Facial Recognition Technology

I’ve been hearing more and more about facial recognition technology and here’s what I’ve learned.

Facial recognition is a biometric technology using artificial intelligence to identify people. Biometrics is the measurement and analysis of a person’s unique physical and behavioral characteristics. Using a type of AI called machine learning, computers analyze large data sets in the form of photos and videos looking for patterns and learn to recognize facial features. The computer then compares new images to stored images in its databases to identify a face.

The technology is most accurate at identifying white, male faces since the algorithms have been trained on mainly white male visual data sets and is least accurate at identifying people of color and women.

Pro and cons of the technology center around its use to improve security and safety versus the threat to an individual’s privacy.

Important points and facts to be aware of:

San Francisco became the first U.S. city to ban facial recognition by government agencies.

Microsoft and Google reported they have denied facial recognition services to law enforcement while Amazon has faced pushback from its employees and shareholders for selling the technology.

There are new facial recognition smart glasses available only to police which allows users wearing augmented reality glasses to scan faces in a crowd which are then compared to a million image database. Positive matches are sent to a display embedded in the lens of the glasses.

And the New York Times reported facial recognition is growing stronger thanks to your face. Using images from social networks, photo websites and cameras placed in public areas, there is a growing database of collected photos in the public domain available for anyone to download and use for training facial recognition software.

On a more hopeful note, a start up company is working on a tool to let you check whether your image is part of an openly shared database of faces. Somehow I think they maybe using AI to develop it.

Facial Recognition Technology Links

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/13/technology/databases-faces-facial-recognition-technology.html>

<https://www.theverge.com/2019/6/10/18659660/facial-recognition-smart-glasses-sunglasses-surveillance-vuzix-nntc-uae>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/bernardmarr/2019/08/19/facial-recognition-technology-here-are-the-important-pros-and-cons/#1918805214d1>

<https://www.stopspying.org/our-vision>

