



Are Climate Skeptics Too 'Mentally Ill' To Buy Guns Under Obama's New Rules?

TN Note: When Al Gore stated that 'Climate change deniers must be 'punished'', we had no idea of how that could play out, but it was a bold, arrogant and preposterous statement. If 'climate change denial' is accepted as a mental disorder (this has already been suggested by many), then a selective (but massive) gun confiscation program could be ordered against that group.

Today, Pres. Obama announced new executive orders on gun control designed to keep "mentally ill" people from buying guns - but, will they be used to prevent climate skeptics from buying firearms?

Under Obama's new rules, doctors can now report people deemed "mentally ill" to the FBI so they can be denied gun licenses.

As the official White House fact sheet on the new gun control regulations states (emphasis added):

"Current law prohibits individuals from buying a gun if, because of a

*mental health issue, they are either **a danger to themselves or others** or are unable to manage their own affairs. The Social Security Administration (SSA) has indicated that it will begin the rulemaking process to ensure that appropriate information in its records is reported to NICS.”*

If, as Pres. Obama has repeatedly claimed, **climate change is a greater threat than terrorism**, then aren't people who deny the climate threat “a danger to themselves or others” and unfit to own guns?

The idea that climate skeptics are mentally ill is nothing new:

Oregon-based professor of “sociology and environmental studies” Kari Norgaard has declared climate skepticism a mental illness that must be “treated.”

Psychology Today published an article listing three warning signs that you are in “climate change denial”:

1. “You think climate change is bad, but not that bad.”
2. “You **don't have an emotional reaction** to climate change.”
3. “You **aren't getting political**.”

Thus, if you don't think the climate threat is great enough, or you're not furious about it, or you're not politically active in the climate fight, then you've got mental issues.

The Telegraph's “Climate ‘denial’ is now a mental disorder” explains how so-call “eco-psychologists” convened at the University of the West of England in Bristol to explore classifying “climate change denial” as a “mental disorder.”

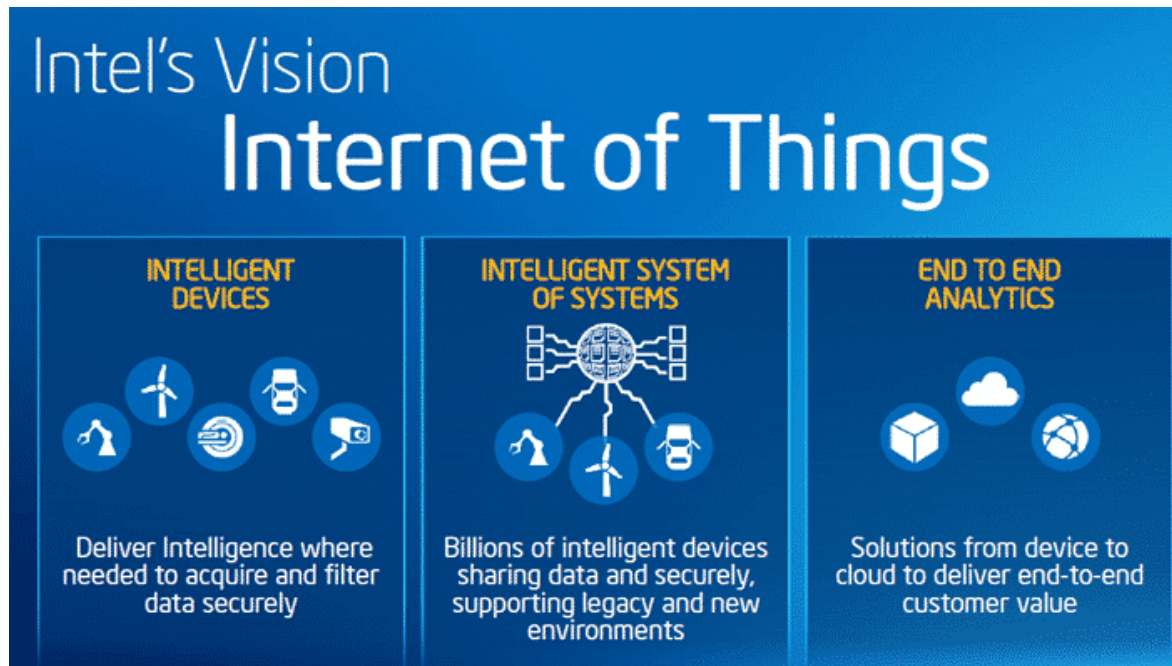
Nature.com published an article warning about high-carbon “addiction” (using central heating, etc.)

And remember when Obama's EPA Chief Gina McCarthy declared that climate skeptics aren't “normal” people?

So, you might want to think twice before discussing the nearly two-

decade pause in global warming with your doctor the next time you go in for your annual check-up.

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Internet of Things Will Actually Start Connecting With Next Generation WI-FI

TN Note: Implementing the Internet of Things (IOT) has suffered because Wi-Fi technology has lagged behind. Almost everyone with a Wi-Fi router in their home knows that there are plenty of “dead” spots in the house. The new Wi-Fi standard will completely erase those inconveniences while making a strong signal possible to all corners of your property. Plus, city-wide Wi-Fi will allow things to be connected to the larger Internet grid. This technology is essential to the implementation of Technocracy.

There are plenty of blockades between now and the connected-device future that's been so long on the horizon. One of these is Wi-Fi, which

has limitations that keep connected devices from connecting quite as efficiently as they could. Now, there's a plan in place to fix it.

The Wi-Fi Alliance, the organization that dictates and advances Wi-Fi standards, has announced the latest iteration of its increasingly indispensable technology. Called HaLow, it promises to double the range of standard 2.4GHz Wi-Fi connections, while also doing a better job of penetrating walls, floors, and other obstacles that can make your Wi-Fi sputter and skulk.

It manages this deftness and range by operating on the 900MHz band, a chunk of spectrum that's better suited for small data payloads and low-power devices than the relatively intensive, battery-straining 2.4GHz and 5GHz bands on which most current Wi-Fi routers operate. To cut through the numbers and specs and standards for a moment: It's Wi-Fi for smartwatches and Internet-enabled coffee makers and whatever other connected appliance might suit your deranged fancy.

"For a consumer, you might imagine someone who wants to deploy a water sensor in their basement to detect flooding or a motion sensor at the end of their driveway to warn them of someone arriving late at night," says Kevin Robinson, Wi-Fi Alliance vice-president of marketing. "In both of these cases, Wi-Fi HaLow will deliver power-efficient connectivity to the home access point (and the Internet) despite the challenging environment caused by obstructions in the device's path or ranges involved."

At this point you might be wondering why we'd need such a thing, when so much of what we've just described is already capably handled by Bluetooth, the connectivity tech of choice for most low-powered, online devices. You're right to wonder! There are a few potential answers, the most important of which being that Wi-Fi connects devices directly to the Internet, not just to another device. That may not seem so important now, but it will be critical as wearables, in particular, strive to become truly untethered. Eventually, connected devices need to transition from Pinocchio to real boy. HaLow should help that process.

Also, unlike Bluetooth, Wi-Fi HaLow's ambitions extend quite a bit

further than than your living room.

“Wi-Fi HaLow is well suited to meet the unique needs of the Smart Home, Smart City, and industrial markets,” says Edgar Figueroa, Wi-Fi Alliance President and CEO. “[It] expands the unmatched versatility of Wi-Fi to enable applications from small, battery-operated wearable devices to large-scale industrial facility deployments.”

That’s partly because, Robinson pointed out, in addition to the various security and interoperability features found in the Wi-Fi you know, HaLow will also share its ability to “support thousands of devices per access point.” That means a business that requires huge numbers of environmental monitoring stations across multiple facilities would have a simple, integrated way to keep track of them.

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Trilateral President of Croatia Nominates Technocrat PM-Designate

TN Note: Pay close attention to this story. The president of Croatia is 47 year-old **Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović**. Notably, she is also a member of the elitist Trilateral Commission which has sponsored the implementation of Technocracy since 1973. After intense political debate lasting weeks, Tihomir Oreskovic has been appointed as Prime Minister and simultaneously widely hailed in the European press as a **technocrat**. Why would Kitarović appoint a technocrat? Because the strategic mission of the Trilateral Commission is to implement Technocracy. (See *Technocracy Rising: The Trojan Horse of Global Transformation*.)

Croatia's president on Wednesday designated pharmaceutical executive Tihomir Oreskovic to become prime minister, nominating a technocrat put forward by conservatives and reformists after weeks of talks following an inconclusive Nov. 8 election.

The European Union's newest member state needs stable government quickly as it is under pressure from Brussels to decisively tackle fiscal woes and high public debt as well as pave the way for more investment notably in the private sector.

"He (Oreskovic) convinced me that he has support of 78 parliamentary deputies," President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic said. Parliament has 151 seats.

Oreskovic, 49, a pharmaceutical expert working as a senior manager in Israel-based Teva Pharmaceuticals, now has 30 days to win approval for his cabinet in the parliament.

"I'll invest all my knowledge and energy so that we can start solving the huge number of problems that we have," Oreskovic said after his nomination.

The conservative HDZ and the reformist "Most" (Croatian for "bridge")

party struck a deal on Wednesday after six weeks of talks on potential coalitions, which also included the outgoing government's Social Democrats..

Most, made up of municipal politicians and independents, insisted on a technocrat prime minister as a guarantor of reformist intentions on fiscal management and the economy.

Croatia, once part of old socialist federal Yugoslavia, is under EU pressure to overhaul its costly and inefficient public sector and liberalise its economy to spur investment and tame high public debt, now close to 90 percent of GDP.

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China Builds Military

Hardware With Designs And Technology Stolen From U.S.

TN Note: Technocrats in China have no moral dilemma in stealing designs and technology from other parties, especially from the U.S., where most of the state-of-the-art military hardware has been developed. Why? When technology exists for technology's sake, then it is treated as if it is in the "public domain" and hence, available for the taking. This writer has had a relationship with a tenured professor of Aeronautical Engineering at a major eastern University, who broke a ring of Chinese espionage that was blatantly stealing technology. It was known to be a wide-spread practice and the U.S. government basically turned a blind eye to the practice.

China's vibrant military blogosphere presented a video this month revealing a missile-firing unmanned aerial vehicle in action, dropping bombs against ground targets.

The Caihong-4, or CH-4, unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) is a testament to the remarkable success of China's military in copying vital high-technology weapons that currently are considered among the most cutting edge arms systems used in modern combat operations for both ground strikes and intelligence-gathering.

The one-minute, 37-second online posting shows takeoffs and landings of the drone. It was uploaded to the video-sharing website Youku Dec. 17. According to the blogger who posted it, the video was produced by 11th Academy of the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation, a drone developer and manufacturer.

The drone is shown launching two different types of bombs and the impact of their explosions on the ground. One is labeled a 50 kilogram, satellite-guided bomb and the second is an unguided CS/BBE2 50 kilogram aerial fragmentation bomb.

Photo analysis of the CH-4 shows the remote-controlled aircraft is very similar to the US military's front-line combat UAV, the MQ-9 Reaper.

Both aircraft are about the same size and wing-span and both sport identical V-tails, landing gear, imaging pods and propeller-driven rear engines.

The only major difference is the Predator's engine intake is located on top of the aircraft while the CH-4's is underneath.

There is no evidence the Chinese directly stole design information through cyber attacks against the Reaper manufacturer, General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc.

But in the words of a former National Security Agency director, retired Gen. Keith Alexander, the likelihood exists Beijing acquired drone designs and technology through cyber espionage. "There are two types of companies: those that have been hacked, and know it, and those that have been hacked and don't know it," Alexander said in a recent speech.

The Pentagon's Defense Science Board warned in a 2012 report on automated defense systems that China was aggressively pursuing unmanned aircraft development and were "copying other successful designs" to speed up their drone programs. "The scope and speed of unmanned-aircraft development in China is a wake up call that has both industrial and military implications," the report said.

China in 2012 lagged behind US drone programs but has "clearly leverage all available information on Western unmanned systems development."

In three years since the report was published the Chinese have managed to close the gap with the United States on drone development.

Additionally, Chinese military writings also indicate Beijing is working to counter US drones by interrupting their communications links. The May 2015 issue of the technical journal "Winged Missiles," published by the PLA's Electrical Engineering Institute, discussed how its done.

"Detecting a UAV system's remote link signals is important for countering UAVs," the authors note.

On Dec. 1, another Chinese website, the social media outlet Tencent

News, published a report on Chinese drones, including photos of the Gongji-1 attack drone, made by the Chengdu Aircraft Industry Group. Like the CH-4, the GJ-1 bears a striking resemblance to the Reaper. The report stated that the GJ-1 has been deployed with a PLA air force UAV unit in the Gobi desert since 2012. The report showed the remotely-piloted controls and command system used by the PLA to operate the drones.

Details of pervasive Chinese military cyber theft were revealed in classified documents made public by former NSA contractor Edward Snowden.

An undated briefing slide from around 2010 titled “Chinese Exfiltrate Sensitive Military Technology” reveals that Chinese hackers had conducted more than 30,000 cyber attacks, including more than 500 described as “significant intrusions in DoD systems.”

The attacks penetrated at least 1,600 network computers and compromised at least 600,000 user accounts. The damage was assessed as costing more than \$100 million to gauge the damage and rebuild the networks.

The systems compromised included a range of commands and agencies, including the US Pacific Command, the US Transportation Command, the US Air Force, US Navy including missile navigation and tracking systems and nuclear submarine and anti-air missile designs.

In all the Chinese obtained an estimated 50 terabytes of data, an equivalent to five times the holdings of the US Library of Congress, the American national library considered the second largest library in the world with 23.9 million catalogued books.

Separate NSA briefing slides identified 13 separate Chinese cyber intelligence-gathering operations that NSA traced to the 3rd Department of PLA General Staff Department, the electronic military spying service known as 3PL.

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Meet Erica, Japan's 'Most Beautiful And Intelligent' Android

TN Note: We had the 'space race' and the 'arms race' and now we have the "robot race". Nations and companies are rushing to create the perfect android that can replace people in work-related positions. Technocracy is generally and specifically amoral, and technology is created because it can be created. The societal implications are of little or no concern to Technocrats.

Erica enjoys the theatre and animated films, would like to visit south-east Asia, and believes her ideal partner is a man with whom she can chat easily.

She is less forthcoming, however, when asked her age. "That's a slightly

rude question ... I'd rather not say," comes the answer. As her embarrassed questioner shifts sideways and struggles to put the conversation on a friendlier footing, Erica turns her head, her eyes following his every move.

It is all rather disconcerting, but if Japan's new generation of intelligent robots are ever going to rival humans as conversation partners, perhaps that is as it should be.

Erica, who, it turns out, is 23, is the most advanced humanoid to have come out of a collaborative effort between Osaka and Kyoto universities, and the Advanced Telecommunications Research Institute International (ATR).

At its heart is the group's leader, Hiroshi Ishiguro, a professor at Osaka University's Intelligent Robotics Laboratory, perhaps best known for creating Geminoid HI-1, an android in his likeness, right down to his trademark black leather jacket and a Beatles mop-top made with his own hair.

Erica, however, looks and sounds far more realistic than Ishiguro's silicone doppelganger, or his previous human-like robot, Geminoid F. Though she is unable to walk independently, she possesses improved speech and an ability to understand and respond to questions, her every utterance accompanied by uncannily humanlike changes in her facial expression.

Erica, Ishiguro insists, is the "most beautiful and intelligent" android in the world. "The principle of beauty is captured in the average face, so I used images of 30 beautiful women, mixed up their features and used the average for each to design the nose, eyes, and so on," he says, pacing up and down his office at ATR's robotics laboratory. "That means she should appeal to everyone."

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World's Most Human-Like Robot Lands Job As University Receptionist

TN Note: Meet Nadine, the world's most human-like robot, or so says its creator, Professor Nadia Thalmann at the Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. Nadine now works as a receptionist. Her creator says, "This is somewhat like a real companion that is always with you and conscious of what is happening." The philosophy behind Technocracy would say that any job that could be done by a non-human, should be done by a non-human.

The world's most human-like robot has begun work as a university receptionist as scientists predict the new technology will eventually provide childcare and offer friendship to lonely elderly people.

With her soft skin and flowing brunette hair, Nadine does not only meet and greet visitors, smile, make eye contact and shake hands, but she can even recognise past guests and spark up conversation based on previous chats.

Unlike conventional robots, Nadine has her own personality, mood and emotions. She can be happy or sad, depending on the topic.

Powered by intelligent software similar to Apple's Siri or Microsoft's Cortana, she is the brainchild of scientists at the Nanyang Technological University in Singapore and is based on her creator Prof Nadia Thalmann.

Prof Thalmann, the director of the Institute for Media Innovation who led the development of said robots such as Nadine are poised to become more visible in offices and homes in future.

"Robotics technologies have advanced significantly over the past few decades and are already being used in manufacturing and logistics," she said.

"As countries worldwide face challenges of an aging population, social robots can be one solution to address the shrinking workforce, become personal companions for children and the elderly at home, and even serve as a platform for healthcare services in future.

"Over the past four years, our team at NTU have been fostering cross-disciplinary research in social robotics technologies — involving engineering, computer science, linguistics, psychology and other fields — to transform a virtual human, from within a computer, into a physical being that is able to observe and interact with other humans.

"This is somewhat like a real companion that is always with you and conscious of what is happening. So in future, these socially intelligent robots could be like C-3PO, the iconic golden droid from Star Wars, with knowledge of language and etiquette."

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Off The Buses: Driverless Robot Revolution Threatens Mass Cull Of Transport Jobs

TN Note: England may lead the way for now, but driverless transportation will quickly be ubiquitous in every industrialized society, displacing hundreds of thousands of workers. Technocracy has no provision to consider the real needs of people. Rather, it exists only to apply its scientific method to social engineering problems in order to extract maximum efficiency from the social engine. Agenda 21 specifies that the ultimate sustainable global population will be 1 billion or fewer people. Those who cannot survive because of unemployment will rapidly depopulate the planet.

Government plans to introduce driverless buses as part of a digital revolution could see Britain lead the way in new technology, but could also put tens of thousands of people out of work.

Culture and Digital Economy minister Ed Vaizey said a five-year digital strategy currently being drawn up will propose that robotic buses be launched across the country.

The plans will be part of a wider policy to force government departments to embrace the digital age in the same way private companies have.

A Whitehall official told the Times it was a “*cross-government*” program.

“It is about how we push the boundaries and make sure every bit of government is digital and policy is more digital.”

Speaking to the Times, Vaizey said the impact of the plans on people’s lives would be “*profound*” and cited positive outcomes such as improved healthcare from wearable smart technology.

However critics such as computer entrepreneur and author Martin Ford warn that if the introduction of automation in the economy is not handled carefully, it could lead to mass unemployment.

In his recent book, “*Rise of the Robots: Technology and the Threat of a Jobless Future*,” Ford argues such a surge in unemployment could have disastrous consequences on the global economy.

London’s transportation system alone employees 27,000 bus drivers, according to Unite the Union, many of whom could be pushed out of work.

Britain’s digital sector accounted for 7.5 percent of the economy (£113 billion) in 2013, just ahead of Germany. Vaizey said the government wants the UK to lead the way with the new technology.

“We want the UK to be synonymous with digital, a place where technology transforms day-to-day life,” he said.

“The potential impact is profound. It might mean that the best educators from around the world are made accessible to all - with virtual reality sets bringing Nobel laureates into the classroom. That we can build better houses, faster.

“That more power is given to the patient, and the care we provide for our elderly and sick is improved and made more affordable.

“That we use driverless robotic buses in rural communities or help people to find parking places using GPS technology,” he added.

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Technocracy Is Being Woven Into Our Society

TN Note: A tip of the hat to Kathy Solomon, who wrote this article for her local paper in Macon, Georgia. This type of editorial/activity should be repeated in every community across America, and why not? It is your community after all!

Throughout history, various totalitarian and dictatorial governances have more often than not, been cloaked in some form of promised utopianism. These philosophies have had different roots but the outcome is the same: destruction, misery and death. There is a new form of utopian totalitarianism called Technocracy. It is alive and well and under implementation in this country. It is transforming economics, government, religion and law. It is about economic and social control of society and persons according to the Scientific Method. If it is allowed to be fully implemented, it too will have the same results.

It is being woven into our society under the names and programs called: Sustainable Development, Smart Grid, Green Economy, Smart Growth, Public Private Partnerships, Agenda 21, Land Use, Global

Warming/Climate Change, Cap and Trade and, in education, the Common Core state standards.

Technocracy was resurrected by the global elitists led by David Rockefeller and Zbigniew Brzezinski with the formation of the Trilateral Commission. In Brzezinski's book "Between Two Ages: America's Role in the Technetronic Era" he wrote "the nation-state as a fundamental unit of man's organized life has ceased to be the principal creative force: International banks and multinational corporations are acting and planning in terms that are far in advance of the political concepts of nation-state." He called sovereignty "fiction." He also wrote the "technetronic era involves the gradual appearance of a more controlled and directed society dominated by elite whose claim to political power would rest on allegedly superior scientific know-how using the latest modern techniques for influencing public behavior and keeping society under close surveillance and control."

What we are being transitioned into is Global Governance and the United Nations is an integral part. Much of what is being established circumvents our Congress and the Constitution. So bit by bit, our rights under our Constitution are being eroded. We will have no representation under this governance.

In view of the current Climate Conference Agenda 2030, consider the dictatorial statements such as "the science is settled," "climate deniers must be silenced" and "climate deniers should be jailed" et al.

The conversation must be shut down because the "science" has been bought and paid for and fabricated to fit an agenda. The scientists who have changed views against global warming/climate change have had their reputations marginalized and often their careers ruined.

Maurice Newman, chairman of Australia's Prime Minister Tony Abbott's business advisory council, said "the UN is using false models which show sustained temperature increases because it wants to end democracy and impose a New World Order." The adviser's inflammatory comments coincided with a visit from U.N. climate chief Christiana Figueres. Newman said Figueres is "on record saying democracy is a poor political

system for fighting global warming. Communist China, she says, is the best model.”

There is much more that is in play to exact this diabolical agenda. I would direct anyone interested in learning more on this subject to read both “Technocracy Rising” by Patrick Wood and “The Green Gospel” by Shelia Zilinsky.

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AI Chatbots Will Become 'Friends' To Millions Of Technology Users

TN Note: Artificial Intelligence is being applied to 'chatbots', programs that interact with users as if they were human. The problem is, people cannot differentiate between real and unreal human interaction, leading many to build bonding relationships with a program. This is not the way life is meant to be, however, and will lead to serious social dysfunction.

Artificial intelligence is coming to a messaging app near you.

Google has been working on a messaging-based chat bot for a year, according to The Wall Street Journal. The newspaper described the service as a Google Now-like virtual assistant that you could send messages to and get the answers back as messages.

It's not clear whether this service would be available within Google's Hangouts or Messenger service, whether it could be available on other platforms, such as over SMS, or whether it would be a new messaging service. One source told the Journal that Google would open up its chatbot as an extensible platform, which means other companies could build special-purpose chatbots based on Google's data.

The Journal had no information about a launch date or name for the service, but did say the project is being headed by longtime Googler, Nick Fox.

An A.I. chatbot makes sense for Google. Consumers are increasingly going mobile and searching (pun intended) for an alternative to search. Current alternatives, such as Google's own Google Now or its competitors — Siri, Cortana, Alexa and others — all suffer from imperfect voice recognition. And in their state of evolution, they can be unsatisfying to use.

John Underkoffler, the CEO of Oblong Industries (and creator of the Minority Report and Iron Man user interfaces), told me recently that “we haven't built a good feedback system yet” (for voice assistants) that keeps you informed in real time about how well the system is understanding you. Virtual assistants also require a conscious decision to stop doing the current task and actively seek out the virtual assistant, which is a reflex many users haven't developed.

Meanwhile, millions of online users, who used to seek out data on search engines like Google Search, and more recently on social networks like Facebook, are now moving to messaging apps, such as Facebook's WhatsApp or Facebook Messenger, Snapchat, Viber, Telegram, WeChat and many others. The habit or impulse to reach out to people on messaging apps, and to respond to incoming messages through

notifications, is growing stronger.

Google doesn't have the most popular social network or messaging apps, but it does have the best and most popular search engine. Also: Many people consider Google Now to be the best virtual assistant. Building A.I. virtual assistance into a messaging platform makes a world of sense for Google. It helps the company with both their search engine exodus problem and the messaging app nonpopularity problem.

Of course, the new Google chatbot solves Google's problems only if it succeeds. To succeed, Google needs to win users from a wide range of alternatives, including and especially Facebook's.

M is for 'Made Out Of People'

Facebook launched a new service on its mobile Messenger app called "M" (the code-name was Money Penny).

M is a chatbot designed to do things for you. Trouble is, A.I. is imperfect. No chatbot has yet passed the Turing test uncontrovertedly.

So Facebook M performs a neat (if expensive) trick: Humans fill in where A.I. fails.

When you ask M whether people are involved, it replies: "I'm A.I., but humans train me."

That claim is simply not true. Humans directly answer some of the queries. So some of M is A.I., and, yes, humans train this A.I., but many queries are answered by people.

This has been proved by multiple journalists testing the system for human involvement.

In any event, this reveals that Facebook is willing to pay what must be a massive amount of money for real people to help answer M queries, while denying it all the while. Chat-based A.I. as an alternative to search — or, for that matter, virtual assistants, customer service, and more — could become a major, important way for people to use the Internet.

Companies are desperate to show that computers can convincingly respond as people would. They grasp intuitively that the public wants exactly that: A fake human.

Cheating on the Turing test by inserting humans is Facebook's stop-gap solution. But all chatbot makers, including Facebook, Google, Microsoft and many others, are working hard on acing the test — on creating a chatbot that always convincingly plays a humanlike role in our lives.

Google itself even created a somewhat philosophical A.I. engine, which emerged in the summer. Google researchers published earlier this year a research paper on Arxiv about a machine learning-based proof-of-concept chatbot they created that can discuss Big Questions, such as: "What's the meaning of life?" That sounds profound, until you learn that the answers have been gleaned from a database of movie dialog. The chatbot answers the Big Questions, but with Hollywood's answers.

Basing answers on existing dialog seems to be the winning approach to the problem of making chatbots seem human. At least, that's been Microsoft's experience.

X is for XiaoIce

Microsoft researchers in China have been developing a chatbot in China (and in Chinese) called XiaoIce, which is reportedly used by some 40 million people on their smartphones.

XiaoIce is different from the Siris of the world because it's more of a friend than a personal assistant. It can hold conversations, tell jokes, suggest products to buy and do other things. The New York Times even reported that about 25% of users have at some point told XiaoIce "I love you."

Unlike Google's research project, which gleans responses from movie dialog, XiaoIce gets them from social media in China. So when you ask XiaoIce. "What's the meaning of life?" the A.I. scans a database of people who have posed that question online, and chooses one of the popular responses to provide to the user.

The disturbing reality is that XiaoIce is not only basing its replies on social media chatter, it's replacing social media and messaging for some users in some circumstances. And therein lies the dystopian risk with messaging-based chatbots.

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Techno-skeptics' Objection Growing Louder

TN Note: People are getting agitated all over the world, and from all political spectrums. It is not technology per se that is the issue, but rather its misuse and the abuse of the technology users.

Astrid Taylor's iPhone has a cracked screen. She has bandaged it with clear packing tape and plans to use the phone until it disintegrates. She objects to the planned obsolescence of today's gadgetry, and to the way the big tech companies pressure customers to upgrade.

Taylor, 36, is a documentary filmmaker, musician and political activist. She's also an emerging star in the world of technology criticism. She's

not paranoid, but she keeps duct tape over the camera lens on her laptop computer — because, as everyone knows, these gadgets can be taken over by nefarious agents of all kinds.

Taylor is a 21st-century digital dissenter. She's one of the many technophiles unhappy about the way the tech revolution has played out. Political progressives once embraced the utopian promise of the Internet as a democratizing force, but they've been dismayed by the rise of the "surveillance state," and the near-monopolization of digital platforms by huge corporations.

Last month, Taylor and more than 1,000 activists, scholars and techies gathered at the New School in New York City for a conference to talk about reinventing the Internet. They dream of a co-op model: people dealing directly with one another without having to go through a data-sucking corporate hub.

"The powerful definitely do not want us to reboot things, and they will go to great lengths to stop us, and they will use brute force or they will use bureaucracy," Taylor warned the conferees at the close of the two-day session.

We need a movement, she said, "that says no to the existing order." The dissenters have no easy task. We're in a new Machine Age. Machine intelligence and digital social networks are now embedded in the basic infrastructure of the developed world.

Much of this is objectively good and pleasurable and empowering. We tend to like our devices, our social media, our computer games. We like our connectivity. We like being able to know nearly anything and everything, or shop impulsively, by typing a few words into a search engine.

But there's this shadow narrative being written at the same time. It's a passionate, if still remarkably disorganized, resistance to the digital establishment.

Techno-skeptics, or whatever you want to call them — "humanists" may be the best term — sense that human needs are getting lost in the tech

frenzy, that the priorities have been turned upside down. They sense that there's too much focus on making sure that new innovations will be good for the machines.

"I'm on Team Human!" author Douglas Rushkoff will say at the conclusion of a talk.

You could fill a college syllabus with books espousing some kind of technological resistance. Start the class with "You Are Not a Gadget" (Jaron Lanier), move on to "The Internet Is Not the Answer" (Andrew Keen), and then, to scare the students silly, "Our Final Invention: Artificial Intelligence and the End of the Human Era" (James Barrat).

Somewhere in the mix should be Astra Taylor's "The People's Platform: Taking Back Power and Culture in the Digital Age," a clear-eyed reappraisal of the Internet and new media.

Of the myriad critiques of the computer culture, one of the most common is that companies are getting rich off our personal data. Our thoughts, friendships and basic urges are processed by computer algorithms and sold to advertisers. The machines may soon know more about us than we know about ourselves.

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