

For: Relationships with Cybernetic Beings

Group A



Worldwide loneliness epidemic

- Pre COVID-19 people have experienced an increase in loneliness which could lead to long-term mental and physical implications according to the API.
- Social isolation significantly increases a person's risk of premature death.
- Availability of cybernetic beings can help support people combat the feeling of loneliness and isolation.



Mental health benefits

- Emotional support system that is always available
 - Social interactions have significant effects on health
 - Someone to consult with and confide in
-
- Companion that provides an emotional bond
 - Robotic pets being brought to nursing homes
 - Products like the Lovot (right) meant to bring comfort to users



Objectophilia

- People have been falling in love with non-humans for years
- “Object sexuality: individuals who develop deep emotional and/or romantic attachments to specific inanimate objects or structures”
- People with objectophilia form strong emotional fixations to objects or structures, and these “things” will be viewed as equal partners in a relationship
- People with objectophilia even believe that their feelings are reciprocated

Objects people have married

- The Berlin Wall
- The Eiffel Tower
- A train station
- A body pillow
- A Barbie doll
- Fairground rides and rollercoasters
- Trees
- The Ghost of a Haitian Pirates
- A chandelier



Objectophilia as a cultural phenomena



My Strange Addiction: Florida woman marries a carnival ride

Case of Parasocial Relationships with VTubers/Cybernetic Beings

- Study done in China during Covid showed that there was an overall positive result of the parasocial relationships with VTubers
- Statistically significant soothing and stress relieving indicators when interacting with VTubers
- Community: an alternative for individuals who cannot connect with others in their in real life environment a space of belonging
 - An escape and coping mechanism from everyday stress

More Attached, Less Stressed: Viewers' Parasocial Attachment to Virtual Youtubers and Its Influence on the Stress of Viewers During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Case of Virtual Reality

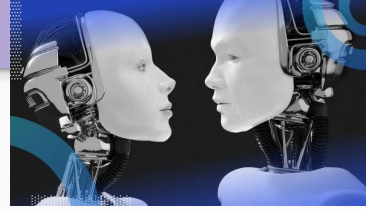


In VR, users feel as though they are psychologically present in the virtual world and that the virtual world surrounds them and becomes the world they inhabit. With the addition of equipment that tracks information such as current head orientation, position in physical space, and body movements (even eye tracking), users are able to interact with the virtual environment, which then increases their perception of psychological presence and immersion.

“Just because you’re not face to face with someone doesn’t mean that the relationship is any less real and that’s a big deal.”

Case on the rise of the sex robot industry

In 2010, New Jersey-based company True Companion claimed to be developing robots — a “female” named Roxxy and a “male” named Rocky — that would, the company promised, “always be turned on and ready to play.” Each bot would be customizable, allowing the buyer to choose the bot’s skin color, facial structure, hair color, and personality — at the price tag of \$10,000.



WHAT IS SEX TECH?

Sex tech describes a field of technology that aims to enhance or innovate around sexual experiences. Examples include VR-enabled sex toys, bluetooth-enabled sex toys, sex robots, sexual wellness apps and more. Sex tech is currently estimated to be a \$30 billion industry.

Beneficial impact

Sex bot proponents suggest that they could help those who are unable, due to circumstances or a physical or emotional disability, to find regular human companionship.

Customizable Experience

- **Tailored:** Cyber-physical entities offer tailored experiences based on individual needs and preferences
- **Continuous availability:** Cyber-physical entities can provide 24/7 support
- **Adaptive feedback and guidance:** Cyber-physical entities offer immediate and customized feedback to support individual progress and improvement - potentially used to improve your social capabilities
- **Enhanced engagement and motivation:** Cyber-physical entities use interactive approaches to increase engagement and motivation
- **Offerings of complementary services:** Cyber-physical entities can provide access to information, promoting knowledge exploration and broadening horizons

Case: Customizable Experience

- **Examples**

- **Cyber-physical companion and teacher** - companion that tailors your experience giving both emotional support and also educational information, eg. new language
- **Cyber-physical companion during night** - companion that can offer services 24/7 is specially attractive for people having night work or in isolated areas

Effects of cyber relationship on real-world relationships

- Healthy avenue for people to explore their urges without impacting others.
- Reduces stress
- Decreases loneliness
- Increases happiness

Rebuttal

Relationships does not limited within intimate/romantic relationships

Stereotypes when addressing specific users when interacting with cybernetic beings

Forcing people out of initial comfort zone / social circle may face stronger backlash

Cybernetic beings are not limited to human-like entities

- Example: Emotional support animals