

# Artificial Intelligence As A Means Of Infantilization

Nilüfer PEMBECİOĞLU <sup>a†</sup> 

<sup>a</sup> Department of Radio Television Cinema, Istanbul University, Turkey

<sup>†</sup> nilufer.pembecioğlu@istanbul.edu.tr, corresponding author.

RECEIVED JANUARY 4, 2022

ACCEPTED MARCH 30, 2022

CITATION Pembecioğlu, N. (2022). Artificial Intelligence As A Means Of Infantilization. *Artificial Intelligence Theory and Applications*, 2(1), 59-73.

## Abstract

The exponential digitalization of products and services, as well as the changing facades of reality, provide a larger area for AI in everyday life. In response to Stiegler's criticisms of Goffman and Bernardini's approach to infantilization, AI appears in all contexts in the modern World surrounding us from simple home equipment to 3D printers, from smart buildings to precision agriculture. The automatized habits, full of lists of likes and dislikes created by opinion leaders, proclaimed future designers, or common post-world paradigms, arose from the pseudo-reality of post-traumatic human behaviors regarding consumerism society. On the one hand, real AI advancements grasp more value, space, and interest in real life, but they also flourish in cinema as a fantasy world. This paper aims to question how cinematic imagination intersects with reality in science fiction films, with an emphasis on AI representation in cinema films.

**Keywords:** AI, cinema films, infantilization, smart cities, space

## 1. Introduction

This paper deals with two very important concepts. One of the is Artificial intelligence (AI) and the other one is Infantilization. The main aim of the paper is to discuss and exemplify how these two concepts overlap with each other integrating the audiences into the application process.

Artificial intelligence (AI) has been used in a variety of disciplines including medical fields for a variety of purposes since its emergence in the mid- to late-1900s [1]. Even though AI is the subject of several scientific studies, it is depicted in the visual world as villains or protagonists in the form of superheroes. Like a fashion trend, all modern stories with origins in mystical or supernatural reasoning made use of AI in different ways specifically in cinema films.

To Başbuğ, infantilization - the practice of treating adults like children and, thus, viewing them as if they have never grown up - is an old concept that appears in a great number of fields, from natural sciences to social and cultural studies [2]. Even if infantilization received attention rarely until the late 20th century, the processes of infantilization had been occurring for centuries in various areas of life from religion to politics. The concept of infantilization is not new, as Dorfman points out, however, its contemporary range of development and its influence on consumers today is [3]. Infantilization has now achieved a new twist reaching its ultimate breakthrough in the realms of marketing and

Permission to make digital or hard copies of all or part of this work for personal or classroom use is granted without fee provided that copies are not made or distributed for profit or commercial advantage and that copies bear this notice and the full citation on the first page. Copyrights for components of this work owned by others than AITA must be honored. Abstracting with credit is permitted. To copy otherwise, or republish, to post on servers or to redistribute to lists, requires prior specific permission and/or a fee. Request permissions from info@aitajournal.com

Artificial Intelligence Theory and Applications, ISSN: 2757-9778. ISBN: 978-605-69730-2-4 © 2022 University of Bakırçay

is meanwhile an essential centerpiece of mass media culture emphasizing the idea of being forever young [4].

## 2. Different Interpretations of AI and Infantilization

Although infantilization might be thought of as placing adults in the place of children, so degrading their minds, honor, and creativity, it can also be thought of as an early adulthood and unintended transfer of facts to children before they get ready and equipped for that. Thus, it is possible to think of infantilization in different perspectives.

### 2.1. Infantilization as a Part of Consumer Society Strategy

Infantilization is referred in many different ways and one of the leading examples put it into the position of a kind of governmental strategy. For example, Barber mentions the strategies of the consumer society to infantilize adults and swallow citizens whole [5]. He mentions the films of that period such as Shrek 2 (\$441 million in ticket sales), Spider-Man 2 (\$374 million), Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban (\$250), and other films that enchanted audiences in 2004. "*Films like Matrix are created to hit the maximum potential global audience where marketing to youth is a major priority,*" Barber asserts. To Barber, either capitalism will be replacing the infantalist ethos with a democratic ethos, regaining the ability to uphold equality as well as benefit, diversity as well as consumption, or infantilization will undo not only democracy but capitalism itself. Much will hinge on our ability to make sense of infantilization and link it to consumerism's survival logic's less-than-creative destruction, he declares. Barber puts the blame on the system and the problematic relationship between the government and the governed ones [5].

Today, when we have a look at those years in the past, it's easy to see that fantastic films like Batman, Superman, Spiderman, War of the Worlds, Star Wars, and others appear to be kiddie blockbusters and youth-marketed films. Those were the days the cinema films started to make use of AI in the films more than ever. And we may now perhaps find out a relationship between AI and infantilization. As a consumer culture, part of infantilization stresses the value of civil society. The way the government operates could only be possible if customers are kept in a consumer position. The more they buy, the more powerful the governing bodies become. In libertarian economies, increasing consumption means increasing demand, and like a never-ending story, people had to work harder to consume more: Consequences have meant and will continue to trigger more infantilization.

### 2.2. Infantilization of Postmodern Individual

Even if infantilization was a concept that could be found even in the earliest myths and fairy tales, Ansen blames the modern society as much as Barber does and puts the blame on the postmodern individuals who do not care anything apart from the self. The concept of the "infantilist mentality" is as provocative and controversial as Weber's concept of the "Protestant ethic" he states [6]. He defines infantilization as a powerful metaphor that refers to degrading of products and customers in a postmodern industrial economy that seems to generate more goods than people need. Ansen also stressed that, in addition to adults as individuals, children are also infantilized as a result of their constant exposure to advertising. As a result, the more they are immersed in the media, the stronger their consumer identities become and the more loyal potential customers they become. On the other hand, he mentions infantilization as targeting of children as consumers in a market where there are never enough customers.

This positioning puts children on the consumers platform even if they are not ready for that. In the past, the type of infantilization was only at the narrative level and was limited to making the audience believe. The level of persuasion in the postmodernist society, on the other hand, brings a more cumulative perspective that includes many different disciplines such as economics, philosophy, belief and sociology.

### 2.3. Infantilization As Part of a Yearning for Nostalgia

Bora, describes infantilization as a drive for innocence, a yearning that metaphysically can only begin after it is lost – so that infantilization and innocence always happen ‘too late’ [7]. This awakening retroactively infantilizes the characters, especially the stereotypic ones. For example, Lacan with phenomenologists might argue that the importance of the infantilization of natives in many different movies. The word infantilization, once a hallmark of Freudian psychology based on the psychopathology of regression, has become a favorite of procrastinator pessimist journalists in recent years: *"Hollywood is significantly responsible for the infantilization of America,"* says Leon Wieseltier, the cultural editor of The New Republic [8]. *"Almost all those movies that are not suitable for children are irredeemably childish."*

Depending upon these interpretations, even the most famous and well-known film directors were blamed to be the ones infantilizing certain groups and causing false interpretations. Dowd states that *"Spielberg, Lucas, "The Flintstones," Brady Bunches unto the generations, Kevin Costner fairy tales, Stallone and Schwarzenegger cartoons: PG 13 (Parental Guidance Suggested, suitable for 13 years and older), NC 17 (No Children 17 and Under Admitted) or whatever, they treat their audiences like children"* adds Maureen Dowd in the New York Times [9]. Whereas *"The consumption orientation of 21st century capitalism - manifested in many ways, but key among them being advertising - is considered to be driven increasingly by an infantilist ethos that targets adults as if they were children."* states Başbuğ and, The Independent's Philip Hensher believes that *"signs of adult society being infantilized are everywhere"* [10].

William Safire's reflections as *"Besotted With Potter."* when he spoke of classics such as *"Huckleberry Finn"* or *"Alice in Wonderland"* and their metaphorical meanings and quoted Philip Hensher – *"The trouble is that grown-ups are buying these books ostensibly to read to kids, but actually to read for themselves."* Yet, this part of interpretation refers much of the infantilization of the adults rather than degrading the groups in societies [11].

### 2.4. Infantilization As Ageless Youth

The baby boom generation of the 1960s, which had early infants, was replaced by parents who had children later in life and even used IVF (in vitro fertilization). Many advances in child-care and education have emerged at this point because these new types of parents, who are mainly focused on self-realization, do not have much time to spare for their children. Adults who had to become adults before living their childhood by seeking to make themselves noticeable in a competitive world were drawn to edutainment materials such as enriched instructional materials, audiobooks, video books, and interactive games.

Infantilization, or the state of becoming an infant all the time, is more than a mesmeric metaphor. A new cultural ethos is forming, one that is intimately connected to global consumerism.

According to Barber, the idea of youth merely goes up as the population of the developing world ages – the irony of infantilization – with baby boomers in the United States sneaking it into their senior years. Of course, the irony of infantilization is that Americans are growing older, with the median age moving from twenty-five in the baby boomer high-water year of 1960 to thirty-five in 2000; by 2050, there would be more people in their seventies than in their teens.

In his blog, Safire concludes “As Hensher warns in the Independent newspaper, this leads to *“the infantilization of adult culture, the loss of a sense of what a classic really is.”* to put forward that *“the Potter series don’t really have a deeper sophisticated meaning as it was made to be enjoyed; used as amusement and adults reading material that is aimed at children does lead to the infantilization of adult culture.”* [12].

The whole point of getting older is to grow up not only physically but also mentally and emotionally-or perhaps not to grow up at all as Peter Pan does. Yet, the Potter series is not just for children and Rowling has a vast audience of all ages. However, myths, films, books are often used as a form of escapism, especially for adults.

Even conservatives who reject the charge of consumer infantilization recognize its potency. George F. Will thus charges progressive thinkers with advancing the thesis of the “infantilism of the American public” as one more “we are all victims of manipulation” explanation for Bush’s victory in the 2004 presidential campaign [13]. Little surprise then that popular magazines such as Time “They Just Won’t Grow Up” and New York Magazine “Forever Youngish: Why Nobody Wants to be an adult anymore” worry in major cover articles about America’s Peter Pan tendencies.

Grebeby states that comic books are selling better than they have in 20 years [14] they relaunched their line in an event called "Rebirth" that's caused major changes to the status quo. In the twenty-first century, older generation comic books sell better than they did three decades earlier. On the one hand, the fact that the latest editions contain old adventures and take parents back to their childhood is an important component. On the other hand, being able to have those old adventures that they couldn't purchase back then and could only read through sharing with friends is extremely significant. When you consider that new editions have higher-quality sheets, colors, and bindings, it's also conceivable to claim that adults now love comics more than they did previously. They now want to be able to keep their old childhood excitement in their library as a collection of books that they can proudly present to everyone, so they are willing to pay more than they used to.

Every discussion of aging, according to Aslantürk, reveals details about the social system [15]. Despite the fact that the biomedical model uses a scientific framework to divide the life course into age stages, aging is a normative and performative area of struggle for the individual. As a result, the argument that "everything has an age" has become a common topic of debate. To complete the tasks that life needs "on time," everyone struggles with time, reconciles with time, defies time, and ages with time. Over time, it deteriorates. This daily idiom is intertwined with neoliberal governmentality, which forces us to describe time and life along a biopolitical axis. This daily idiom is intertwined with neoliberal governmentality, which forces us to describe time and life along a biopolitical axis. The growing belief in this direction contributes to a "fragility" attitude toward the aging process. As both social policies and scientific advancements influence "rational" aging behaviors. As a result, challenging aging as a "exceptional occurrence" is crucial in media discussions, not only for "old people," but for everyone who is biologically destined to age.

### 3. Aim and Methodology

The exponential digitalization of products and services, as well as the changing facades of reality, provide a larger area for AI in everyday life. The automatized habits, full of lists of likes and dislikes created by opinion leaders, proclaimed future designers, or common post-world paradigms, arose from the pseudo-reality of post-traumatic human behaviors regarding consumerism society. This paper aims to question how cinematic imagination intersects with reality in science fiction films, with an emphasis on AI representation in cinema films.

### 4. Findings: Bridging The Gap Between AI and Infantilization

The majority of 21st-century films employ artificial intelligence to entertain audiences by various effects. This sensation of gratification is often linked to the audience's infantilization. To Ginsberg, even if the structure is plain such as Steven Spielberg's *Munich* (2005) which received five Oscar nominations, the director was often censured for "infantilizing the audience, reconstituting the spectator as child, then overwhelming them with sound and spectacle, obliterating irony, aesthetic self-consciousness, and critical reflection." [16]. However, in an interview with Reuters, a retired head of Israel's Shin Bet intelligence service and former Internal Security Minister, Avi Dichter, likened *Munich* to a children's adventure story:

*"There is no comparison between what you see in the movie and how it works in reality"* [17].

Apart from the infantilization efforts regarding the socio-political aspects which might require more concentration on the dissemination of the thoughts and ideas, infantilization through AI brings another perspective to the cinema films. While it seems that people are going to the movies less, the impact of movies on individuals and cultures have intensified. Individuals that are exposed to a denser amount of media and a more intense visual images are more likely to prioritize secondhand interactions throughout the real world. Artificial intelligence-implemented scenes and effects in films may include projections about how the future will be formed, and they can often help to create an utopian or dystopian perspective.

In real life, the elder patients may either feel infantilized by the use of AI based robotic animals or experience robots that simulate a human personality as a deception [18]. Apart from reality of the real life, recognizing that you are infantilized in a fantasy world requires a more complex and unacceptably difficult task, because, people who are absorbed in the media for entertainment and consumption find it difficult to return to reality and realize that the media shapes their thoughts, feelings, and decisions. The media's network, on the other hand, which pervades the real world, would not allow this reality to be perceived. Even the most mature, adult person is unlikely to age in this fresh, encouraged, and infantile environment. Today, artificial intelligence-driven identity, physical, and social changes enable individuals to take control of their identities and change them whenever they want. As a result, it is difficult for people to give up artificial intelligence and imagine a life without it. Being a pampered kid whose every wish is fulfilled in the media's virtual universe prevents anyone from becoming a responsible adult in the real world.

Today's scenarios are based on experiences with artificial intelligence at various levels, rather than on human interactions. People are gradually preparing for a more intensive AI-driven life in the future with the aid of movies, which typically include thought and

decision-making processes that include artificial intelligence elements. AI plays an important role in films. This narrative form, which appeals to a wide audience, especially those who are interested in future developments and reconstructions and who want to see concretely what the future and technology will provide to humans, is embellished with striking filmic details, can surprise its followers with temporal and conceptual leaps, and emphasizes how much of their daily and ordinary choices it emphasizes.

The enjoyment of new discoveries, as well as the ever-increasing number of toy-like artificial intelligence resources, can all contribute to kind of childishness or self infantilization. This entails sacrificing the present for a distant dream, which is akin to being persuaded of a future that may never come. In such a virtual world, they are probably looking for the happiness they lack in real world.

All of them have amazing stories, from Al Pacino's *SimOne* (2002) to John Travolta's *Face Off* (1997), from *Back to the Future I-II & III* series (1985-1989 and 1990), to Whoopi Goldberg's *The Associate* (1996) It's important to note that the audience has seen a lot of movies involving AI representing the innovative technology in its positive and negative ways. The AI interference into the film world is not only in the form of the content, the main or sub-character or the technology used in the movie. Previously, there was a steady increase in the amount of AI interspersed into films; nowadays, it is almost impossible to think a film without an AI-based structure. Furthermore, there occurs an entertainment industry in which AI virtually recreates every stage of the production, from acting to stage, set, design, and make-up.

AI appears in today's media in the form of handling, interpreting and positioning new forms of narrative. With the opportunities provided by transmedia, the information gap generated between those who have access to the media and those who do not causes people who are trying to find a place in the modern world to fear and worry. In this context, the narrative is transformed from a purely fictional story to a genuine source of concern. Today, it can be argued that both utopia and dystopia spread with the influence of the media. On the one hand, it could be argued that the drama, with its dose of anxiety and concern, gives the viewer a "fear appeal." All, including when you eat and when you will have sleep or sex, is known and regulated by the state in the future with the help of AI. Since society takes precedence over the man, no one is permitted to think or be imaginative on his own or become individualized. People are only named and known by numbers, so they don't even need to have a personal identification. Although AI-controlled societies present a harmonious and systematic image of society, there is actually nothing shared in between the individuals and humanity is as isolated as death.

Fears are implanted both in the stories within the films and in the real life. It is seen that a new type of humanity has been created that has been captured by the media for fear of missing something, trying to keep up with all kinds of innovations that might be faced.

The big ban of the *Twilight* series, the excitement of the *Hunger Games* which once again took the world by storm with their novels, and the excitement generated by the *Labyrinth* books in the sector resulted in a slew of kidult-targeted films. As the portrayal of a dystopian future through the eyes of teenagers, "*The Darkest Minds*" movie (2018) is a remarkable product of the kidult (young adult: not teen, but not adult) movement and adapted from a novel series by Alexandra Bracken.

Ulukan stresses that science fiction films are divided into different groups, with some films focusing on aliens, others on fear of the future, and still others on robots [19]. While the number of films featuring artificial intelligence has risen since 2000, the initial themes

started to occur in the 1920s, when we began to fantasize about modern science and create fiction. Artificial intelligence, defined as a computer's ability to think, reason, interpret objective evidence, understand, judge, and draw conclusions, can be thought of as a machine's comprehension of knowledge about its environment, such as the state of a game or relevant data from a database. Artificial intelligence is not something that exists or evolves on its own; it is generated as part of a framework by human hands and can be used in everyday life by optimizing the data it collects. Artificial intelligence will no longer be able to stay out of our lives as technology advances, but it will continue to be the focus of many films. While some of these films contain horror elements, others suggest that artificial intelligence-powered robots can be companions for people who are becoming increasingly isolated in society.

As Zengin stated, in the Hollywood film industry, where millions of dollars are at stake, accurate risk analysis by filmmakers is understandable and normal [20]. To him, in this context, for film studios that invest in stories of unpredictable commercial returns, a thorough understanding of the audience is critical. *"If studios know who watches what, they will figure out what kind of films to make"*. Zengin states that previously, conventional approaches such as surveys were used for this purpose, but the fact that artificial intelligence-based software began to perform these functions very quickly and successfully prompted Hollywood movie studios, which have a global network, to invest more in data science. According to Zengin, Warner Bros., a century-old Hollywood studio, has agreed to use "Cinelytic," an artificial intelligence-powered system that can predict the probability of success of the film based on factors such as the stars, budget, and brand of a film, while 20th Century Fox uses "Merlin," a Belgian-based artificial intelligence system [20]. Zengin claims that Merlin can predict a movie's performance simply by evaluating the scenario with the algorithms it employs. Another program, Israeli originated Vault, can also make predictions based on the online consumer behaviors to estimate how trailers were received by the consumers and which demographic structures would tend to watch the film [20].

In addition, AI could be implemented into the filmmaking process ranging from making use of softwares to formulate scenarios or providing robot camera technology to shoot and edit films, up to the point to add different sounds, visuals, and effects to films. Apart from the fact that actors and even directors are turned into images that can be controlled by artificial intelligence, it is also possible to discuss films in which demonstrations have individualized speed and flows, sound and music, even images are tailored to the viewer. To some extent all these might include infantilization because the content of such films could be dwelling more on infantilization elements. Among such elements, humor, a fantasy world, uncommon adult behavior and acts, and AI influences, among other things, may be included. The information is analyzed based on the messages involved, extracted, or deduced. The information is also questioned depending upon its applicability in the real world.

What drives people to science fiction movies and confronts them with what AI can do, may be the desire to define our stance against robots that think, feel, and talk just like us. Made in Germany in 1927, Metropolis is the first artificial intelligence film in the cinema in this sense. Artificial intelligence became more essential after The Wachowski brothers' sci-fi action film The Matrix (1999). In the Matrix, a dystopian future is portrayed, which brings up the question of virtual reality, where reality was generated by conscious machines to suppress the human population and mind. The heat and electrical actions of their bodies are used as a source of energy, and the Matrix depicts a dystopian future, which is a simulated reality. The Matrix series is known for being a high-quality production that combines programming, virtual reality, and augmented reality concepts

with references to well-known fairy tales (Sleeping Beauty, Alice in Wonderland, etc.). In a world turned upside down by earthquakes, famine, and droughts, *Interstellar* (2014) depicts the sending of an astronaut and an artificial intelligence robot to three planets together, and portrays a futuristic journey filled with passion, sorrow, apprehension, and regret.

Considering the relationship between cinema and AI, it seems that some movies are groundbreaking ones. For example in *The Terminator* (1984), a cyborg sent from the future, on a deadly mission, searches for a young woman, revealing one of the special and frightening examples of human and machine interaction. *The Blade Runner 2049*, a 2017 American neo-noir science fiction movie, was shot as a sequel to the movie *Blade Runner* (1982) thirty years ago. Apart from the fearful examples, Yılmaz & Turan evaluate how the love between the artificial intelligence and man takes place in the cinema by making thematic film analysis of the selected films of the post-2010 period, which are *The Machine* (2013), *Ex Machina* (2014) and *Uncanny* (2015) with the common themes of "love and sexuality", "technology and science", "loneliness", "body", "learning", "violence", "truth and lies", "surveillance", "creative", and "death and birth" [21]. *Ex Machina* (2015), on the one hand, questions the experimental stages of artificial intelligence and its effects on human life, on the other hand, emphasizes how strong the will to survive is.

*The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951), *Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery* (1997), and *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) are some of the older films that feature artificial intelligence. *2001* depicts the crew of a ship traveling to Jupiter with a human conscious computer program. It covers a wide range of topics including evolution and the quest for extraterrestrial existentialism, the onslaught of scientific technology, combined with artificial intelligence. Apart from the content, the film's special effects were revolutionary at the time of its release, with 205 special effects and a variety of special techniques used in this Kubrick film. Shot by Kubrick in the early 1970s, AI was brought to the big screen in 2001 with Spielberg signature.

Adapted from Isaac Asimov's nine-story anthology, *I, Robot* (2004) focuses on how people become highly dependent on robots in their daily lives become an increasingly disturbing and anxious issue.

*Robocop* (1987), on the other hand, deals with the story of the hero Robocop, who is a little human, a little machine and a complete cop, apart from dystopian films that reveal artificial intelligence in a frightening way. Although its content can be considered as media influence, gentrification, corruption, authoritarianism, greed, privatization, capitalism, identity, dystopias, and human nature, it has a very childish perspective and has turned into a character that children often watch and admire.

Toby Stephens, a computer scientist, builds a conscious cyborg for the Ministry of Defense in the film *The Machine* (2013). With the line "I am part of the new age, you are a part of the old," it is highlighted in the film that the smooth blonde Machine, conceived as a super soldier, is more human and moral than anyone imagined. AI opens several enticing doors for people, but it also comes with a price tag that they were not expecting. As the widening information gap between those who have access to technology and those who lack it, makes us question the future of the future.

The legendary movie series *Star Wars* (1977) and its aftermath also suggest that the AI may not be that scary, but even more human, with a strong sense of humor, and perhaps even funny. In these movies, humanity is the one that can develop more terrible features



than artificial intelligence. The Hitchiker's Guide to the Galaxy (2005) is also about a robot who is rarely given the chance to use his brain and is therefore depressed. With these features, it can even be argued whether humans are similar to AI or whether AI is similar to humans.

Around 100 best box office films were questioned throughout the study and most of them were having AI in a heroic based content or portraying AI basis as a sub-content or context. A general content analysis served as the foundation for the database. 12T's approach was used to evaluate the data. Pembecioğlu developed this approach as a structural, contextual, and functional text analysis technique, based on Stoller & Grabe's 6T's Approach for Content-Based Teaching in 1997 [22]. There are twelve T's each representing a different viewpoint that influences the substance and quality of the sample text. The main aim is to figure out the text's coherence and harmony, how meaning and image, culture and codes are depicted in various ways for diverse reasons. As the findings reveal a high correlation between AI and infantilization, in conclusion, it could be argued that the triangle of AI, cinema films, and infantilization should be questioned in a deeper sense.

**Table 1.** AI and Infantilization Relationship Regarding 12T's Approach

<b>12 T's Approach</b>	
<b>Theme</b>	Considering the "Theme", as the central part of the AI, many different concepts could be encountered ranging from fear to happiness from time travels to space adventures, from daily life to eternal. AI could be implemented into any kind of theme.
<b>Topic</b>	The "Topic" would allow as many different audience types as possible since the main value of the film is not hidden in its content but the function to provide a kind of relief to the world of the audience. AI is involved in almost all topics, similarly, infantilization could occur simultaneously in all as well.
<b>Text</b>	The "Text" is mainly fictional, rarely seems to be original but adapted from novels, myths of previous discourses. The concept of AI could be implemented into the text as the main element or as several different sub-contents. As a textual element, infantilization usually appears in a humorous way in the visual or linguistic text (in reduplications, riddles, syllabicate, temporal forms). The references of infantilization in the text are usually the exophoric reference, out of the text, to real life.
<b>Threads</b>	The "Threads" on the other hand provide as many different details as possible, focusing on the human vs machine comparison, questioning the values making humans unique and better than AI. The threads of infantilization on the other hand are usually the hints to make the messages cultivated and to promote consumption.
<b>Tasks</b>	In each film, an explicit or implicit "Task" waits for the audience. Regarding AI expansions, this is usually explicitly focusing on the useful side of AI in modern life. The tasks regarding infantilization on the other hand are more hidden and implicit.
<b>Transfers &amp; Trends</b>	There are so many transfers and trends between the real-life and the life depicted in the films. Mainly the audience tends to make the possible transfers from the films as to implement the most fashionable trends into real life. For example, mobile phones, used applications, computers, smart vehicles, or else. They do not mind the infantilizing effects of the messages.
<b>Transition</b>	The "Transition" of humanity or systems seems to be the ultimate aim of the narratives. Regarding AI, robots or cyber identities humanized seem to be normalized whereas infantilization is regarded as the feeling of childhood, it's much more normalized.
<b>Thinking</b>	These kinds of films, with the impact of AI, provide the ways of "Thinking" of transitions to the upper level of AI societies in which the human actions are a bit restricted by the machine societies acting as the tribal societies hunting disobedient men. The class system is promoted in most AI-based films through more powerful or updated units and this is a way of infantilization as well. Fear, happiness, or any kind of feeling could not make people think in a healthy way. This is another way of infantilization.

<b>Tailoring</b>	The "Tailoring" actions involve adventures, fears, and hopes. Infantilization is also another way of tailoring. One of the complex processes in which this environment affects people is the "Infantilization" process. Childhood, which refers to the "being a child" process, which includes the experiences and emotions that adults could not experience and missed during their childhood and that they can live in adulthood, even if it is a bit late. This concept has a very important place in today's media to infantilize the adults as if they were still children.
<b>Taking Risks</b>	Taking risks is mainly focused on the level of making use of upper-level technology or degraded to the level of the evil face of technology. Losing humanity or the beloved ones is the main core of the risks. Infantilization on the other hand puts the risks away, without realizing the real danger. It sometimes downgrades the risk into a game, in a childish manner.
<b>Technology</b>	Technology is depicted as the uncontrollable power in the wrong hands or as a form of sneaky enemy targeting human beings. Infantilization allows the technology to become the mastermind without noticing the absurdities, contradictions, inconveniences, and incoherencies.
<b>Transmedia</b>	The impact of "Transmedia" has an important role on the narrative itself as well as its mediation. On one hand, AI is frequently focused, and on the other hand, infantilization makes it easier to mobilize it in all possible surroundings. The Enlightenment and the ensuing industrial revolution affected the lifestyles, expectations, and values of all societies in quite different ways. After the global wars and crises that followed, humanity became aware of its losses and saw the need to embrace its values more. The years of the 70's symbolize the periods in which our lives evolved towards new organizational forms, network society, starting from the West. It can be said that technology has left its mark on the 21st century and its communication styles. Technology has now begun to change not only what we do in the network society, but also the way we think. It is thought that a cyber-culture, which the Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) field tries to understand and explain, puts humanity in a different phase than its evolution until today, is in an environment that we call New Media. Transmedia, in this sense functions as making all the messages mobile more than ever, covers the reality with a deep smog, making it possible for the individuals to lose their way and bump into the same message, again and again, emphasizing how AI is important and how life with AI is better, more comfortable and secure, etc.

---

## 5. Conclusion and Evaluation

According to the findings of the study, the correlation between AI and Infantilization seems to be very high. The more AI-focused films are produced the higher the level of infantilization. The findings also reveal that the AI and infantilization relationship regarding the cinema sector could be summed up in a three-fold way. Initially, the concept of infantilization in the 21st century should be discussed phenomenologically. On the other hand, the implications should be made clear such as the media impact and postmodern humanism. Secondly, cinema films should be handled regarding their structural, functional, semiotic, contextual, and content level analysis. The results are expected to reveal that hundreds of films have AI as theme, topic, text, and threads in them. Thirdly, a tasks level analysis would make us understand how the movies become accessible to the audiences through AI-based systems and algorithms for making the transfers and trends possible, or for taking (economic) risks in an easier way, or for increasing the impact on the audience.

### 5.1. Phenomenological Analysis

Manuel Castells' network society organization has been coined by Bell the as the post-industrial society dominated by the information and service sector, with "data," "information," and "knowledge" as its three main dimensions [23]. Humanist philosophies of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, according to Daniel Bell, were washed up and would be replaced by more narrow-minded modern ones. And the desire

for active individuals, as well as the consumerist cultural climate of instantaneous, uncompromising satisfaction.

What the field of Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) is attempting to comprehend and explain is that we are living in a cyber-culture, an interaction environment known as New Media, that places humanity in a different stage of evolution than it has previously experienced. When it comes to media today, it refers to a networking world in which massive data transfers and subscriptions, a life surrounded by screens, and visuality are becoming increasingly important. In conclusion, there is a slew of traces attempting to be identified from what they are seeing. According to Anders, mechanized communication forces us to undergo an irreversible personality change, causing us to become very similar to one another and also making us angry with machines because we are not as perfect as they are [24].

When Bernardini switched from a socio-psychological to a socioeconomic viewpoint, he noted that the global video game market has increased by more than 10% in the last decade, while the Western economy has grown by less than 2%, and that only half of games sold globally in 2010 [25]. He emphasizes that only 17% of them are truly intended for adults. The idea that adults are gradually embracing infantilization in the media context also covers the new 'kidults', the digital generation in this context. Similarly, the growing number of children is a priority for advertisements on television, but the role of commercials has shifted in the last decade. Via advertisements, children - and adults - are drawn into a fairy tale realm of infantilization and idealized settings.

The majority of the media and digital applications that we see around us include indicators and behaviors that adults believe will enable them to reclaim their childhood, which they are unable to do. Barber puts it as follows: To sell in the global marketplace, where "the need for adult goods and services has proven not to be endless," and where there is little profit in selling to those in need, manufacturers must not only create homogeneous global products aimed at the wealthy young, but must also economize. Del Vecchio believes that the new capitalism must unleash a "kidquake of kid-directed goods & services" aimed at kids who are old enough to "articulate their preferences," which he defines as children aged four and up. In 2001, the advertising industry in the United States invested more than \$230 billion, including up to \$40 billion directed at children. In other words, the concept of infantilization into what the market is doing in order to illuminate its activities in an age of mandatory sale is extrapolating the idea of pumping up buying power, manufacturing needs, and promoting infantilization out of the actual practices of the consumer marketplace.

Even as children are encouraged to eat, infantilization seeks to induce puerility in adults and preserve what is childish in children seeking to grow up. In terms of mobility, it's as if humanity has all but migrated to childhood.

As Barber puts it people may prefer play to work most when it can convert work into play. Neil Postman was already using the disappearance of children's games and the transformation of children's sports into "adult company" as evidence for what he called the "merging of children's and adults' ideals and styles," a foreshadowing of what is now called infantilization. The professionalization of children's play in the hopes of making a profit is the flip side of adult athletes' infantilization [26].

J.M. Barrie's fantasy of Peter Pan is neatly inverted. For Barrie, the dream was for kids never to grow up so that they might be spared the burdens of responsible adulthood: jobs, families, mortgages, and political and moral responsibilities. "*I don't want to grow*

up” exclaimed Peter, fleeing to Neverland. “*I don’t want to be a man, I want always to be a little boy and to have fun.*” Modern merchandisers don’t want Peter to grow up either: not to preserve his innocence, however, not to keep him safe from the world of commerce, but to make him their loyal customer, to exploit his separation from mother and family to make him theirs, to prompt him to buy the fund for which his youth once offered him costless access.

## 5.2. Content Analysis

Infantilization in this instrumentalist form signals the abandonment of Western civilization’s understanding of childhood (not necessarily shared by earlier cultures) as a precious legacy and children – not yet capable of autonomy or self-defense – as ends in themselves whose happiness and well-being are the ultimate object of the public good. In the movies the impact of infantilization is even more pronounced. Hollywood is ever more dominated by blockbuster films aimed at the elongated thirteen- to thirty-years-old “teen market”.

Infantilization has been Hollywood’s adaptive strategy, with the new blockbuster films featuring universal kid features like comic-book action, branded characters, numberless sequels, extensive product placements, and commercial tie-ins with fast food and other global enterprises, minimal plots, and still more minimal dialogue. To do this requires not simply the shaping of fresh advertising and merchandizing strategies, but the reshaping of cultural, educational, and civic institutions to help sustain an ethos favorable to infantilization – the condition for the selling of uniform commodities the world over.

The majority of hypotheses are focused on infantilizing people and classes, groups or elders. Apart from all other considerations, it might now be possible to include the methods of mass infantilization techniques. When, for example, everybody in the vicinity is laughing hysterically, the person cannot help but laugh as well. The desire to join the group is irresistible, making it meaningless by embodying or excluding oneself from the group’s core ideas by definition and infantilization. According to Russell Belk, modern Las Vegas resorts collaborate in a dramatic farce designed to infantilize their adult customers by creating a wonderful liminal time and place. Adults that have been infantilized make better gamblers and customers. Consumers are confronted with a world that resembles a circus. Nothing is impossible in this universe. The importance of the consumer theory is emphasized. It’s a challenge to become somebody, to join the community, and, most importantly, to remain in the group.

It’s debatable if romantic comedies starring princes and princesses, in which a love story is told in a fairy-tale setting, are credible. However, given the sheer number of such films produced (220) and the resulting box office receipts (more than three billion dollars), it is clear that the impact of such infantilization is long-lasting. The frequency of such events, which seem to be a harmless spectatorship, demonstrates a trustworthiness that is too inconsistent (monarchy) and childish to be incompatible with the truth (democracy) encountered in it.

In most AI environments, reality is supplanted by unreality, and authentic life is enslaved by inauthentic life. Instead of optimism and hopes, the faces often represent escapism and fear imprints. Autonomy of the individual is translocated by manipulation and exploitation. As a consequence, rather than improvement, the main outcome is regress. The dichotomy of childhood vs. maturity may also be expressed as disobedience vs. obedience of the identities. As a result, incidental occurrences is regarded as

exceptional, while a life of leisure and idleness, or a life of imagination, fantasy and play, seems to be unlikely to be replaced by work and responsibility.

Stiegler speaks of *Digital-Being & the Exteriorisation of Desire* in today's world where virtual internet identities are transformed into real individual identities or personalities, and individual's visibility is divided hundred times, thus, multiple identities emerged [27]. However, Drawing on Symbolic Interactionist social theory, and, in particular, the works of Goffman referred to as 'personal home pages' as illustrative of the desire to construct cohesive narratives of self-identity rooted in offline, embodied identities. Personal home pages are web pages set up by individuals and in some cases entire families. They are constructed as a 'presentation of self, incorporating both image and text [28].

As late-modern capitalist society artificially expands the former, Hayward asserts that the opposition between puberty and adulthood is constantly questioned. In contrast to other theorists, his approach to the definition includes two reciprocal processes of 'adulthoodification' and 'infantilization' that overlap. To children and young people, the marketing campaigns reveal adulthood, while to adults, "childish pleasures" are promoted [29].

### 5.3. Impact Analysis

Claude Lévi-Strauss, a distinguished French anthropologist, argued that syntagmatic analysis reveals the obvious meaning of a text, while paradigmatic analysis reveals the hidden meaning of the text. The surface structure of a text consists of what is in the text, while its deep structure focuses on what the text is about. Or to put it differently, when we take a paradigmatic approach, we're concerned with what the characters mean, not what they do. Lévi-Strauss explored how narratives are organized and how their structures produce meaning. He has done a lot of work on myths, kinship systems, and related topics (many of which are highly controversial). According to Lévi-Strauss, myths are composed of basic or minimal elements or "myths", which combine in a certain way and become a message [30]. When all the data and narratives are evaluated, the conclusion that could be reached is that AI actually is a myth and a mythmaking process. It is a very powerful and dangerous concept that can make people's lives easier, perhaps happier but can take their jobs over time or even replace them with AI units. In the unfolding and utilization process of infantilization concept, it is impossible for the audience to comprehend that they are in a state of infantilization, they rather care how much more childhood dreams come true.

### References

- [1] Becker, A. (2019). Artificial intelligence in medicine: What is it doing for us today?. *Health Policy and Technology*, 8(2), 198-205.
- [2] Başbuğ, Bengü (2018). When Brand Communication Becomes Childish. *Infantilization in 21st Century Advertising*, Munich, GRIN Verlag, <https://www.grin.com/document/465677>
- [3] Dorfman, A. (1987:177). The infantilizing of culture. In Lazere, D. (Ed.), *American Media and Mass Culture: Left Perspectives* (pp. 145-157). Berkeley, CA: University of California.
- [4] Danesi, Marcel (2003) *Forever Young: The 'Teen-Aging' of Modern Culture*. Toronto: Toronto University Press.
- [5] Barber, B. R. (2008). *Consumed: How markets corrupt children, infantilize adults, and swallow citizens whole*. WW Norton & Company.
- [6] Ansen, David (1986). "Tall Tale: Lord of the Mosquitoes." (Mosquito Coast) *Newsweek* 106 (Dec 1).
- [7] Bora, R. (1998). From gold to green: shiny new currencies of latin american fetishism. *Dispositio*, 23(50), 37-58.
- [8] Wieseltier, L. (1994) 'Close Encounters of the Nazi Kind', *New Republic*, 210(4), 42-42.

- [9] Dowd, M. (1997). Leave It To Hollywood, *The New York Times*, Opinion, Liberties, August 16, 1997. <https://www.nytimes.com/1997/08/16/opinion/leave-it-to-hollywood.html>
- [10] Başbuğ, Bengü (2018). When Brand Communication Becomes Childish. *Infantilization in 21st Century Advertising*, Munich, GRIN Verlag, <https://www.grin.com/document/465677>
- [11] Safire, W. (2000). " Besotted With Potter. *Wall Street Journal*, 7, 11-2000.
- [12] <https://allyjgardner.wordpress.com/2011/05/23/criticisms-grr/>
- [13] Knapp, Krystal (June 3, 2019), George Will to Princeton graduates: The antidote to the overabundance of anger in America is praise, *Planet Princeton*, <https://planetprinceton.com/2019/06/03/george-will-to-princeton-graduates-the-antidote-to-the-overabundance-of-anger-in-america-is-praise/>
- [14] Grebey, J. (Jul 15, 2016). Comic Books are selling better than they have in 20 years — here's why they're so popular. *Insider*. <https://www.insider.com/comic-books-are-popular-again-heres-why-2016-7>
- [15] Aslantürk, Gülten (2021) Yaşlanma Sürecinin Biyopolitikası Alternatif Medya ve Ana Akım Medyada Yaşlanma Temsilleri, *Nobel*
- [16] Ginsberg, S. (2011). An American Reflection: Steven Spielberg, The Jewish Holocaust and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. *미국학*, 34.
- [17] Urquhart, Conal (December 19, 2005). "Sharon's aide helps Spielberg promote controversial film". *The Guardian*. London. Retrieved May 13, 2010.
- [18] Vandemeulebroucke, T., Dierckx de Casterlé, B., & Gastmans, C. (2018). The use of care robots in aged care: A systematic review of argument-based ethics literature. *Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics Supplement*, 74, 15–25.
- [19] Ulukan, G. (March 18, 2019) Yapay Zeka Teknolojisini Konu Edinen 10 Film, *Webrazzi*, <https://webrazzi.com/2019/03/18/yapay-zeka-teknolojisini-konu-edinen-10-film/>
- [20] Zengin, F. (2020) Akıllı Makine Çağı Sinemasına Giriş: Sinema Sanatında Yapay Zekâ Teknolojilerinin Kullanımı. *İletişim Çalışmaları Dergisi*, 6(2), 151-177.
- [21] Yılmaz, M., & Turan, N. S. (2018). Zekâ Yapay Ama Aşk Doğal: Bilim Kurgu Sinemasında Yapay Zekâ-İnsan Aşkının Temsili. *Akdeniz Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi Dergisi*, (30), 281-300.
- [22] Grabe, W., & Stoller, F. L. (1997). Content-based instruction: Research foundations. *The content-based classroom: Perspectives on integrating language and content*, 5-21.
- [23] Bell, D. (1973) *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*, New York, Basic Books
- [24] Anders, Günther (2018) *İnsanın Eskimişliği*, İstanbul, İthaki
- [25] Bernardini, J. (2014). The infantilization of the postmodern adult and the figure of kidult. *Postmodern Openings*, 5(2), 39-55.
- [26] Postman, N. (1985). The disappearance of childhood. *Childhood Education*, 61(4), 286-293.
- [27] Harding, A. (2015). Beyond (dis) embodiment: Bernard Stiegler, Digital-Being & the Exteriorisation of Desire.
- [28] Goffman, E. (1959) *The Presentation Of Self In Everyday Life*. London: Penguin.
- [29] Hayward, Keith (2012) 'Pantomime Justice: A Cultural Criminological Analysis of "Life Stage Dissolution"', *Crime Media Culture* 8(2): 213–29.
- [30] Lévi-Strauss, C. (1967). The story of Asdiwal. *The structural study of myth and totemism*, 4, 1-47.