

## Viewpoint: Capitalism and technology — Whose interests does AI serve, and what unrecognized dangers about data privacy are around the corner?

How do we get machine learning algorithms to do what we want them to do? The canonical example here is the paper clip maximizer. You tell a powerful A.I. system to make more paper clips and it starts destroying the world in its effort to turn everything into a paper clip. You try to turn it off but it replicates itself on every computer system it can find because being turned off would interfere with its objective: to make more paper clips.

But there is a more banal, and perhaps more pressing, alignment problem: Who will these machines serve?

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What about when these systems are deployed on behalf of the scams that have always populated the internet? How about on behalf of political campaigns? Foreign governments? "I think we wind up very fast in a world where we just don't know what to trust anymore," Gary Marcus, the A.I. researcher and critic, [told me](#). "I think that's already been a problem for society over the last, let's say, decade. And I think it's just going to get worse and worse."

[\*\*This is an excerpt. Read the full article here\*\*](#)