Generative AI…

… **plagiarises and steals your work**! LLMs can reproduce entire texts found in their training data, and this training data is often used without the consent of the author.

… **changes what your words mean**! Scientists *from Google* released a paper earlier this summer which found that getting a chatbot to revise your writing changes its meaning – even when you just ask it to check for grammatical errors.

… **makes difficult tasks more difficult**! Researchers at Berkeley recently found that just ten minutes of using a chatbot reduced users' persistence.

… **isolates you**! According to a psychological study, texting a random person is better for alleviating loneliness than talking with a chatbot.

… **takes away your skills**! When scientists integrated AI-based diagnostic tools into endoscopists' offices, the doctors themselves got worse at evaluating their patients' results.

… **doesn't make you more productive**! From coding to writing and beyond, researchers have found that, while an AI chatbot might make you *feel* productive, this feeling doesn't translate to actual output.

… **fosters dependency**! Like so many tech products, generative AI products are engineered to be addictive. This is a big part of why they're "sycophantic" – that is, prone to giving over-the-top compliments and sucking up to you.

… **can't tell the difference between true and false**! Generative AI uses probabilities to generate text that *looks like* it's right. But it's not actually "thinking through" your prompt – just spitting out words that are *likely* to come next. There is no way to force a generative AI chatbot to check its answer. But because it's good at generating correct-seeming text, it can be very hard to perceive when it's made a mistake.

… **is terrible for the environment**! While the companies behind data centers are refusing to release information about their resource usage, we know that running generative AI models requires computers literally hundreds of times more powerful than your laptop. And the harms of the massive new data centers on the places they're built are well-documented.

… **is used to wage illegal wars**! AI has played an integral role in Israel's genocide of Gaza. Anthropic's Claude products have also been linked to the US's bombing of a girls' school in Iran.

… **poses a health risk**! OpenAI is facing more than fifty wrongful death lawsuits related to its chatbots, which have been linked to suicides and school shootings. And while there's lots of talk about "guardrails," these are usually just invisible prompts slipped between your own prompts, making them just as susceptible to being ignored as any other part of the prompt.

What to do instead?

Take advantage of campus resources.

https://wellness.ncsu.edu/programs-and-services/ – NCSU Campus Wellness

https://dro.equalopportunity.ncsu.edu/ – NCSU Disability Resource Office

https://asc.dasa.ncsu.edu/tutoring-and-mentoring/appointment-tutoring/ – NCSU Academic Success Center (tutoring)

Reach out to a friend.

Join a club.

Get organized!