This summer, China adopted a set of guidelines with respect to the emerging Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools such as chat-bots. It is useful to take a look at the incorporated regulations and in particular the sequence of priorities.

> "*Uphold the Core Socialist Values; content that is prohibited by laws and administrative regulations such as that inciting subversion of national sovereignty or the overturn of the socialist system, endangering national security and interests or harming the nation's image, inciting separatism or undermining national unity and social stability, advocating terrorism or extremism, promoting ethnic hatred and ethnic discrimination, violence and obscenity, as well as fake and harmful information*"

While the last clauses reflect objectives that would be ideal, it is very hard to believe that they will not yield to the primary, first objectives of upholding autocratic values, the government and the autocratic system. (I have replaced "socialist" with "autocratic" to generalize this phrasing to apply to similar governments that might not claim to be socialist.) There are U.S. organizations seeking to influence U.S. AI policy that optimistically assert folks will "play nice" with AI … which sort of matches the last few elements of the Chinese guidelines.

This ain't going to happen. Governments, not just China, will be using AI to promote their objectives and in various situations influence, impact or disrupt activities in targeted countries and to control their own population. As implied by the Chinese guidelines, the opportunities are there to promote hatred, violence, and undermine national unity and social stability. This has already been demonstrated with Social Media, and AI will take this to another level.

Not only will governments be utilizing these tools, but so will social discontents. Malicious actors with specific agendas will take full advantage of AI to manipulate target populations. Domestic or international propaganda is nothing new. The ability to collect detailed information about most persons, adapt messages to influence targeted individuals, monitor the impact and revise/repeat in real time, is new with the social media revolution. With AI the ability to do this will push the boundaries of rational resistance, taking advantage of the lower instincts of our human nature. Since engagement (aka addiction) and influence (aka brainwashing) are highly profitable aspects of major corporate business models, there will be significant effort invested here to sell shoes, candidates and social unrest.

We have already been drawn into "filter bubbles" where media is adapted to attract and isolate communities, with echo chambers of selective, and often misleading if not false information – all as methods to hold on to their base of consumers. Fear and outrage have been proven to be the most effective ways of doing this. To put it bluntly, this is not healthy for any of us. The antidote is to avoid the most abusive of these sources, and keep asking if what is being driven your way is objective, factual, or even close to credible. If you find your response to the messages is fear or outrage, there is a good chance the content has skewed into the fringes of reality.

At this point you can maintain a modicum of control. Limit your exposure. Take time away from the confusion and conflict that media channels propagate. Talk to real people, maybe even ones that hold different views --- and note, this means listening to their perspective, not turning into a fear and outrage broadcaster yourself. It's amazing to find that many of us have similar objectives, but different views of the best path forward. We can step back from the dogma of the "filter bubbles" and try to find common ground – it actually exists. In theory, AI technology could help us find these areas for real

collaboration and positive change --- but there will be many entities trying to steer AI and us in far more dangerous directions.

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