

IEEE VR



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Ethical & Social Challenges of the Metaverse

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THE 32nd IEEE CONFERENCE ON VIRTUAL REALITY AND 3D USER INTERFACES



What can we learn from the Past?



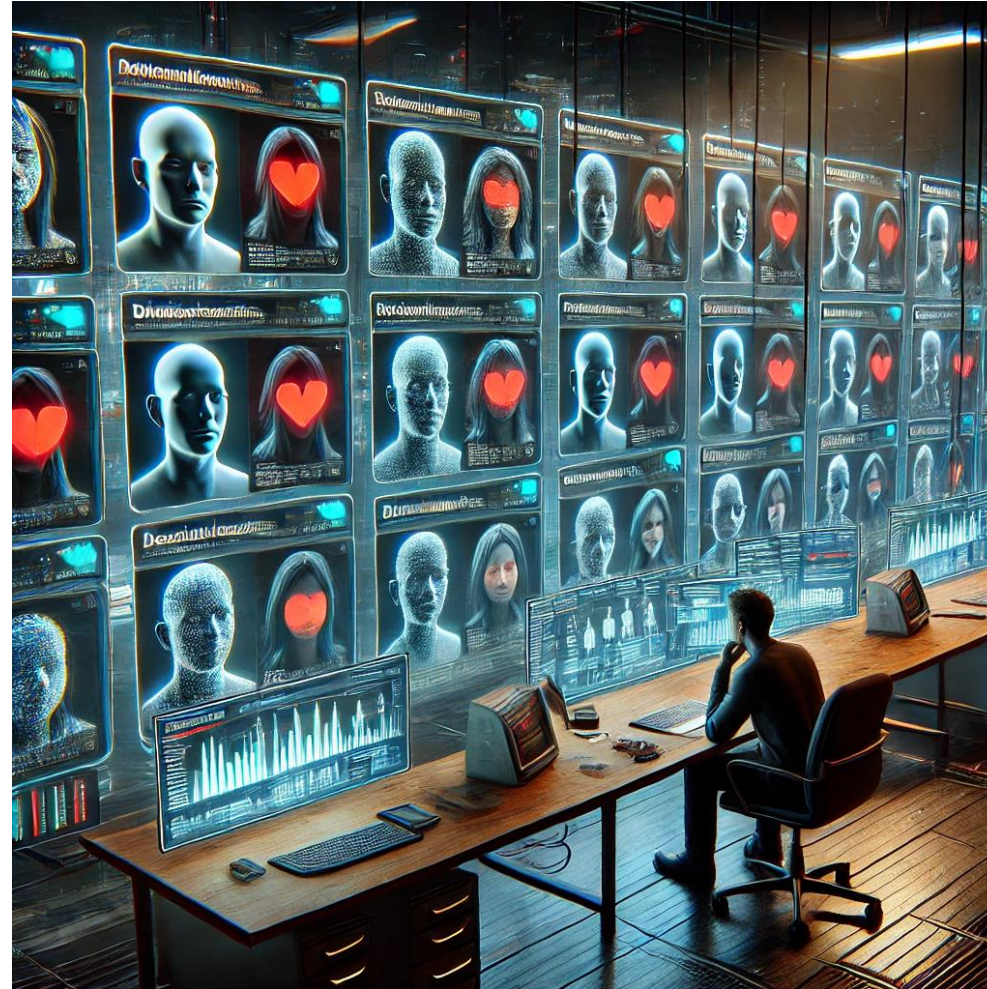
Insecure Internet

What can we learn from the Past?



Echo Chambers

What can we learn from the Past?



AI Biases

What can we learn from the Past?



Content Moderation

What can we learn from the Past?



Walled Gardens

What can we learn from the Past?



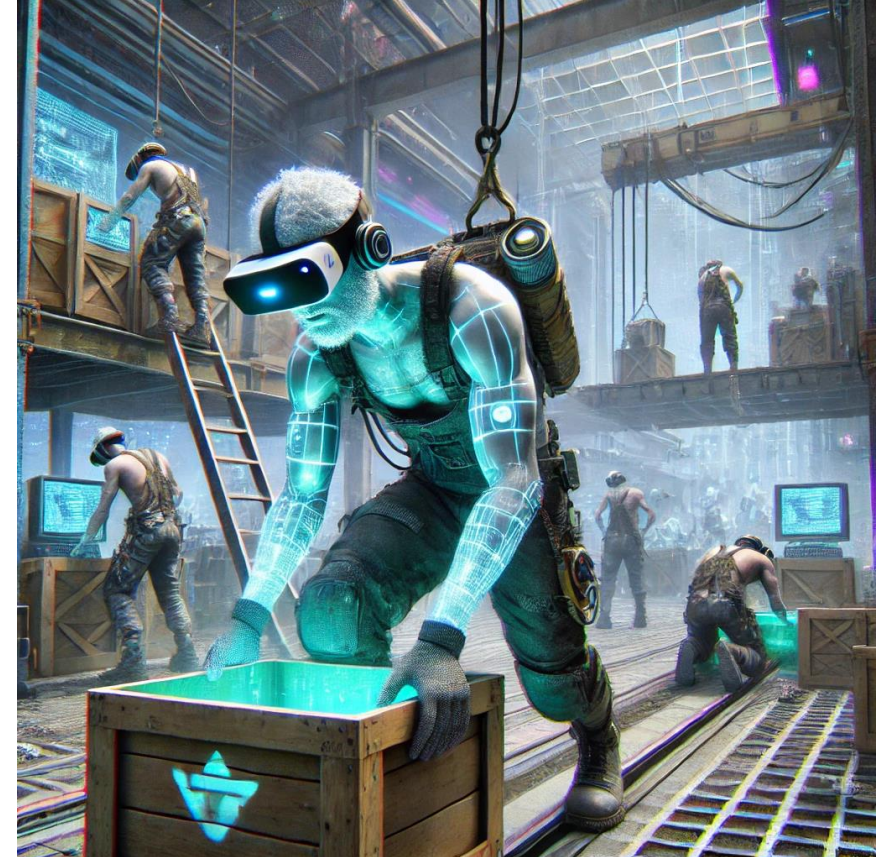
Lost Public Spaces

Digital Divide



Labor and Employment Issues

- Exploitation concerns with content creators and digital laborers – Amazon Turks
- **PlayBour**
- Workplace monitoring taken to new extremes with full-body tracking
- Labor rights in virtual workplaces
- The gig economy extending into virtual environments
- "Digital sweatshops" where people perform repetitive tasks in VR
- KYC? Can you really know?



Economics and Ownership

- Who benefits from the value created in these new economies
- How we prevent exploitation and predatory economic practices
- What virtual assets should have legal protections
- How taxation and regulation should function across physical/virtual boundaries
- Moving retail/fashion worlds to the metaverse



Developmental Concerns

- Age-appropriate design principles for immersive environments
- Protecting children from predatory behavior in 3D spaces
- Impact on social and emotional development
- Educational benefits versus developmental risks
- Family structures and parenting in virtual contexts



Escapism and its Social Cost

- When virtual life becomes preferable to physical reality
- Social implications of widespread "checking out" from physical communities
- Addressing the root causes of escapism rather than just treating symptoms
- Balancing immersive engagement with physical world responsibilities
- Philosophical questions about the value of different forms of experience (Chalmers)



Mental Health and Well-Being

- Addiction to increasingly compelling virtual environments
- Dissociation from physical reality and physical communities
- Harassment and abuse taking more visceral and embodied forms
- Exposure to extreme content with heightened psychological impact
- Identity confusion between virtual and physical selves



Algorithmic Control of our Lives

- Subtle nudges and manipulations that exploit
- The risk of behavioral addiction through variable reward mechanisms
- Questions about authentic choice in algorithmically curated worlds (BuyOlogy)



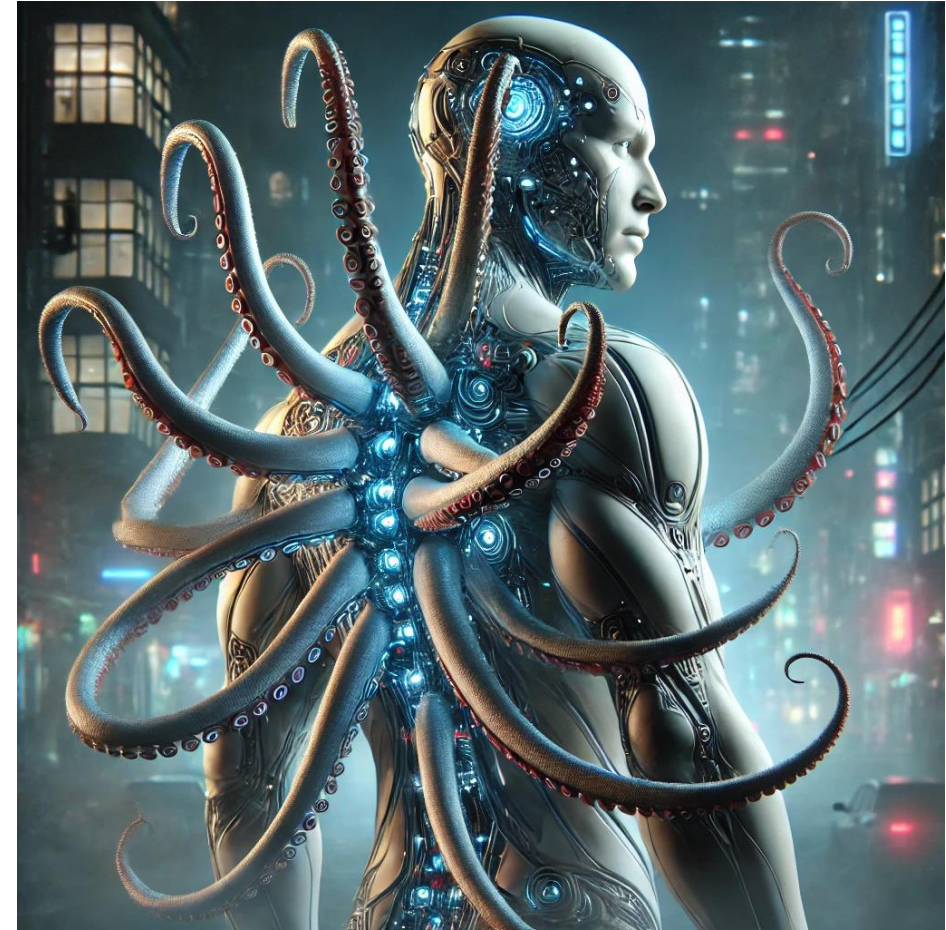
Privacy and Data Collection

- Our physical movements and gestures
- Eye tracking data revealing what captures our attention
- Biometric responses showing emotional reactions (BIPA)
- Spatial mapping of our physical environments (Roomba)
- Social interactions in unprecedented detail



Redefining What is Real

- Challenging our perceptions of identity, existence, and truth.
- What happens when virtual experiences become more desirable than reality?
- How do we define human experience when our senses can be fully simulated? Metaverse of Food?
- If its not real- does it really count? Is everything allowable?



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THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

