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Experimenting with the “Not Yet”

Current applications of predictive or even prescriptive practices based on Big Data are found in a whole variety of fields ranging from predictive medicine to predictive policing. They are used for the optimization of individual behaviour and the optimization of the overall behaviour of a social system. However, humans may not only behave as intended but also act in a subversive way demonstrating that “individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application” (Foucault). One could use fictional data and experiment with predictive algorithms to generate alternative futures and alternative narratives. Used in such a way predictive algorithms are “dispositifs” in the Foucauldian sense possessing the dual structure of manifestation of power and the possibility of subverting it. Such a new way of engaging with technology could foster the creativity of the users and open up new perspectives, a novel way of futures thinking.