

#EqualAI

*Bulletin on Bias & Artificial Intelligence:
Issue 4, September 2020*

Spotlight of the Week: Congressman William Hurd



“The first step in the ethical use of AI is looking at what we’ve agreed on as a society. It’s wrong for human lenders to discriminate based on race for a home loan; we shouldn’t accept that in AI systems either. One of the reasons it’s so important for Americans to lead the way on AI developments is so that we also lead the way on AI ethics. We want to ensure that American values are incorporated into AI and not that of our adversaries.”

- Congressman William Hurd to EqualAI on 9/17/20

Hot Topics in Business and Technology 🔥

- **Twitter & Election Protocols:** Twitter announced tightening of security protocols in advance of the election, including password reset protocol and two-factor authentication (9/17).
- **Updates on TikTok Acquisition:**
 - Eyes look to the Trump Administration, which is expected to review the proposed acquisition of TikTok by Oracle (9/17).
 - Oracle would oversee TikTok's user data and security policies.
 - Under the proposed deal, ByteDance, TikTok's Chinese parent company, will continue to be a majority shareholder with headquarters in the U.S.
- **Tencent Games:** The Committee on Foreign Investment in the U.S. moved to investigate the security protocols of American gaming companies such as Riot Games and Epic Games Inc. that are affiliated or owned by Chinese technology company Tencent (9/17).
- **New Diversity Coalition for U.S. Patent Holders:** ‘Invent Together’ coalition launched to increase diversity among inventors with the goal of raising

awareness about the lack of diversity in patenting through social media campaigns, congressional briefings and lobbying efforts (9/17).

- **Nvidia To Acquire Arm for \$40B:** The leading U.S. graphics processing unit designer Nvidia announced plans to acquire British chip company Arm from SoftBank for \$40 billion. Nvidia's CEO Jensen Huang states this acquisition would create the "leading computing company for the age of AI" (9/13).
- **Chinese Hackers Charged:** Federal prosecutors charged five Chinese hackers for organizing advanced security breaches to steal source code and key business data from agencies and institutes around the world (9/16).
- **IBM Calls for Facial Recognition Regulations:** The technology company released a statement in support of Commerce Department adoption of new regulations over facial recognition surveillance technology to prevent human rights violations (9/11).
- **New Market for US Drone Makers:** Security concerns around Chinese drone maker DJI are drawing US security agencies towards US makers, such as Skydio, a startup previously focused on the outdoor sports industry (9/11).
- **AI and Wildfires:** Utility companies are investigating use of AI to reduce the risk of wildfires through drone monitoring of changes in visual landscapes (9/11).
- **Nintendo Games & Censorship:** Nintendo is now censoring language relating to COVID-19 in an attempt to prevent misinformation from spreading across their platform (9/16).
- **Facebook Offers New Climate Platform:** Facebook announced a new effort to find verified facts and resources about climate change on their platform. Facebook will continue to highlight false posts but will not remove false content unless they deem it as a cause of immediate harm (9/15).
- **Facebook Whistleblower & Election Meddling:** Sophie Zhang, a recently fired Facebook employee, came forward with accusations regarding Facebook's failure to respond to evidence of politicians using the social media platform to covertly manipulate elections and public debate globally (9/14).
- **Robot Tour Guide:** Visitors to Seika, Japan, will soon be greeted by an AI-powered robot to answer questions about tourism and government (9/11).
- **Inequality & Access to Technology:** Deutsche Bank published a report, 'America's Racial Gap & Big Tech's Closing Window,' on the increasing inequalities surrounding access to technology across the U.S. (9/2):
 - *"If one is concerned about basic Tech connectivity, access to Tech training, ability to muster Tech skills and other several structural and infrastructural inequities for survival, then the issue of privacy becomes a luxury."*
- **The World Economic Forum Published AI Ethics Guide:** The WEF outlined 12 steps for organizations to incorporate AI ethics into their practices, paying particular emphasis to risk/benefit assessment frameworks (9/11).

AI & Public Health

- **AI Powers the First at-home Covid-19 Test:** After performing an at-home nasal swab test, users take a photo of their test with Gauss' app which uses AI to deliver results in under fifteen minutes (9/16).
- **First Official Standards for AI in Clinical Trials:** An international body of medical experts announced the first official standards for clinical trials that

involve AI. These standards incorporate existing guidelines surrounding medical interventions such as drug development and diagnostic tests. (9/11).

- **Ambient Intelligence and Patient Care:** Researchers at Stanford published a paper on the use of AI to improve care and reduce fatal errors by building “ambient intelligence” for patient care settings. Ambient Intelligence, or Aml, an emerging sector of AI research, aims to create physical spaces that are sensitive and responsive to the presence of humans. For example, sensors and AI can immediately alert clinicians and patient visitors when they fail to sanitize their hands before entering a hospital room. The authors explain that such developments come with challenges: (9/9/20)
 - *“Similar to other technologies, transformation into clinical applications at scale must overcome challenges such as rigorous clinical validation, appropriate data privacy and model transparency. Thoughtful use of this technology would enable us to understand the complex interplay between the physical environment and health-critical human behaviours.” - Albert Haque, Arnold Milstein and Fei-Fei Li*

US Federal and State Government News

- **National AI Strategy:** Reps. Hurd, Kelly introduced a Resolution to create a National Artificial Intelligence Strategy. The bi-partisan recommendations include (9/16):
 - AI R&D:
 - Within government: provide funding for inclusive technical training within both defense and nondefense related US government programs.
 - Commit to foster technical education across the country for sustainable learning and skills development.
 - Open data sets to the public.
 - Make federal computing resources available to academic researchers.
 - New investment and export strategies to combat foreign competition and foster US innovation.
 - US standards for global use of AI, particularly involving surveillance.
- **Election Technology Research Act:** This Act would create a Center of Excellence in Election Systems at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) to foster secure and accessible voting, authorizing NIST and the National Science Foundation to research voting technology (9/16).
- **Defense Innovation Board Fall Meeting:** The Board addressed better testing protocols for AI systems and strategies for DoD to better attract and foster technical talent (9/16).
- **AI in Government Act Passes the House:** This new legislation aims to help small businesses and the education system remain competitive in the global economy (9/16).

EqualAI in the News

The Council on Foreign Affairs interviewed EqualAI senior advisor Michèle Flournoy about her inspiring career (9/11).

“I’ve actually always loved leadership and management... You inherit people with very different backgrounds, strengths, weaknesses, and styles, and you have to get them normed and formed as a team—bring the best out of each person, establish some common ways of working, and hopefully have a culture that’s not only productive and high-performing but also fun, that makes people excited about coming to work. I always loved that challenge.”

AI Around the World 🌍

- **China:** Continues its focus on innovation:
 - Former tech executives announced plans for a ‘domestic replacement’ investment fund (9/8).
 - President Xi Jinping urged the Chinese private sector to follow suit, urging for faster technological innovation and investment (9/11).
- **Israel & U.A.E.:** Mohamed Bin Zayed University of AI and Weizmann Institute of Science signed an agreement to collaborate on AI research. This is the first joint effort between universities from the UAE and Israel (9/13).
- **Israel:** An AI program claims to have predicted the spread of the coronavirus with over 98% accuracy using demographic data and LTZ data, without patient contact or physical testing (9/14).

Op-Eds: Top Picks of the Week 🤖

- **MIT Tech Review:** Abhishek Gupta and Victoria Heath argue that AI Ethics must account for the contextual diversity in which AI technologies operate (9/14):
 - *“The AI community should, indeed, agree on a set of international definitions and concepts for ethical AI. But without more geographic representation, they’ll produce a global vision for AI ethics that reflects the perspectives of people in only a few regions of the world, particularly North America and northwestern Europe.” - Gupta, Heath*
- **MIT Tech Review:** Karen Hao explores how algorithms are increasingly shaping children's lives, and suggests new guardrails to prevent harms.
 - *“Algorithms can change the course of children’s lives. Kids are interacting with Alexas that can record their voice data and influence their speech and social development. They’re bingeing videos on TikTok and YouTube pushed to them by recommendation systems that end up shaping their worldviews... Vosloo led the drafting of a new set of guidelines from Unicef designed to help governments and companies develop AI policies that consider children’s needs.”*
- **Brookings:** Diane Coyle reviews the trade-offs between prioritizing AI computing performance while maintaining transparency, and targets underlying policy issues as major road-blocks for ethical AI (9/15):
 - *“The first step, before deploying machines to make decisions, is not to insist on algorithmic explainability and transparency, but to restore the trustworthiness of institutions themselves. Algorithmic*

decision-making can sometimes assist good government but can never make up for its absence.” - Diane Coyle, University of Cambridge.

Upcoming Events 🎉

- ‘How AI Can Help People Back to Work,’ hosted by ITIF: [September 23](#).
- ‘Key Considerations for Responsible Development of AI,’ hosted by Montreal AI Ethics Security Group and the National Security Commn on AI: [September 23](#).
- ‘AI Ethics & Bias’ - AI and unconscious bias based on real life use cases,’ Marc Rodier on Ethics, AI and Biases: [September 24](#).
- Politico’s AI Summit, EU: [September 30- October 1](#).
- AI in Healthcare Summit, ‘Business and Academia for Innovations in Healthcare,’ co-hosted by MIT CSAIL and STEMM Global: [October 1-2](#).
- HAI Summit, ‘Triangulating Intelligence: Melding Neuroscience, Psychology, and AI,’ hosted by Stanford University: [October 7](#).