AI

Mindpruner ~ making new connections

It was tempting for me to just prompt ChatGPT or one of its equivalents for this blog post. But I didn't, in the hope that I can continue exercising creativity and adhering to a work that is, at least in part, original. When humans truly create something, they are increasing their likelihood of feeling authentic and increasing a perceived competency towards building upon a skill. Writing is a skill that takes repetition and I believe that the maxim "use it or lose it" applies. I can even see that in my own writing; I have taken several months off posting anything with the excuse being "no time," which is really a cover for "I feel a little lazy; it's easier to push this off / I'll resort to other practices that are more directly related to my day-to-day work tasks." Which is true in part — my current, clinical responsibilities don't require any use of AI (as a tool or agent). When will the industry that I've grown so fond of experience these changes? How will it impact my role(s) and the experiences of my clients? These are questions that I'm sure many of us are facing.
I pride myself in being someone who takes in as much data, from as many sources as possible, before arriving at any strong opinions. And, even then, I try to always remain open to new information that could lead to a shift in my perspective. I invite anyone who reads this article to write me with any countering, more hopeful responses to recent information that has come to my attention.

In Podcaster Chris Williamson's interview with AI researcher Eliezer Yudkowsky, Yudowsky warns us of the dangers that could come from AI

consequences). Another podcaster, Steven Bartlett, finds similar, concerning information in his interview with Roman Yampolskiy. Rather than try and summarize their conversations, I have put links to the episodes below this post.

While the potential consequences that these interviews reveal are anxiety-provoking, I recommend that everyone listen so that they can begin grappling with the ideas put forth. The listener will find that most of the AI trajectory and its potential consequences in years to come are outside of their control. However, there are both internal and external actions that one can take to contribute in a positive fashion. Actions falling into this category should act in accordance with promoting and improving the lives of humans — to continue offering them work, meaning and purpose.

Negativity bias reveals to us how we are much more impacted by "negative" information than positive — we are wired that way due to promote survival (those who quickly act on their threat detectors go on to promulgate their genes). So, I remain cognizant of this bias and how it impacts my day, especially as it relates to the unknown of superintelligence. I choose not to spend much of my time listening or reading to "worst case scenario" reports on this topic. I want to continue remaining as informed as I can within reason — my priorities lie in my family, friends, work and community. I spend as much of my time and energy towards aspects of my priorities that I interface with everyday. What time I have left over, I try to learn more — AI and its evolution has continued to bombard my podcast and social media feeds, leaving it tough to ignore. But I wouldn't want to ignore (as much as ignorance can be bliss).

I feel as though, since I have exposed myself to what some of the top researchers in the field are espousing, that I have a duty (to my loved ones and community) to present a Call to Action so to speak. It all starts with awareness. Sharing videos, as well as relevant articles and posts across media platforms, will help alert the masses of the peril that could await us. It is not too late, but if we don't all come together to advocate for more safety and regulations, we could be running into some bleak outcomes. I believe that it's good to have a healthy sense of fear around AI and its future so that we can all mobilize together. Aside from honing awareness around this topic, there are several organizations that are putting together petitions (links below this post).

While most of us are not responsible for infusing morality and values into these advanced systems, we can at least spread our own values to people we interact with, and to anyone who may listen or read petitions. When I look back on my life, I want to be able to proudly state that I consistently took value-driven actions that served to promote dignity and fairness for human beings. As just one person, most of my efforts will be intangible to me. But that's okay. I will continue to lean into faith and hope for humanity and encourage everyone to do the same! Please feel free to write me at llovett@mindpruner.com if you'd like to further discuss.

Referenced AI Podcasts and Petitions:

Modern Wisdom #1011

Diary of a CEO: Roman Yampolskiy

AI safety

Pause AI - Take Action

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