

Chatbots, sex robots and impact on society (Part 2)

By  Juanita Pienaar

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[Heavy Chef](#) invited Heidi Patmore, a tech marketing consultant to speak at one of their events on Tuesday, 28 August. Patmore who specialises in tech that is changing consumer behaviour, like cryptocurrency, artificial intelligence, self-driving cars, drones and fintech, spoke about an incendiary topic: sextech, and how it's irrevocably impacting our lives.



The audience at the Heavy Chef Sextech event of which the first part was presented by Heidi Patmore. Image: Heavy Chef.

This a continuation of [#Sextech: Smart condoms, KinkBNB and VR porn \(Part 1\)](#). If you haven't read Part 1, click below, and continue reading...



[#Sextech: Smart condoms, KinkBNB and VR porn \(Part 1\)](#)

Juanita Pienaar 5 Sep 2018



In China, there is a chatbot called Xiaolce, that is currently chatting with 50 million Chinese people each day. Its basic use is for companionship. So they go online or on the app and they speak to Xiaolce about their feelings or about their day. She is so intelligent, in terms of artificial intelligence, that she can continue to have a conversation, up to 23 times, back and forth.

The norm for other chatbots is quite low, but for Xiaolce it's about 10x more. Her personality is like a sassy 17-year-old and she's not just giving random boring responses, she actually personalises and customises based on what she has deduced about you. She is also constantly monitoring all the 50 million people's conversations.

She is learning all the time what people are interested in and how to react to people and it's basically substituting a companion with a chatbot. There is also a 33-day breakup recovery course, which in fact, many people use, where you can talk to her for 33 days to get over a breakup.

"The next iteration of sextech which I think is going to be the most ground-breaking is the introduction of sex robots," says Patmore.

The introduction of sex robots

A documentary that aired in the UK, earlier this year, features a guy called James, who is currently a customer of ReallDoll, a company based in the US which manufactures sex robots.

James lives with his wife, and he owns 4 sex dolls, that he keeps at home. Every morning he gets up, he dresses his sex dolls, he applies make-up on his dolls and often takes them to the library. For James, it's not about sex, it's more of a hobby

and companionship.

Patmore believes this will become more prolific in the future. With the introduction of robotics and artificial intelligence, those real dolls are now going to become even more interesting. Consumers of these robots/dolls are even able to customise their robots. Robosexual is the term now given to people who happen to be in a relationship with these robots. This is something, that in the future, we have to start not judging people for the preference of having a relationship or dating a robot.

“ Ms. [@HeidiPatmore](#) is talking about technology and sex tonight on the [#Heavychef](#) stage. So far Heidi has fired off a barrage of fascinating factoids about sex products that are innovating technology. Already one of the most interesting talks we've seen on our stage. [pic.twitter.com/wXpbYsQbjj](#)— Heavy Chef (@heavychef) [August 21, 2018](#) ”

ReallDoll reportedly sells 600 dolls a year, so this isn't something that is just a niche, says Patmore. This is going to get a lot bigger. She says what's quite interesting about the way they are market sex dolls and sex robots is that they market it as, "The doll that can do your dishes and laugh at your jokes." So, Patmore points out that it makes us think, what are they trying to say? Who are they trying to replace?

She then introduced us to sex robots, Harmony and Silicon Samantha. Silicon Samantha was created by a husband and wife team in Spain who sense the human touch and then she can switch on arouse mode. They have gone so far as to integrate Samantha with other artificial intelligence like Google Home and Siri.

The impact of sextech on society

Patmore says it's important to look at how these inventions and technologies will impact society. There is something called the global loneliness epidemic, which is currently happening all around the world, where people have become too attached to their technology that they are losing the ability to make real human interactions.



Why is loneliness becoming an epidemic?

Raleen Bagg 17 Apr 2018



"They did a survey in Japan that found out that 43% of 18-34 years olds were virgins and 64% of those were not in any sort of romantic relationship. Which, if you think about it, that's your main procreation population and you've got almost half of them, at 34, virgins," states Patmore.

When studies were conducted to determine people's attitudes towards sex robots, they asked men and women if they thought it was okay to sleep with a sex robot. Two-thirds of men indicated that they thought it was fine to sleep with a sex robot, while two-thirds of female respondents said they were not okay with the idea.

But when they asked certain things like, Do you think that having sex with a sex robot was cheating? There was a lot of variation in the answers that they received. Some people said no it's not cheating and in cases where someone is disabled or not able to have a normal relationship, most people approved of that, to have a robot as a substitute.

"There are also some other ethical considerations that come up. Since this is very much marketed as the doll you can do anything to, there are no boundaries around consent, it's basically there to act out any fantasy that you can think of. And what was quite disturbing is that when I went into one of the doll sites, about 50% of the dolls looked like they were under 18. Some of them looked like they were under 12," Patmore shared with us.

She said that this raises questions like if you were to give a paedophile a sex robot would that encourage paedophilia or does that save a real person from a predator. These are some things that need to be considered.

There is a [campaign](#) in the US that is against sex robots in society. They believe it's completely going to destroy our ability to have relationships and connect with each other and they adamantly against it.

“ *Why We Must Ban Sex Robots – debate at Web Summit, 2017* <https://t.co/KJunojg7zp> <pic.twitter.com/9fZbfKklDX>—
NoSexRobots (@RobotCampaign) [November 17, 2017](#) ”

In terms of how long will it take until you visit someone's house and they introduce you to their sex robot, Patmore says, she's not sure, but it would be very interesting to see how this all plays out.

And so are we. For more on future Heavy Chef events, visit their [website](#), and follow them on the following social media platforms: [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Youtube](#). For more from Heidi Patmore, follow her on [Twitter](#).

ABOUT JUANITA PIENAAR

Juanita is the editor of the marketing & media portal on the Bizcommunity website. She is also a contributing writer.

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