hospital environment to assist clinicians with complex care,” (Yeung, 1). Computer based ambient intelligence was a form of technology I was not even familiar with prior to reading the article however from what I have gathered it is a technology that can change the future of the healthcare field. Not only did this article do a great job of informing me of this newfound technology, but also addressed the ethical concerns of said new technology. While this article did a great job of informing me of this technology, I think it serves as a great model for how other technologies should be presented to the public, while also addressing the ethical concerns that may come along with a new technology.

Technoethics is a field that is currently expanding extremely rapidly. I believe the field of technology is one that will provide an immense number of jobs in the future as we see technological capabilities increase. In lecture, we talked about many different aspects of technoethics, including freedom of speech, personal representation, marketing, clickbait, and
social justice; however, healthcare was the most interesting to me, because I believe it has the most day to day impact on the most people. Not only do I see myself in a job that involves technology in healthcare, but I believe that in the future, almost everyone’s job will be in direct contact with some sort of automated technology. That being said, I find ethical questions in healthcare are some we still address today, and the more we add technology to the healthcare field, the more ethical questions and dilemmas are going to come up. While the implementation of technology may increase the number ethical questions and concerns that arise, I ultimately believe it will be for the better.

While there are many ethical concerns with new technology, I believe these concerns are essential for the technological advancement of our society. We live in such a technological era where new technologies are being created almost every single day, and in order for us to be able to successfully implement these new innovations it’s important for us to get the best possible understanding of these new technologies before we make them common practice. I believe technology is the future of our society, and with that comes the questions and concerns that technoethics attempts to answer.
Works Cited
