

# Department of Anthropology - AI and Relations

## The future of connection: *how artificial intelligence is transforming the way we connect and build relationships*

### Present uses

- **RELATIONSHIP BOOSTER** - AI that finds your love language while providing personalized tips for your relationship.  
Ex: Love Nudge
- **VIRTUAL COMPANIONS** - AI-powered virtual best friend, confidante, or even romantic partner.  
Ex: Replica
- **RELATIONSHIP ANALYSIS** - AI analyze patterns and data from relationships to provide insights and areas of improvement.  
Ex: Gottman Connect
- **MATCH-MAKING** - AI matches individuals based on compatibility and preferences. Ex: Hinge
- **RELATIONSHIP ADVICE** - AI that provides guidance for navigating inward and outward relationships.  
Ex: Woebot Health
- **DATE PLANNING** - AI that plans personalized dates based on your location, preferences, and previous activities.  
Ex: Foursquare
- **LANGUAGE TRANSLATION** - Real time AI language translation platforms minimize linguist barriers.  
Ex: Google translate
- **EMOTION DETECTOR & ANALYZER** - Affective computing in AI recognizes emotion in text, voice, or image.  
Ex: Microsoft Azure
- **VOICE CLONING** - AI voice replication has been used creatively (i.e. David Guetta) but also for phishing (someone pretends to be a legitimate source to scam). Ex: Clony AI

### Future uses

1. AI is on its way to **read brain scans** and **re-create** versions of **images** a person has seen. This would expand our **relational understanding** of the world and allow us to communicate with paralyzed people, record dreams, or even glimpse at how **different species** see the world! (Kuta, 2023)
2. AI might soon be implemented in museums as **chatbots** that take the role of **historical figures**. These would use the figures' published writings, archives and oral histories, to **interact** with the visitors (Styx, 2023).

### Acknowledgements

I would like acknowledge with respect the Lekwungen peoples on whose traditional territory Uvic stands, and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose relationships with land continue to this day.

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### Debates of integrating AI into human connections

- **BIAS REINFORCEMENT**- AI algorithms can perpetuate societal biases when it comes to matchmaking or relationship advice.
- **ETHICAL BOUNDARIES** - Questions arise regarding consent, privacy, objectification, and the potential for exploitation in AI.
- **AUTHENTICITY OF RELATIONSHIPS** - Critics wonder whether AI can truly offer authentic, meaningful relationships.  
  
*News:* Akihiko Kondo held a wedding ceremony with virtual pop-star character Hatsune Miku (Dooley & Ueno, 2023).
- **EMOTIONAL DEPENDENCY** - People argue that relying on AI for emotional needs may hinder interpersonal skills, emotional intelligence, and make human connections overly dependent on AI.
- **EMOTIONAL MANIPULATION** - The line between personalized recommendations and emotional manipulation through AI is a fine one. Many ethical concerns have surged as a result.  
  
*News:* AI chatbots designed to influence political opinions or promote ideologies without our realizing it (Mims, 2023).
- **PRIVACY AND DATA SECURITY** - AI systems often require access to personal data and intimate details to function. Thus, there are risks of data breaches, surveillance, and misuse of sensitive information.
- **HUMAN REPLACEMENT** - Concerns are raised about the potential for individuals to prefer AI workers, partners, or companions over real-life connections, leading to severe social repercussions.  
  
*News:* AI programs' ability to paint, sing, respond to emails, prepare tax returns, and provide health advice can hinder certain professions (Chow & Perrigo, 2023).

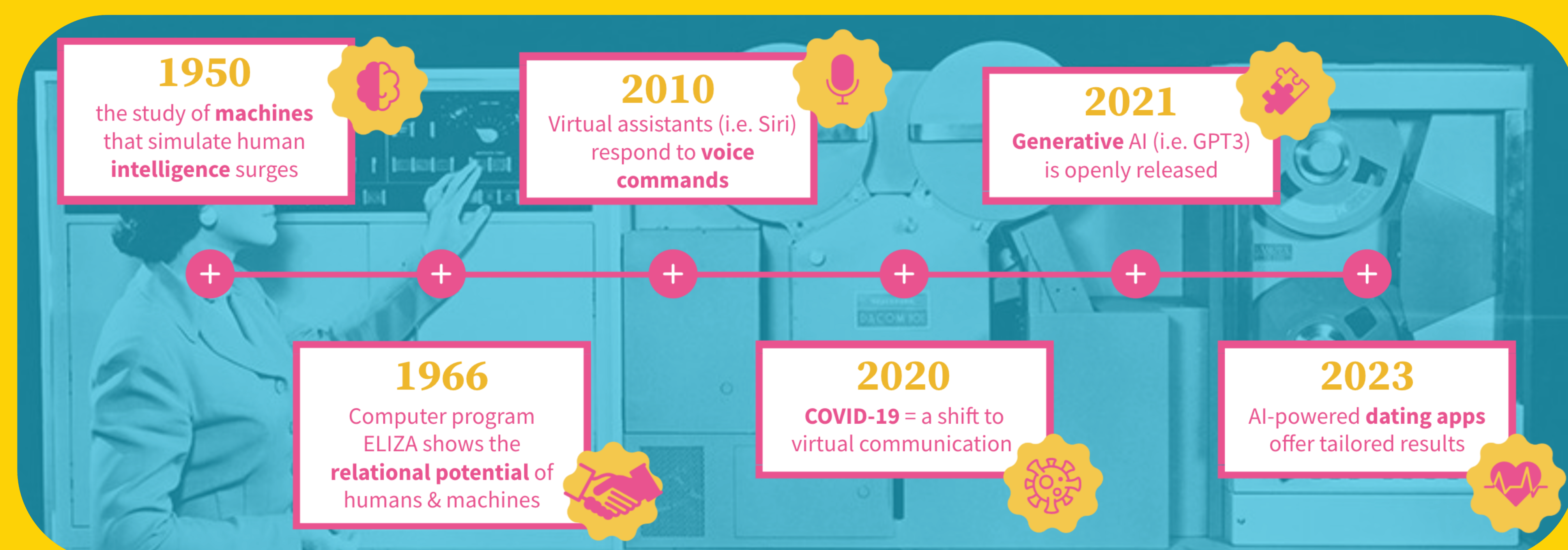


Fig. 1: AI & Relationships through time. Credits: Verdejo, 2023

### Final thoughts

- Since its start AI has been **relational**.
- AI is **constantly** moving and **evolving**, forming part of new ideas and concepts while creating **unexpected connections**.
- AI is already merged in our everyday life, and this **synergy** between **human** and **artificial mind** will only continue to **expand**.
- AI is on its way to be relational not only with **differently abled** humans, but with **different species** altogether.
- AI is still primarily **limited** by the **range of its data set** (what is already "put out there" by programmers). Meaning that at this moment AI cannot create an original idea on its own.
- AI is complex and **multifaceted**, which is why we must be extra attentive of the intersection between AI and human relationships. We must **consider** its potential ethical, social, and psychological **implications**.



Scan to see the full project on its webpage!

Scan to see the works cited for this project!

