

Eric Schmidt: AI Could Worsen Our Misinformation Problem | The Atlantic

By Saahil Desai

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For years now, artificial intelligence has been hailed as both a savior and a destroyer. The technology really can make our lives easier, letting us summon our phones with a “Hey, Siri” and (more importantly) assisting doctors on the operating table. But as any science-fiction reader knows, AI is not an unmitigated good: It can be prone to the same racial biases as humans are, and, as is the case with self-driving cars, it can be forced to make murky split-second decisions that determine who lives and who dies. Like it or not, AI is only going to become an even more omnipresent force: We’re in a “watershed moment” for the technology, says Eric Schmidt, the former Google CEO.

Schmidt is a longtime fixture in a tech industry that seems to constantly be in a state of upheaval. He was the first software manager at Sun Microsystems, in the 1980s, and the CEO of the former software giant Novell in the '90s. He joined Google as CEO in 2001, then was the company’s executive chairman from 2011 until 2017. Since leaving Google, Schmidt has made AI his focus.

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