# The Debate Over AI's Potential: Julia Angwin Delivers Critical Insight



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On May 15, 2024, investigative journalist and opinion writer Julia Angwin discussed the current state and future potential of artificial intelligence (AI) in her guest essay for The New York Times. Angwin observed that a six-month pause in AI development, proposed by leading researchers a year ago, did not materialize. Instead, AI's evolution has prompted questions about its actual utility rather than fears of it becoming overly powerful.

Angwin highlighted OpenAI CEO Sam Altman's recent promises of unprecedented AI advancements, which resulted in updates to make ChatGPT cheaper and faster—a development she considered underwhelming and indicative of AI not meeting its high expectations. Technological promises from various sectors, including a singer using AI to release new music and ChatGPT-4's alleged high bar exam scores (later found to be less impressive), have contributed to this skepticism.

Criticism is widespread among experts like cryptocurrency researcher Molly White, who likened AI's efficacy to that of blockchain technologies. AI's inconsistencies in fields such as law, medicine, and programming have been noted, with notable examples including generative AI agents performing poorly compared to human counterparts.

Despite AI companies, like Cognition, acknowledging their products' limitations and seeking improvements, Angwin suggests that AI may not see significant near-term advancements due to constraints like data scarcity and energy demands. This could result in AI settling into roles that require only basic performance levels.

Angwin concludes by questioning the extensive investments in AI, emphasizing the need to reassess our resource allocation toward this technology that might not deliver on its grand promises.