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- Surveillance of all communications, hacking & cracking, etc.
- Leading up to the 'Permanent War Information Structure' of all against all
(cf. the similar 'permanent war economy')

[1]

New technologies and moral degradation

Shannon Vallor:

- We need *technological skills* in order to carry out productive tasks efficiently
- In analogy, if we consider the elements of virtuous character, we need *moral skills* for enabling the virtues to unfold; these need to be practiced for their development
- As to the former skills, new technologies often lead to *deskilling of labour*: existing skills disappear (and new ones emerge)
- Likewise, V. argues, new technologies may also lead to *moral deskilling*: moral skills at the base of specific virtues are undermined, ultimately at the expense of the virtues involved
- Illustrations of the phenomenon from Pariser (1x) and Vallor (3x)

[2]



(a) *The Filter Bubble* (Pariser)

- Search on the net: personalized results
- Inside your own 'filter bubble'
- 'Identity loops'
- These blinkers eliminate the unexpected: the ability to be curious and look around gets atrophied; the virtuous individual full of ambition and curiosity slowly fades away

[3]

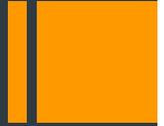
(b) Social media (Vallor):

- If we delegate the task of 'friending' to SM,
- then the skill of *paying attention* may be undermined in this fashion;
- and by the same token, the notion itself of what it means to be friends whithers away

(c) Carebots (Vallor):

- If we delegate the task of caring for older people to carebots,
- then we run the risk of loosing the ability to actively take care of them *ourselves* with compassion and patience;
- by the same token, the virtue itself of respect and compassion may be undermined

[4]



(d) Drones (Vallor)

<her most controversial example>

- If we delegate responsibilities of war to (a technological system with) drones,
- then we tend to lose the ability to wage war in a moral way; i.e., observing the distinctions between friend & foe, between necessity & vengeance, and the like;
- even the very conceptions of military virtue and 'just war' are put in jeopardy

[5]

So technologies may undermine our abilities to remain inquisitive, to pay attention to our friends, to care for our (grand)parents, and to wage war without abandoning morality

What to do against this 'moral deskilling', this 'moral degradation'?

We should demand 'alternative technologies' that enrich, not impoverish, us in our moral capacities: non-personalized search engines, social media that let *us* define friendships, carebots that operate not as substitute for but as supplement to human attention, and drones that are not our masters but our allies

[6]



FUTURE STEPS?!

- Can this be related to the computing profession, their professional bodies and codes?
- The ACM-code (1992): no easy connections
- ‘The Rules’ (about moral responsibility for computing artefacts) (2010) : more easily