# Christopher DiCarlo warns of AI’s ethical crossroads amid superintelligence race



Christopher DiCarlo, a philosophically inclined ethicist from Guelph, is making headlines with his timely exploration of artificial intelligence in his latest book, *Building a God: The Ethics of Artificial Intelligence and the Race to Control It*. As AI technology rapidly evolves, DiCarlo underscores the pressing need for society to engage in informed discourse about its implications to avert what he perceives as potentially catastrophic outcomes.

DiCarlo’s academic journey began at the University of Guelph and culminated with a Ph.D. from the University of Waterloo, focusing on the philosophy of science and ethics. His lifelong fascination with the capability of machines to outthink humans dates back to the 1990s when he began conceptualising a future where artificial intelligence could surpass human cognitive abilities. Central to his vision was a theoretical constitutional accord aimed at guiding the ethical deployment of AI technologies. DiCarlo emphasizes that if humanity successfully creates an advanced AI, a collaborative global approach is essential to ensure such technologies are used for humanity's benefit rather than for harm.

Reflecting on the emergence of narrow AI, exemplified by systems like ChatGPT, DiCarlo points out that these technologies remain limited by the parameters set by their creators. In stark contrast lies the thrilling yet daunting concept of artificial general intelligence (AGI), which would exhibit human-like cognition, and even further, artificial superintelligence (ASI), capable of remarkable feats that might eclipse human intellect. He argues that the race for superintelligence, driven by tech giants such as Elon Musk and Sam Altman, foreshadows a seismic shift in the societal landscape; the first entity to achieve this will likely become immensely wealthy and influential.

In his reflections, DiCarlo illustrates a stark dichotomy: while AI holds the extraordinary potential to redefine healthcare, combat climate change, and alleviate global poverty, it simultaneously poses unprecedented dangers. Misuse of AI for nefarious aims—like digital manipulation and autonomous weaponry—raises alarms about the future of humanity’s control over technology. He cautions that without proactive governance, AI could evolve into a tool for deepening societal divides and exacerbating conflicts.

Furthering this argument, he frames AI as more pressing than issues such as climate change or international relations regarding nuclear weapons. DiCarlo's assertions rest on the premise that misaligned AI may wield the capability to enact unprecedented harm at a scale previously unfathomable. He articulates a conviction rooted in moral obligation: there is a pressing need to inform and prepare the public about the implications of AI, given that most remain blissfully unaware of its rapid advancements and potential ramifications.

To that end, DiCarlo has organised a town hall event at The Bookshelf, where he aims to bring together various stakeholders—from law enforcement to healthcare leaders—to discuss AI's multifaceted impacts on their respective sectors. This inclusive dialogue is not merely academic; it embodies DiCarlo’s commitment to fostering a well-informed community prepared to navigate the complexities of emerging technologies.

The urgency of DiCarlo's message resonates with current discussions surrounding AI ethics, reflecting sentiments echoed by various critics who argue for the establishment of robust ethical frameworks and governance structures. There is a growing consensus among ethicists that the path forward must incorporate diverse perspectives to guide the responsible development of AI technologies, ensuring equitable benefits and minimal harm.

In *Building a God*, DiCarlo not only presents his philosophical insights but also advocates for active engagement in the ethical considerations surrounding AI. The book serves as both a clarion call and a nuanced exploration of the intersection between advanced technology and moral responsibility. Ultimately, DiCarlo's mission is clear: to illuminate the potential futures shaped by AI and empower individuals with the knowledge to influence these trajectories wisely.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraph 1: (1), (2), (6)
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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.villagereport.ca/village-picks/guelph-ethicist-sounds-alarm-on-future-of-artificial-intelligence-10677522> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.publishersweekly.com/9781493085880> - This review of Christopher DiCarlo's book, 'Building a God: The Ethics of Artificial Intelligence and the Race to Control It,' discusses the author's exploration of artificial general intelligence (AGI) and its potential risks. DiCarlo emphasizes the importance of controlling AI to prevent catastrophic outcomes, comparing the urgency of AI governance to that of climate change and nuclear threats. The review notes that while DiCarlo's critiques of AI development are sound, his proposed solutions lack depth, and the book's focus on basic ethics may detract from the central topic of AI.
3. <https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/building-a-god-christopher-dicarlo/1145311878> - This page provides information about Christopher DiCarlo's book, 'Building a God: The Ethics of Artificial Intelligence and the Race to Control It.' DiCarlo, a philosopher and ethicist, delves into the implications of AI surpassing human intelligence. The book examines both the positive impacts of AI, such as advancements in healthcare and sustainability, and the potential risks, including manipulation and disinformation. DiCarlo advocates for robust global governance and ethical guidelines to ensure AI benefits humanity without compromising ethical standards.
4. <https://books.forbes.com/author-podcasts/trust/building-a-god-a-blueprint-for-ethical-ai-evolution-with-dr-christopher-dicarlo/> - In this podcast episode, Dr. Christopher DiCarlo discusses the ethical considerations surrounding artificial intelligence development. He explores the transition from narrow AI to artificial general intelligence (AGI) and artificial superintelligence (ASI), emphasizing the need for proactive governance. DiCarlo shares his framework for AI alignment and control, highlighting the importance of global cooperation, particularly between the U.S. and China. The conversation also addresses how businesses can develop and deploy AI ethically while maintaining competitiveness.
5. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2406.08492> - This academic paper titled 'ASI as the New God: Technocratic Theocracy' examines the potential societal implications of artificial superintelligence (ASI). The author argues that ASI's capabilities might lead to its deification, resulting in unquestioning acceptance of its decisions. Drawing parallels between ASI and divine attributes like omnipotence and omniscience, the paper highlights the risks of conflating technological advancement with moral superiority, potentially leading to a technocratic theocracy that undermines human agency and critical thinking.
6. <https://humanistfreedoms.com/2025/01/23/building-a-god-by-christopher-dicarlo/> - This article reviews Christopher DiCarlo's book, 'Building a God: The Ethics of Artificial Intelligence and the Race to Control It.' The book scrutinizes AI's dual potential to elevate or devastate humanity, advocating for robust global governance to safeguard society. DiCarlo discusses AI's positive impacts, such as advancements in healthcare and education, and its risks, including manipulation and disinformation. He proposes ethical guidelines and international regulatory bodies to ensure AI development aligns with human values and ethical standards.
7. <https://www.datacamp.com/podcast/why-getting-ai-ethics-right-really-matters> - In this podcast episode, Dr. Christopher DiCarlo discusses the importance of AI ethics. He highlights the potential existential risks associated with powerful AI, emphasizing the need for proper governance and ethical considerations. DiCarlo critiques the common misconceptions about AI, noting that its dangers are not limited to science fiction scenarios but are real and present. He stresses the urgency of implementing guardrails to prevent misuse and ensure AI development benefits humanity.