

AI Safety Needs Fiction, Not Just Code

MIT redefines its reading program for the AI era.

10-year anniversary

MIT Reads Duration

The program is being reimagined as it reaches a decade of fostering connection through reading.

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MIT Reads, now in its 10th year, is shifting from nonfiction to fiction and memoir to deepen human understanding in the age of artificial intelligence. This evolution reflects a growing recognition that ethical and safe AI development requires more than technical rigor—it demands empathy, narrative intelligence, and shared meaning-making.

01

Stories Shape AI's Moral Compass

Fiction allows us to simulate consequences, explore identity, and grapple with free will—core issues in AI ethics. By engaging with narratives like Ted Chiang's 'Exhalation,' which explores consciousness in machines, MIT is cultivating a culture where AI development is guided by philosophical depth, not just algorithmic efficiency.

02

Shared Narratives Build Ethical Consensus

When a community reads the same stories, it creates a common vocabulary for discussing AI's impact. MIT's decision to center fiction in its AI-readiness strategy shows that governance isn't just about policy—it's about shared narrative frameworks that help diverse stakeholders align on values before deployment.

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