

Category: **Student Work**

Project: **A. Text: A Text, Algorithmic Text, Artificial Text**

What was the challenge?

“Through algorithms, one can see through human society.”

Algorithms are considered neutral. They are actually not because they are man-made tools. Social, political and personal aspects perform a significant role in the production and usage of such tools. Besides, data, learning material for algorithms, are completely same as society.

For these reasons, algorithms (can) perform a task that no one has expected: human discrimination. But not everyone is discriminated by them, but only those who are neither male, white-skinned, heterosexual nor indigenous. This reality is called “algorithmic bias”.

These algorithms are already being widely applied in various fields in innumerable countries. And more than half of the population is being/can be unknowingly discriminated.

What was the solution?

Being mindful of the above facts, the following scenario was developed and enacted. A dataset for an algorithm* was created, based on the collection of texts about “algorithmic bias.” After learning from this dataset, the algorithm wrote four texts, which are contentwise and stylistically different. Concurrently, the project author also wrote a text, based on the same dataset. Its sub-topics are blind trust in technology, fragile and non-inclusive data, examples and reasons for discriminatory algorithms, and ways to digital democracy.

(* Specifically, the algorithm “recurrent neural network” was applied. RNN operates on the linear progression of time. Thus, it is being employed in the field of language, music, time series prediction, etc.)

These five texts are comprised in the book *A. Text: a text, algorithmic text, artificial text*. It is a simple and funny guidebook on algo-

rithms for those who

1. use computers, smartphones, apps, and/or Internet,
2. are neither a programmer, a mathematician, nor a statistician,
3. reside in a country, where citizens are being digitally administered.

What was the effect?

The first motive of making this guidebook was to understand the following questions, as a non-programmer. What is an algorithm? Which influences algorithms and artificial intelligence have on me and on (international) society? What are the meanings of *generated texts*? What might the future of books look like? Above all, how can we create objective algorithms in order to build a (digitally) equal and democratic society?

The same questions might/should be asked to the people as well, who reside in a society, which is socially, economically, administratively, and/or politically assisted/ruled by algorithms and artificial intelligence. By reading this guidebook and trying to answer these questions, the first and the most important step will be taken towards awareness of the importance of understanding algorithms, their current application, and feasible negative and positive impacts by them.

A. Text: a text, algorithmic text, artificial text fills a lacuna between the present, the possible future, and believing and imagining algorithms.

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