Everyone will readily agree that it is of the highest importance to know whether we are not duped by morality.

Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*
In the standard pro-censorship position, it is claimed that such games are immoral, that they hinder moral development, that they cause immoral or antisocial behavior in the real world, and that under these circumstances the state has the right to impose censorship.

Philip Brey, 1999,
In the standard anti-censorship position, the libertarian viewpoint is defended that since immoral acts in a virtual environment do not cause harm to others, the decision to engage in such behavior is private, and the morality of these games or the right of individuals to use them should be decided by private citizens individually and not by the state or other acting body. It is often added that there is no evidence that such games would cause individuals to act immorally in the real world, and it is sometimes claimed that such games may even be beneficial by allowing individuals to release pent-up frustrations and act out fantasies or desires that they might otherwise act out in the real world.

Philip Brey, 1999, p. 8
Dualism lies at the heart of life. It should not then be surprising that given the chance to build the ultimate machine, we based it on zeros and ones.

Peter Lurie, 2004,
Methods are generally understood as roads (from *hodos*: 'way,' 'road') to knowledge. In the sciences, as well as in the philosophies that scientific thinking patronizes, method is an instrument for representing a given field, and it is applied to the field from the outside.

Rodolphe Gasché, 1986, p. 121
“The paradox of a book”

One of the ironies of our culture’s fascination with virtual technologies is its fondness for consuming books and articles that proclaim the death of print culture—or its disappearance into the matrix.

Robert Markley, 1996, p. 1
To write about media is to ask the question what gives writing the right to speak for other media.

Adilkno, 1998, p. 1
Significant differences seem to prevail among social groups within nations and among nations in the access to and utilization of new ICTs. This is generally understood as the 'digital divide' and the term has quickly become so popular as to serve as a shorthand for any disparity associated with digital networks.

Sinikka Sassi, 2005, p. 685.
Information haves
Information have-nots
Chapter Four

VRx: Media Technology, Drugs, and Codependency

Drugs and media are equal partners —Addams

As Dr. Bloomfield describes it, the question is whether the essential characteristics of virtual reality as a reality in which the simulations and disappointments of the actual world do not exist will inevitably lead to a diminishing desire to live in the actual world. Is it possible that using the abstractions of being and allowing oneself to be one with a virtual or commercial environment, one finds it easier to escape into a reality where these practicalities do not apply? This concern, despite the terms being used by VentureTek, is not a new one. And inevitably, this new form of virtual reality in the form of video games and other entertainment vehicles of the future, is bound to raise ethical questions about the nature of reality. The question of whether the line between artificial and natural worlds is becoming blurred is one that needs to be addressed.

According to Computerworld's findings, VRx is not just for fun and games, but represents a real alternative and challenge to what we've been called reality.
Socrates: “You see, I am fond of learning. Now the country places and the trees won't teach me anything, and the people in the city do. But you seem to have found a drug [φάρμακον] to bring me out. For as people lead hungry animals by shaking in front of them a branch of leaves or some fruit, just so, I think, you, by holding before me discourse in books, will lead me all over Attica and wherever else you please." (230d)
Chapter Five

The Virtual Dialectic

Rethinking The Matrix and its Significance

Awareness was first described in relation to human interactions with artificial intelligence. In the context of artificial intelligence, the term "virtual" refers to the simulated environment created by computers. This simulated environment, or "virtual world," is distinct from the real world. The distinction is not always clear-cut, and the line between the virtual and the real is often blurred. The Matrix, a film that explores these concepts, presents a scenario where human consciousness is trapped within a simulated reality. This blurring of the line between the virtual and the real raises questions about the nature of reality and the role of technology in shaping human experience.

In considering this matter, I do not mean to explore the familiar rubrics and arguments that have been published on this particular subject. Instead, I want to discuss the Matrix, a film that raises questions about the nature of reality and the role of technology in shaping human experience. The Matrix presents a scenario where human consciousness is trapped within a simulated reality, and the line between the virtual and the real is often blurred. This blurring of the line between the virtual and the real raises questions about the nature of reality and the role of technology in shaping human experience.

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There is something inherently stupid and naïve in taking the *philosophical* underpinnings of the *Matrix* trilogy seriously and discussing its implications. The Wachowski brothers are obviously *not* philosophers. They are just two guys who superficially flirt with and exploit in a confused way some postmodern and New Age notions.

Slavoj Žižek, 2005, p. 198
What is interesting is to read the Matrix movies not as containing a consistent philosophical discourse, but as rendering, in their very inconsistencies, the antagonisms of our ideological and social predicament.

Slavoj Žižek, 2005, p. 199
Chapter Six

The Machine Question

Ethics, Alterity, and Technology

In addition, we might ask about those ethical questions that arise in the context of “benga,” that is, a question that is not even

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In the Machine trilogy, as in many contemporary science fiction narratives, the machine is situated outside of and in opposition to what is defined as properly and uniquely human. The question of the Machine’s consciousness that has emerged from our current and future understandings of artificial intelligence and superintelligence. The following, therefore, raises the question of ethics. Both the example and the extent of the controversy are important here. It is not merely the call for our participation in our responsibility for others. Moreover, it is the call for a self-reflective and self-critical approach, as well as the process of the mutual suffering of others. It raises the question that is not even conceivable in the context of the question about the future and the question about the future of exclusion and exclusion of others. It raises the question that is not even conceivable in the context of the question about the future and the question about the future of exclusion and exclusion of others.
The cartoon makes fun of the anonymity of network communications by showing a dog online, presumably fooling some credulous humans about its true identity.

Richard Holeton, 1998, p. 111
Would an ethics be sufficient, as Levinas maintains, to remind the subject of its being-subject, its being-guest, host or hostage, that is to say its being-subjected-to-the-other, to the Wholly Other or to every single other? I don't think so. It takes more than that to break with the Cartesian tradition of the animal-machine that exists without language and without the ability to respond.

Jacques Derrida, 2003, p. 121
1. Binary opposition is not optional

2. Binary opposition is not neutral
1. Binary opposition is not optional
2. Binary opposition is not neutral
3. Resistance is Futile
1. Binary opposition is not optional
2. Binary opposition is not neutral
3. Resistance is Futile
4. There is no finality