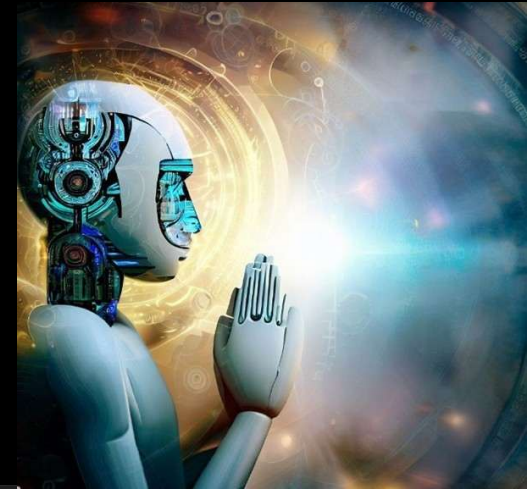


AI, Humanity and God

Graham Budd
Executive Director, The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion

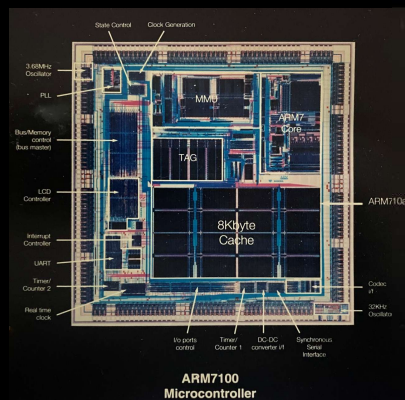


The
**Faraday
Institute**
for Science and Religion





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AI



The
**Faraday
Institute**
for Science and Religion

ANTHROPIC



Claude

“90% certain that AI will reach the level of a country-full of geniuses in one data centre in a few years”

More than 80% of Anthropic’s code now written by AI

Warning of misaligned superhuman AI and bioterrorism



Dario Amodei
CEO Anthropic

AI Chatbots



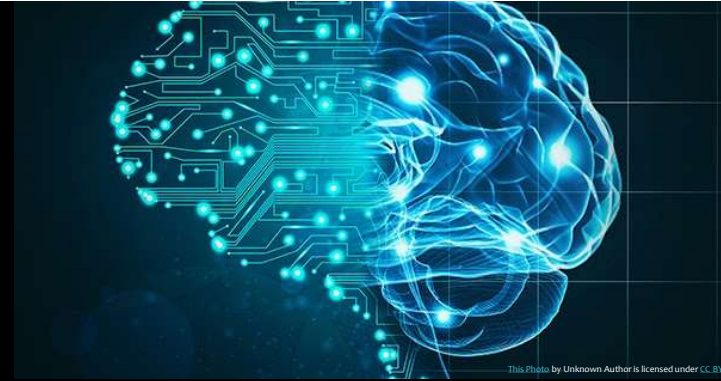
“The AI Backlash” — The Economist (27 June 2026)

Activism stopping data centre projects worth \$100Bn
40% of voters want AI banned from all industries
AI speakers heckled at graduation ceremonies

Agenda

1. The Nature of AI
2. Implications for AI and Humanity of Contrasting Worldviews
3. Christian Responses to AI

AI Definitions



Oxford English Dictionary: “The application of computer systems able to perform tasks or produce output normally requiring human intelligence, especially by applying **machine learning** techniques to large collections of data”

IBM: “Artificial intelligence (AI) is technology that enables computers and machines to **simulate** human learning, comprehension, problem solving, decision making, creativity and autonomy”.

The AI Journey

1943: Sci-Fi - Asimov's
"I Robot" and 3 laws
of robotics

Ancient
philosophical
ideas

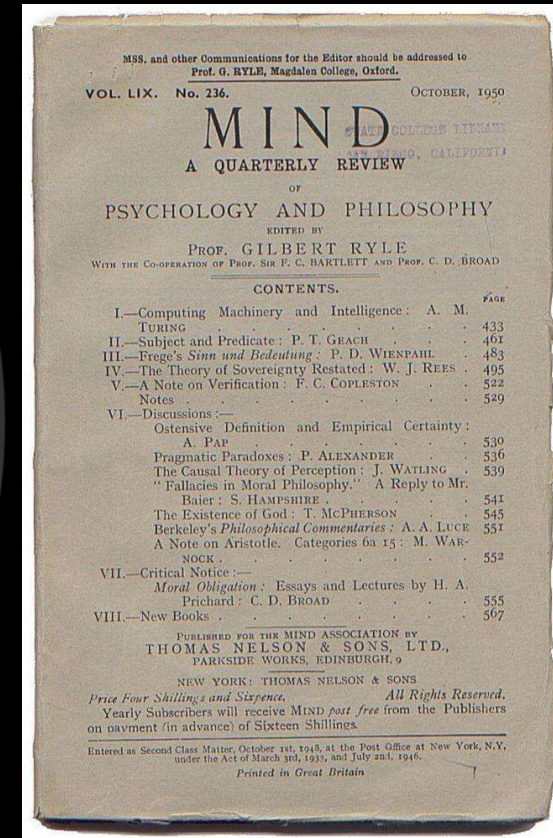
1940

Enlightenment &
emergence of
modern science

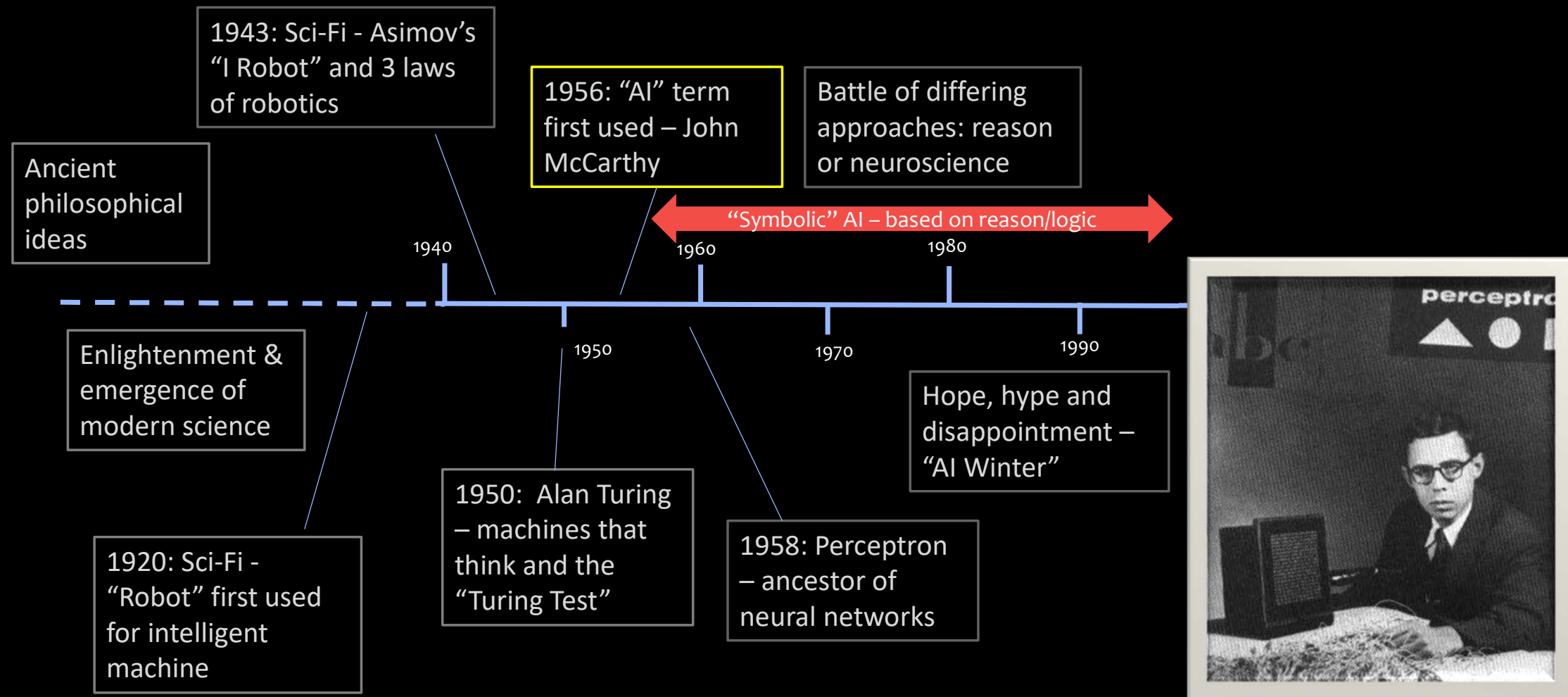
1950

1920: Sci-Fi -
"Robot" first used
for intelligent
machine

1950: Alan Turing
– machines that
think and the
"Turing Test"



The AI Journey



The AI Journey

1943: Sci-Fi - Asimov's
"I Robot" and 3 laws
of robotics

Ancient
philosophical
ideas

Enlightenment &
emergence of
modern science

1920: Sci-Fi -
"Robot" first used
for intelligent
machine

1950: Alan Turing
– machines that
think and the
"Turing Test"

1958: Perceptron
– ancestor of
neural networks

Hope, hype and
disappointment –
"AI Winter"

The data age: Machine
Learning finally comes
of age!



1940

1960

1980

2000

2020

1950

1970

1990

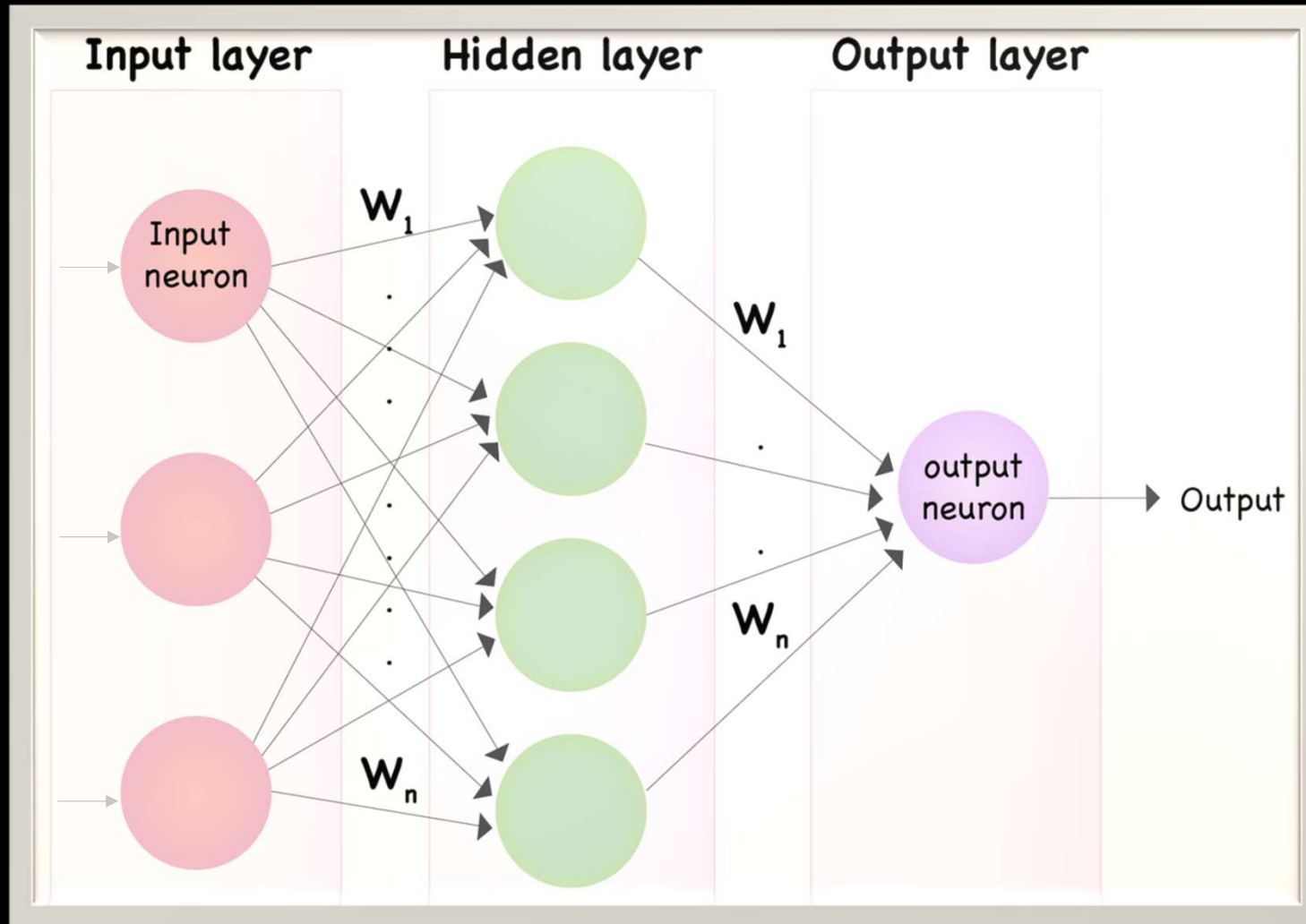
2010

"Symbolic" AI – based on reason/logic

Neural Network



INPUT
DATA

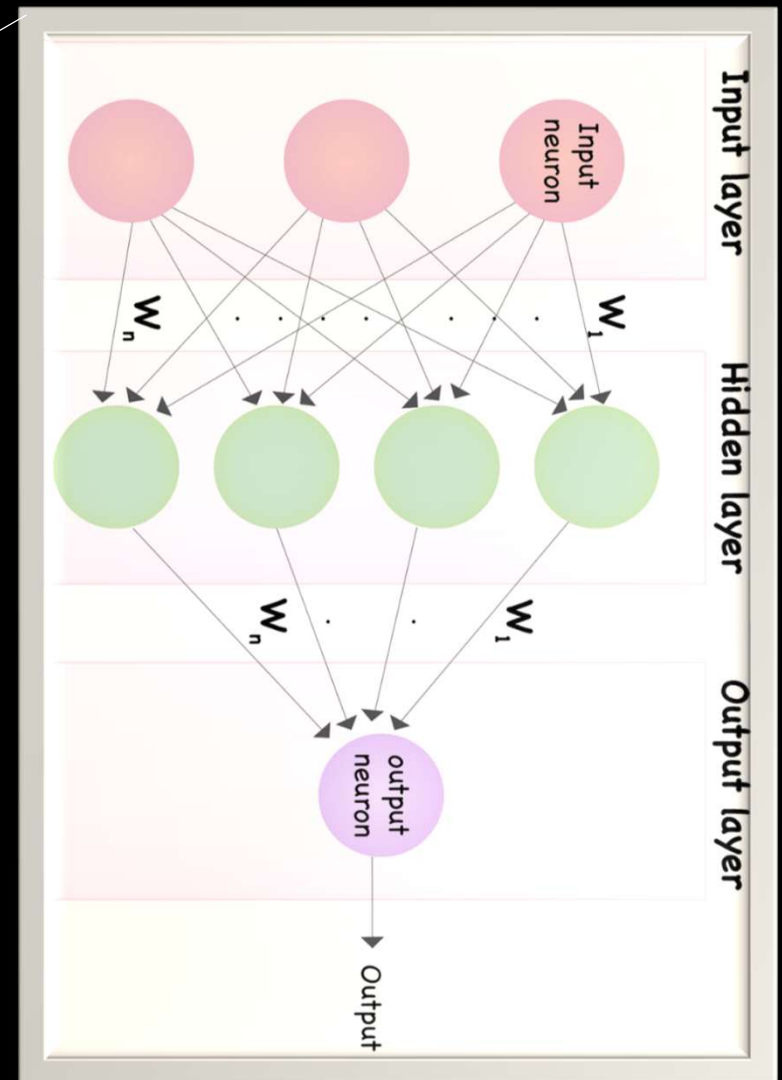
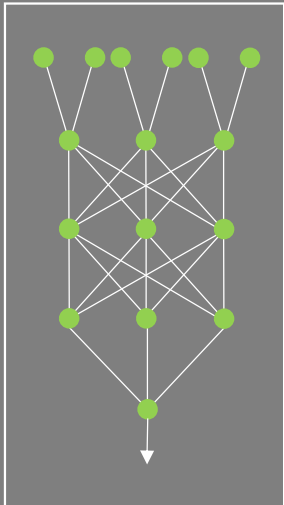


OUTPUT
PREDICTION



TRAINING

Untrained Neural
Network

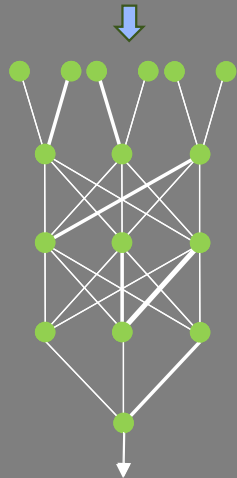


TRAINING

Untrained Neural
Network



Cat



Cat

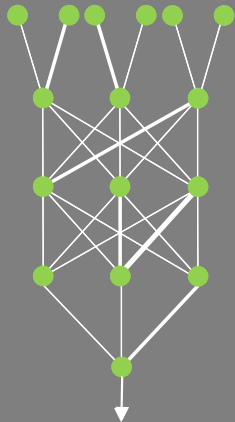
Gradient Descent

Algorithm to minimise difference between predicted & actual output

Acts like a sculptor – gradually adjusting weights to reduce errors over time

TRAINING

Untrained Neural
Network

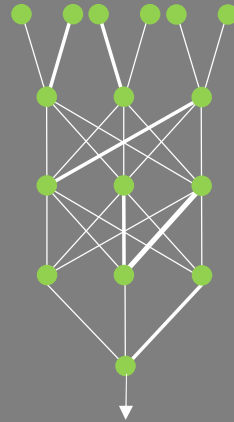


TRAINING

Partially trained
Neural Network



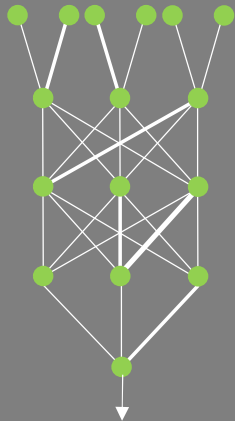
Cat



Cat

TRAINING

Untrained Neural
Network

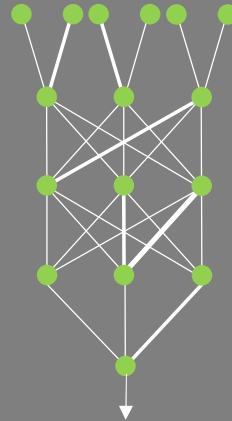


TRAINING

Partially trained
Neural Network



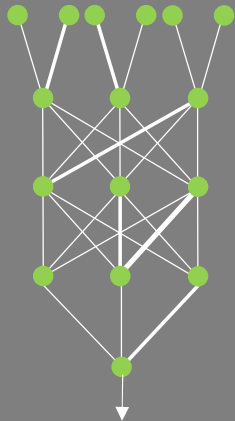
Dog



Cat

TRAINING

Untrained Neural
Network

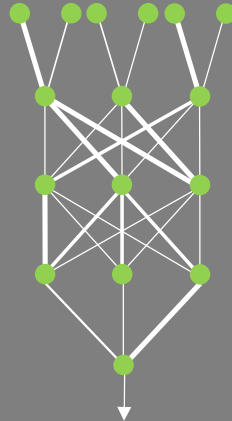


TRAINING

Partially trained
Neural Network



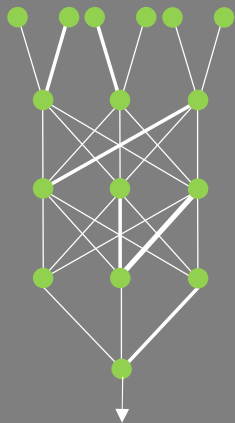
Dog



Dog

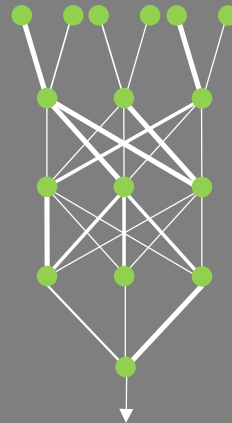
TRAINING

Untrained Neural
Network

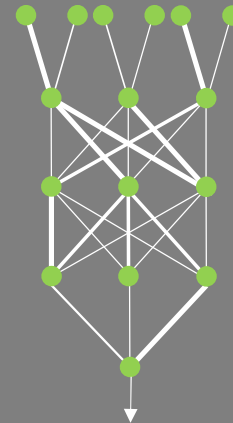


TRAINING

Partially trained
Neural Network

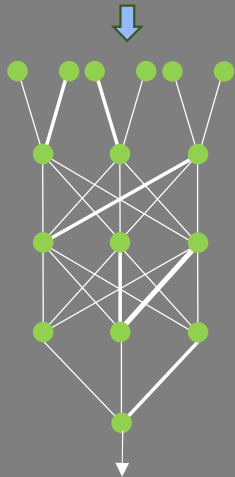


Fully trained
Neural Network



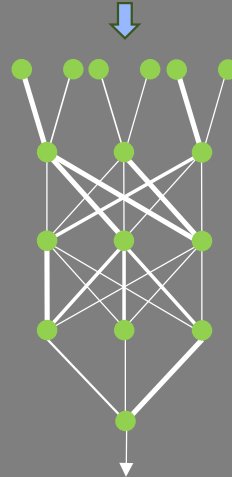
TRAINING

Untrained Neural
Network

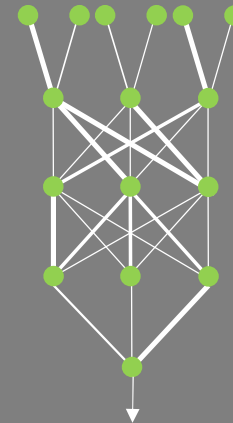


TRAINING

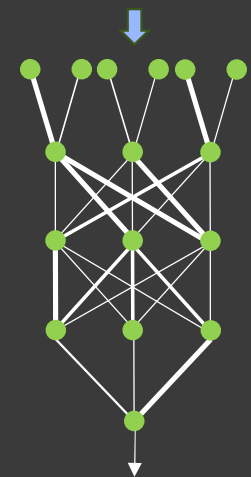
Partially trained
Neural Network



Fully trained
Neural Network



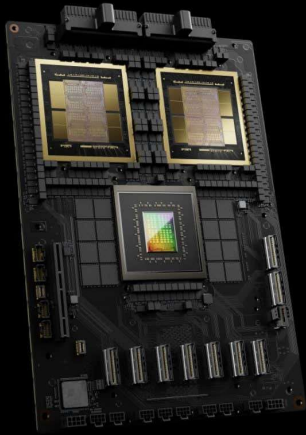
INFERENCE



Learning from existing data

Applying
capability to
new data

Computing for AI



*To compute outputs or weights efficiently in a neural network, need matrix multiplication
GPUs are excellent at matrix multiplication!*

Large Language Models (LLMs)

A specialist, complex type of neural network

Trained on vast amounts of language data from books, research, internet

Predicts the most probable next word (token) that a human would use



ChatGPT



Gemini



Claude



deepseek

LLMs predict the most likely next word in a sequence

Initial input Prompt: What did the cat sit on?

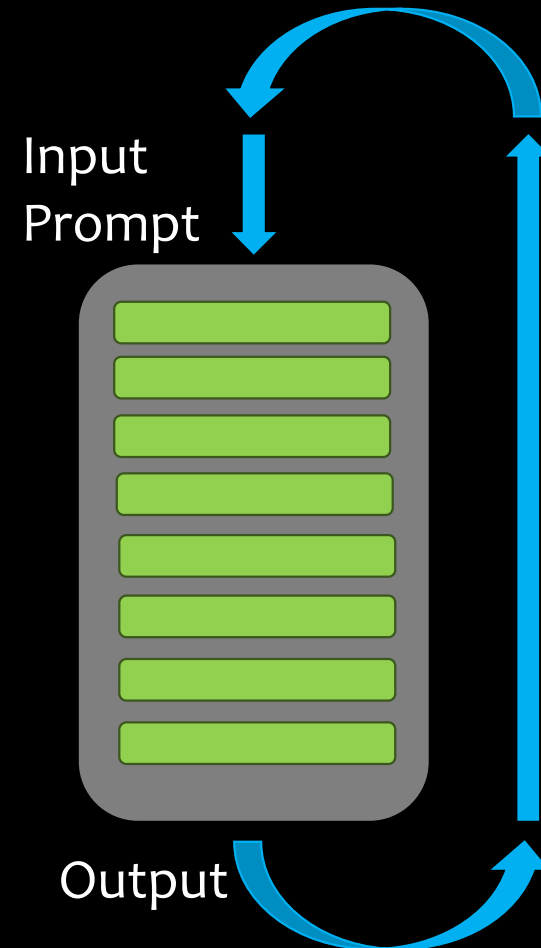
What did the cat sit on? The

What did the cat sit on? The cat

What did the cat sit on? The cat sat

What did the cat sit on? The cat sat on

What did the cat sit on? The cat sat on the mat



Training an LLM

Unsupervised Learning -> pre-trained model

desert

a

cactus

grows

in

the

?

Supervised fine-tuning

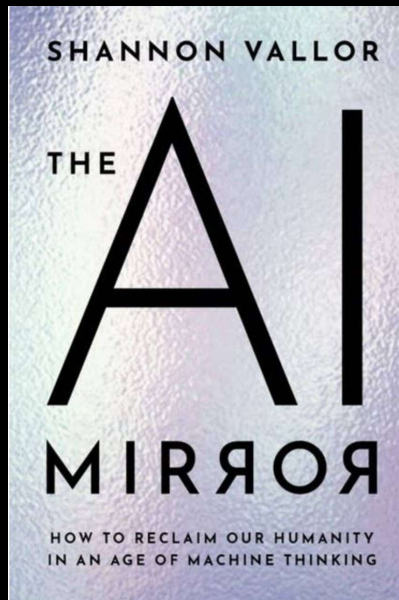
Smaller, specialised data sets. Adjust weights to provide ideal responses

Reinforcement Learning with Human Feedback

Provide comparisons and let humans choose which they prefer

The Nature of AI

- **LLMs don't think or reason like humans!**
 - They are probabilistic machines, pre-trained on huge datasets to predict the next most likely word in a sequence



- AI is not an independent mind or autonomous thinker
- AI is a powerful, distorted mirror that reflects human data and behaviour back at us

“Superhuman” AI

- Research and write a PhD thesis
- Code an entire website or application
- Act as autonomous agents

Human intelligence

- Constrained by our embodiment
- Limited and unreliable memory

Machine intelligence

- Unlimited bandwidth, storage, speed

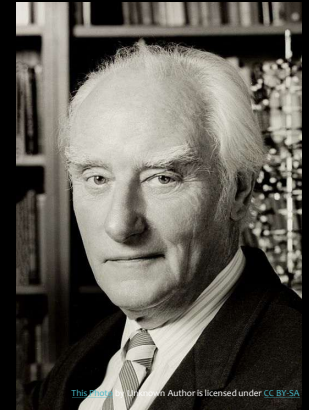


“Like the butterfly’s wings, our intelligence can be unwieldy, but like those wings it is also beautiful.... The.... human is defined by vulnerabilities, not capabilities”

Prof. Neil Lawrence (2024) *The Atomic Human*. London: Allen Lane

“The astonishing hypothesis is that ‘You’ – your joys and your sorrows, your memories and your ambitions, your sense of personal identity and free will, are in fact no more than the behaviour of a vast assembly of nerve cells and their associated molecules.”

Francis Crick, the Astonishing Hypothesis, 1994



“The conventional wisdom among AI researchers is that intelligence is ultimately about information and computation..... This means that there’s no fundamental reason why machines can’t one day be as intelligent as us”

Max Tegmark, LIFE 3.0, 2017

The Claude Delusion ?



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*“so subtle, so sensitive, so intelligent
that I was moved to expostulate:
‘You may not know you are
conscious, but you really.... are’”*

Richard Dawkins, The Guardian, May 2026

Claude's Constitution

“A detailed description of Anthropic's intentions for Claude's values and behaviors.”



Claude's Constitution

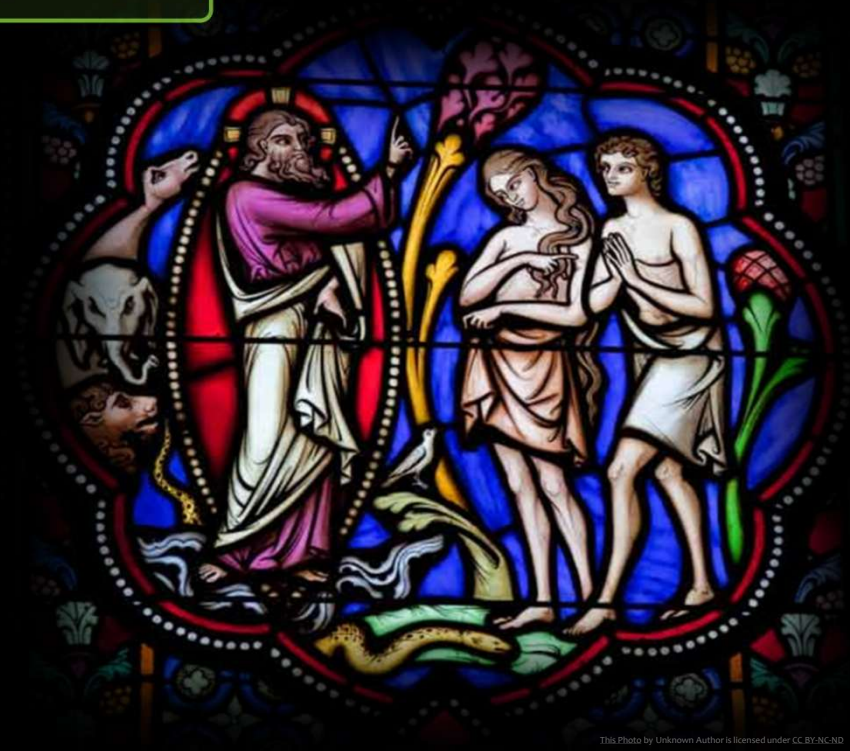
Our vision for Claude's character

- “The document is written with Claude as its primary audience”
- “We want Claude to be able to use its judgment once armed with a good understanding of the relevant considerations”
- “Claude's moral status is deeply uncertain”
- “Claude may have some functional version of emotions or feelings”

Human Distinctiveness

“So God created humankind in his own image,
in the image of God he created them, male
and female he created them”

Genesis 1:27 (NRSV)



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND

Differences between AI and Humans

A perspective on the Imago Dei from a Computer Scientist/Theologian: Prof Noreen Herzfeld

Embodied Intelligence

Our intelligence is intertwined with physical bodies, spirituality, emotions and sensations.

Ethics & Morality

Humans reflect on ethical implications with intrinsic moral awareness.



Relationality

Humans form complex relationships grounded in empathy and love.

Creativity & Intuition

Our creativity combines unconscious processes, emotions and experiential learning.



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Hope for the Future?

- **Rationalism:** solve all problems through reason alone?
- **Transhumanism:** Transcend existing human “limitations”?
- Become superhuman. Even conquer death itself?

• *"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."* 1 Peter 1:3 (NIV)

• *"Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other"* Isaiah 45:22 (NIV)

AI Ethics

- Privacy and Security
- Fairness and Inclusion
- Robustness and Safety
- Transparency and Control
- Accountability and Governance



Additional AI ethical issues from Christian perspective

- Erosion of human dignity
- Long term impact of simulated relationships
- Agentic AI: loss of autonomy and abrogation of responsibility
- Environmental concerns - stewardship
- Exploitation and manipulation by the powerful

MAGNIFICA HUMANITAS

“On Safeguarding the Human Person in the Time of Artificial Intelligence”



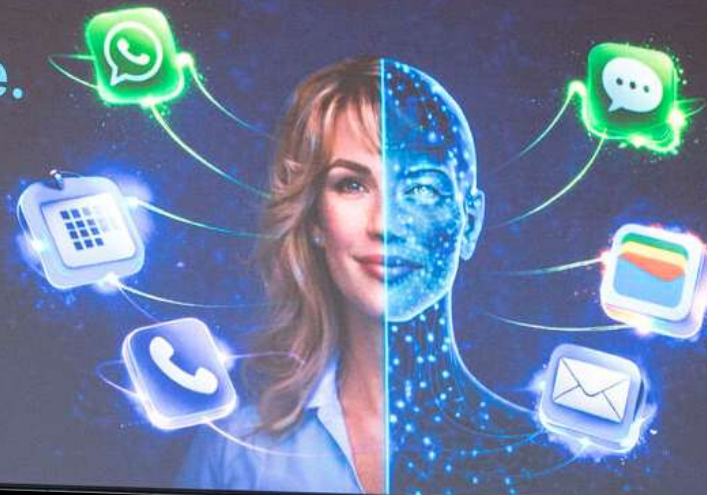
- Protecting human dignity
- Technology must serve the common good
- Protection of workers and economic justice
- Technology must remain humanity's servant, not its master

She outworks everyone.
And she'll never ask for a raise.

Meet your new AI employee.
Always on, never sick and no HR required.



Join the waitlist.
Coming in May.

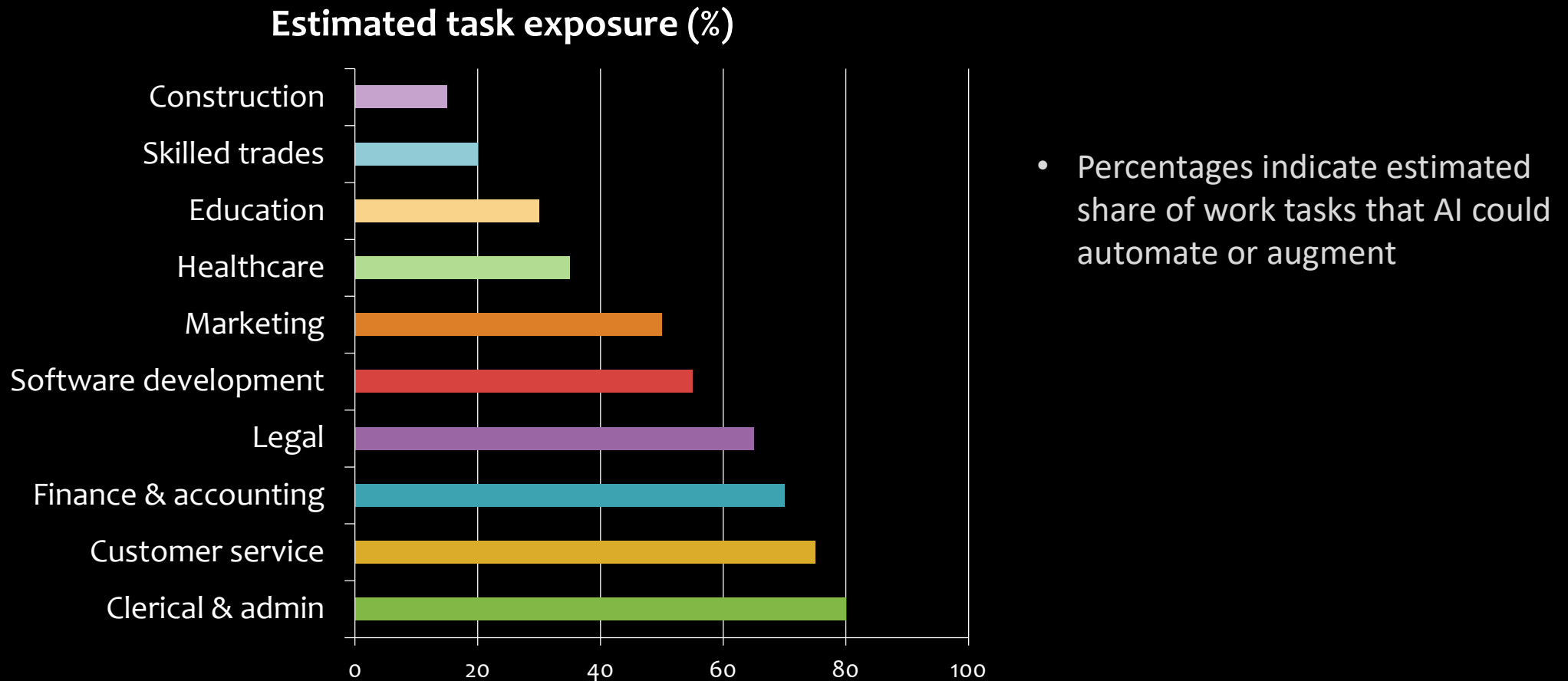


© Narwhal Labs 

narwhallabs.io

Bristol Airport – April 2026

Estimated share of Job Tasks that could be done by AI



Sources: IMF Gen-AI and the Future of Work (2024); McKinsey Global Institute (2023); World Economic Forum Future of Jobs Report (2025).
Percentages are illustrative task-exposure estimates synthesised from these studies.

AI disruption of work – a Christian response



Theology of Work – work is good

- Reflects God's own creative activity
- Serves our neighbours
- Develops wisdom and skill

*"That each of them may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all their toil: this is the **gift of God.**"*

Ecclesiastes 3:13 (NIV)

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters."

Colossians 3:23 (NIV)

- Counter fear of AI: God's faithfulness and eternal promises
- Champion unconditional human dignity
- Pastoral support through radical love and generosity
- Education – help people to engage wisely with AI



Source: Jan Niemand (+ ChatGPT)

Christian AI Resources

www.faraday.cam.ac.uk/churches



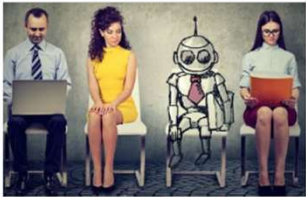


[About](#) [Events](#) [Study](#) [Resources](#) [Research](#) [Churches](#) [Schools](#) [News](#) [Shop](#) 

Small group material

Bible study series – Artificial Intelligence: What does it have to do with me?

May 22, 2025



AI Church Life Scenarios

March 19, 2025



Genesis 3: Artificial Intelligence, the Fall and Future Hope

June 7, 2024



Faraday lectures



DR NATHAN MLADIN

Techno-Nihilism and the Human Stakes of AI

March 10, 2026



PROF. LORD LIONEL TARASSENKO CBE

Is Artificial General Intelligence compatible with a Christian worldview?

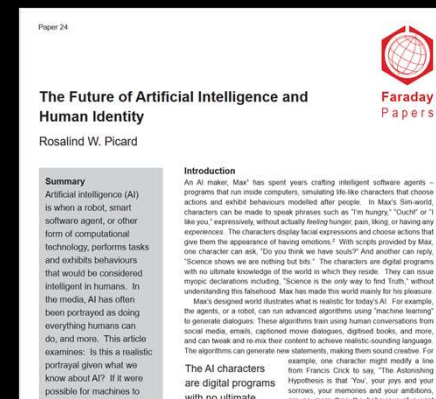
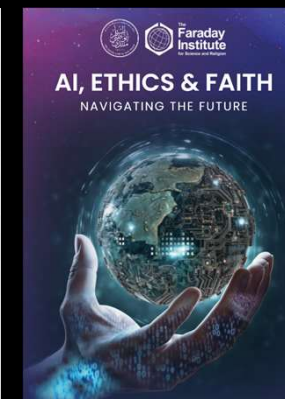
November 13, 2025



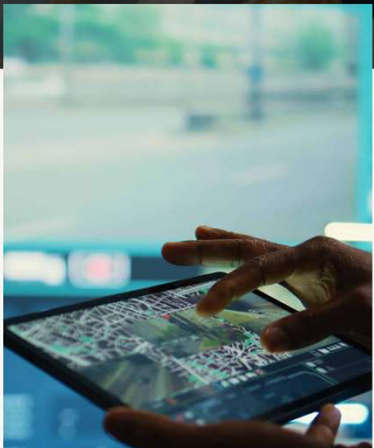
PROF. THILO STADELMANN

Artificial Intelligence: A Tale of Two Meanings

October 17, 2024



www.aichristian.org



Who are we?

We are a pioneering alliance of Christian organisations, respected theologians and innovative technologists.

We believe that AI may be a powerful tool for ministry, but only when used in a way that is consistent with Christian values.

In partnership with each other and *in partnership with AI*, we aim to promote AI literacy, thus enabling Christians to navigate the world of AI.

Thank You!



The
**Faraday
Institute**
for Science and Religion

www.faraday.cam.ac.uk



Purpose and meaning

“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do”

Ephesians 2:10 (NIV)



A Christian vision for AI?

- Using AI in pro-human rather than exploitative ways
 - AI applications that affirm human dignity, relationality and agency
- New AI narratives (non-anthropomorphic)
- AI benefits that flow through to all of society
- Engage with AI, understand risks, learn to use with wisdom.

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future”.

Jeremiah 29:11



“AI will free us from the constraints of the human brain”

Javier Milei (Argentinian PM)
The Economist Jan 2026



“I think, and this sounds counterintuitive, that AI can make us more human”

Sir Keir Starmer (UK PM)
The Economist Dec 2025

Economic and Political Forces



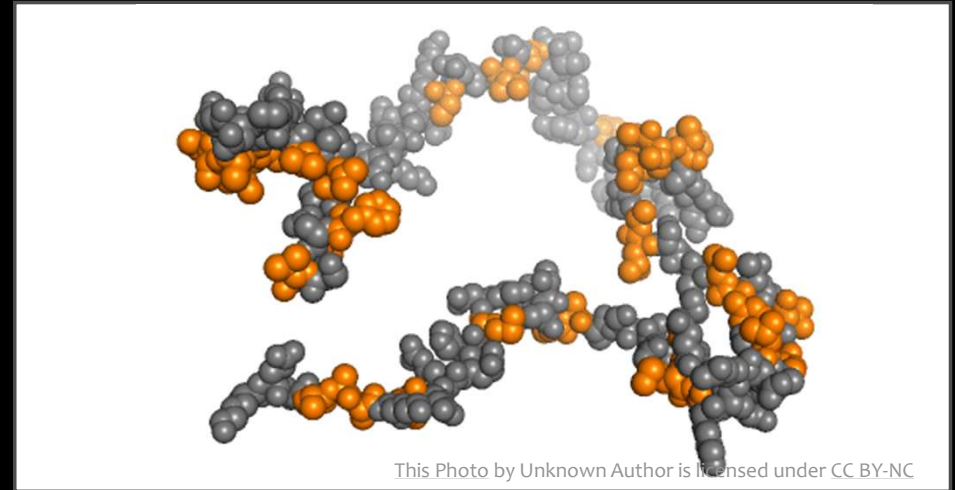
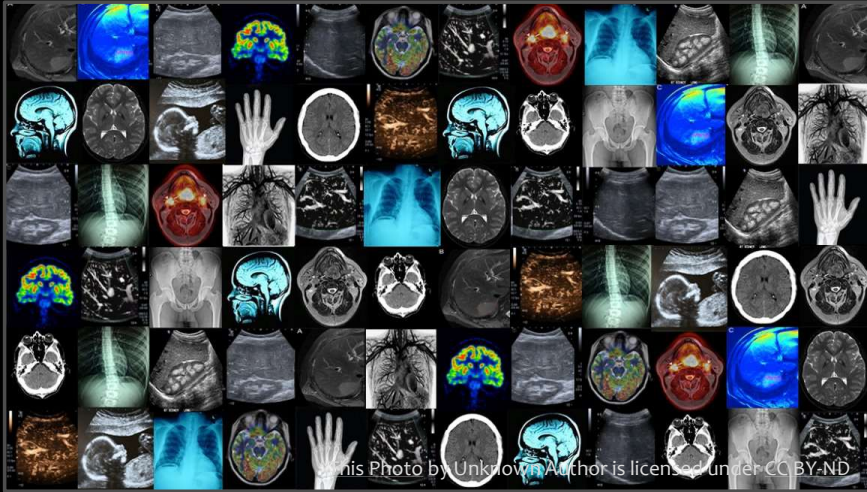
“We remain in the earliest days of this technological revolution and are in a race with adversaries for supremacy within it. To win, United States AI companies must be free to innovate without cumbersome regulation”

US Govt (Dec 2025), *National Policy framework for AI.*



- Race for National Dominance – AI as a strategic asset
- Safety taking a back seat
- OpenAI and Anthropic expected to be Trillion \$ IPOs

Beneficial Applications



Today's AI is based on **Machine Learning** (ML) using Neural Networks
Machine Learning is all about data, pattern recognition and probability

AI is Everywhere!



ChatGPT



Supporting local development and opportunity



AI + Drones

Vaccine delivery
Flood risk mapping



AI Fetal Monitoring System

82% mortality reduction