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Class  Essay:  A  New  Emerging  Technology   It’s  hard  to  imagine  where  the  world  we  know  today  is  headed  when  it  comes  to   technology.  A  currently  emerging  technology  is  Artificial  Intelligence.  The  concept  has  been   around  for  decades.  John  McCarthy  first  coined  the  term  ‘ Artificial  Intelligence’  in  1956.   McCarthy  defined  Artificial  Intelligence  (or  AI)  as  " the  science  and  engineering  of  making   intelligent  machines."  The  more  modern  definition  of  AI  is  “ the  study  and  design  of   intelligent  agents"  where  intelligent  agent  refers  to  a  system  that  can  recognize  its   environment  and  then  takes  action(s)  which  quantifies  its  possible  success.   Although  Artificial  Intelligence  has  been  an  evolving  concept  in  the  scientific  community,   I’m  sure  McCarthy  had  not  fathomed  the  realm  of  possibilities  that  could  derive  from   refining  the  concept.  AI  overlaps  with  robotics  in  which  we  have  the  autonomous  car  or  the   “ driverless"  car  developing.  Global  Positioning  Systems  (GPS)  have  played  a  key  role  in   these  driverless  cars.  The  GPS  technology  allows  the  car  to  know  its  relative  location  and   what  surrounds  it.  In  2011  Google  was  awarded  a  US  patent  for  self-­"driving  cars.   I  first  discovered  that  they  had  actually  succeeded  in  creating  a  driverless  car  when   searching  for  a  topic  for  this  paper.  I  was  astonished!  It’s  been  a  possibility  portrayed  in   movies  and  something  I  thought  might  come  around  in  a  hundred  years  or  so.  According  to   an  article  written  by  the  New  York  Times  Sebastian  Thrum,  the  developer  behind  Google’s   driverless  car  predicted  that  by  2030  “ more  people  will  use  self-­"driving  cars  in  their  daily   commute  than  manually  driven  cars. "  The  New  York  Times’  website  had  an  option  for   readers  to  make  suggestions  to  this  timeline.  On  average  readers  predicted  that  this  will   happen  around  2023.  The  date  has  been  moved  1, 794  times.   This  technology  is  only,  at  most,  a  few  decades  from  becoming  an  everyday  reality  for  our   society.  I  thought  I  would  discuss  the  possible  utilizations,  and  impacts  this  technology   could  have  on  life  as  we  know  it.  I  think  it  is  an  interesting  aspect  to  consider  the  possible   differences  this  type  of  technology  can  make  and  the  changes  it  can  cause.   The  utilization  of  the  technology  the  self-­"driving  car  is  composed  of  is  almost  endless.   There  could  be  self-­"piloting  passenger  carrying  planes.  Motorcycles  could  be  composed  of   this  technology  as  well.  Imagine  if  you  were  able  to  hop  on  a  motorcycle  and  just  tell  it   where  you  wanted  to  go.  A  person  would  be  able  to  get  work  done  in  the  car  while  driving.   The  driverless  car  would  take  you  where  you  needed  to  go  while  you  read  your  favorite   book,  caught  up  on  homework,  or  conducted  research  for  work.  It  would  truly  maximize   our  time.   Beneficial  effects  of  this  technology  are  many.  In  the  United  States  alone  “ motor  vehicle   crashes  are  the  leading  cause  of  death  among  those  age  5-­"34.  More  than  2. 3  million  adult   drivers  and  passengers  were  treated  in  emergency  departments  as  the  result  of  being   injured  in  motor  vehicle  crashes  in  2009.  The  economic  impact  is  also  notable:  the  lifetime   costs  of  crash-­"related  deaths  and  injuries  among  drivers  and  passengers  were  $70  billion  in   2005. "  What  if  we  could  reverse  all  of  these  losses?  If  there  was  no  longer  a  drinking  and   driving  issue?  We  could  use  the  recaptured  finances  from  these  unfortunate  circumstances   and  fund  matters  that  are  in  dire  constraints.  Instead  of  paying  for  unnecessary  medical Shipp  Project  2 bills  we  could  finance  the  building  of  a  playground,  buy  school  books  for  children,  conduct   more  technology  research,  or  focus  on  inspiring  our  future.   Other  perks  related  to  the  self-­"driving  car  include  time,  parking  and  less  traffic.  We   wouldn’t  have  to  worry  about  where  we  are  going  to  park.  The  car  can  drop  us  off  at  the   curb  and  go  find  a  big  lot  to  park  in,  and  then  come  back  and  pick  you  up  when  you’re  ready   to  go.  There  would  be  less  of  a  delay  in  commuting  time  during  high  volume  traffic.  The   cars  would  be  able  to  sense  the  one  in  front  of  them,  this  would  decrease  the  response  time   needed  which  would  decrease  the  distance  that  needs  to  be  maintained  between  cars.  This   would  in  turn  decrease  the  commute  time  needed  because  there  would  be  a  steady  flow  of   traffic  instead  of  the  stop  and  go  that  is  common  during  high  traffic  volume  times.   New  technology  doesn’t  develop  without  the  potential  for  harmful  effects.  On  the  downside   there  are  literally  several  million  employed  drivers.  There  are  school  bus  drivers,  city  bus   drivers,  truck  drivers,  tow  truck  drivers,  delivery  drivers,  taxi  drivers,  and  business  car   drivers,  among  others.  If  there  is  a  surplus  of  self-­"driving  cars  available  then  this  means  no   more  driving  jobs  for  these  people,  effectively  displacing  millions  from  their  jobs.  Road   conditions  would  also  be  something  worth  consideration.  We  essentially  would  be  required   to  trust  this  technology  with  our  lives.  This  is  a  hard  task  to  accept.  I  think  that  especially   with  the  older  population  in  our  society  it  would  be  difficult  for  them  to  put  trust  in   something  they  might  not  entirely  understand.  Road  conditions  would  proliferate  this   distrust.   I  think  technology  this  profound  begs  the  question,  what  about  if  it  malfunctions?  What   kinds  of  tests  will  it  be  put  through  to  make  sure  it  will  uphold  to  the  tightest  regulations   and  standards?   There  can  be  many  benefits  to  this  technology  that  has  created  a  self-­"driving  car,  but  there   can  also  be  many  harmful  consequences.  We  must  ask  ourselves  the  hard  questions  and   proceed  with  caution  when  we  are  on  the  brink  of  replacing  the  central  mode  of   transportation  in  our  lives  with  something  new.   References: 2 Shipp  Project  2  (2010).  Artificial  Intelligence.  Science  Daily.  Retrieved  from   http://www. sciencedaily. com/articles/a/artificial\_intelligence. htm   (2011,  December  15). 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