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15 MINUTES INTO THE FUTURE

Forget Taking Snapshots, Let's Use High Tech Glasses to Read People

The medical applications sound great, but let's talk more about winning at poker.

By Kelly Faircloth 6/19 11:15am

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Snazzy, but slightly style-challenged. (Photo: Changizi.wordpress.com)

Googlers are swanning about all over the place wearing their Project Glass specs, [snapping pics](#) with the president of Turkey and [showing them off](#) to Charlie Rose. And sure, it's a pretty cool prototype. But can it help the search behemoth's more awkward employees *make sense of human emotions*? Didn't think so, Mr. Brin.

In a [blog post yesterday](#) (h/t [Technology Review](#)), Mark Changizi, director of human cognition at research outfit 2AI Labs, announced that the

company has just received its first shipment of [o2Amps](#), described as "patented eyewear that amplifies one's view of the emotions and health visible in the color and pallor of other people's skin."

And they didn't even have to raise money on Kickstarter.

Essentially, the glasses commercialize Dr. Changizi's research suggesting that, "color vision evolved to sense oxygenation modulations in the hemoglobin under the skin." In short, we can see in color because it helps us (or rather, it helped some predecessor primate species) read others. Blushes would be the most obvious example, but a tool like these 2AI Labs might help us pick up even subtler signals.

So it lacks the social appeal of Google Glasses, which it looks like will allow you to take and share pictures (finally, a compelling G+ use case), but it's got interesting potential for, let's say, emergency room staffers and TSA security personnel. Dr. Changizi (who, before you boast about your busy schedule, is also a writer, researcher, and Discovery Channel host) outlines three different technologies developed specifically for medical use, including a vein finder, a "trauma detector," and a "general chemical enhancer," which incorporates both of the former.

But he rattles off other could-be applications, including "sports, poker, and dating." Poker we can see, but dating? Haven't you ever heard the old adage that men don't make passes at girls

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who wear futuristic emotion-reading glasses?

At any rate, provided the science is as solid as Dr. Changizi claims, the biggest problem we see with the glasses is that they look like something Bono would wear. Do they come with a squashed straw cowboy hat, as well?

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