



Spotlight on AI, Innovation & Ethics: Unethical Designs and Everyday Interfaces

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Abstract:

This JOSHA Spotlight brings together five perspectives on how artificial intelligence is reshaping everyday interfaces and, with them, the ethical foundations of contemporary life. A covert persuasion experiment on Reddit and artificial intelligence (AI)-driven political disinformation show how opaque systems can bypass consent and weaken democratic trust. A hopeful case of AI-guided drug repurposing reveals the power of reusing old medicines while exposing gaps in current innovation models. In clinical practice, automated documentation promises efficiency yet risks erasing the “chitchat” that makes care relational and humane. A survey of leading AI tools situates these debates in a rapidly evolving ecosystem shaped by business

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Abstract

This JOSHA Spotlight brings together five perspectives on how artificial intelligence is reshaping everyday interfaces and, with them, the ethical foundations of contemporary life. A covert persuasion experiment on Reddit and artificial intelligence (AI)-driven political disinformation show how opaque systems can bypass consent and weaken democratic trust. A hopeful case of AI-guided drug repurposing reveals the power of reusing old medicines while exposing gaps in current innovation models. In clinical practice, automated documentation promises efficiency yet risks erasing the “chitchat” that makes care relational and humane. A survey of leading AI tools situates these debates in a rapidly evolving ecosystem shaped by business models, regulation, and geopolitics. Through this curated set of articles, JOSHA invites readers to ask not only what AI can do, but what types of societies and values its everyday designs are quietly building.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence Ethics; Persuasive Digital Interfaces; Democracy; AI in Healthcare; AI-driven Drug Repurposing; Platform Ecosystems and Geopolitics; Human-machine Interaction and Consent.



1. 'Unethical' AI Research on Reddit under Fire

By Cathleen O'Grady

This article exposes one of the latest scandals involving the University of Zurich. A group of researchers, whose names were not disclosed, conducted an experiment on the Reddit community r/changemyview. This online forum is a space where users share their beliefs and invite others to challenge or change their views. The aim of the research was to test the persuasive abilities of a large language model (LLM) in this context. However, the experiment was conducted without the users' consent, and participants were unaware that they were part of a study. This raises serious ethical concerns, especially since the Artificial Intelligence (AI) model reportedly used background information to increase its persuasive effectiveness. The case could not be formally prosecuted as Swiss law currently limits regulations on non-consensual human experimentation to health-related research. Additionally, the study faced criticism for its lack of scientific rigor, particularly concerning the methodology used to analyze the results.

This article was previously published in *Science*, Volume 388, Issue 6747, on May 8, 2025.

[Read the full article here.](#)

2. A.I. Is Starting to Wear Down Democracy

By Steven Lee Myers and Stuart A. Thompson

Today, it's common knowledge of artificial intelligence's ability to generate images, videos, and recordings with just the right instructions. Now, what could happen if this same approach were applied to political campaigns or election results? Fake news is increasing disproportionately, and real information is getting lost in the viral tide of social media. The inappropriate use of artificial intelligence has already produced fraudulent results on more than one occasion, forcing governments in different countries to redo their elections. Although this is not always the way AI is used in this context, it is crucial to understand that it is no longer possible to blindly trust what we consume for political decisions and to understand that this contamination of the information ecosystem will be one of the most difficult things to overcome as democratic societies.



This article was previously published in *The New York Times* on June 27, 2025.

[Read the full article here](#)

3. Doctors Told Him He Was Going to Die, Then A.I. Saved His Life - Scientists are using machine learning to find new treatments among thousands of old medicines.

By Kate Morgan

AI is being used to rapidly identify new applications for existing, approved medications, a process known as drug repurposing. As it is shown in the compelling story of Joseph Coates, who was saved from a rare blood disorder by an AI-generated drug combination, the technology has potential for treating the over 90 percent of rare diseases that currently lack approved treatments. Experts like Dr. David Fajgenbaum are pioneering this approach, using machine learning to compare thousands of drugs and diseases simultaneously, significantly accelerating a discovery process that was previously slow and labor-intensive. Although repurposing older, often generic, drugs lacks the high financial incentive for pharmaceutical companies that developing new drugs does, organizations like Every Cure are securing large grants to fund clinical trials for these life-saving discoveries. Ultimately, the source frames AI-driven drug repurposing as a hopeful and systematic way to uncover "treasure troves" of hidden cures that are already available.

This article was previously published in *The New York Times* on March 20, 2025.

[Read the full article here](#)

4. AI-Driven Clinical Documentation — Driving Out the Chitchat?

By Gordon D. Schiff, M.D.

AI is being widely adopted to automate the writing of clinical notes, saving physicians like the author from hours of administrative work. However, these AI systems are intentionally designed to filter out personal patient details, often dismissed as "chitchat", such as family events or job stress, which are not directly related to a billing diagnosis but are crucial for building trust and understanding the social context of a patient's life. The author frames this technological shift as part of



a larger battle for the "soul of health care" between an efficient, transactional model and an empathetic, relational one. While acknowledging that AI documentation is an "unstoppable tsunami" he warns that without a fundamental rebalancing of priorities, this efficiency will come at the cost of dehumanizing care and undermining the patient-clinician relationship. Ultimately, the article serves as a critique of a healthcare system that may use technology to increase throughput rather than to preserve the essential human connections at the heart of medicine.

This article was previously published in *The New England Journal of Medicine* on May 10, 2025.

[Read the full article here](#)

5. Die Toptools der Künstlichen Intelligenz - The Top Artificial Intelligence Tools

By Marcus Schwarze

The article provides a comprehensive overview of the main AI tools currently available, highlighting the difficulty of keeping up with the new applications and versions that are rapidly transforming the world of work and education. Key language models include ChatGPT-4o by OpenAI, considered the "altmeister" or "Swiss Army knife," and Gemini by Google, distinguished by its ability to analyze very long documents thanks to a one-million-token context window and its capacity to process up-to-date events. Grok 3 and Claude 3.5 Sonnet are also prominent: Grok 3 stands out for using real-time content from the X (Twitter) platform, while Claude 3.5 Sonnet focuses on generating sophisticated texts with humor and a strong emphasis on ethics.

Specialized tools such as OpenAI's Deep Research and Gemini Advanced are dedicated to deep, autonomous research, taking several minutes to thoroughly analyze numerous sources. AI also encompasses "answer engines" like Perplexity AI and You.com, which provide direct solutions with cited sources, avoiding long lists of links.

In addition, there are numerous content creation applications, ranging from image generation (Midjourney, Adobe Firefly) and video creation (Sora, Synthesia) to translation (DeepL) and meeting transcription (tl;dv). Finally, the AI landscape includes geopolitical and economic considerations, exemplified by DeepSeek R1



from China, which achieves high-quality performance but is subject to censorship, while offering significantly lower costs for corporate API use.

This article was previously published in *Digital Wirtschaft* on March 10, 2025.

[Read the full article here](#)

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