The Rise of AI under the Demise of Intelligence

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THE DECLINING IQ OF ARTIFICIAL IGNORANCE

When the initial boom of what targeted global marketing **coined as AI** (Artificial Intelligence), Large Language Models (LLMs) came to the forefront of global news. The initial reaction wasn't as dismissive as it may be today by the general public, nor were there active hypotheses that AI would cause a behavioral and cognitive decline. The reason was simple: Who wouldn't want to fully automate mundane tasks, repetitive daily chores without significant meaning that take up space, time and thinking power in the day to day grind? Key words being here the adjective "mundane" and the verb "automate". Nowhere near what Black Mirror-esque societal horrors of AI psychosis and inability of critical thought we are experiencing today.

I was one of the true believers that the technological boom of the internet would be beneficial to society, as the only thing separating most sentient beings humans from true consciousness and critical thinking is the infinite and unobstructed access to free information. However aspirational this theory may be, the current societal relapse paints a different picture: AI is actively contributing to the erosion of critical thinking and lowering the cognitive process. And it is not just MIT's research, it's much more extensive than initially thought. Higher confidence in AI is correlated with less critical thinking. Dependence in AI is tied with cognitive substitutes rather than supplements. Even the legal world is experiencing the AI behavioral decline, with new emerging lawsuits against LLMs. Truth is, new and current versions of proclaimed AI are actively hallucinating, generating more errors instead of minimizing them. As LLMs are predictive in terms of their analysis and automated responses, and are being trained in a bottomless pit of raw data, not uncommonly taken unlawfully from unauthorized sources, one would guess hallucinations wouldn't be an issue. However, LLM's will always carry a tremendous risk of plain mistakes.

Semantics are not used here to enter inconclusive philosophical territory and derail the conversation. Semantics were always, and will remain, extremely important to understand new technologies and equally shared limitations on both the user base and the operator of the system. Tackling the basics

out of the way of this discussion, there is no true artificial intelligence in existence yet, and after extensive debating, scientists came up with a new terminology called Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) which potentially encompasses the concept of future AI consciousness. GenAI is still trained in large-batch databases, but claims to be creating innovative ideas and concepts such as artwork, imagery and large volumes of text from novels to disingenuous research papers.

A recent TU-Delft study evaluated 53 articles with research citations and discovered that at least 48 of those were GenAI generated. We have reached, as a society, a proliferating era of a complex cyber infection, that feeds off natural intelligence and muddles human perception so much so that areas of long-known trust can now be disassembled with one swift cross reference. How much information consumed daily can be truly attributed to AI hallucinations? Worse still, true human intelligence, especially in written form, is being confused with AI generated texts, all based on the unique use of the em dash and a profound lack of grammar mistakes in the articles and texts we consume. Nowadays showing competence in grammar, syntax and even in the articulation of complex ideas in a simplified form, is a measure of AI and not a sign of acquired skill and intelligence.

In fear of sounding like a new age Luddite, the Reverse Flynn Effect cannot be ignored. Attention spans are lowering rapidly in both children and adults, all the while brains need "friction" to get trained, and it seems that these two metrics are clashing in opposite directions. In a counter-argument, we also can't ignore the benefits of using AI for medical analyses and new drug development, but trusting AI to such an extent carries its own cognitive and bias risks. Truth is, AI is great for **one** thing: Amplifying the most dominant and self-repeating concepts, while completely ignoring nuance. AI is being trained in pre-existing bodies of information, and these bodies will always carry their own biases and raw-data risks. Now imagine multiplying these risks to infinity and getting some sort of AI-slop in the form of a school essay with a side of brain-rot as a result. Worse than this infinite repetition, the last fort standing (i.e education) is also quickly faltering. Reliance in LLM's isn't only affecting students- teachers and professors are also known to cognitively offload their tasks in generative AI.

The price paid in global environmental and energy impacts is horrendously imbalanced for generating highschool-level essays and content creation for social media and reality TV.

FOLLOW THE MONEY

While investigating correlating data for this article, reality became bleak in every step; AI prompts were seemingly appearing out of thin air. Science Direct for example, a reputable platform and online database for scientific articles and books, shows a pop-up notification promoting their creatively named "ScienceDirect AI", which the user must manually remove in order to continue reading. Conveniently, this innovation is a **paid feature** and claims to carry more research integrity and AI transparency than other generative LLMs. Aside from their model validity and originality claims, what we are now referring as the over-marketed term "AI" is a billion dollar industry with seemingly endless funding. Concerns however peak, much higher than our marketing terminology disagreements, when one notices how this industry is already justifying their AI-spending habits as either a "long term payoff" or by pretending not to care about monetary returns in investments, while willfully ignoring the dark side of data: 95% of organizations are getting zero return.

Entities and larger enterprises are applying the fundamentals of AI in the wrong sectors of their operations. Instead of using AI's capabilities as originally intended (eg. a closed-circuit power source of back-office data analysis) companies opt to implement LLMs into their sales, content creating and marketing fields. From the 2025 MIT report, it is evident that corporations are not able to successfully and fully implement something as fast-changing and power-needing as AI. No counter-argument can be made about these claims: AI advancements both require tremendous amounts of power and constant re-evaluation in effectiveness, by taking into consideration timely training. For example, whatever claims could be made about refined and usable AI prompts in 2024 are now considered obsolete. Remember job postings like "Prompt Engineer" sounding like a gimmick? It actually was.

Much of the importance of owning and storing information can also be currently considered burdensome in terms of a usable AI function. Coined as the "dark data problem", the issue refers to digital information that is never used or processed but religiously maintained, reportedly reaching a volume of up to 90% of all stored data. Imagine outdated emails, old reports and drafts backed up by companies due to regulatory requirements for record keeping, fear of future implications, or old-fashioned ignorance. AI is also in need of a lot of RAM memory, leading into a never seen before RAM shortage, words we never expected to ever hear in our era of information.

While the changes in AI technological advancements are fast and profound, the EU's access to the one most necessary ammunition is limited. Energy.

GREEN ENERGY AND THE AI COLD WAR ERA

Access to power has never been more important for the Old Continent. EU's policies on energy consumption and a promise to reduce emissions began as unfathomably strict and geo-economically risky. While these policies were originally implemented for a target set as "net zero" by 2050, we are already seeing discussion on some key-loopholes and misplaced AI data center dreams. It is of no surprise that Europe will continue to lower the bar on sustainability requirements for both smaller and larger entities to comply with global climate goals. How else will the AI power-hungry data centers be approved to operate from within the EU borders?

These softening changes are not unwelcome in the larger picture, and they all lead to a commonly used phrase by Gen Z: F(ear) O(f) M(issing) O(ut). Aside from the green energy plans, if EU regulations remain idle, Europe could be held hostage in the future by forfeiting the necessary data centers in countries like Saudi Arabia, which are not yet crippled by the strict European energy policies. EU is already over-reliant on Chinese manufacturing, such as Chinese microchips that contribute to the ultimate race of "AI power", a race that now includes global key entities of high value technological monopolies, like the Dutch ASML lithography tech, Taiwan's TSCM, and China's own SMIC, all playing with or against the US definitive plan of "achieving global AI dominance".

The similarity to the recent global history of 1947 is uncanny: We are deep in the process of an AI cold war. While the EU is trying to maintain a heavy hand in this fast-paced sovereign race, achieving energy sovereignty seems currently improbable. Even worse, building a steady semiconductor private sector by overcoming bureaucracy and regulatory setbacks seems impossible.

An ambitious predictive model named AI2027 presents a dismal outcome. Taking into account that all powerful technological advancements always trickle to military operations and intelligence, what is there to stop the return of a shiny and new but slightly different proxy war?

INTELLIGENCE IN A WORLD OF MISALIGNMENT

Invasive technologies have always been in the forefront of politics and targeted civil manipulation, much like the well-known examples of WWII propaganda. However, the security and deep intelligence risks have never been higher. Historical manipulation and narrative-driven misinformation used to target larger audiences and aim for a favorable societal perception to avoid unrest and drive obedience, unlike live-feed information in the form of spoon-fed conclusions. It is almost impossible to counteract informational super speed bound to reach a designated target via any means possible, including unauthorized access to personal devices. Researchers have specific terminology to address these issues such as "deep fakes" and "disinformation" but humans will always be the weakest link disseminating propaganda. And while humans are the main instigators, creating unmeasurable amounts of AI online content and feeding it directly to specific target groups via algorithmic manipulation certainly doesn't help.

Modern warfare is AI, and AI is both under tremendous scrutiny and simultaneously being rapidly forced down major departments throats. Herculean efforts are in place to push for AI implementation in practical fields, such as the example of the innovative EagleEye, an Anduril helmet designed to enhance the wearers perception and live-feed critical information to multiple assets at the same time, by being connected to one decentralized mesh network. While the benefits of such a sci-fi technological wonder do not evade me, it seems appropriate to cross-reference its security viability through previous examples of their own applications failing. Cyber security appears to be a buzz word often forgotten in such ambitious efforts, but we are now looking at the possibility of an army counting thousands of soldiers on the battlefield receiving live orders from an unauthorized source and acting on them thinking they are guided by their own commanders. EagleEye has not yet been fully implemented as it is still being tested, however AI implications with their extensive hallucinations and ease of convincing them to break previous orders, such as spilling sensitive data, does not seem as an optimal approach we are ready to embrace. Be that as it may, how wise is it to allow Meta's hands to run through military weaponry and even partner throughout their development?

Neither military nor OSINT technologies are safe from the newfound AI craze. Vibe coding has been gaining traction, with disappointing results, all the while AI implementations fail enterprises, individuals and even investigators. Nico Dekens, one of the most prominent OSINT figures, also known as the "Dutch Osint Guy" also points to a harsh truth- investigators who over trust AI responses will undoubtedly end up being misled. It could be an image, text or audio being fed to tools like Gemini or Claude or ChatGPT, all showing symptoms of confirmation bias and misinformation. It all starts with a nudge and ends up in blind trust, the opposite of what intelligence officers are required to maintain in order to provide timely, and most importantly verified, information. There is a notable shift in acquired skills and even craftsmanship, leading up to a lack of understanding of the dangers of accepting an AI generated answer to a key question that will lead the whole investigation to a wild goose chase. Using AI for cyber defense or counter-attacks is not unheard of, however the risks and various privacy implications are yet to be fully determined and

mitigated. Where there is potential for better, faster and most accurate intelligence, there are countless risks a human eye will need to evaluate before treading further into murky waters.

As much as cyber security experts and intelligence officers openly discuss the known and unknown issues of AI, maybe even contest its use altogether, we have entered the era of no return. There is no easy way to implement such advanced technologies without the dangers of overstimulating societies, minimizing cognitive functions and opening a world of security backdoors, yet the race for AI is here and its best to be weary and prepared than in denial and unaware of its potential. We are left to navigate unknown maps, as many generations before us, waiting for a fictional bubble to crash and expecting the cognizant remainders to pick the leftover pieces back up; a task only a few can be counted on for.