

Computers with Oracles

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An oracle is the one with worldly wisdom and knowledge that sets the path forward for people who seek advice and help. An oracle tells solutions to problems that sometimes people can not solve themselves. A computer with an oracle is a mathematical model of computers where the computer has access to an all powerful oracle to help solve problems that it can not solve. There has been a considerable amount of study on Turing machines (a model of computers) with oracle access and how it can be used to increase the power of the machines themselves. Today, with access to the internet, the internet can be considered the oracle that provides vast amount of knowledge and information instantly. It brings the world closer and makes it a small village of its own, with everything touch of a finger-tip away.

Yet, it comes with its own set of problems. The value that is associated with the ease with information can be accessed is that of negligence and ignorance. Oh, we can ask this to Google, why need to remember it? Oh, Google will tell us the direction to the mall, why remember the map of the place anyway. Not just that it makes us dependent on the information provided, we start to take it for granted, not valuing the amount of effort that has gone into building the system in the first place.

Google, and internet in general, is like an all-powerful oracle that gives us access to information that has been collected and sorted through the efforts of many scientists, engineers and enthusiasts. It is the true representation of a free and open world that the modern world represents. The question to ask is how does it help people and if it is another form of world dominance? Is it controlling the people to lead a certain life and become the big-brother that has been feared since the novel 1984 by George Orwell? The risk is there, and more so in the modern world. We need to be cognizant of the same and work to ensure the freedom of everyone including ourselves.

This reminds me of another popular Netflix series today, which is the Squid game. It depicts how people are used to be the entertainment of the rich, while they play a game of life and death. They are not made aware of the same in the beginning and words have a different meaning altogether: 'elimination' from the game is elimination from life. What if this is the reality today. When we play a game on our phone, are there people who have to play with their life for our entertainment. Or when we see happy videos on Instagram and Facebook, there are sad and depressed faces behind the faceless videos of cooking, craft

making and so on. With a disconnect from the human connection that one had in person, the internet is a world of oblivion and desolation.

Internet was born as the free-world and a world that brought together people and united one with the other. It was a product of counter-culture, the movement that was opposed to the modern governments and their oppression. It spread through movements of open-source and free software. Google is one of the public establishments that came about as a product of open-source and with the vision to bring the world together. Its mission statement is to “organize the world’s information” and bring it closer to the people.

What Google probably did not realize when building these systems was that one day the world would rely on Google’s services to carry out activities in their lives. The dependence would be essential for their existence. That one day, Google would be that oracle which would be expected to magically solve all problems in one’s life. That they would lose control of their own life to the systems built by Google and all the other corporate organizations that provide their services that people rely on for “free”.

Any technology that is built for human beings provides a new strength and an ability that people do not possess. The invention of mechanical cars provided the power to travel distances that could not be covered on foot. The invention of machine allowed people to build things within minutes that took days to build by hand. The invention of internet allowed people to send files that would take days to send by mail. Such power is possessed by internet that it allowed people to do things unimaginable.

Now, we are so reliant on technology that today it is shaping who we are then we shaping the path for technology. Technology is driving us and has boxed us into a corner and a trap from which there is no way out. From the moment we wake up, we have a need to check our phones, our mailbox on the phone. We are trapped in the virtual world of our phones, emails, and text messages. We are sitting in our home offices and connecting with our colleagues over Zoom. Is there a way to break free from this trap?

We can try and reduce our reliance on Internet. We can reduce our reliance on when we search for something on Google, we instead go to a saved bookmark that provides the same or nearly same information. We can practice Internet hygiene and use only as much as we need. We can reduce our consumption of online media that takes a huge internet bandwidth of our communication infrastructure. We can try to discipline our usage and just because it is available for free, not take it for granted. We must break our online habits to be more healthy and happy in the offline life.

Lets make the world magical again. Lets make Internet a beautiful place where receiving an email from a friend would spark a new life in us. Let’s think of the wonders of the efforts of so many people that have gone into building this place that we call Internet. It is truly an oracle unlike any other. It is the genie of our world, that we must cherish and not just capture it in a lamp. Lets feel the wonder of playing games with friends and family far away from us on our mobile devices, and has been made possible by the efforts of numerous people. Let’s give more respect to the things that we have been given for “free”.