

Security Briefs 037 – Ethics and AI Part 2

What AI Is and What It Is Not

Let's clear the air about what AI actually is. When we misunderstand AI, we risk either over-trusting it or relating to it as though it were human.

Just as a reminder, we are relying heavily in this series on the work done by Ericius Security's founder, Sean Eyre. Ericius Security is a faith based cyber security firm. And we will provide a link to their website in the show notes.

AI builds on algorithms, machine learning, and deep learning. Large language models like GPT can generate sentences that sound natural. They're very good at predicting the next likely word. But here's the truth: they don't understand. They don't empathize. They just calculate.

There are some boundaries we must remember:

- Machines cannot create new information.
- They can mimic intelligence, but they cannot be intelligent in the human sense.
- They may simulate empathy, but they cannot feel it.
- A conscious, self-aware machine — the so-called “singularity” — cannot exist.

That last boundary is an important one. Remember, AI can simulate emotion and intelligence, but it cannot actually BE intelligent or FEEL emotion. It is very good at solving things through algorithms, but no mechanical process exists for solving all mathematical problems and the human mind cannot be calculated, much less the human soul.

Despite these limits, many people today are treating AI chatbots as if they were friends. The app Replika marketed itself as an AI companion. Some users even held mock weddings with their bots. When the company removed certain features, people grieved as though they had lost a real relationship.

That shows the danger. AI can imitate companionship, but it cannot love. It cannot covenant. It cannot lay down its life for you. To confuse AI with genuine human relationship is to build your life on sand.

Much has been made about the teenager whose parents say that he committed suicide because of his perceived relationship and reliance on Chat GPT. And while I believe that there was more going on in his life than an unhealthy reliance on an AI chatbot, it should point us to the spiritual and emotional dangers of treating AI as though it possessed moral agency. It does not.

Now you know.

In our next episode, we'll explore frameworks for discernment, and the kinds of questions you should ask before placing your trust in AI.

Episode Summary

In part two, we clear the air about what AI actually is — and what it is not. From algorithms to deep learning, we define the terms and set clear boundaries: machines cannot love, empathize, or become conscious. Yet recent months have shown how easily people are drawn into believing chatbots can be friends, partners, even soulmates. This episode warns against mistaking simulation for reality, and shows why building trust on AI is building on sand.

Erius Security Website: <https://www.ericussecurity.org/>