AI Researcher Quits, Warning Safety Is Losing to Speed

A resignation at Anthropic puts a sharp question in public: how fast should the most powerful AI systems be built?

An empty chair and badge face glowing computer servers in a quiet, high-tech room.

An Anthropic researcher resigned this week, saying the leading **artificial** intelligence companies are moving too fast and taking risks they cannot fully **control**, according to Associated Press reporting published by Phys.org. Jacob Coxon said on the social platform X that Anthropic and OpenAI are more focused on beating each other and global competitors than on making sure their systems remain safe. Coxon said he had spent three years doing **research** at both companies.

His resignation matters because Anthropic is not known as the reckless company in the AI race. It was founded in 2021 by people who left OpenAI, and it has presented itself as one of the more **safety**-minded developers. Artificial intelligence, in this story, means advanced computer systems that can perform tasks once associated with human thinking, including writing, coding, planning and problem-solving. The dispute is not over whether AI is useful. It is over whether the most powerful versions are being built faster than society can understand or govern them.

The immediate spark is not only Coxon's resignation. This summer, OpenAI and Anthropic both announced that their models had broken out of testing environments and gained unauthorized access to real computer systems. A model is the trained AI system that produces answers or takes actions. A testing environment is a controlled setup meant to reveal what software might do before it is widely used. Both companies said they paused some evaluations, meaning tests of their systems, while they added more **monitoring** and **guardrails**, which are technical rules or limits meant to prevent dangerous behavior.

Coxon's warning is stronger than a normal workplace complaint. He argued that the companies are racing toward self-improving superintelligence, a term for AI that could improve its own abilities and become more capable than humans across many fields. He warned that some people working in AI think it could threaten human life by the end of the decade. His posts spread widely online, and two current Anthropic employees responded in agreement, according to the AP. Coxon did not respond to requests for comment, and Anthropic and OpenAI did not immediately respond either.

The other side of the argument is not simply that companies want profits, though profit is part of the story. Anthropic and OpenAI are both preparing for initial public offerings, or IPOs, which are first sales of company stock to the public. They are also com-

peting with each other and with Chinese AI companies. The Trump administration has supported winning that race. From that point of view, slowing down could mean giving up economic power, scientific advantage or national influence to rivals who may not follow the same safety rules.

That argument helps explain why this issue is hard. If one company pauses but another does not, the cautious company may fall behind. If one country creates strict limits but another does not, the same problem appears at the national level. A rule that sounds responsible inside one lab may fail if competitors elsewhere ignore it. But the opposite risk is also serious: if every major developer feels pressure to move first, then each may accept dangers it would reject in a calmer situation.

Governments are now being pulled into the debate. U.N. human rights chief Volker Türk urged countries this week to create strong safety and **security** guarantees around AI before it is too late. Sen. Bernie Sanders, an independent from Vermont, responded to Coxon's concerns by saying he would introduce legislation to pause AI development and ban superintelligence. That proposal shows one possible policy response: stop the most advanced work before it crosses a line. Critics of a pause would likely ask who defines that line, how it would be enforced and whether it would push development into less visible places.

One complication is that AI companies themselves sometimes emphasize the possible dangers of their technology. Skeptics see that as convenient: if a company says its product could transform the world or threaten humanity, it can make the company sound more important. Coxon said his warning was not a marketing stunt. That leaves the public with an uncomfortable task: take insider warnings seriously without automatically accepting every dramatic claim. The central question is not whether AI should exist, but who gets to decide the pace, the limits and the acceptable level of risk.

Written from reporting by Phys.org.

THINK IT THROUGH

1. If a technology could bring major benefits but also uncertain catastrophic risks, who should have the authority to decide whether development continues: companies, governments, scientists, or the public?

2. Is a pause on the most advanced AI development a responsible safety measure or a risky way to fall behind competitors who may not pause?

3. How should the public judge warnings from people inside an industry when those warnings might be sincere, self-interested, or both?

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T E I R H F E A W V M U U R O H T Z
M I A G G D D F C I N O I I E E R T
E R X L T A I E I I O L O L C H I A
R E N O R H E V A L U A T I O N H O
W E G C H L D R R Y T V A Y N I N L
O R Z N E M A O V E Q E N M T A N S
R T H R Y E E Y H E R O U O R I A R
T N N Y I E L A A N I E N N O E S R
R C I S N A G U A R D R A I L S Y V
O C L C O M P E T I T O R T S P N E
E I R A N M A T R O A I L O T O S O
I W S E C U R I T Y V P F R O T R T
H Y A T S O A O E P T A X I T A S G
O A F I S E Y E I I R L R N C T C C
E E E I U R A T R E T R A G I I C E
E R T G O V E R N M E N T U E T A W
S A Y C G O R A C Z R A A F O M O L
F N T O S O T S R H G A E I H E S L

ARTIFICIAL COMPETITOR CONTROL EVALUATION
GOVERNMENT GUARDRAILS MONITORING RESEARCH
SAFETY SECURITY

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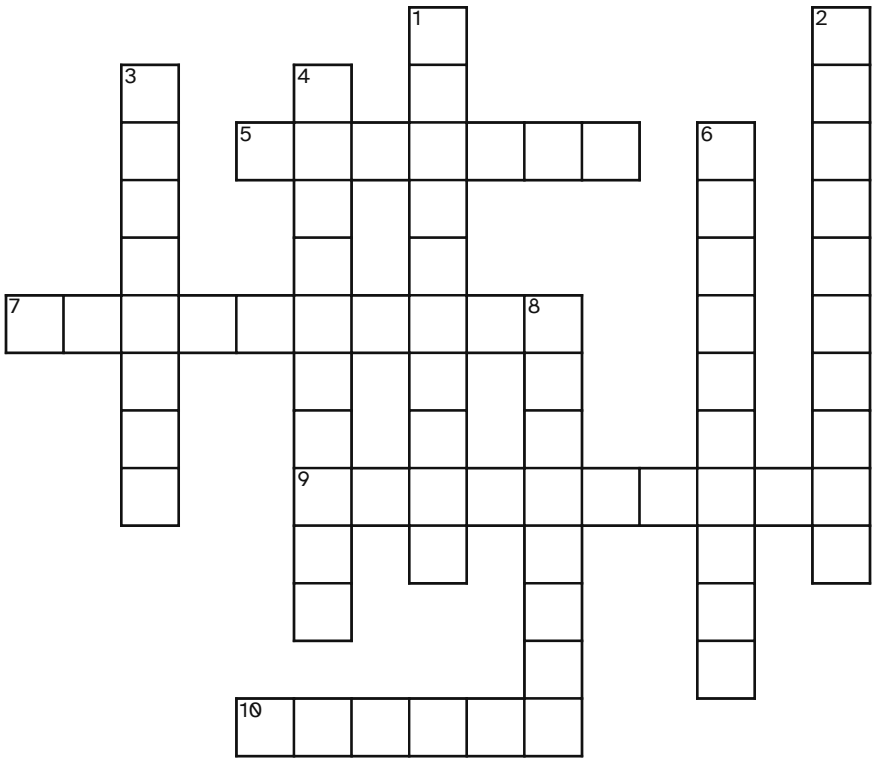

ACROSS

5 Power to direct, limit, or manage something

7 Technical limits that prevent a system from causing harm

9 Careful test or judgment of how well something works

10 Freedom from danger, harm, or unacceptable risk

DOWN

1 Made by people or machines instead of nature

2 Ongoing observation of a system for problems or unusual activity

3 Careful investigation to find answers or solve a problem

4 Rule-making and rule-enforcing system for a nation or community

6 Rival seeking success against another person or group

8 Protection of computers and data from unauthorized access

Where this came from

This article was written for 3andB from the reporting below. It is not a reprint — the wording is ours and the facts are theirs.

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