



Generative AI, Free Speech, & Public Discourse

**Tuesday, February 20, 2024
The Forum at Columbia University**



**COLUMBIA
ENGINEERING**



**KNIGHT
FIRST AMENDMENT
INSTITUTE at
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY**

Welcome

AI has been decades in the making, but the development of Generative AI tools like ChatGPT and Dall-E feels like a seismic shift in the relationship between humans and technology. Anyone experimenting with these new tools has had a glimpse of their creative potential and perhaps even seen the spark of so-called general intelligence. But many who have used them are left feeling uneasy, and anxiety about our AI future is widespread. Doomsayers abound, with some warning of dire harms for democracy and predicting a fresh deluge of disinformation that poisons our politics, erodes trust in societal institutions, and undermines the integrity of our elections.

Democracy depends on public discourse—the messy process of discussion and contestation through which individuals determine how they will be governed. It entails not just the election of representatives but a continuous, collective dialogue over what’s true, what can be trusted, and how we should move forward. Public discourse was once an entirely human activity, but now machines are in the conversation, too. Algorithms already influence our public discourse on many social media platforms, and GenAI tools will surely soon be shaping public discourse even more profoundly. Can we harness GenAI to enhance humans’ ability to think critically and to strengthen democratic processes? How can we harness GenAI’s benefits and mitigate its harms? What legal and ethical frameworks must we put in place to ensure that this new technology enhances rather than undermines democratic societies?

We’re delighted to be co-hosting this event to explore these questions. We are even more delighted to launch an ongoing partnership between Columbia Engineering and the Knight First Amendment Institute, born of our shared commitment to understanding how technologies interact with core civil and political rights, and to ensuring that democratic values are incorporated into new technologies. Today’s program is the first of our collaborations, but over the coming months we will be working together in other ways, including by co-sponsoring research projects focused on the issues that are the subject of this convening.

We’re glad to have you with us, and looking forward to today’s conversation.



Shih-Fu Chang
Dean
Columbia Engineering



Jameel Jaffer
Executive Director
Knight First Amendment Institute

Program

11:00 am - 12:15 pm

Welcome

Shih-Fu Chang, *Columbia Engineering*
Jameel Jaffer, *Knight First Amendment Institute*

Keynote 1A: Opening Up the Language Model Black Box

Tatsunori B. Hashimoto, *Stanford University*

Keynote 1B: Challenges for Conversational AI in the Era of LLM

Dilek Hakkani-Tür, *University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign*

12:15 pm - 1:00 pm

Lunch

The Forum West Atrium

1:00 pm - 2:15 pm

Panel 1

Empirical and Technological Questions: Current Landscape, Challenges, and Opportunities

Panelists

Alex Jaimes, *Dataminr*
Kathy McKeown, *Columbia Engineering*
Smaranda Muresan, *Barnard College*
Arvind Narayanan, *Princeton University*
Carl Vondrick, *Columbia Engineering*

Moderator

Shih-Fu Chang, *Columbia Engineering*

2:15 pm - 2:30 pm

Break

2:30 pm - 3:00 pm

Seed Funding Presentations

Introductory Remarks

Alberto Ibarguen, *President, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation (2003-2023)*
Katy Glenn Bass, *Knight First Amendment Institute*
Samar Kaukab, *Columbia Engineering*

Presentations

Kathy McKeown, *Columbia Engineering*
Lena Song, *University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, SSRC Digital Platforms Initiative*
Carl Vondrick, *Columbia Engineering*
Xia Zhou, *Columbia Engineering*

3:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Keynote 2: AI and Trust

Bruce Schneier, *Harvard Kennedy School*

3:30 pm - 3:45 pm

Break

3:45 pm - 5:00 pm

Panel 2

Legal and Philosophical Questions: Information Integrity, Trustworthiness, and the First Amendment

Panelists

Mike Ananny, *University of Southern California*
Nadine Farid Johnson, *Knight First Amendment Institute*
Camille François, *Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs*
James Grimmelman, *Cornell Tech and Cornell Law School*

Moderator

Katy Glenn Bass, *Knight First Amendment Institute*

5:00 pm - 5:15 pm

Closing Remarks

Shih-Fu Chang, *Columbia Engineering*
Jameel Jaffer, *Knight First Amendment Institute*

5:15 pm - 7:00 pm

Reception

The Forum West Atrium



PLEASE USE THE QR CODE BELOW TO ASK THE
PANELISTS QUESTIONS DURING THE DISCUSSION.



If you plan on posting about the symposium on
social media, please include the hashtag:

#GenAIFreeSpeech


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