5PM SUNDAY
29TH JUNE 2025

AI: DEEPER THEOLOGY DISCUSSION PANEL

AllSaints

All Saints Weston Bath Deeper Theology Discussion Panel
AI: The good, the bad and the ugly

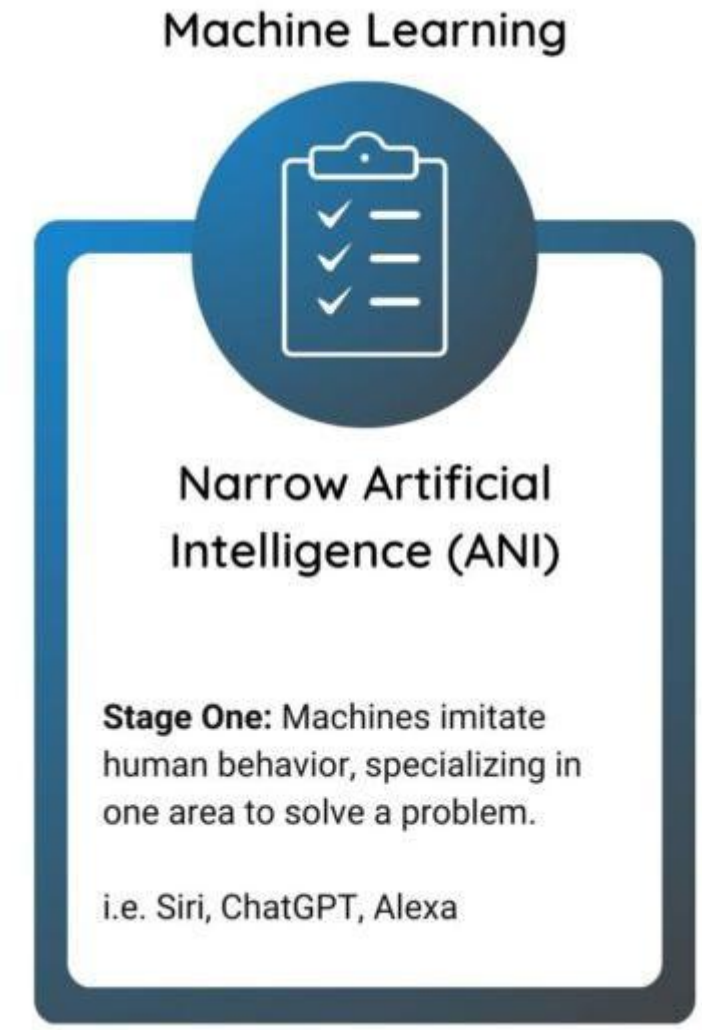
Panel Contributors

Neil Langmead	Professor of AI, Cybersecurity, and Mathematics at Valley Forge University. Senior Lecturer on Computer Science at Bath University
Mark Whitcroft	CEO and Founder of PlannerPal a Bath based Financial Technology company
Kevin Hurley	Software Release Manager at Graphcore – Specialists in AI Chips
Isaac Langmead	Photographer and Videographer, final year student at Valley Forge University
ChatGPT	Generative Pre-trained Transformer (GPT) AI Chatbot released by OpenAI in 2022
Tom Yacomeni	Rector of All Saints Weston Bath and former IT manager and project engineer

What is AI?

- AI is a broad term that covers a whole range of computer technologies but was defined in 1956 at Dartmouth University as ‘the science and engineering of making **intelligent machines**.’
- AI has featured in Science fiction since the 1920s (eg. the term ‘**Robot**’ was first used in a 1920 Czech play about synthetic workers rising up against humanity!), but over the past 20 years AI has come to dominate advances in computing, robotics, medicine and biology.
- AI uses ‘**algorithms**’ which are programmable procedures that can be used repeatedly to solve a whole class of problems.
- The use of AI has accelerated since the development of ‘**reinforcement learning**’ in which the algorithms are optimised through repeated cycles of training with vast amounts of sample data.

Different types of AI development



2025 $120 Billion

ANI is focussed on solving particular tasks, for example:

- Image Recognition
- Personalised Adverts
- Automated machinery and robotic controls
- Medical scan analysis
- Chatbots & Translators such as Siri, ChatGPT, Alexa, Gemini

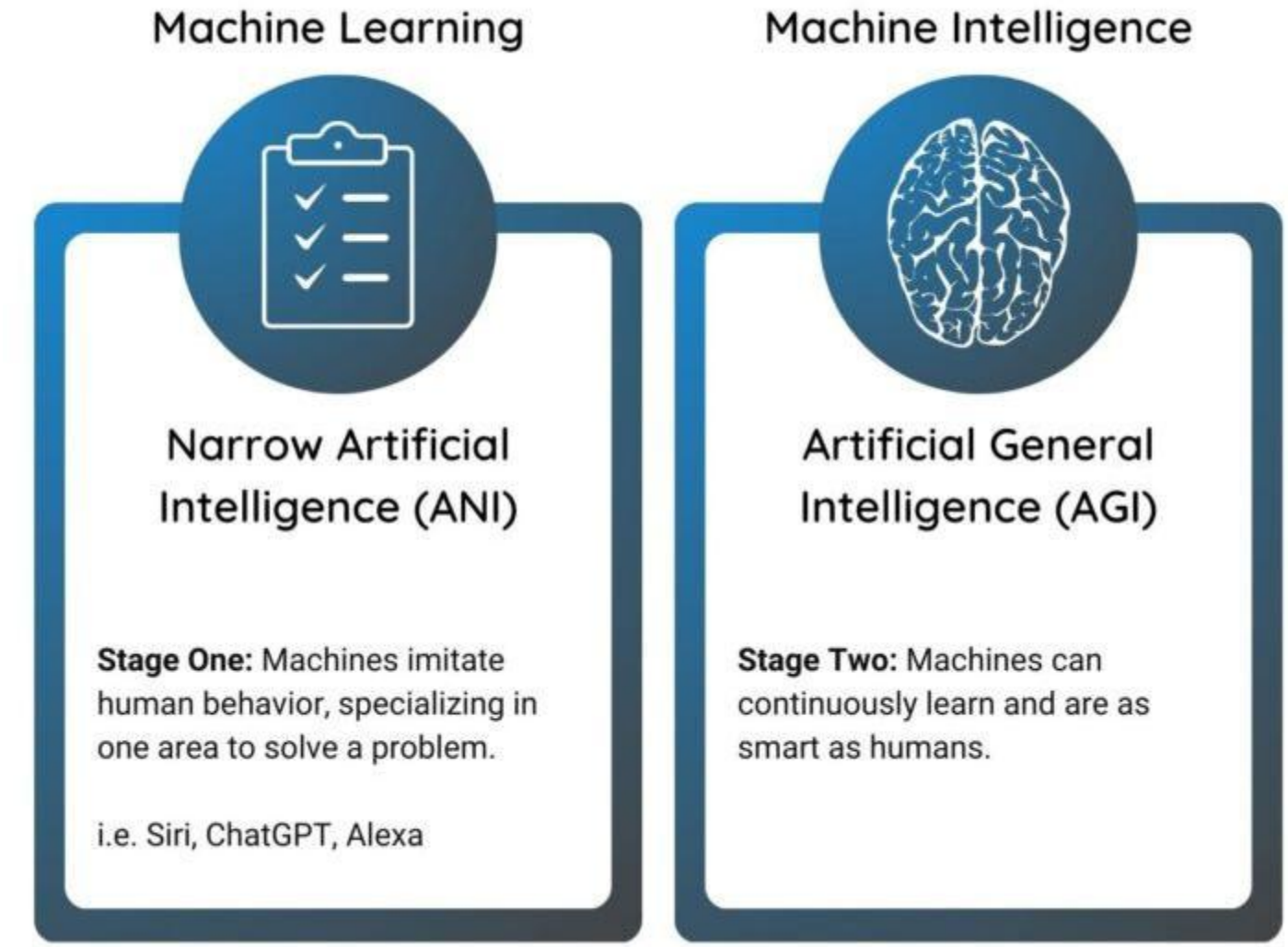
Outputs from different ANI models could be:

- Generation of images/videos, language, sounds (*Generative AI*)
- Autonomous control of systems, vehicles & robots (*Agentic AI*)
- Analytical reports – weather, markets, finances etc. (*Analytic AI*)

- **ANI is not itself creative** – it is trained with massive amounts of existing data to recognise patterns for an optimised algorithm to produce helpful outputs. Eg. ‘the sky is…’
- Some LLM (Large Language Model) data needs labour intensive data-labelling to correct errors (‘The hidden underbelly of AI’)

Infographic: viso.ai

Different types of AI development



2025 $120 Billion $6 Billion

2030 **$1800 Billion**

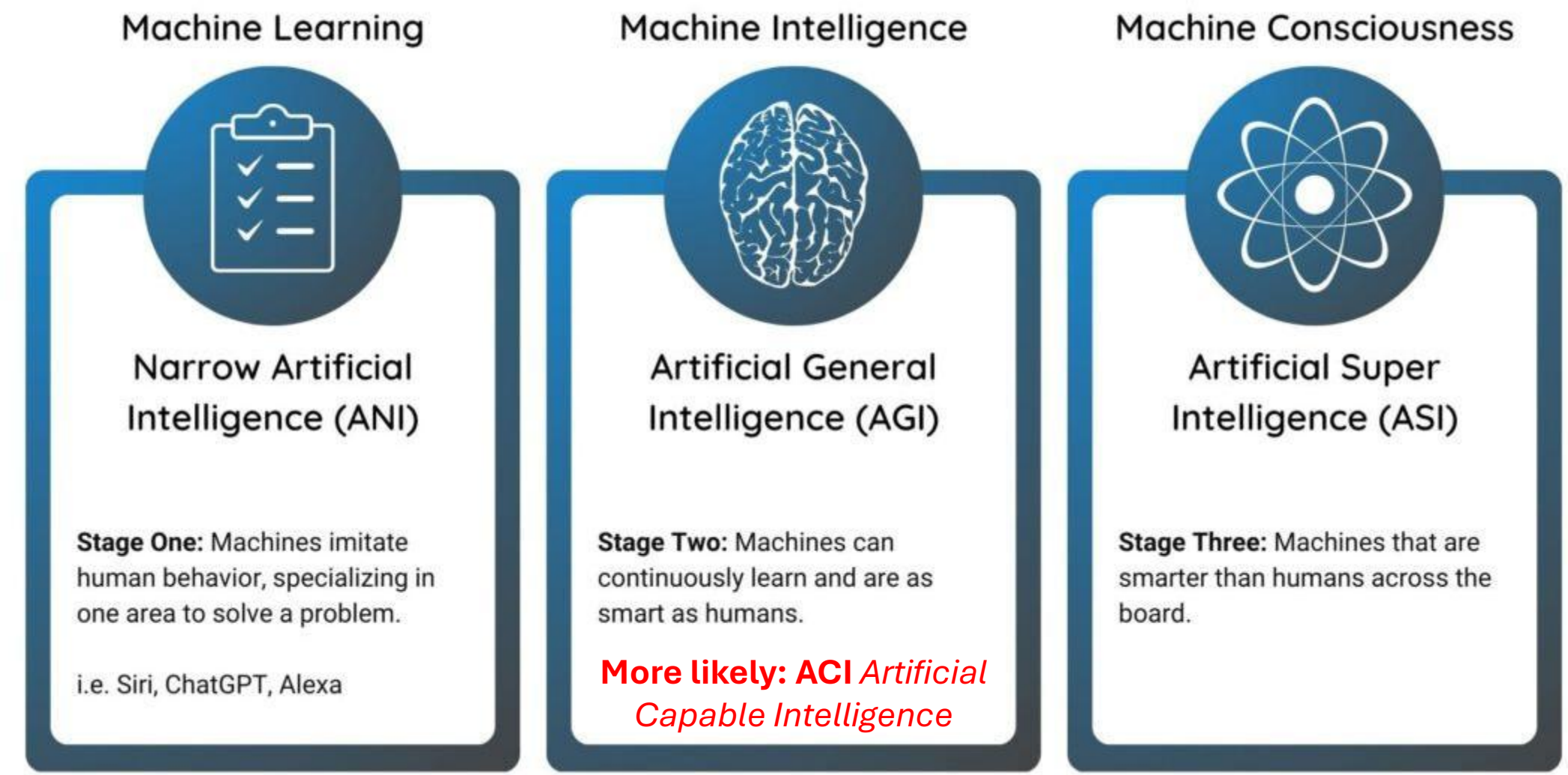
AGI Artificial General Intelligence has not been achieved, but AGI is still a stated goal of OpenAI, Google and Meta.

Instead of just being trained with lots of large data sets, AGI would be programmed to 'think creatively' with automated reasoning. AGI would need sensory inputs, and the ability to communicate & respond.

Mustafa Suleyman, CEO of Microsoft AI suggests an intermediary stage '**ACI**': *Artificial Capable Intelligence* where different AI tools are linked together to perform real world tasks.

Infographic: viso.ai

Different types of AI development



Infographic: viso.ai

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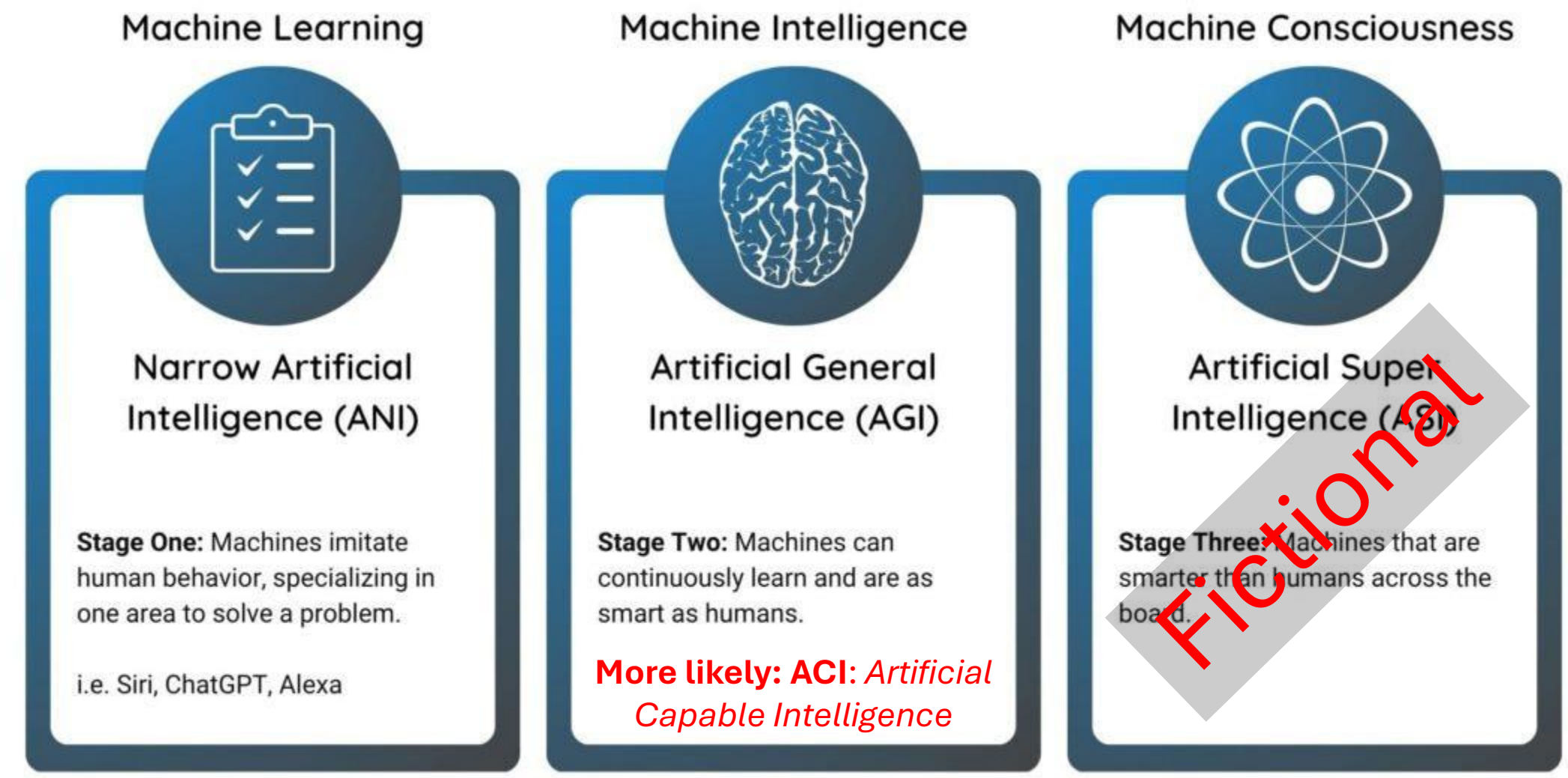


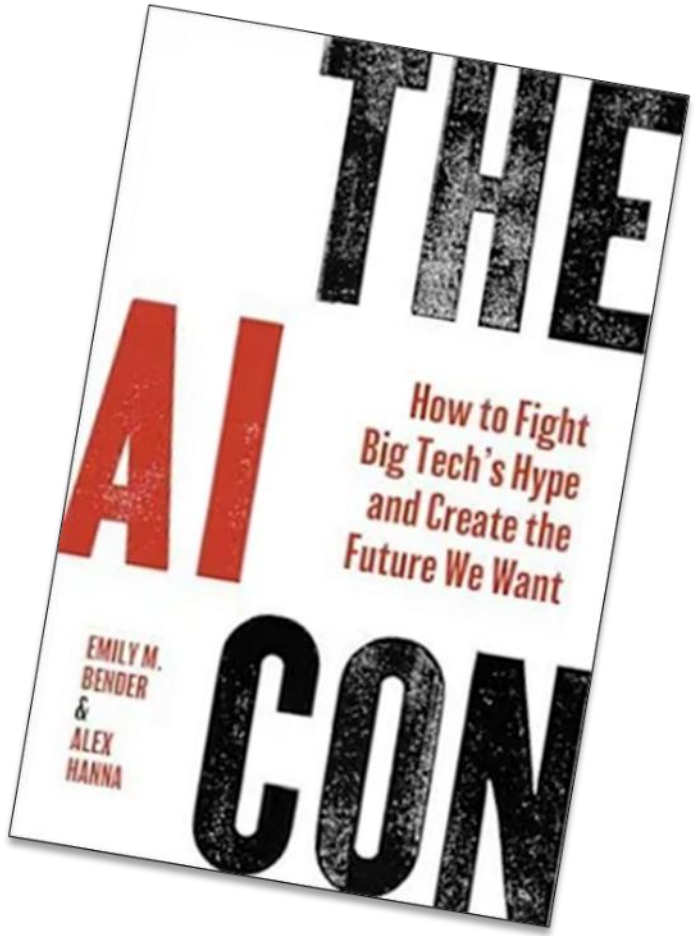
Infographic: viso.ai

Some helpful benefits of AI

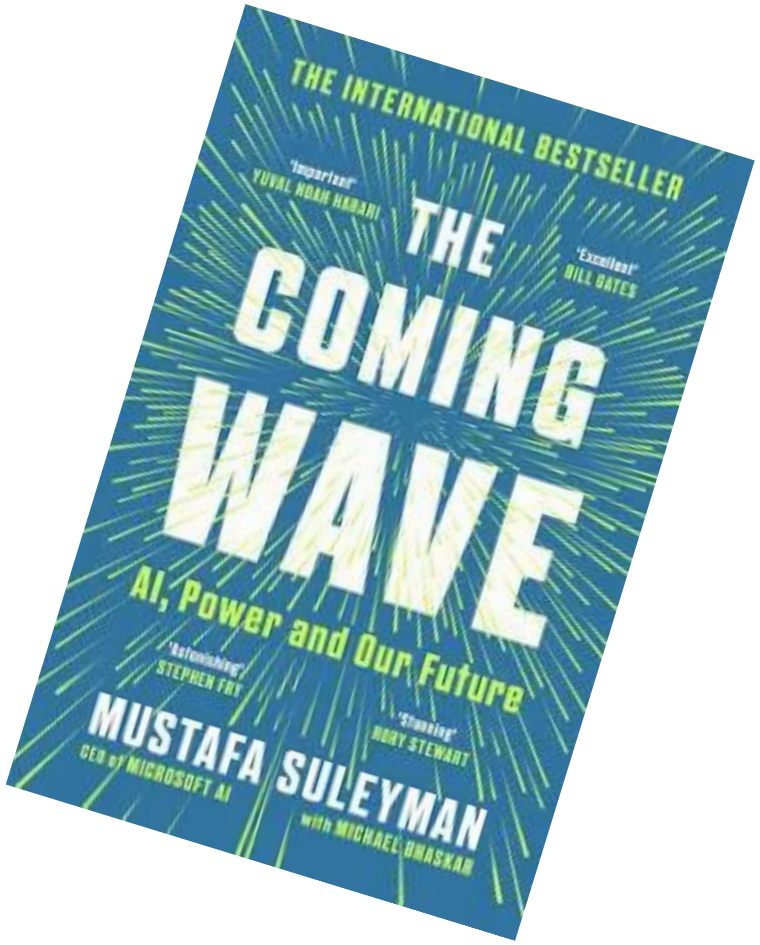
- The world’s data summarised at your fingertips
- Free access to expertise and creativity for unskilled users
- Voice activated digital assistance for the elderly
- Rapid medical diagnosis and theoretical drug research
- Real time language translation, grammar and spell checking
- Smart farming – increased productivity and crop yields
- Efficient online shopping and recommendations
- Real time analysis of traffic, weather and solar activity

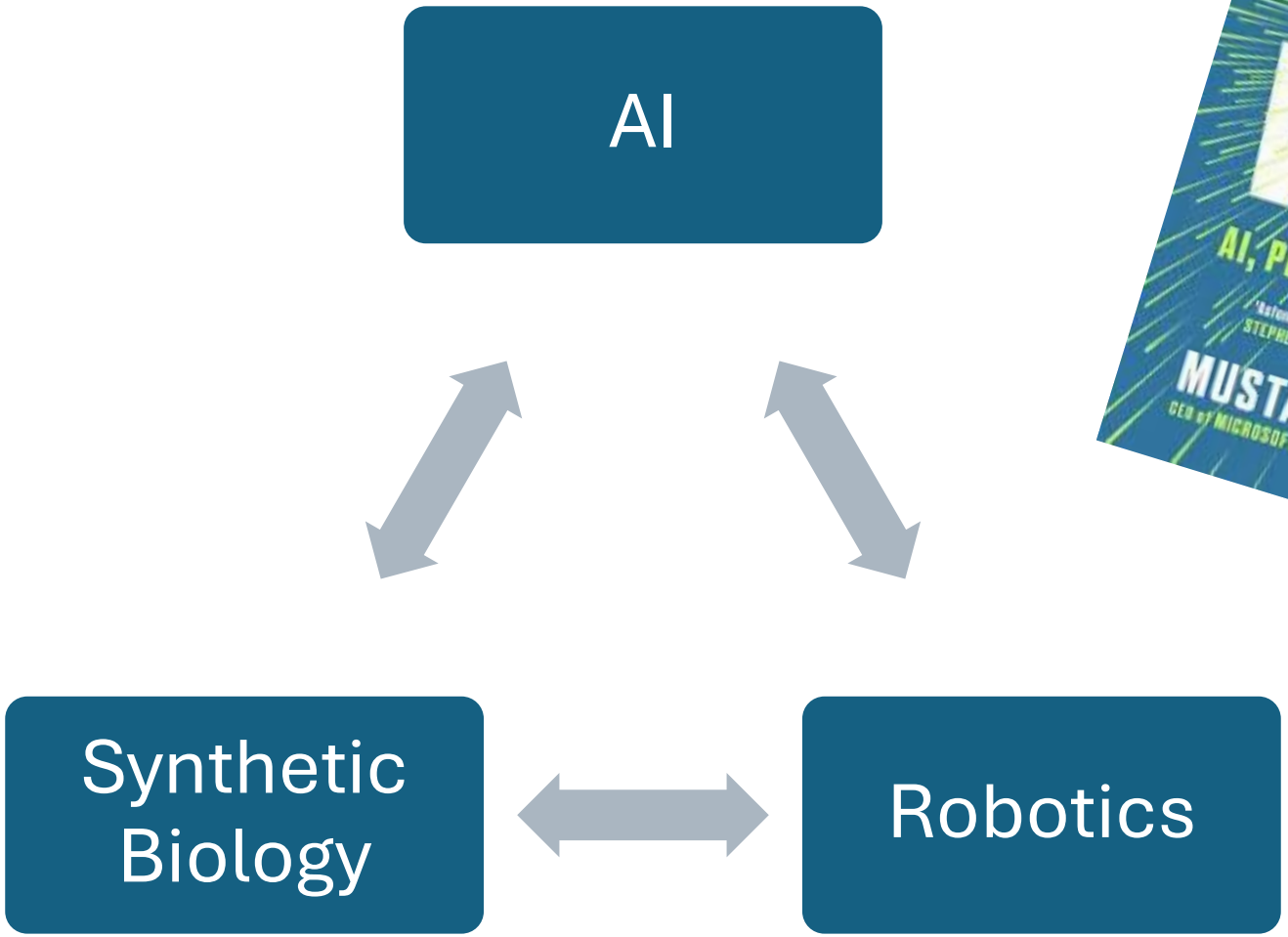
Current risks from AI

- Truth, accuracy and accountability
  - Misinformation and Deepfakes
  - Bias and discrimination hidden within the training data
  - No legal accountability for plagiarism, misinformation or erroneous action
- Environmental impact
  - Increasing energy consumption
  - Increasing carbon footprint
  - Growing conflicts over scarce materials such as rare earths
- Social impacts
  - Mis-‘alignment’ with human rights and values
  - Creative disempowerment
  - ‘Job displacement’ eg. Low skills unemployment
  - ‘Data Labelling’ relies on manual data checkers who may be exploited
- Geopolitical impacts
  - Growing inequality and accumulation of knowledge based power.
  - AI ‘arms race’ for power and military superiority



‘The Coming Wave’





Accelerating developments

- Synthetic Biology – (‘Work begins to create artificial human DNA from scratch’ BBC – 26th June 2025)

Synthetic DNA to use for new genetic treatments

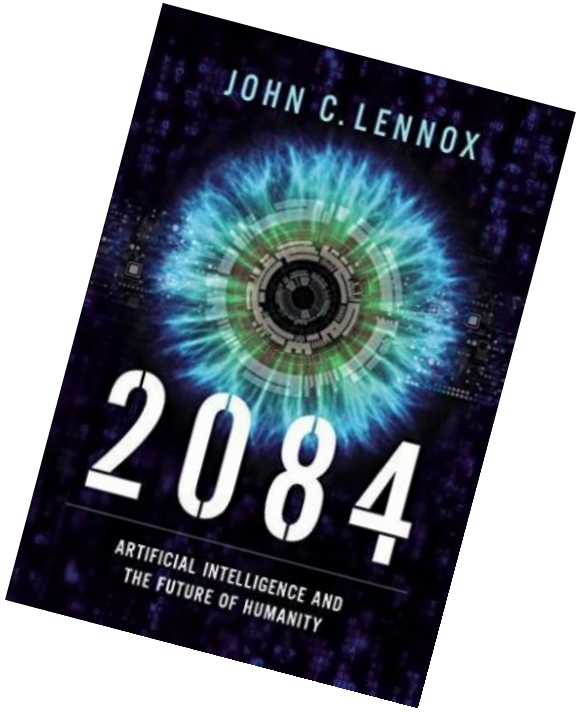
“The Genie is out of the bottle” - Prof Bill Earnshaw, genetic scientist at Edinburgh University

- Robotics – The Chinese Government has announced a development fund of $138 Billion for the development of Humanoid Robots.

Boston Dynamics ‘Atlas’ is reportedly already working for Audi, BMW and Hyundai.

Military drones and Robotic Mini-tanks are routinely deployed on the battlefield in Ukraine

Spiritual risks of AI



- **Idolatry** – 'They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator' Romans 1v25
- Devaluing the **sanctity** of life, as we elevate ourselves to create and destroy human life.
- Loss of **truth**, **wisdom** and Godly understanding. 'The LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding Proverbs 2v6. 'I am the way, the truth and the life' John 14v6
- Devaluing spirituality, conscience and consciousness. ' [God] breathed life-giving breath into his nostrils and the man began to live.' Gen 2:7
- Transhumanism – the new religion seeking man-made immortality.