

Automating Welfare – Promises and Challenges

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Registerforskning 2019 – Dagens utmaningar och morgondagens möjligheter



I fjol inträffade flera incidenter där ett stort antal brev om sanktioner inte kom ut efter att ha "fastnat i en server", något som fick myndigheten att undersöka det automatiserade beslutssystemet närmare. Foto: Lars Pehrson/SvD/TT

SVT avslöjar: Datafel kan ha skapat tiotusentals felaktiga beslut hos Arbetsförmedlingen

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Ett allvarligt systemfel hos Arbetsförmedlingen gör att mer än vart sjunde beslut om indraget aktivitetsstöd kan vara felaktigt. Totalt kan

Efter robothaveriet: AF måste rätta uppemot 30 000 felbeslut

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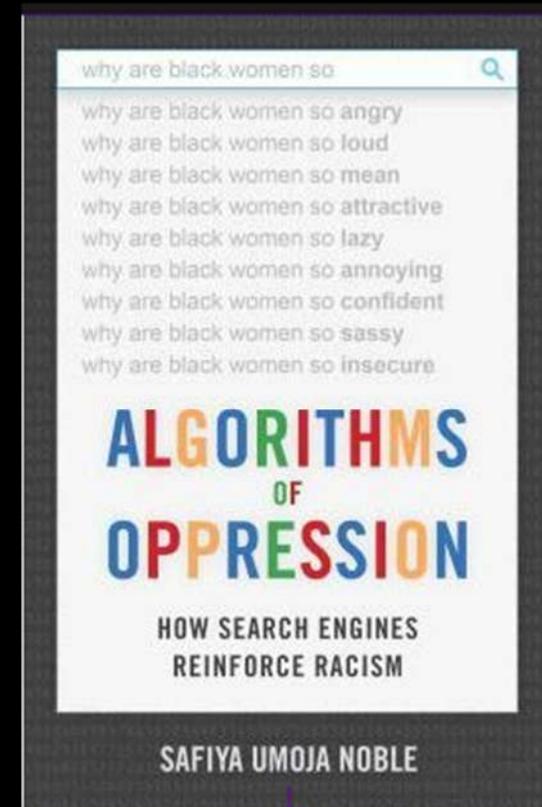
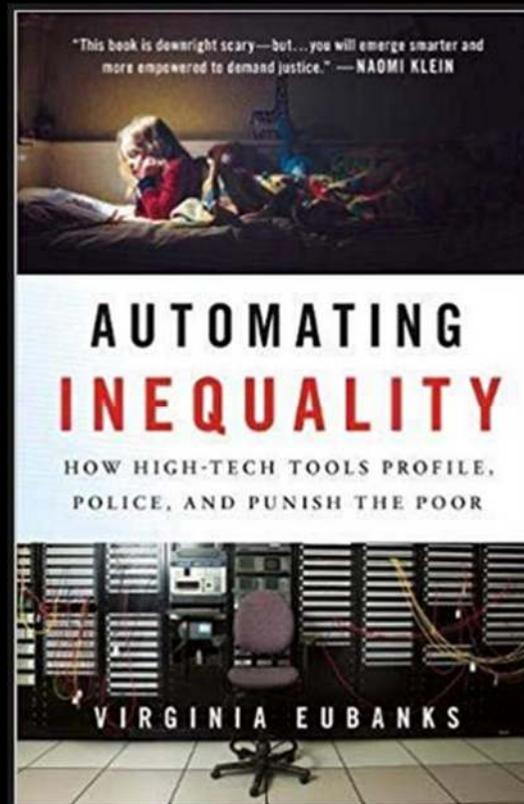
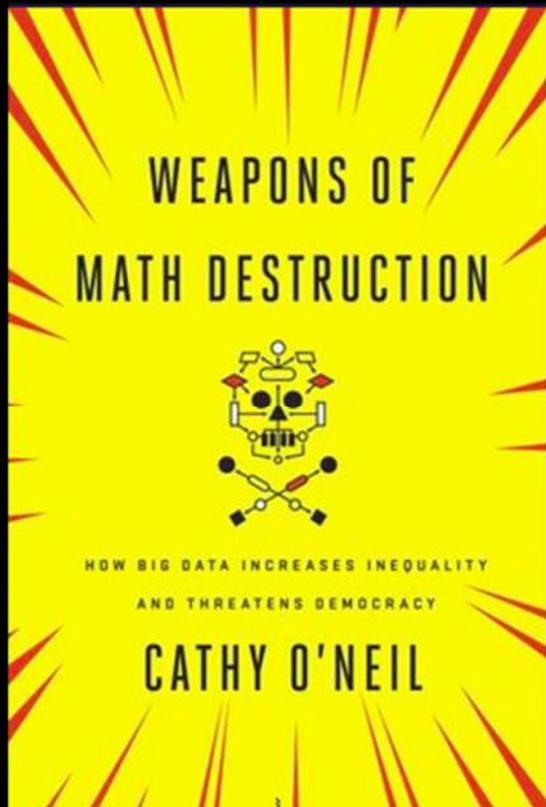
Uppemot 30 000 felaktiga beslut måste korrigeras efter Arbetsförmedlingens robothaveri. De flesta handlar om felaktigt stoppade ersättningar. Men det kan dröja innan alla får tillbaka sina pengar – och generaldirektörens tidsplan har redan spruckit.

SVT [avslöjade i februari](#) att Arbetsförmedlingen upptäckt allvarliga fel i en beslutsrobot som sedan 2015 fattat beslut om sanktioner mot arbetslösa som misskött sin aktivitetsrapportering.

Tusentals beslut om varningar och indragen ersättning misstänktes vara felaktiga, och Arbetsförmedlingen [fick kritik för att ha inte ha gått ut](#) öppet med upptäckten förrän efter SVT:s avslöjande.

När generaldirektören Mikael Sjöberg [kallades till riksdagens arbetsmarknadsutskott](#) den 5 mars lovade han dock snabba åtgärder för de drabbade.

Critical algorithm and data studies



Social risks and policy concerns

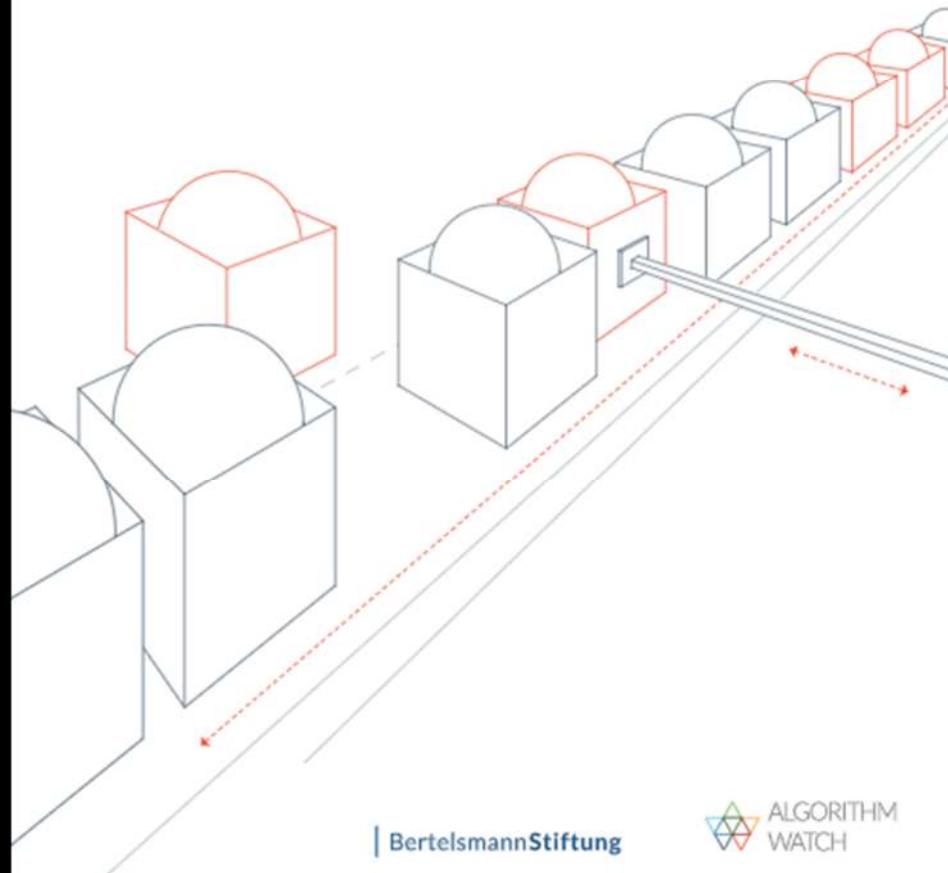
- Fairness and equity
- Transparency and scrutiny
- Accountability
- Robustness and resilience
- Privacy
- Liability

Automating Society

Taking Stock of Automated Decision-Making in the EU



A report by AlgorithmWatch in cooperation with Bertelsmann Stiftung, supported by the Open Society Foundations



BertelsmannStiftung

ALGORITHM
WATCH

Definition ADM

- “A software system – including its testing, training and input data, as well as associated governance processes – that autonomously or with human involvement, takes decisions or applies measures relating to social or physical systems on the basis of personal or non-personal data, with impacts either at the individual or collective level.”
(Algo:aware report)
- process of implementing and delegating tasks to digital systems— both rule- and knowledge-based
- One pre-condition for automated decision-making is the process of datafication, namely the quantification of social life at large and the production of big data → role of directories

Typology of ADM

- Decision trees (if-then instructions, no complex mathematical models): Trelleborg model
- Matching algorithms: Stanford algorithm matching refugees with new host country
- Sorting algorithms: Austrian Employment Services
- Predictive algorithms: Child abuse prediction in Denmark

ALVA MYRDAL och GUNNAR MYRDAL

**KRIS
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FRÅGAN**

BONNIERS

Folkhemmet 4.0: Automating the Welfare State

- How is technological change through automated decision-making imagined and motivated by actors involved in and those affected by the automation process? (algorithmic imaginations)
- How is automated decision-making implemented and regulated? (algorithmic implementations)
- How do algorithm-based models for automated decision-making transform the relations between public sector institutions and citizens? (algorithmic implications)

Ongoing research on automating welfare

- Exploring the politics of registers/ directories and their use for automation in the welfare sector
- Data collected become proxies for decision-making
- Mapping of automated decision-making across all public agencies in Sweden (Freedom of information requests)
- In-depth study of the Employment Services (ethnographic methods including

Conclusion

- Question of changing values with datafication → values and norms important part of training of civil servants, perceived as third pillar of democracy (as a mediator between government and citizens)
- Loss of autonomy and discretion in the decision making of civil servants
- Discrepancy between the imaginary of disruption / digital imperative and the degree of implementation
- Welfare state institutions and the related bureaucracies built on the idea of control and support → focus on control rather than support?
Individualization of structural inequalities and exclusion?
- Emergence of new welfare state models: from new public management to algorithmic public services (based on datafication and algorithmic automation)?