

AI News Digest

01/19/2026 - 01/25/2026

WEEKLY DIGEST: ARTS, MEDIA & PERFORMANCE

AI's Transformative Impact on Creative Industries

This week, discussions surrounding the intersection of AI and creativity have intensified, highlighting both opportunities and challenges. From blockchain's potential to enhance social media activism to the ethical concerns of AI-generated art, the articles reflect a growing awareness of AI's influence on artistic expression. YouTube's new AI likeness feature and TikTok's strategic restructuring further illustrate the evolving landscape of digital media. As these technologies advance, the implications for authenticity, bias, and cultural identity remain critical points of debate.

KEY FINDINGS

- ✓ Blockchain may offer solutions to AI-driven social media manipulation.
- ✓ AI integration in art is driven by corporate productivity culture.
- ✓ Using AI for personal communication risks diluting human connection.

IMPLICATIONS

- The rise of AI in creative fields may challenge traditional notions of authorship.
- Increased reliance on AI tools could lead to ethical dilemmas in content creation.
- Corporate interests may shape the future of digital platforms and user interactions.

1. From automation to authenticity: blockchain as a remedy to AI-enhanced social media activism

Category: Policy & Ethics

Departments: Political Science & Public Administration, Computer Science, Communication, Sociology & Anthropology

Topics: AI Ethics, Social Media Manipulation, Automated Systems, Big Data Targeting

Impact Score: 25.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 4

Educational Value: 4

Innovation / Novelty: 3

Practical Impact: 4

Interdisciplinary Potential: 5

Ethical / Policy Implications: 5

The article discusses the evolving landscape of machine-to-machine interactions and AI-driven manipulation within social media, highlighting the role of corporate entities in leveraging these technologies for political and commercial purposes. It notes that the complexity of measuring public representation on social platforms creates opportunities for misrepresentation and manipulation of public interests, facilitated by the use of fake accounts and automated systems. The piece emphasizes the transition from human commentators to sophisticated AI solutions that utilize big data for targeted social engineering, reflecting a systemic shift in how public opinion is shaped online. Additionally, it underscores the financial incentives driving this trend, as major telecommunications companies benefit from the mining and reuse of personal data in these contexts.

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00146-026-02867-4>

2. Garbage in, garbage out? How the monster of AI art reflects human fault, bias, and capitalism in contemporary culture

Category: Policy & Ethics

Departments: Art, Communication, Political Science & Public Administration

Topics: Generative AI, Copyright Ownership, Artistic Plagiarism, Social Media Algorithms

Impact Score: 25.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 4

Educational Value: 4

Innovation / Novelty: 3

Practical Impact: 5

Interdisciplinary Potential: 4

Ethical / Policy Implications: 5

Vincent Chang, director of the HMVC gallery, highlights the increasing integration of AI in the art world, particularly within corporate settings, attributing this trend to a culture of productivity that streamlines the creative process. The paper "Art as a Business: the Intention of Andy Warhol's Brand Images" discusses historical issues of plagiarism and copyright, using the recent legal cases involving Jingna Zhang and Jeff Dieschburg to illustrate evolving interpretations of transformative work and copyright ownership. The Luxembourg court's decision to uphold Zhang's copyright over her photograph, despite Dieschburg's painting being minimally altered, reflects a significant shift in legal perspectives on originality and transformation in art. Additionally, the article examines the impact of social media algorithms on artists' visibility and economic opportunities, emphasizing the disparities faced by those lacking access to resources and high-quality materials.

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00146-025-02799-5>

3. How the use of AI for apologies could cause the 'Canadian sorry' to lose its soul

Category: Research
Departments: Psychology, Communication, Political Science & Public Administration
Topics: AI Ethics, Social Implications of AI, Authenticity in Communication, AI in Personal Interactions

Impact Score: 25.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 4	Educational Value: 3	Innovation / Novelty: 4
Practical Impact: 5	Interdisciplinary Potential: 4	Ethical / Policy Implications: 5

A recent study published in **Computers in Human Behavior** by Scott Claessens and colleagues examines the social implications of using AI for personal communication. The research indicates that while AI assistance is acceptable for technical tasks, it negatively impacts perceptions of warmth, morality, and authenticity in social contexts, such as writing love letters or apologies. Even when users transparently disclose their use of AI as a collaborative tool, the recipients still view them as less caring and invested in the relationship. This suggests that reliance on AI for personal interactions may undermine social bonds, as recipients interpret AI-generated messages as a lack of effort.

<https://techxplore.com/news/2026-01-ai-canadian-soul.html>

4. YouTube to match OpenAI with AI likeness feature

Category: Business
Departments: Computer Science, Educational Leadership, Communication
Topics: Generative AI, AI-Generated Content, Content Authenticity Measures, User-Created AI Avatars

Impact Score: 21.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 2	Educational Value: 3	Innovation / Novelty: 4
Practical Impact: 5	Interdisciplinary Potential: 3	Ethical / Policy Implications: 4

YouTube announced plans to introduce features allowing users to create AI-generated versions of themselves for video sharing, a move that aligns with similar offerings from OpenAI's Sora app. CEO Neal Mohan emphasized that AI will enhance creative expression rather than replace human creators, addressing concerns about content quality and authenticity. The platform will implement measures to ensure transparency regarding altered content and combat low-quality automated outputs. YouTube reported that over one million channels utilized its AI creation tools daily as of December, indicating significant engagement with these new capabilities.

<https://techxplore.com/news/2026-01-youtube-openai-ai-feature.html>

5. TikTok Strikes Deal to Create New U.S. Entity and Loosen App's Ties to China

Category: Business

Departments: Political Science & Public Administration, Communication

Topics: AI Policy & Regulation, Data Privacy Concerns, Foreign Ownership Implications, National Security in AI

Impact Score: 14.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 1

Educational Value: 2

Innovation / Novelty: 2

Practical Impact: 3

Interdisciplinary Potential: 2

Ethical / Policy Implications: 4

The Chinese parent company of TikTok announced that a consortium of non-Chinese investors will establish an American version of the app. This initiative aims to circumvent potential federal restrictions on the platform in the United States. The move reflects ongoing concerns regarding data privacy and national security associated with foreign ownership of social media applications.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/22/technology/tiktok-deal-oracle-bytedance-china-us.html>