Navigating the Promise and Perils of Innovation: Law and Technology at a Crossroads

UC Davis School of Law and Jindal Global Law School Symposium

Friday, January 19, 2024

Innovation presents unparalleled opportunities to transform society. On the one hand, technological advances promise enormous benefits. For example, AI and Big Data analytics can improve numerous facets of society, from streamlining the delivery of government services to accelerating drug discovery to enhancing the efficiency of solar panel manufacturing. Relatedly, clean technologies can decrease greenhouse gas emissions and even sequester carbon, thus mitigating global climate change. On the other hand, technological advances can harm society in significant and unpredictable ways. AI and Big Data analytics present a host of harms, such as threatening privacy, enabling discrimination in automated decision-making, exacerbating unemployment, and facilitating fraud, deception, and misinformation. And widespread industrialization and technology-driven greenhouse gas emissions have created a climate change crisis that threatens humanity. Taken together, these harms enable the very real possibility of societal collapse.

Technology, however, is not bound to unfold according to an inexorable inner logic. Technology is a product of human civilization and is subject to political, economic, and legal forces. Indeed, as a body of applied knowledge, law is itself a powerful technology that can shape, refine, and improve the development and deployment of innovation in society. Law and lawyers have several roles to play in ensuring that technological advances serve the interests of society. First, law can help provide the proper incentives to both generate new technologies and hold parties accountable for their harmful effects. Through mechanisms such as intellectual property law, environmental law, health and safety regulations, torts, and contracts, law can calibrate incentives to create and rein in new technologies. At a more macroscopic level, law can regulate the pace of technological progress. By weighing the benefits of new innovations versus the risks they present, policymakers and the polity at large can balance the promises of new technology against the precautionary principle, which urges restraint rather than unbridled progress. Finally, law plays a significant role in distributing the benefits and harms of technologies to various individuals and communities. Technological advances create gains and losses, and law can help ensure equitable access to the fruits of innovation throughout society.

7:45 am Pacific   8:15 pm India   Welcome

- Peter Lee, Professor of Law, UC Davis School of Law

7:50 am Pacific   8:20 pm India   Panel 1

- Moderator: Peter Lee, Professor of Law, UC Davis School of Law

- Indranath Gupta, Professor and Dean of Research and Controller of Examinations, Jindal Global Law School

- Al Lin, Professor of Law, UC Davis School of Law
  - Carbon Dioxide Removal: Emerging Policies for an Emerging Technology

- Suvrajyoti Gupta, Associate Professor, Jindal Global Law School
  - Will AI Revolutionize Indian Judiciary?

- Elizabeth Joh, Professor of Law, UC Davis School of Law
  - Technological Innovation in Law Enforcement: Opportunities and Challenges

8:50 am Pacific   9:20 pm India   Panel 2

- Moderator: Indranath Gupta, Professor and Dean of Research and Controller of Examinations, Jindal Global Law School

- Stacy-Ann Elvy, Professor of Law, UC Davis School of Law
  - Commercial Law as a Source of Privacy and Cybersecurity Protection

- Krishna Deo Singh, Associate Professor, Jindal Global Law School
  - Personal AI and Hypernudging – At the Frontiers of Regulatory Limits?

- Peter Lee, Professor of Law, UC Davis School of Law
  - Synthetic Data and the Future of AI

- Avirup Bose, Associate Professor, Jindal Global Law School

9:55 am Pacific   10:25 pm India   Closing remarks

10:00 am Pacific   10:30 pm India   Close