Transcript

AI and Creativity

Can AI be creative? That's a question many people are asking as AI technology becomes more advanced. On one hand, AI systems are capable of performing tasks that require a high level of intelligence, such as problem solving and learning. But is this the same as creativity? Many people believe that creativity is a uniquely human trait and that it requires imagination and original thought.

Ultimately, whether AI can be creative all depends on what we mean by creativity and the role that this concept of creativity plays in our lives. One definition is that something is creative if it's novel, surprising, and of value. This definition can work for both problem solving and artistic creativity. You can come up with a creative solution to a scientific problem, or you can create a literary artwork.
So how about artificial intelligence? Can it produce things that are novel, surprising, and valuable? Again, it all rather depends on what you mean by novel, surprising, and valuable. For example, when DeepMind's AlphaGo AI beat a human Go champion, it made a move that was described as creative. It was creative because it was surprising, but decisive. At least surprising for humans, who didn't have the computing power to see the pattern that AlphaGo did.

But how about art? AI can now generate all sorts of images and texts. If you give it a prompt, it will produce a completely original image, which is incredibly proficient. The issue here, though, is value. In problem solving examples, the concept of value is fairly straightforward. It's something which solves the problem-- in the case of AlphaGo, for instance, the problem of winning the game.
But what's the value of something like this? Or this? Why works such as these are considered valuable is a very complicated business, and ultimately, it's something that relates very closely to human experience and history. Modern art might be a rather extreme example, but it illustrates just how nebulous the concept of creativity can be for humans. Today, of course, this isn't just an abstract or theoretical conundrum. It has very real implications for real people.

As generative AI tools become more sophisticated, how long will it be before human creatives are no longer necessary? But despite the worrying implications of such advancements, maybe it will be better to look at it this way. The rise of AI in creative fields has democratized creativity in many ways. With access to generative AI tools, individuals who may not have had the opportunity or resources to pursue traditional creative paths, can now explore their own imaginations and produce unique works of art. This shift towards democratization allows for a more diverse range of voices and perspectives in the creative world, breaking down traditional barriers to entry, and potentially leading to a more inclusive and dynamic cultural landscape.

We now have access to the ultimate playing field leveler. If anyone can create pretty much anything with the help of nothing more than the technology they carry around in their pockets, we can start exploring the very outer reaches of our imagination.