

VALERIE VEATCH  
GHOST IN THE MACHINE

THE NEW CURRENT

"IT IS HARD FOR ME TO LOOK AWAY WHEN SOMETHING FEELS LIKE INJUSTICE, AND GHOST IN THE MACHINE IS VERY MUCH ABOUT THAT..."

## The Precursor to AI? It Might Be Eugenics.

A new documentary traces the ideology of "general intelligence" to the fathers of eugenics and statistics.

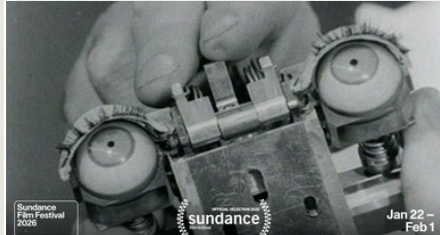
ARIELLA STEINHORN  
JAN 07, 2026

One documentarian named [Valerie Veatch](#) sought to understand the conditions that these workers face, while also grounding her film in the history and ideology that AI technology was born from. Veatch traces the origins of AI in theories of "general intelligence," which was first promoted by the eugenicist Francis Galton and his protégé Karl Pearson, who used statistics to justify imperialist or capitalistic goals as well as mark some human beings as worthy or unworthy.

# Forbes

## Understanding AI's 'Ghost In The Machine' Is Vital Amid Vast Spending

By [David Bloom](#), Senior Contributor. © I'm an LA-based columnist & consulta...  
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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT, NATIONAL

## Sundance 2026: The Masculinist and Eugenicist Origins of AI Are Writ Large in Documentary 'Ghost in the Machine'

PUBLISHED 2/12/2026 by AVIVA DOVE-VIEBAHN

A fast-paced Sundance documentary traces how modern AI's obsession with "intelligence" and innovation is rooted in the eugenicist, sexist and racial hierarchies that have long shaped Silicon Valley and its technologies.

Ms.  
MORE THAN A MAGAZINE. A MOVEMENT

## The Brief

Position *Ghost In the Machine* as a defining documentary voicing the origins, evolution, and ethical consequences of artificial intelligence. Establish the film as a Sundance must-see and build momentum toward distribution.

## CONTEXT

2026's Sundance arrived at a cultural inflection point: AI had become inescapable yet its origins remain largely unexamined. In lead up to its Sundance world-premiere, we harnessed the film's biggest assets--its over 30+ expert voices in the film to launch an impactful counter-narrative that positioned *Ghost in the Machine* as the AI film to watch.

## OUR APPROACH

- Built a narrative architecture that positioned the film at the intersection of AI development, the people behind today's systems, and the (un)ethical consequences unfolding in real time.
- Activated a press toolkit, equipping the talent featured in the film with assets and coordinated messaging.
- Facilitated a culturally attuned media plan spanning culture & ideas, tech & policy, and broadcast/podcast verticals, to reach both industry and unique audiences.
- Worked with various partners to facilitate in-depth panel discussions at the Sundance, and coordinated on the ground event support.

## RESULTS

### Forbes

- Secured an interview with tech writer David Bloom ahead of the premiere. His piece frames the film as essential context for Big-Tech spending.

### Hard Reset

- Secured an interview with tech writer Ariella Steinhorn—her piece, *The Precursor to AI? It Might Be Eugenics*, ran on her Substack. She also shared on her social channels.

### The New Current

- Fielded an inbound interview resulting in international, UK-based press in lead up to the premiere.

### Ms. Magazine

- Drove organic discovery across justice verticals: Ms. Magazine ran a review connecting the film's eugenics thesis to feminist critique of AI.