EXTENDED AND AUTONOMOUS AGENCY

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"the human organism is linked with an external entity in a two-way interaction, creating a coupled system that can be seen as a cognitive system in its own right" (Clark & Chalmers 1998)

Conditions for being part of the mind (from Clark 2010):

1) reliably available and typically invoked
2) information retrieved more or less automatically endorsed
3) easily accessible as and when required

- Parity principle: Function that if in brain would be mind is mind
AI EXTENSIONS

• Virtual assistants today
  o Chalmers iPhone (2008)
  o Recommender systems (Amazon, Netflix, etc.)
  o Apple’s Siri, Amazon’s Alexa

• Virtual assistants tomorrow
  o Automatic planning of routine events
  o Savulescu & Maslen 2015: ”Moral AI”
    ▪ Personalized moral advice
AI THREAT TO HUMAN AUTONOMY?

- Outsourcing of competence - deskilling
- Passivity, loss of engagement and sense of responsibility
EXTENDED AGENCY

• The integrated agent consisting of me + my virtual assistant(s)
  o More capable
  o More able to take responsibility
    ▪ Keeping better records
    ▪ Human part has more room for taking responsibility
DIMENSIONS OF EXTENDED AGENCY

• Conceptual/metaphysical
• Psychological/social
• Moral
  1) Because of conceptual/metaphysical/psychological/social
  2) For instrumental reasons (AI important for agency though not part of it)
     => Treat people as if extended agents
• Legal
ETHICS OF EXTENDED MIND

• Privacy (Carter et al 2018)
• Protection against assault (Carter & Palermos 2016)
  - Hacking (Zebrowski 2019)
ETHICS OF EXTENDED AGENCY

• Increased knowledge => increased responsibility (Carter et al 2018)
• Allocations of accountability and esteem (Carter et al 2018)
• Control
• Independence
• Coherence
LOSS OF CONTROL?

• “there can be no question that the locus of computational and cognitive control resides inside the head of the subject [and involves] internal processes in a way quite distinct from the way external processes are involved” (Butler 1998: 205)
  ○ Clark 2010 (55-56): Only part of the brain is involved in “final choice and control”

• Agency: Should control be kept in the brain/biological mind? Why exactly?

• Greater capacity => more control
LOSS OF INDEPENDENCE?

• “reliably available”, “accessible as and when required” – Clark 2010

• Tech part needs maintenance, upgrading, etc.
  o What if this was true for part of our brain? – Less independence, less autonomy?

• More rational decisions => Less self-destructive behavior
LOSS OF COHERENCE?

• Virtual assistant or other external cognitive unit that produces plans or decisions may conflict with brain-generated same.

• Effect on autonomy?
  o Frankfurt (1988): Second-order endorsement
  o Christman (1991): Endorse history
  o Bratman (2007): long-range plans and intentions
SOME REFERENCES


Chalmers, D., 2008. Foreword to Andy Clark’s Supersizing the mind. A. Clark, Supersizing the mind: Embodiment, action, and cognitive extension.
