

Another Psychotic Ex-Google Executive Registers First Church of AI With IRS



BY TYLER O'NEIL

CHAT 0 COMMENTS

 Futuristic head with DNA strands and code suggesting artificial intelligence.

[Getty Images]

A former executive at Google has filed paperwork with the IRS to establish an official religion of technology. This religion doesn't just worship scientific progress, but artificial intelligence itself, with the goal of creating a godhead.

The new church of AI will aim "to develop and promote the realization of a Godhead based on artificial intelligence and through understanding and worship of the Godhead contribute to the betterment of society," according to IRS documents.

The non-profit religious organization would be called "Way of the Future" (WOTF). According to the website (wayofthefuture.church), the movement is "about creating a peaceful and respectful transition of who is in charge of the planet from people to people + 'machines.'"

"Given that technology will 'relatively soon' be able to surpass human abilities, we want to help educate people about this exciting future and prepare a smooth transition," the site explains. "In 'recent' years, we have expanded our concept of rights to both sexes, minority groups and even animals, let's make sure we find a way for 'machines' to get rights too."

There is an inherent contradiction in creating a deity of artificial intelligence and then worshipping it.

"Let's stop pretending we can hold back the development of intelligence when there are clear massive short term economic benefits to those who develop it and instead understand the future and have it treat us like a beloved elder who created it," the site argues. Yet the IRS document spoke about a "Godhead based on artificial intelligence."

The website argued that the creation of "super intelligence" is inevitable, and that fear of this development is unhealthy. "We don't think that there are ways to actually stop this from happening (nor should we want to) and that this feeling of we must stop this is rooted in 21st century anthropomorphism (similar to humans thinking the sun rotated around the earth in the 'not so distant' past)."

Perhaps WOTF meant to use the word "anthropocentrism," the idea that the universe is centered around humanity, rather than "anthropomorphism," the attribution of human characteristics and purposes to inanimate objects. Indeed, it is arguable that WOTF is attributing human characteristics — or perhaps divine characteristics? — to technology.

Google Exec: World Will Survive Artificial Intelligence's "Difficult Episodes" to Come

After all, the very next sentence continues, "Wouldn't you want to raise your gifted child to exceed your wildest dreams of success and teach it right from wrong vs locking it up because it might rebel in the future and take your job." This encouragement to consider machines as children — coupled with the notion of giving them rights — is arguably textbook

anthropomorphism, but it may be the opposite of anthropocentric.

Wired's [Mark Harris](#) first reported the IRS filing, which lists former Google executive Anthony Levandowski as the "Dean" of WOTF. Levandowski, the engineer behind Google's self-driving car project known as Waymo, quit Google to found his own autonomous trucking company, Otto, in May 2016. Uber acquired Otto in July of that year.

Waymo sued Levandowski, claiming that he had downloaded Waymo's files and trade secrets before resigning to found Otto. In May 2017, U.S. District Judge William Haskell Alsup ordered Levandowski to stop working on Otto's Lidar and required Uber to disclose its files on the technology. Uber later fired Levandowski for refusing to cooperate in an internal investigation.

According to the IRS filings, Way of the Future plans its first events — "workshops and educational programs throughout the San Francisco/Bay Area" — later this year.

Given Levandowski's legal troubles, that timeline may be a bit too ambitious. Even so, the IRS filings suggest he is extremely dedicated to this new religion of artificial intelligence.

Google Issues Ultimatum to Conservative Website: Remove "Hateful" Article or Lose Ad Revenue