

# WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH AI?

Feeling overwhelmed, confused, wary, or alarmed about the sudden prevalence of AI products in all of your tech platforms? You're not alone.

## WHAT EXACTLY IS AI?

- **"AI" is a marketing term and political project** that refers to a number of technologies new and old, including:
  - Pattern recognition algorithms that produce "new" text, videos, or images based on copies of existing, human-created materials.
  - Applications (apps) like chatbots, image generators, virtual assistants.
- **These technologies are not actually intelligent:** the AI project is about increasing the value of these technologies by marketing them as having human qualities, while cutting costs to devalue real human labor & skill.
- Human interaction is replaced by a fantasy one-stop answer shop.

## WHY IS AI SEEMINGLY EVERYWHERE?

- We are currently in a well-funded AI hype cycle. AI companies have become increasingly valuable because investors are gambling on AI.
- AI companies are trying to make a return on these high investments, so AI apps are now popping up in all kinds of tech platforms in order to increase adoption.
- Returns on investment for AI apps are zero or negative, and skepticism about these technologies is growing among the general populace.

## DOES AI KNOW THINGS?

- **AI apps are often wrong.** Some have disclaimers that say that their answers cannot be verified (you may have heard of "hallucinations") and therefore should not be trusted.
- AI apps cannot evaluate information on their own. Responses are based on statistical relationships of words and phrases rather than knowledge.
- AI apps reflect the bias of the material they are trained on and the motives and values of the companies creating the technology.
- AI is a main driver of the ongoing crisis of mis- and disinformation.
- Identifying and verifying AI-generated content is difficult and time consuming.



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## WHAT ARE THE COSTS OF AI?

- **Energy and raw materials:** The production of AI apps increase electronic waste, carbon emissions, and extraction of metals and minerals—already inflating computer and energy prices for the general public.
  - Big Tech is not transparent about levels of use, making exact climate impacts hard to measure.
- **Local energy and water infrastructure:** AI technologies require the construction and upkeep of large data centers, straining these systems.
- **Mental health:** Use of AI chatbots contributes to mental health crises, like psychosis and suicidality, and is shown to have negative impacts on curiosity and creativity.
- **Labor:** AI tools aren't self-powered. Human workers do the draining work of "data labeling," often without job stability or adequate pay.

## IS AI COMING FOR MY JOB?

- AI can't do your job as well as you can, and management may use AI as an excuse to eliminate or downsize your job anyway.
- AI undermines our ability to learn, think, create sound arguments, and become experts in our own right, making us as workers less employable.
- Where jobs are not eliminated, bosses may make employees editors of AI outputs rather than allowing them to do the creative work themselves.
- AI data centers only employ a handful of permanent employees. Often the parent company brings them in from outside the local community.

## WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

This guide includes talking points, research, and actions:

<https://www.kairosfellows.org/fightdatacenters>

These talking points offer workers a way to practice resisting AI:

<https://www.workersdecide.tech>

This teaching resource helps students critically engage with AI:

<https://www.civicsoftechnology.org/curriculum>

Learn ways to resist AI through this practical plan for action:

<https://ainowinstitute.org/publications/research/ai-now-2025-landscape-report>



These resources and many more!



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