

5/15/2025

Like a good number of folks in the modern world, I'm feeling "technologied out" right now. That is, there is a deep-seated desire to be forced onto some farm or wherever where I don't look a single screen for, I don't know, a week? A month? A year? I want to sleep with the setting of the sun and wake with its rising. I want to intuit all of the animals and weather patterns around me. I want to have meaningful interactions with people, not surface-level bullshit that is just rehashing what we all saw on our screens. I'd also like to remember my dreams on a regular basis and feel a real continuity with that part of me. Yeah, these things would be nice.

I'm writing in the present format because the proliferation of AI has made it increasingly difficult to figure out what has actually been written by a human. Now, do I think AI is eventually going to be able produce images that look exactly like this? That is, do I think it will eventually be able to produce

images of lined paper with handwritten words on it? Probably someday. All I can say is that I have immense contempt for whatever yuppie moron deludes himself into thinking something like that would ever be worth inventing. After all, it would open the floodgates to forgery, which will have all sorts of legal consequences.

Is it ok to say I hate these people? Hate is such a strong word, of course, but I don't know how else to describe people who play games with literal human extinction with a goofy grin on their face - people who say "yeah, AGI could end up killing us all, but we need to invent it so China doesn't get there first," and then spout off some bullshit about how these incomprehensible blackbox algorithms can actually do a lot of good.

The fundamental premise of industrial society, as I understand it, is the following: "Anything that can be invented will be invented, regardless of the consequences." That is, there is a sort of helpless fatalism that infects

the industrial society. We do not view ourselves as masters of our own destiny, so much as we view ourselves as discoverers of a pre-determined set of "things that can be invented." It's as if some massive, massive archaeological dig is going on. The ruins are already there, you can't stop human curiosity from unearthing all of them, and we just hope to hell there isn't a bomb down there.

But suppose there is a bomb down there. Suppose there does exist a technology so stupidly destructive mere invention of it is tantamount to dooming the species. Well, if such a technology can be invented, the fundamental premise of industrial society tells us it will be invented. That is, the fate of every industrial society is extinction. QED.

This isn't the first time I've sent you something like this, James. But you did let me know that you like the idea of handwritten entries (in a Facebook Messenger video call required by your literal being in Cambodia, oh the irony). The first of these types of entries

("This was not written by AI") called direct attention to the format, as has this one. Over time, I suppose, I can wear myself off of this self-reference.

But for now, I feel a bit like a Bitcoin peddler whose goal is to eventually obtain a large number of dollars; the handwritten word is promoted as a viable alternative, but what is ultimately sent, at the end of the day, is a traditional electronic file.

But just imagine if a genuine renaissance of handwritten letters was set off by AI. Imagine the Post Office actually becoming super relevant again as particularly well-connected people have dozens of handwritten, intimate things to sift through on a daily basis. Imagine a solution to the attention span problem as people have to start thinking about their conversations in terms of weeks and months and not mere hours. Imagine the proliferation of genuinely well put-together sentences. Imagine a completely separate media ecosystem where trends live, and die and the Internet doesn't even have a clue.