

Time Work in the Age of AI: New Actors, Techniques, and Settings for Temporal Agency

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This paper investigates how generative AI is shaping the everyday experience of time. Using the sociological concept of time work as an analytical lens, we analyze Reddit user discourse to understand how this technology is integrated into daily temporal practices. Our analysis shows that while users employ AI for established tasks like planning and task acceleration, they also engage in novel practices, such as delegating cognitive and emotional labor to AI companions and using AI as a partner in creative projects. Interpreting these findings, we argue for a conceptual extension of time work. We introduce three concepts to account for these emergent practices: the human-AI dyad as a new collaborative agent, emotional and cognitive time work as a technique for processing affective labor, and the co-creative workflow as a setting for sustaining creative momentum. This study contributes a sociologically grounded understanding of how human-AI collaboration facilitates a new, co-creative mode of temporal agency, reconfiguring the management and subjective experience of time.

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