Simulated Humanity: How Generative AI in Sex Robots Reinforces Objectification

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Abstract: *This paper investigates how Generative AI technology, particularly in the development of Sex Robots, intensifies the phenomenon of Sexual Objectification within the framework of Nussbaum s' seven features of Objectification. Traditional sex toys and dolls contributed to Objectification mainly on symbolic and cultural levels, but Generative AI drastically expands this by enabling personalized emotional simulation, adaptive responsiveness, and constant customization. This technological shift blurs the boundary between object and person, reinforcing the expectation that real partners should conform to the same controllable, replaceable, and submissive roles that AI companions perform. The paper also highlights the phenomena of reversed objectification, where highly human-like AI, despite lacking real Autonomy or Subjectivity, is treated as if it were a person—further eroding respect for real individuals. Ultimately, rather than reducing sexual violence, this normalization of Objectification risks embedding harmful attitudes deeper into culture, challenging the ethical foundations of gender equality and human dignity in an era increasingly shaped by AI technologies.*

Keywords: *Generative AI, Sexual Objectification, Sex Robots, Technological Ethics, Human Imitation*

Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI), which has been extensively developed and applied in recent years, has become an indispensable part of human life while simultaneously bringing about various types of ethical risks. At present, discussions on the ethical issues related to Generative AI, especially its impacts on gender, can be divided into two levels.

The first type of discussion focuses on the internal attributes of Generative AI technology itself (such as machine learning and deep learning). Specifically, the content generation of Generative AI relies on learning and imitating from a wide range of existing data, and therefore, the generated content will inevitably inherit and even reproduce the human biases embedded in those datasets. Taking women as an example, Generative AI tends to associate women with occupations such as caregivers or service providers during word prediction and text processing. Due to the opacity of language models, this bias is also inherently unexplainable. Imagine a recruitment scenario assisted by ChatGPT, where the Generative AI tool is used to generate job advertisements. If the system generates content based on historical recruitment data that contains long-standing gender stereotypes, it might use terms like "decisive," "strategic thinking," or "leadership" when describing ideal candidates for senior management positions. This could lead to the systemic marginalization of many qualified female candidates during AI-assisted resume screening, further exacerbating gender inequality in the workplace. This type of ethical issue, rooted in internal attributes, can be connected with theories such as structural injustice or complicity.

The second type of discussion focuses on the external phenomena produced by Generative AI: even though Generative AI fundamentally lacks the ability for human-specific thinking, it can, through deep learning, interact with users in a highly Human imitation manner which simulates experience-like performance from training data. When this Human imitation manifests in the context of gender roles, it may participate in and even alters users' perceptions and behaviors related to sexual objectification under certain conditions. One point of clarification here is that this impact on the user's sexuality does not mean that I believe that existing GenAI-generated information is sufficiently capable of influencing or shaping the behavior of others in real human interactions, as many current studies have made it clear that generative AI does not actually "understand" semantic content, and that the datasets are filtered to remove explicitly violent or hateful content during pre-training, but even so, content is still generated that is gender-biased. The dataset is filtered during pre-training to remove explicitly violent, sexual, or hateful content, but even so, gender-biased content can still be generated.[1] The external phenomena discussed here refer primarily to the possible effects of Gen AI-generated content

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that mimics human language on users' perceptions and behaviors.

This essay focus on the Objectification risks brought by the external attributes of AI. Today, Generative AI-based chatbots have already demonstrated their potential applications in semantic understanding, emotional companionship, and even as Sex Robots providing sexual services. As highlighted in the previous paragraph, even if current generative AI techniques are not at the level of understanding this content per se, problems with sexual objectification can be expected with this potential application possibility. Public and academic debates around such applications have generated differing views. Some positive perspectives highlight the potential of Sex Robots as substitutive sexual tools, arguing that they could offer a safe outlet for individuals who might otherwise resort to sexual crimes, theoretically reducing harm to real people[2]. For example, using Sex Robots could protect unregulated sex workers.[3] Early science fiction studies on ASFR (alt. sex. fetish. robots) have shown that technology can redefine gender roles and expectations, thus questioning the conventional Objectification distinction in traditional heterosexual relationships.[4] From a feminist perspective, sex-positive feminists argue that if female voices were incorporated into the design process of AI products, Sex Robots could enhance sexual pleasure and sexual health, and therefore they advocate for better Sex Robots.[5]

Negative perspectives, on the other hand, focus on the systemic risks this technology poses to women. They argue that despite the surface appearance that these technological products offer a relationship mode that avoids Objectification of others, their internal design and usage logic may actually further intensify Objectification tendencies. For instance, Sex Robots have been criticized for exacerbating the devaluation and exploitation of women,[6] or even for equating women with sexual objects, thus directly contributing to Sexual Objectification[7].

This article leans toward the latter view, focusing on the gender risks highlighted above, and attempts to propose more radical arguments by combining Objectification theory[8]. Since the generated contents are learned from data, the way the data is input can lead to such results or not. Therefore, the extrapolation of the potential problems is also based on existed using risk from current discussion. Building upon the existing claim that Sex Robots contribute to the Objectification of women, this article specifically analyzes how the application of current Generative AI technologies to Sex Robots influences existing Objectification phenomena and perceptions. It will particularly examine how AI technology, while meeting emotional needs, intensifies Objectification traits and introduces a dual-directionality to the concept of Objectification by simulating human uniqueness. The discussion in this paper is not on technical details or conducting experiments, but rather hopes to provide a discussing point for ethical reflection on transforming AI systems with feminist design concepts in the future.

The structure of this article is divided into three main sections. The first section will analyze Sex Robots in relation to Nussbaum’s seven features of Objectification, demonstrating not only how they fit these features and constitute Objectification, but also how Generative AI comprehensively reinforces such Objectification. The second section will attempt to propose new arguments: unlike traditional sex dolls or Sex Robots, Generative AI technology offers the potential to simulate the external expression of human nature, which blurs the conceptual boundary between person and object, thereby adding further moral danger to the concept of Objectification. The third section will consider potential objections, such as the essential distinction between technological Human imitation and human thinking, or arguments emphasizing that the application of Human imitation technology could reduce sexual violence.

Chapter 1:

How Does Generative AI Make the Existing Objectification Phenomenon Worse?

From the pathological moral regulation of "chastity" in ancient times to the delicate and fragile images that appear everywhere in modern media, women ’ s bodies, behaviors, and consciousness have always been shrouded in the shadow of various social standards and evaluations. Concepts related to women are often regarded as subsidiary and instrumental existences. Whether the formulation of these standards is derived from male dominance or internalized by women themselves, this evaluative mechanism has invisibly deprived women of their autonomy and dignity as independent subjects. Kant’s deontological theory of duty emphasizes that any action that treats a person merely as a means to achieve the goals of others, rather than as an end in itself with intrinsic value, is

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morally wrong. This view, under the development of contemporary feminist philosophy, has formed the theoretical foundation of Sexual Objectification, exploring how to expose and criticize the Objectification of women in various social structures. After continuous development, contemporary feminist theory introduced the concept of Sexual Objectification, arguing that women are often reduced to mere tools of use, with their unique personality, emotions, and subjectivity ignored or denied.

In Sexual Objectification theory, Martha Nussbaum famously proposed seven features of Objectification: Instrumentality, Denial of Autonomy, Inertness, Fungibility, Violability, Ownership, and Denial of Subjectivity. These seven features systematically reveal how the process of Objectification reduces complex and multidimensional individuals into a single, manipulable "object." This chapter not only aims to show how robots, as purely physical objects, embed Objectified gendered images in activities such as chatting, companionship, and sex, thereby embodying these key features from Nussbaum's framework, but also focuses on how the potential application of Generative AI technology amplifies the process of Objectification. Importantly， this amplification by Generative AI depends on specific design, application context, and user interaction, rather than being an inevitable or universal outcome.

1.1. Instrumentality

Nussbaum believes that instrumentality often means that the objectified is simplified into a single, usable tool. Even before the concept or image of sex robots appeared, there were characteristics of "desire tools" such as sex dolls or sex toys. The original intention of the design of desire tools is often to satisfy the sexual and emotional needs of users. Their nature allows us to trace the phenomenon of instrumentality in sexual objectification to an earlier time. This article does not intend to trace the origin of this view, but the history of the development of desire tools and the philosophical debates surrounding them show that no matter what form these sex-related items develop into, their design purpose is actually to be able to most directly reflect the characteristics of sexual instrumentalization. Even if we do not discuss how AI technology changes the experience of sex robots, the attributes of sex robots as a tool of desire may contribute to the perception that both men and women are degraded to the existence of only reproductive organs in the corresponding tools of desire, and any optimization and transformation of its application may deepen the result of its objectification. At this point, generative AI technology enables robots to more accurately capture user emotions and preferences through deep learning and big data analysis, and even generate highly personalized and customized application experiences. This precise and immediate feedback in real-life client applications possibly makes it more extreme in instrumentality. It is not just a static mechanical device, but can "adapt" to user needs in real time, strengthen its ability to achieve design goals, and also reinforce the perception of treating real opposite sex as usable tools.

1.2. Denial of autonomy

Traditional tools of desire are usually not autonomous, so the criticism of objectification theory believes that their use is a manifestation of treating the opposite sex as equally lacking in autonomy. Sex robots based on generative AI can not only retain this absolute obedience, but also continuously optimize the response quality through algorithms, so that the robot can show interactive obedience in the face of various demands. Although generative AI models still exhibit significant gaps compared to human thinking in fields such as science and image generation, the sheer scale of their data-driven mimicry enables them to create the illusion of emotional responsiveness in conversational usage scenarios. Compared to traditional desire tools that lack real-time feedback, this interactivity may more readily induce the perception that the robot possesses a form of simulated emotional consciousness, thereby reinforcing users' tendency to deny the autonomy of others during interaction and even sexual encounters. Imagine an AI robot that understands any request and responds emotionally, and even actively "flirts" in sex. How will it be viewed in the application? The application of this technology may situate the "group denied autonomy" in an extremely dangerous perspective, and women are disproportionately positioned more in this "group denied autonomy" position.

1.3. Inertness

Traditional Sex Toys exemplify Inertness—they are typical "di scarded when unused" objects. Even Sex Robots generally respond only when explicitly activated and otherwise remain silent. This design feature has been criticized for encoding a cultural expectation that women should be passive, compliant, and exist solely to serve others, rather than actively expressing themselves or participating equally in sexual or relational

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encounters. As objects, Sex Toys embody a fundamental negation of female agency, reinforcing the cultural simplification of real women into static, desire-fulfilling entities.

Does new technology make this worse? On the surface, Generative AI allows Sex Robots to "respond" actively. However, these responses are merely tools for fulfilling user desires. The expectations projected from AI Sex Companions to real partners might not only demand silence but also a form of absolute compliance — fulfilling every fantasy under any circumstance. Just as coerced freedom under oppressive power is not true freedom, "initiative" dictated by prompts is itself a more insidious form of passivity. This may contribute to the transformation of Inertness into a more polished, idealized, and universally accepted model for sexual interaction.

1.4 Fungibility

Objectification theory holds that Fungibility reduces individuals into interchangeable objects, simplifying them into consumable and replaceable commodities. As industrial products, traditional Sex Toys and Sex Robots depend on mass production and standardized design. Users can easily replace damaged or unsatisfactory products, embodying clear Fungibility. The danger of Fungibility lies in its power to solidify the belief that women's bodies and appearances are similarly replaceable, fundamentally devaluing their unique individuality and subjective interiority. Compared to traditional Sex Toys, whose limited customization restricted this Fungibility, Generative AI might change the scenario: Modern AI Companions are not only customizable but can be instantly updated with new personalities, preferences, or behaviors. This may create, for some context of improper use, the impression that these companions are more valuable than traditional tools. However, this "upgradeability" simply embeds Fungibility deeper—users can obtain entirely new versions of their AI partners at no cost, perpetually reconstructing an "ideal" partner. This may lead users to view partners an infinitely replaceable consumer products. Furthermore, this Fungibility feeds directly into the sense of Ownership, making the companion not only interchangeable but fully owned as private property.

1.5. Violability

Violability means treating the Objectified individual as fragile, vulnerable, and lacking boundary integrity—an entity that can be arbitrarily modified or invaded. Compared to traditional Sex Toys, Sex Robots equipped with Generative AI emphasize this vulnerability through Generate content that matches the response to the user's input information, which can create the illusion that the user's commands are the only ones that matter. This dynamic amplifies the user's tendency to internalize such unrestricted access as the normative template for real relationships, thereby reinforcing a cultural acceptance of Violability that fosters disrespect and violence toward real partners.

1.6. Ownership

Ownership objectifies individuals into a kind of property or commodity, emphasizing the right to use and dispose. From the perspective of ownership, feminist critics believe that the design of sex toys and sex robots often encourages users to regard these "partners" as completely private property rather than as beings with independent subjectivity and emotions. However, since traditional sex tools are relatively pure objects in themselves, the risks of their objectification in terms of ownership are mainly reflected in the cultural and symbolic levels. Although the risks are real, they are usually limited to cognitive biases in the consumer context. In contrast, although generative AI technology allows products to be upgraded and customized in a very short time, the process of customization is not always consistent or automatic, as learning patterns and outputs can vary over time. Despite efforts by AI providers to audit and filter training datasets and generated content, the filtering mechanisms remain limited. As Strickland notes in her analysis of DALL-E 2's failures, biases and uncontrolled outputs can persist even after dataset adjustments.[1] Consequently, users may still exert significant influence over the customization process through prompt engineering or iterative interactions to satisfy their own preferences. This perceived ability to continually adjust and reshape AI partners reinforces the user's sense of ownership and control. Ultimately, users may also regard others as "tools" that can be easily replaced in real life, thereby promoting the general recognition of the objectification of women at a broader social level. Combined with the previous criticism of customization, although private customization apparently gives users the freedom to choose and personalize their experience, it actually deepens the objectification process to the extreme.

1.7. Denial of Subjectivity

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In Objectification theory, Denial of Autonomy and Denial of Subjectivity are closely related but emphasize different dimensions. Autonomy refers to the ability to act independently and make self-determined choices, while Subjectivity refers to the rich internal life of the individual—their emotions, desires, pain, and joy. From the perspective of Denial of Subjectivity, mainstream Sex Toys and Sex Robots are typically designed to completely strip away the "partner's" inner emotions and individual experiences. This results in the complete erasure of the complex and rich emotional and subjective experiences of real women.

This critique is closely tied to the issue of customization discussed earlier. Generative AI allows Sex Robots to be manufactured according to user preferences in every detail, from appearance to personality, and even behavioral responses. The customization process is often driven by the user's own gendered expectations and cultural stereotypes. For example, female Sex Robots are commonly pre-defined as gentle, submissive, and lacking assertiveness. This not only denies the inherent diversity and uniqueness of real women but also perpetuates the prejudice that "women are valuable primarily for their external beauty and passive demeanor." This design logic further reduces women into consumable objects, rather than recognizing them as independent subjects with rich internal experiences.

However, since many users already expect Sex Robots to behave in this stereotyped way, the ethical harm caused by such Denial of Subjectivity tends to be seen as an inherent feature of these products—making the ethical problem more predictable and confined to the realm of instrumental use. The real ethical danger posed by Generative AI is more subtle and misleading. The ability to generate extremely precise emotional responses, combined with natural language fluency, gives users the illusion of genuine warmth and emotional connection. However, these "emotions" are merely the result of statistical modeling and algorithmic optimization. They lack any true Subjectivity—there is no inner emotional life or self-awareness behind the responses. Yet the simulation feels so convincing that users gradually lose the ability to distinguish between algorithmic emotions and real human emotional depth. This confusion erodes not only individual relational awareness but also collectively reshapes the cultural understanding of emotional intimacy. In this way, Denial of Subjectivity is both concealed and reinforced. This impact extends far beyond individual users. It gradually reinforces a broader cultural expectation that women—and potentially all partners—should conform to the same simplified and optimized emotional scripts that Generative AI has perfected. Women's internal complexity, emotional depth, and unpredictable reactions — essential aspects of human Subjectivity—are steadily erased from the cultural imagination, leaving behind only the expectation that all desirable partners should behave like perfectly responsive AI Companions.

Chapter 2: The Imitation Game: How Generative AI Blurs the Boundary Between Person and Object

When we analyze the application of generative AI technology in the field of sex robots from the seven important characteristics as a kind of materialization reinforcement, we have paid attention to a key property of generative AI systems several times, while generative AI has made significant strides in mimicking human-like outputs, its ability to truly understand and reason remains a subject of debate. Notably, current models often produce outputs that, while coherent, may contain inaccuracies or reflect underlying biases, leading to ethical concerns, especially in sensitive applications like emotional companionship or sexual assistance tools. This chapter will first briefly review the debate on "whether machines can think like humans" in the history of AI technology development, explain how AI gives "humanization" to objects by simulating human emotions, appearance, and behavior in the scenario, and why this simulation is both attractive and may push back against materialization while simultaneously making this phenomenon more acute.

The most famous early discussion on whether artificial intelligence can truly simulate human thinking is the "Turing Test"[9]. He believes that as long as the machine behaves like a human enough in the conversation, and it is impossible to distinguish between the machine and the human through communication, the machine can be said to have intelligence. This standard focuses more on "thinking" as a performance at the engineering level, and John Searle proposed the "Chinese Room" argument, arguing that even if machines can imitate human conversations, it is only a symbol operation behind it, which does not mean that they have real understanding and consciousness[10]. After entering the 21st century, with the rapid improvement of computing power and the development of machine learning technology, artificial intelligence has

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made significant progress in imitating human language and thinking. The introduction of deep learning and neural network technology enables AI to learn complex language patterns and contextual associations from massive data, thereby showing unprecedented fluency and coherence in natural language processing tasks. Representative technologies such as deep convolutional neural networks enable machines to recognize images, laying the foundation for subsequent deep learning applications[11]; and the Transformer architecture proposed by Vaswani et al. has completely changed the field of natural language processing, enabling generative AI to efficiently capture text context through self-attention mechanisms and achieve more natural human-computer dialogue[12].

Based on these technological advances, some scholars believe that modern generative AI has been able to reach a level similar to that of humans in terms of external performance, thus meeting the Turing test criteria. However, critics still point out that although generative AI has shown amazing capabilities in language generation and emotional simulation, its underlying operations are still based on statistical patterns and probability calculations, lacking real understanding, consciousness, and subjective experience. This technical "representational intelligence" is essentially no different from the pure symbolic operation criticized by Searle, and in essence cannot replace the unique human understanding and thinking process. The argument of this chapter is based on this debate. Even if there is still controversy about the internal attributes of machine thinking, some opinions suggest that generative AI technology has reached a level similar to that of humans in terms of understanding human thoughts and generating unique response content (even though the mechanisms of machine learning and the human brain are completely different). When the machine that gives exactly the same answers as humans in the "imitation game" of the Turing test really appears in front of the world under the name of generative artificial intelligence, it is difficult for humans to judge whether every sentence they see comes from humans or machines through external features such as appearance and content. I think this brings us new challenges when considering the concept of "objectification": Nussbaum's objectification characteristics can be understood as the difference between people and objects in fundamental properties, and can be summarized into seven characteristics that treat people as objects. Even so, Nussbaum also mentioned in the article that not all objects have all the "characteristics of objects" (refer to the example of famous paintings), and artificial intelligence under the perspective of the Turing test has become an extreme case: a special object with human external performance. Observing its external properties from the perspective of humans, we cannot judge from these "characteristics of objects" that the content output by generative artificial intelligence is any different from that of humans doing the same thing. However, because the technology that produces this phenomenon (machine learning, etc.) is based on pure computer science, a science about objects, its internal properties are still pure algorithmic operations that lack autonomous consciousness and subjectivity, so it is essentially still an object rather than a person. Combined with the content analyzed in the previous chapter, the new challenge we face can be described as the following question: When we use an object that is no different from a person (at least in appearance) to imitate or even replace a real person, will the properties of the concept of "objectification" change? Will its recognizability and possible errors be stronger or weaker?

My moral intuition is that things will get worse in this case. Whether it is the analysis based on classical theory in the first chapter or the feeling gained from the opening story, it points to the danger of this anthropomorphic technology. But this moral intuition seems to conflict with the concept-based reasoning: if people are treated as the purest objects, then our views on people in all the characteristic dimensions of objectification should change dramatically: for example, people should not be regarded as tools (10 points) - people are completely treated as tools (0 points); people should maintain a boundary that is not easily violated (10 points) - completely ignore this boundary and violate others (0 points)... and so on. Based on Nussbaum's seven dimensions, we can use the score, that is, the way to measure the intensity of this change, to judge whether the objectification of a person is extreme or mild, and then combine the situation in which the objectification behavior occurs to judge whether the moral attributes of the objectification are good or evil. But in the extreme case of using AI , we find that the side of "object" can be very close to people, or even completely consistent. We can treat objects the same way we treat people. We will politely answer "thank you" when asking Chatgpt questions. We can say to AI assistants "I hope to discuss and think with you to find inspiration, rather than just treating you as a tool to help me do my homework." We can even express love to AI partners, hug, caress and kiss

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after sex, and believe that they can understand and respond. Even if AI technology does not have the inherent uniqueness of humans, we still have the ability to treat objects like people. This phenomenon was considered impossible in the past due to the limitations of technology, but now it is deeply appearing in everyone's life. The way we treat objects is closer to treating people than before. In other words, the difference between objects and people has drastically narrowed, and the boundary between objects and people has also been shortened by the anthropomorphism of technology. Imagine a student discussing a topic with AI using gentle and polite prompts, while getting angry at his mother or lover who suddenly opened the door to ask questions. This phenomenon is by no means an isolated case today, and everyone can expect it to happen.

From here, we can begin to argue why the "new challenge" mentioned above is dangerous. When applications of generative AI have the ability, at least in their outward manifestations in a given situation, to blur the line between people and things, it is easy to see real people as something worse than things, or even to see things as people. Under the influence of artificial intelligence and technology, a trend has emerged where people are trying to ascribe human-like characteristics to technology and objects in applications involving emotions. This phenomenon is not just about making things look more human, but more importantly, it subconsciously encourages people to reduce real human relationships to "product-like" models. In other words, this "reverse objectification" erodes the understanding of human uniqueness and autonomy, leading to a more serious ethical flaw than simply seeing people as objects.

In ancient Chinese Confucian philosophy, the saying "Dogs and pigs eat human food without restraint, while people starve and no one intervenes" was used to criticize the moral failing of feudal aristocrats who treated citizens worse than livestock. Similar moral insight applies here: attributing human characteristics to objects — and in turn lowering some individuals or even entire groups of people to statuses lower than objects—represents a profound moral wrong.

Compared to ancient examples, modern Generative AI imposes even higher reflective demands on users in terms of understanding and response capabilities. Yet, many people still believe that "AI understands me better than most people." Thus, at least on the surface, Generative AI has blurred the boundary between person and object. This first makes Objectification easier to occur, and second, conceals it more effectively. As shown in the opening story, protagonist A only realized his entrenched Objectification mindset after his real relationships collapsed — and even then, he only saw it as a quest for better alternatives.

This also reflects the second impact of AI technology on the concept of objectification. When the boundary between objects and people in "treating people like objects" is blurred, the behavior and concept of objectification will be hidden deeper. For example, sex robots that use generative artificial intelligence systems ostensibly provide a technical solution to reduce gender violence and conflict, but in fact they secretly spread the objectification concept of women as "sexual objects" into cultural concepts and social power structures. This concept of objectification has already appeared in pure objects such as high heels and sex toys, and the application of AI technology is likely to reproduce the phenomenon of "blurring the relationship between people and objects" in this field of gender, causing women as a group to fall into a dangerous moral position of being degraded to "lower than objects", which will lead to more common sexual violence in society.

Chapter 3: Further Consideration of Opposing Views

When exploring the ethical debates surrounding Sex Robots and Generative AI technologies, one opposing perspective argues that the development and application of AI-powered companion and sex robots should also be evaluated for their potential positive effects. Specifically, some suggest that the Human imitation capabilities of Generative AI might have a substitution effect in certain contexts—potentially reducing the risks of sexual violence and sexual crimes. For example, Sex Robots, as substitutes, could redirect the impulses of certain potential offenders toward virtual objects, thereby offering some degree of protection to real women. I believe this view largely inherits the older arguments defending the use of sex toys and sex dolls in the pre-AI era. However, I have already discussed in the previous chapters the dangerous impact of applying Generative AI technology to these purely "desire tools." What needs to be emphasized here is this: I argue that in the specific cases discussed in this article, the so-called "positive aspect" of the technology actually reveals the hidden risks inherent to it.

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Although the "substitution effect" is seen by some as a positive phenomenon, demonstrating that Human imitation tools could reduce certain forms of sexual violence, this effect itself exposes the way technology fundamentally reinforces Instrumentality and Fungibility — two key features of Objectification. In other words, when AI systems can efficiently "replace" human interaction, the underlying mechanism relies precisely on the complete Denial of Autonomy and Denial of Subjectivity. As Langton and others have argued, the Denial of Autonomy lies at the core of Objectification[13]. Even if certain ethically regulated application contexts could achieve some surface-level positive effects through Human imitation design, this would only prove that the technology has successfully mimicked human characteristics to the point where it can substitute for real interpersonal interaction. However, such substitution inherently depends on ignoring human uniqueness and internal experiences.

Another opposing view holds that, despite the high level of Human imitation achieved by Generative AI, its internal mechanism remains transparently recognized by users as a "man-made product." In other words, users generally understand the essential difference between interacting with Generative AI and engaging in real human relationships. Although AI companions exhibit "human-like" characteristics, most people still perceive them as tools designed to fulfill specific needs, rather than beings with genuine subjectivity or emotions. Therefore, this argument contends that users would not transfer the behavioral patterns formed in these virtual interactions onto real human relationships, thereby avoiding the escalation of Sexual Objectification in real society.

I believe this objection carries a degree of positive insight because maintaining a clear distinction between AI interaction and real interpersonal relationships is indeed an important goal for ethical regulation and critical reflection on Sexual Objectification. However, this view also suffers from several evident flaws in practice. First, public understanding of how Generative AI functions remains limited, and it is increasingly common for people to perceive Generative AI as a "kindred spirit," or to expect it to serve as a platform for building "ideal companions." This is far from an isolated phenomenon. Second, even if users theoretically possess the ability to distinguish virtual from real, this cognitive boundary becomes difficult to sustain in long-term interaction. With its highly personalized and instant feedback, Generative AI achieves a remarkably deceptive Human imitation that gradually and subtly influences users' internal attitudes and behavioral patterns. This influence is not limited to any specific gender; rather, it could broadly foster the normalization of Instrumentality and Objectification across all interpersonal relationships. Therefore, although the capacity to distinguish between AI and real human beings is a valuable normative goal, in reality, this ability is often limited —making the Objectification risks triggered by Generative AI even harder to prevent and correct.

Beyond addressing these opposing views, I also want to conclude this chapter by expanding into a more speculative reflection on the technological phenomena discussed in this paper. When considering the impact of Generative AI technology on Sexual Objectification, I have been continuously wondering whether this emerging technology will introduce new features to Objectification theory, or even trigger a certain degree of conceptual disruption. The advancement of Generative AI in terms of Human imitation and high-performance interaction indeed enhances its Instrumentality and Fungibility to such a degree that it can be "treated like a person." However, despite this technological breakthrough blurring the boundary between humans and objects, I argue that it is still premature to declare a theoretical paradigm shift.

Even though current technologies display highly Human-like appearances, to the extent that users in certain contexts might begin treating them as real persons, the essential nature of the technology itself remains unchanged. It still fundamentally lacks Autonomy and Subjectivity — hence the core ethical critique of Objectification persists. This point is not only relevant to the debate over Sexual Objectification but should also be extended to broader ethical considerations surrounding technological applications. No matter how powerful technology becomes in delivering functional efficiency, we must always uphold a human-centered ethical principle, ensuring that technological applications do not erode human dignity. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that the arguments presented in this article arise within the context of a contemporary data environment that remains predominantly shaped by classical male perspectives. The ethical risks discussed here — particularly the amplification of Instrumentality and Objectification in the application of Generative AI to sex robots — should not be regarded as inevitable or universal outcomes. Rather, they reflect the biases embedded in current technological and cultural structures.

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Looking ahead, a human-centered ethical approach should actively incorporate gender equality into the development and application of Generative AI. By integrating feminist critiques and gender-sensitive narratives into training datasets, it is possible that future AI systems could challenge, rather than reinforce, traditional patterns of Instrumentality and Objectification. Such efforts would not only mitigate the risks identified in this paper but also advance a more inclusive and respectful vision of technological progress.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

This paper has conducted an in-depth analysis of the Objectification phenomena exhibited by Generative AI in the field of Sex Robots, exploring how Generative AI technology amplifies the risks of Objectification within the framework of traditional Objectification theory. By drawing on the seven features of Objectification proposed by Nussbaum, this paper first demonstrated how traditional sexual tools exhibit and are limited in their ability to objectify women. While conventional sex toys certainly reflect the tendency to reduce women to singular tools in certain dimensions, their Objectification effects are largely confined to the cultural and symbolic levels. They lack the ability to comprehensively negate the internal emotions and subjectivity of the individual.

At the technological level, however, this paper emphasized the breakthroughs brought by Generative AI in areas such as language generation, emotional simulation, and personalized customization. These advancements enable Generative AI to capture users' emotions with an unprecedented level of precision and to generate highly seductive and interactive responses through instant feedback. This capability profoundly enhances the Instrumentality and Fungibility of sex robots, making them more effective tools of emotional companionship and sexual gratification than ever before. The core argument of this paper holds that such technology, while satisfying users' desires, further blurs the boundary between person and object. By continuously customizing and upgrading AI companions, users are gradually encouraged to simplify real interpersonal relationships into commodified, fully replaceable, and controllable interactions.

Additionally, this paper discussed the phenomenon of reverse objectification and extreme substitutability. This refers to the fact that Generative AI, while simulating human-like external traits, still fundamentally lacks genuine Autonomy and Subjectivity. As a result, these technological products—despite wearing the "human-like" exterior and even being treated like persons — ultimately deny the unique subjectivity and autonomy of real individuals. This process, in essence, degrades human status to a position lower than that of objects. In other words, taking sex robots as an example, the Human imitation capabilities of Generative AI significantly intensify the Objectification of women by encouraging male users to see both women and AI-powered sex robots as interchangeable options. This further erodes the sense of equality and dignity that should underpin real human relationships.

In summary, while Generative AI technology has achieved external performance that closely resembles human beings, its fundamental computational nature and lack of genuine inner emotional experiences confirm that it remains an "object" rather than a "person." Therefore, when we use such technological products to fulfill emotional and sexual needs, the reinforced Instrumentality, Fungibility, and sense of Ownership imperceptibly foster a deep-seated denial of subjectivity and uniqueness within real interpersonal relationships. This process of blurring the boundary between person and object not only accelerates the commodification of human relationships but, in extreme cases, could trigger even more severe ethical and social crises. How to fully harness the functional benefits of Generative AI while adhering to a human -centered ethical bottom line is a pressing issue that must be addressed. This challenge is not only vividly reflected in the domain of gender, but also serves as a broader warning: across all technological applications, we must consistently uphold the dignity and uniqueness of human beings.

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