weizenbaum institut

WORKSHOP PROGRAM 13. JULY

Decisions, Choices & Reasoning in AI

Joseph Weizenbaum developed his critique of artificial intelligence during the first major wave of AI successes in the mid-1970s in his book "Computer Power and Human Reason: From Judgment to Calculation" (1976). Since then, the development and proliferation of artificial neural network algorithms has multiplied many times over, and they have become embedded in a wide range of technologies. These range from medical devices for body measurement and diagnosis, to surveillance and management software that makes personnel or allocation decisions, to algorithms in social media that decide the visibility and relevance of political worldviews, beauty standards and sexualities. Artificial intelligence, it is argued, is now an aid to human decision-making, and at the same time the expression of an operationalised mathematical logic that contains certain epistemological premises.

The aim of the workshop is to explore the different levels of meaning of decisions and thus to address the concepts of decision, choice and reasoning in order to find out what kind of decisions can be made by AI and what epistemological premises are embedded in them. The focus of the workshop is to discuss these terms in a small group setting and to gain new perspectives. We ask that if you attend, you also participate in the discussion.

10:30 – 11:00	Welcome
PANEL 1:	Decisions, Choices & Reasoning in their mathematical meaning
11:00 – 12:00	Input (20 min): **Hannah Fitsch** (Weizenbaum Institute) In this talk, I aim to clarify how the terms Decision, Choices and Reasoning are framed in their mathematical, instead of their philosophical or ethical, meaning and how these concepts are used in algorithmic processes. The concepts will then be examined to understand, which idea of reason(ing) they support and to what extent their use in artificial intelligence produces an eclipse of reason (Horkheimer/Weizenbaum).
PANEL 2:	Objectivity, Discretion, and Administrative Power in „Smart" Migration Policing
12:00 – 13:00	Input (20 min): **Michelle Pfeifer** (TU Dresden) Border and migration technologies are framed as smart and intelligent claiming to reduce discrimination and violence and purportedly enacting more humane and just forms of migration and border policing while significantly increasing the racial violence and discrimination of border regimes. In this talk, I will focus on the role of discretion, interpretation, and objectivity in decision-making processes as they are envisioned and impacted by so-called "smart" bordering projects. I suggest that analyzing algorithmic modes of governmentality, surveillance, and administrative power from the explicit vantage point of migration sheds light on how we can understand and challenge "smart" migration policing.
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch

PANEL 3:	Digital Moderation of Obscenified Bodies
14:00 – 13:00	<u>Input (20 min)</u>: **Corinna Canali** (Weizenbaum Institute) Through visual ethnographic research, genealogical methods, and an-archival work as qualitative methods of critical inquiry, I analyse the digital obscenification of specific nudities via the automation and hegemonic amplification of biased revealing concealments historically employed to mark and cover obscenity in visual production/consumption in western modernity (i.e. the fig leaf). My work, focusing on the digital moderation of objectionable/obscenified bodies erased from the digital, investigates the presence of underlying obscenifying censorship across UGC that is rendered invisible, silenced users, partially disclosed policies, black-boxed algorithms, and blurry power networks of mutual influence/capitalization whose affective force results in the increased normative capitalisation of individual expression.
PANEL 4:	Algorithms Don't Have a Future: On the Relation of Judgement and Calculation
15:00 – 16:00	<u>Input (20 min)</u>: **Daniel Stader** (University of Halle-Wittenberg / Weizenbaum Institute) Current debates about the replacement of human judgement by machine calculation have a history that goes back at least to the middle of the last century. Joseph Weizenbaum titled his 1976 book Computer Age and Human Reason: From Judgment to Calculation, and the number of contributions critical of machine decision making in health care, jurisdiction or warfare has increased enormously over the last decade. Rarely, however, have these contributions been accompanied by sustained conceptualisations that focus on the epistemic and pragmatic differences between judgement and calculation. In my paper, I introduce the philosophical concept of judgement and contrast it with the properties of algorithms. I aim to show, that judgement cannot be and is not replaced by (algorithmic) calculation, but that algorithms can be used and referred to in more or less prejudiced and reflected as well as opaque and transparent ways.
16:00 – 16:15	Coffee Break
16:15 – 17:00	**Wrap-up & discussion**

EVENING EVENT: Keynote by Orit Halpern Automating Freedom: Neo-liberalism, Artificial Intelligence, and Politics	
18:30 – 18:45	Welcome
18:45 – 19:15	**Keynote by Orit Halpern:** **Automating Freedom: Neo-liberalism, Artificial Intelligence, and Politics**
19:15 – 19:45	Panel with Orit Halpern (TU Dresden / Chair for Digital Cultures), Hannah Fitsch (Weizenbaum Institute) and Alexandra Keiner (Weizenbaum Institute)
19:45 – 20:00	Open Q&A
20:00 – 22:00	Reception

To register for the workshop, please send an email to alexandra.keiner@weizenbaum-institut.de
Please note that the workshop is limited to 20 participants. We ask that if you attend, you also participate in the discussion, as this is the heart of the workshop.