

“Deconstructing” Jarvis: An Examination of a Facebook Post and Its “Community”

Facebook is a necessary evil. It provides its users with a wealth of tools to communicate with their own self-defined communities. And, as a wolf in sheep’s clothing it extracts personal information, or rather, we furnish it with information that is used to tailor advertisements, recommend products, friends, events, businesses, music, books, and the like. I suppose the mutual, synergistic relationship between Facebook and its users being ease of interaction with our virtual communities for ease of access to our personal information is clearly that—mutual, though perhaps leaning more towards one side, and the synergistic aspect is yet to be unveiled fully.

For my case study, I thought it’d be interesting to “un-nest” the “nesting-doll” that is Facebook. As ironic as it may seem, Facebook does have its own Facebook page. What does a site post on a page that is its own? Well, anything that perpetuates its ideals I suppose. In Facebook’s case, the first post I encountered (and the most recent posted at my writing this) is a linked post from Mark Zuckerberg’s page. Zuckerberg of course, is the CEO and founder of Facebook. The post was a video—one of the many media that Facebook affords for use in posts. In it, Mr. Zuckerberg details his latest achievement: “Jarvis.” The video reveals that aside from ripping off the name of an AI from the well-known Marvel film, Zuckerberg also “ripped-off” the Alexa product offered by Amazon. Zuckerberg isn’t afraid to admit this either (1). In the video, we see Jarvis and its (his?) creator’s interactions (Zuckerberg in this case and not Mr. Stark). The video does come off as a sort of Amazon-Alexa, Iron-Man crossover-advertisement though arguably with a Silicon-Valley-Minimalist aesthetic topped off with a twinge of April-Fools-Hoax. That minimalist aesthetic however, is lost in the rabbit-hole practices that Facebook seems to propagate, encourage, and truthfully, requires.

Well, I delved “through the wormhole” (I forgot to mention that Jarvis is voiced by Morgan Freeman in the video—a nice touch). Opening pages like Facebook’s own unearths massive

communities. Or, more specifically, the sorts of “imagined communities” Anderson describes as connected via media rather than proximity. I had the slight hope that I’d uncovered an Easter-Egg of some sort having been smart enough to think Facebook had its own Facebook page but alas, I discovered that close to two-hundred million people liked the page and over eighty-thousand of them purportedly posted on Zuckerberg’s Jarvis video—an imagined community in and of itself. In the video/ad/hoax Zuckerberg encourages viewers to suggest potential features that could be added. This prompted comments ranging from exclamations of adoration for Jarvis’ godly creator to Bill Gates’ silly recommendation to add a secret hamburger-delivery feature (3).

The most interesting comment of all (because yes, I read all 80,000 comments) was Zuckerberg’s preface/qualifying comment: “In case it’s not clear, this is meant to be a fun summary and not a live demo” (2). In an age of false-news I suppose this sort of disclaimer is necessary, though when coupled with the link that directs to an overview of his (Zuckerberg’s) experience creating Jarvis (a quasi-empirical one) it leaves readers/viewers/users lost in limbo—unsure whether it’s all a joke or whether it should be taken seriously.

Zuckerberg’s self-described “note” in which he details his experiences creating Jarvis was one of dolls I un-nested. In it, he reflects upon his personal revelations pertaining to AI, its current issues and where things may be headed. Ultimately he comes to the consensus that the public (those concerned with creating a ‘perfect’ AI at any rate,) need first to discover what “intelligence” means. Having disclosed that AI is already perfectly adept at the recognition of patterns he notes that things fall short for AI once things become unpredictable. Current iterations of artificial intelligence require their respective creators provide the tools to answer the questions—to identify patterns, but to have a fully self-sufficient AI, that AI must be able to define its own answers by its own means—to recognize patterns on its own. In effect, the posting of the Jarvis video and the request for ideas, comments, recommendations was an attempt to elicit the types of questions pertaining to AI that

may need answering. Here we see the use of the Facebook (imagined) community cultivated by Zuckerberg's post as a means of open-sourcing the sort of self-learning that is prescribed to be necessary for the AIs of the future. Thus, the Facebook ideology: even if you don't know the question ask for answers and they'll come freely.

The community fostered by Zuckerberg's post illustrates the typical interactions found on Facebook. Facebook is effectually a platform in which people communicate with others in hopes of satisfying their individual need for interpersonal interaction. Given that Facebook affords users communication with each other regardless of location, it allows for ease of accessibility. This is demonstrated in the more than eighty-thousand comments that are engaged with the post. In this sense, Zuckerberg's post and its having been linked on the Facebook Facebook page illustrates motivation on the company's part, but also betrays its assumption that users are actively seeking a place where they can be seen and heard. Remarkable, aside from the sheer number of posts, is the number of responses from Zuckerberg himself.

Comments are another affordance that Facebook enables to its users and thus stimulates discourse between people from around the world. Zuckerberg wasn't alone in his responding to other's ideas. This is to say that all eighty-thousand posts were not from different people pertaining to different concepts, but that all culminated in a discourse of the sort Facebook and Zuckerberg hoped to initiate at the initial posting of the video. One inspired to some degree by the question of what would be a cool AI feature in the home. In this respect, the Facebook Facebook page and the Jarvis post fostered a community in its (correct) assumption that people wish to provide answers. The user comments are (not unlike Zuckerberg's) multi-modal and often implement multimedia. Not only Zuckerberg furnished the post with links, countless users provided links to their own sites or pages. Some people even posted links to their own surveys which shines light on the fact that not all are blind to the fact Facebook is a hub that cultivate knowledge, or more specific, mass opinion.

This concept speaks volumes about Facebook and how it's gleaned so much information from so many people without much difficulty because, in the end, people just want to be heard and if the medium is the message as McLuhan claims, Facebook can be seen not only as a media of connecting people, but a media of discourse.

Yes, Facebook is a necessary evil and it is learning to adapt as well. People freely furnish Facebook with not only their own information, but with valuable recommendations pertaining to a potential product release. Moreover, the community initiated by the very posting of the Jarvis video serves as a learning, growing, living entity that, in many ways, fits the criteria for what it is the AIs of today are lacking. Virtual communities are adaptable and dynamic. They are large and some are large enough and active enough to provide a plethora of answers to a single question, enough to form databases of valuable information that can be used to fuel the next generation of media. I wonder whether we are feeding upon technology or whether it is feeding upon us. Whether that wolf in sheep's clothing has already pounced and we're caught unaware.

```

task = FaceDetectTask::forImageData($file_data);

tasks = array("image" => $task);

api_config = nullthrows(SV_AI_API_CONFIG::get());
api_config = $api_config['facer'];
algorithm = FacerecProdAlgorithmRollout::getAlgorithm();
($algorithm == FacesConst::JARVIS_FACEREC) {
    $algorithm = FacesConst::RC_MODEL;

$detection_tier = idx($api_config, 'detection_tier');
$config = await FaceDetectRequestConfig::gen($detection_tier, $algorithm);
$config->setReturnTagsFaceSig(true);

    print "Configured...\n";

```

Building Jarvis





MARK ZUCKERBERG · MONDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2016

My personal challenge for 2016 was to build a simple AI to run my home -- like Jarvis in Iron Man.

My goal was to learn about the state of artificial intelligence -- where we're further along than people realize and where we're still a long ways off. These challenges always lead me to learn more than I expected, and this one also gave me a better sense of all the internal technology Facebook engineers get to use, as well as a thorough overview of home automation.



Mark Zuckerberg  In case it's not clear, this is meant to be a fun summary and not a live demo. 


If you want to read about how I built it, check out the note I published yesterday:

<https://www.facebook.com/notes/mark-zuckerberg/building-jarvis/10154361492931634...> See More

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Bill Gates  Hey, Mark. Can Jarvis secretly order a hamburger and have it delivered to the back door? Asking for a friend...

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Mark Zuckerberg  I think I can build that for you, Bill 😊

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