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TAMING THE MACHINES

MORAL AGENCY AND MACHINE LEARNING

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PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES

About the lecture

It is often claimed that machine learning does not use classification systems assigning people to 'protected' categories and that therefor it is unbiased. However, its effects often include clear value judgements and political bias. I present a framework for thinking through the question of whose decisions get folded into machine learning and for developing an analytic framework for their exploration. I examine especially the claim that there is no role for classification in machine learning: to the contrary, the political act of classification recurs at each of the many levels at which it operates – from deciding what is 'good' data to input, through the reification of categories (and its political implications) through our understanding of users. I briefly compare policy frameworks around machine learning in the United States and Europe, and suggest a broadening of these based around empirical studies of the practice of machine learning, arguing that much policy is deficient precisely because it blackboxes practice.

Wednesday, 19. January 2022, 18:15 – 19:45 (CET)

Flügelbau West, 2. OG, Raum W221
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http://uhh.de/inf-eit on a timely basis.

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