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The Funny Thing About Algorithm Aversion: Investigating Bias Toward AI Humor

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Abstract

Though humans should defer to the superior judgement of AI in an increasing number of domains, certain biases prevent us from doing so. Understanding when and how these biases occur is a central challenge for human-computer interaction. A proposed source of such bias is the perceived subjectivity of tasks. We tested this hypothesis using one of the most subjective tasks possible: Evaluating joke funniness. Across two experiments, we addressed the following: Would people rate jokes as less funny if they believed an AI created them? When asked to rate jokes and guess their likeliest source, participants evaluated jokes attributed to humans as the funniest and those to AI as the least funny. However, when we explicitly framed these same jokes as either human or AI-created, there was no difference in performance-level ratings. These results challenge the notion that task subjectivity always biases users against AI if the source is transparent.