Class 8: Datafication: Future directions and ethical considerations

- Datafication is a social phenomenon. It has implications for individuals, organizations, and society in general.

Implications for individuals

- New ways of working
- Blurring boundaries between work and private lives
- Increased surveillance and monitoring potential

Source: https://pixabay.com/images/id-5333802/

Source: https://pixabay.com/images/id-1903997/

Source: see also Plesner & Hurst, 2019

Implications for organizations

Type of organization	Implications of datafication
Private Organizations (Businesses, Startups)	• Collaborative paradigm • Openness and the search for value outside of organizations • New visibilities and control • Data-driven competition
Public Organizations	• Data-based public service • Legitimation • Legislative struggles
Non-Governmental (Voluntary/Hybrid/Fluid) Organizations	• Personalization of politics • Digital-platform driven activism

Source: Adopted from Plesner & Hurst, 2019

Implications for society

- New value-adding infrastructures versus power concentration
- New opportunities for division of labor across the globe vs reinforcement of inequality

Source: Plesner & Hurst, 2019

What now?

Source: @markusspieske https://unsplash.com/photos/qjnAnF0jIGk
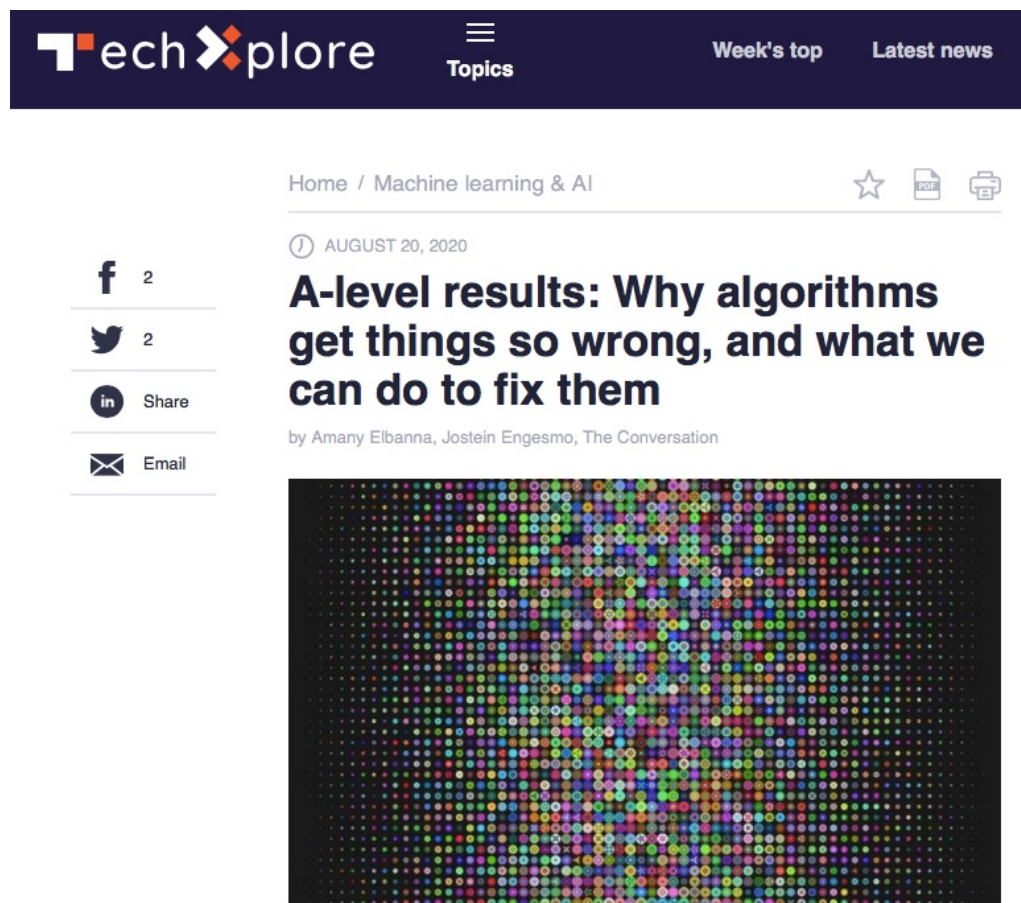
New problems, new questions
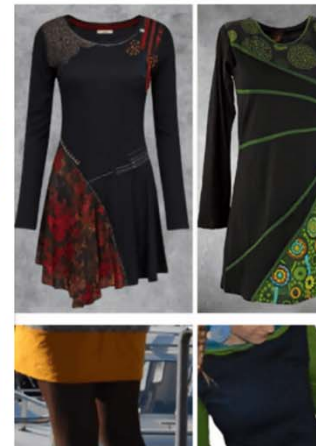
"Many of the assumptions about human life made by machine learning systems are narrow, normative and laden with error. Yet, they are inscribing and building those assumptions into a new world, and will increasingly play a role in how opportunities, wealth, and knowledge are distributed' (Crawford & Joler 2018, n.p.).

Gender Classifier	Darker Male	Darker Female	Lighter Male	Lighter Female	Largest Gap
Microsoft	94.0%	79.2%	100%	98.3%	20.8%
FACE++	99.3%	65.5%	99.2%	94.0%	33.8%
IBM	88.0%	65.3%	99.7%	92.9%	34.4%

Source: Joy Buolamwini. Gender shades.
http://gendershades.org.

Decenter technology in discourses on the dark sides of datafication

Gangadharan, Seeta Peña and Niklas, Jedrzej (2019)
Decentering technology in discourse on discrimination.
Information, Communication & Society, 22 (7). 882 - 899. ISSN 1369-118X

Ten simple rules for responsible big data research

1. Acknowledge that data are people and can do harm
2. Recognize that privacy is more than a binary value
3. Guard against the reidentification of your data
4. Practice ethical data sharing
5. Consider the strengths and limitations of your data; big does not automatically mean better
6. Debate the tough, ethical choices
7. Develop a code of conduct for your organization, research community, or industry
8. Design your data and systems for auditability
9. Engage with the broader consequences of data and analysis practices
10. Know when to break these rules

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