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### **The Whiteness of AI**

In this paper we problematize the often unnoticed fact that artificial intelligence (AI) is predominantly portrayed as white -- in colour, ethnicity, or both. We argue that this Whiteness both illuminates particularities of what (Anglophone Western) society hopes for and fears from these machines, and situates these affects within long-standing ideological structures that relate race and technology. We first present evidence for the prevalent Whiteness of real and imagined intelligent machines in four categories: humanoid robots, chatbots and virtual assistants, stock images of AI, and portrayals of AI in film and television. We then offer three interpretations of the Whiteness of AI, drawing on Black feminist philosophy and critical race theory, particularly the idea of the 'White racial frame'. First, we examine the extent to which this Whiteness might simply reflect the predominantly White milieus from which these artefacts arise. Second, we argue that to imagine machines that are intelligent, professional or powerful is (in Western culture) to imagine White machines because the White racial frame ascribes these attributes predominantly to White people. Third, we argue that AI racialised as White allows for a complete erasure of people of colour from the White utopian imaginary. Finally, we examine potential consequences of the racialisation of contemporary AI technologies, arguing it could exacerbate bias and misdirect concern.