



Deadbots

Description

What are deadbots?

- Deadbots also known as thanabots or ghostbots or greifbots are AI chatbots designed to mimic the behaviour and personality traits of dead people. These chatbots are created using their digital interactions such as video or voice recordings, text messages, social media posts etc.

Why?

- When loved ones of a deceased person wish to communicate with them to cope with grief, deadbots offer a solution. Several companies now provide services to create AI chatbots that mimic the behavior of the deceased, forming a market known as the 'Digital Afterlife Industry'.
- Some people approach companies to create AI chatbots using their data. This way, they can leave a digital version of themselves for their children in case they pass away.

Ethical concerns:

- Some people believe that if a deceased person did not consent to having their digital version used, creating an AI chatbot of them violates their right to dignity and privacy. They argue that using someone's digital data without permission disrespects their memory and personal boundaries.
- Even if a deceased person consents to creating their digital version, there is a risk that it could be used in ways they did not intend.
- The deadbots may interfere with the natural process of mourning the death and may cause psychological distress to the loved ones.
- What if after the expiry of a paid plan or free trial, companies start advertising products to them using the digital avatar of their deceased loved ones, potentially amounting to manipulation?

- Imagine if the deadbots were created by their deceased loved ones while they were alive. Now, these deadbots may send messages to their loved ones, even when they don't want them to, causing them difficulty in moving on and finding peace.
- If the deadbot caused psychological harm to anyone, who will take the responsibility?

Way Forward:

- As the 'Digital afterlife industry' is growing, it is essential to implement regulations and safety standards. It is important to get consent from the person whose digital version will be saved and also from their loved ones, who will interact with the bot. It is also important to create a procedure to safely 'retire' the deadbots.

Conclusion:

Deadbots are AI chatbots designed to mimic the behaviour and personality traits of dead people. They help in preserving the digital versions of dead people, so that their loved ones can communicate with them. Everyone copes with loss differently. So, deadbots can help some people to cope with grief. But it may intensify the pain for others. Hence it is important to get consent from the person whose digital version will be saved and also from their loved ones, who will interact with the bot.

Your Turn...

What are your thoughts on deadbots? Express your point of view through the comment section below. Subscribe to our blog to read answers to the trending GD topics.

References:

- [Digitally immortalising departed loved ones comes with ethical concerns: Study calls for cautious design of AI 'deadbots'](#)
 - [Digital Hauntings: Are Deadbots Helpful or Harmful?](#)
 - ['Deadbots' can speak for you after your death. Is that ethical?](#)
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