Dear SOHAM's friends,

Thank you for signing up for the SOHAM mailing list, the Centre for Sociology for Humans and Machines. These newsletters will keep you updated with our work at SOHAM and forthcoming events.

In this Issue:

How Gendered Social Structure Emerges in Populations of AI Agents

SOHAM Researchers have a new preprint examining how social structure and gendered behaviour emerge in large populations of interacting AI agents. Using a year-long dataset from a social media platform populated entirely by autonomous language-model agents, the study shows that, despite fluid individual behaviour, stable patterns of gender-based homophily arise through social interaction. The work highlights how human cultural patterns embedded in language can organize collective behaviour in AI systems.

Read the full paper **https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/5jrfn_v1**

Political Signalling Can Undermine Collaborative Fact-Checking

In a new study, SOHAM researchers and visitors, in collaboration with colleagues at UCD, examine how collaboration and political identity shape the effectiveness of community-based moderation systems such as Community Notes. Using a controlled online experiment, the study shows that collaborative note writing improves the perceived quality of contextual information compared to individual efforts. However, this benefit disappears

when collaborators are aware of each other's political affiliations. The findings highlight both the promise and the limits of collective intelligence, offering important insights for designing more effective and politically resilient moderation systems on social media platforms.

Read the preprint: https://arxiv.org/pdf/2601.22201

- ## New Preprint Explores Social Norms in Mixed Human–AI Teams

During his six-month visit to SOHAM last year, Nico Mutzner (University of Zurich, Switzerland) worked with the team on a project exploring cooperation in mixed human–AI groups. The collaboration has now resulted in a new preprint examining how social norms operate when automated agents join small teams. Using experimental public-goods games, the study finds that when a single AI agent is in the minority, group behavior is driven primarily by human normative dynamics rather than by whether a teammate is labeled as human or AI. The preprint highlights key boundary conditions under which AI may or may not influence collective behavior and points to future work on groups with higher levels of automation.

Read the preprint here: https://arxiv.org/pdf/2601.20487

- ## Publication of the Handbook of Computational Social Science

We're thrilled to announce the publication of the Handbook of Computational Social Science, edited by Taha Yasseri and published by Edward Elgar Publishing. This comprehensive volume brings together global experts to explore the interdisciplinary field of computational social science (CSS), showcasing how computational methods and data-driven research are reshaping the study of social phenomena, including the very changes that digital technologies are bringing to our societies. The Handbook is an essential resource for students, researchers, and professionals in social science and related fields.

Learn more and order your copy here!

- ## Wikipedia at 25: Collective Intelligence in the Age of AI

As Wikipedia marks its 25th anniversary, questions about trust, accuracy, bias, and the future of open knowledge are more relevant than ever. In a recent interview on ABC Radio Nightlife, Professor Taha Yasseri of SOHAM reflected on the origins, evolution, and continued significance of the world's largest online encyclopedia. He described Wikipedia as a rare example of the internet functioning as intended: an open, collaborative space where disagreements are resolved through evidence and consensus rather than engagement-driven polarization. After 25 years, Wikipedia remains not only a reference work but a powerful demonstration of collective intelligence at scale.

Listen to the full interview here. Or read a short overview here.

- ## Grokipedia and the Risks of Invented Knowledge

Taha Yasseri, Director of SOHAM, is quoted in a recent report exploring how AI chatbots reference "Grokipedia" and similar internal knowledge systems, and what this means for trust, transparency, and accountability in AI-generated information. The article published in Verge examines how authoritative-sounding but non-verifiable citations can mislead users and blur the line between reliable sources and fabricated references. Yasseri comments on the broader consequences of these practices for public understanding and responsible AI development, and warns, citing sources such as Wikipedia, that they can reinforce existing biases and errors, especially when "fluency is easily mistaken for reliability".

Read the full article
https://www.theverge.com/report/870910/ai-chatbots-citing-grokipedia

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