

PWM-CS-HS2: Computational Social Science II
Artificial Intelligence and Democracy
Syllabus



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Course Description

As Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies advance, they increasingly shape how democratic and autocratic governments operate, how political actors communicate, and how citizens engage with the public sphere. This seminar offers an in-depth and interdisciplinary examination of the relationship between AI and democracy, combining foundational knowledge of AI systems with cutting-edge research on their political and societal implications.

The course begins with an introduction to core concepts: *What is AI? How does it work? And under what conditions can it be effectively and safely applied?* Building on this technical and conceptual groundwork, we explore how AI affects democratic institutions and processes—such as public discourse, elections, political communication, and regulatory governance—as well as how AI technologies are used by autocratic regimes for control and surveillance.

Weekly sessions are structured around thematic case studies and comparative readings that examine topics such as:

- Foundations of AI and its alignment with human values,
- Regulatory efforts and the politics of AI governance,
- The use of AI in public administration and service delivery,
- AI's role in journalism, public debate, and misinformation,
- Campaigning, microtargeting, and opinion shaping through AI,
- The strategic deployment of AI in authoritarian regimes.

Students will engage with contemporary scholarly debates through active discussion, critical reading, and presentations based on empirical research and theoretical analysis. The seminar draws on examples from across democratic and autocratic systems, with an emphasis on how AI technologies interact with broader processes of digital transformation, institutional change, and value contestation.

For any questions regarding the course, please contact Ms. Katharina Kachelmann (katharina.kachelmann@uni-bamberg.de).

Learning objectives:

- Develop an advanced understanding of key concepts, theories, causal relationships, and research methods related to AI and democracy;
- Gain familiarity with core paradigms in computational social science;
- Apply interdisciplinary theories and approaches to the study of digital transformation and democratic governance.

1 Course requirements

1.1 Regular and active participation

This course is structured around in-depth discussions of the required readings. To fully benefit from these sessions, students are expected to read all assigned texts in advance and come prepared to engage actively in class discussions. Taking notes while reading will help you retain key arguments and contribute more effectively to seminar dialogue.

Background Readings:

- On taking notes: Ahrens, S. (2022). *How to take smart notes: One simple technique to boost writing, learning and thinking* (2nd ed.). (Original work published 2017).

To guide your reading and prepare for discussions, consider the following questions (not all questions might be applicable to all texts):

- What theoretical framework do the authors draw on, and how does it shape their analysis?
- How are key concepts defined and applied?
- What are the central research questions?
- What hypotheses do the authors propose, and how are these developed?
- What methodological approach is used, and why is it appropriate for the research question?
- What phenomena do the authors investigate?
- What types of evidence are presented?
- What mechanisms do the authors suggest explain the observed outcomes?
- What are the key findings?
- How persuasive is the overall argument? (e.g., How do the findings relate to or challenge other work? How do they align with your own observations?)
- Are there alternative approaches or methods you would recommend to address the same question?
- In which aspects does the text succeed particularly well?
- Which elements of the text do you find unclear or difficult to understand?
- What is the broader significance of the text — for scholarly debates, policy discussions, or societal issues?

If any of the terms or concepts used above are unfamiliar, you may find the following background readings helpful:

Background Readings:

- Gerring, J. (2012). *Social science methodology: A unified framework* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139022224> (Original work published 2001).
- Howard, C. (2017). *Thinking like a political scientist: A practical guide to research methods*. The University of Chicago Press.

1.2 Presentation

Each participant will be responsible for a short presentation on one of the assigned texts related to the weekly topics. The goal of the presentation is to introduce the assigned text, summarize its core argument, identify the phenomenon under investigation, and explain the methodological approach taken by the authors. Please refer to the presenters' guide below to support your analysis.

To prepare your presentation, start with the text assigned to you and connect it to the required readings for your session. The background readings may also be useful—especially if you plan to explore this topic further in your written essay. However, these texts are only a starting point. You are expected to go beyond them by consulting relevant academic literature and, where appropriate, high-quality journalistic coverage or policy reports.

During the first session, each student will be assigned a topic from the listed readings for presentations. Please keep the following considerations in mind in preparing your presentation:

- Please plan your presentation to take about 10-15 minutes;
- Please prepare a slide deck with a presentation program of your choice (except for Prezi);
- In preparing the presentation please follow the guidelines discussed in the first session;
- Discuss your plan for the presentation with the lecturer at least one week before your presentation date;
- Please prepare a handout of one to two pages for your fellow students, summarizing the main points of your presentation;
- Upload the handout on the day your presentation is due to the assignment folder on the course's VC repository. Use the following template for the filename "your_last_name-handout.pdf";
- The presentation will be graded and contribute 30% to your final grade.

If you do not follow these guidelines this will be reflected in your grade.

Background Readings:

- Schwabish, J. (2017). *Better presentations: A guide for scholars, researchers, and wonks*. Columbia University Press.

1.3 Presenters' guide—Guiding questions for presenters

Use the following questions to structure your presentation and deepen your engagement with the assigned readings. Not all questions will apply to every text, but they offer a flexible framework to help you summarize, analyze, and contextualize your topic.

1. Conceptual framing

- What is the central research question?
- What phenomenon does the text investigate?
- What key concepts are introduced, and how are they defined?
- What theoretical framework guides the analysis?

2. Empirical focus

- What are the main hypotheses or expectations?
- What case(s) or examples does the author use to illustrate their claims?
- Who are the relevant actors, and how are they (not) engaging with AI?
- What mechanisms are proposed to explain the observed outcomes?

3. Methods & evidence

- What methodological approach is used (qualitative, quantitative, computational, etc.)?
- What types of data or evidence are presented?
- How do the authors justify their methodological choices?
- Are there limitations or potential biases in the approach?

4. Democratic and societal implications

- What problems, conflicts, challenges, or opportunities emerge from the use of AI in this context?
- What are the potential consequences for democratic processes or institutions?
- Whose values or interests are embedded in the use or governance of AI?
- What normative vision of democracy or governance does the text imply?

5. Context & relevance

- How does this case connect with other cases discussed in the course?
- Is this phenomenon new, or does it reflect longer-standing dynamics?
- Are there recent developments (technological, legal, political) related to this topic?
- What is the broader relevance of the text for scholarly or public debates?

6. Critical reflection

- What aspects of the argument are persuasive? Where is it weak or underdeveloped?
- What assumptions are made—explicitly or implicitly?
- How might the conclusions change in a different political or cultural setting?
- Are there alternative approaches or explanations you would consider?
- What parts of the text did you find confusing or in need of clarification?

1.4 Term paper

Participants will be asked to hand in a term paper. Please adhere to the following guidelines:

- **Style Guidelines:**
 - Font: Times New Roman, 12 pt;
 - Line spacing: 1.5;
 - Margins: 2.5 cm left and right, 2 cm top and bottom;
 - Text alignment: Block format;
 - Paragraphs: First line of each paragraph should be indented.
- **Citation Style:** Please follow the American Psychological Association (APA) citation guidelines. You may use the APA style available in your reference management software.
- **Cover Page:** Include the following information: university, department, course title, paper title, your full name, matriculation number, current semester, study program, and email address.
- **Length:** Approximately 5,000 words ($\pm 10\%$).
- **Submission Deadline:** The paper must be uploaded to the VC platform by **September 30**. Extensions will only be granted in the case of officially certified illness.
- **File Naming Convention:** Please name your file using the following format: `your_last_name-paper.pdf`

- **Grading:** The term paper will be assessed and will account for 70% of your final grade.

Background Readings:

- Basbøll, T. (2018). The paper. *Inframethodology*. https://blog.cbs.dk/inframethodology/?page_id=614
- Becker, H. S. (1998). *Tricks of the trade: How to think about your research while you're doing it*. The University of Chicago Press.
- Becker, H. S. (2020). *Writing for social scientists: How to start and finish your thesis, book, or article* (3rd ed.). University of Chicago Press. (Original work published 1986).
- Howard, C. (2017). *Thinking like a political scientist: A practical guide to research methods*. The University of Chicago Press.

1.5 Policy on AI-enabled applications (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, and others)

You have likely encountered discussions about the potential of tools like ChatGPT to assist with writing and other academic tasks—and perhaps you've already experimented with them. This is strongly encouraged. There is every reason to believe that AI-enabled assistants will become integral to future work and research environments, whether in software development, data analysis, or administrative tasks. Familiarizing yourself with these tools, and understanding their capabilities and limitations, is both valuable and necessary.

That said, their use in academic contexts requires careful consideration. Research papers are assigned not simply to produce a final product, but to give you repeated opportunities to practice, develop, and refine essential academic skills. These include formulating arguments, structuring complex ideas, synthesizing evidence, and writing with clarity and precision. If you rely too heavily—or too early—on AI-generated content, you risk undermining your own learning.

A productive approach to using AI tools is to treat them as partners in reflection rather than authors. First, complete a task independently. Then, compare your work with AI-generated output. Reflect on the differences: Is your approach clearer? More accurate? Does the AI reveal blind spots in your own thinking—or vice versa? This kind of critical engagement not only deepens your understanding of the topic but also helps you assess the reliability and usefulness of the tool itself.

A word of caution: Do *not* use ChatGPT or similar applications to draft or initially write sentences and paragraphs in your paper. While such output may sound polished, it is often clichéd, vague, or factually incorrect. Worse, it can obscure your own voice and thinking. Revising or disentangling AI-generated text is often more time-consuming than writing your own. Avoid the trap of outsourcing your intellectual work to a probabilistic echo of what others have said.

Instead, let AI serve as a reflective aid—not a replacement for your own reasoning.

In short, use AI as feedback, summary, or tutoring device; not as tool to replace your thinking, drafting, or writing.

1.5.1 Transparency in the use of AI-enabled applications

For reasons of academic integrity and transparency, we ask students at the *Chair for Political Science, especially Digital Transformation*, to include a short disclaimer in all submitted papers indicating whether—and how—they used AI-enabled applications (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude) in the preparation of their work.

Possible tasks where AI tools may be used responsibly include:

1. Exploring a phenomenon, mechanism, or relevant literature;
2. Stress-testing or refining a research question;
3. Reviewing the clarity and coherence of theory-driven hypotheses;
4. Writing or debugging code for data analysis;
5. Structuring the paper or outlining sections;
6. Language editing and improving phrasing.

Your disclaimer must include:

- Whether you used ChatGPT or any other large language model (LLM);
- For which specific tasks the model was used;
- How your own original work was improved with input from the model;
- A selection of your prompts and the model's responses (included in an online appendix or submitted as a separate PDF).

This disclaimer should be included either on the cover page or in a separate appendix of your paper. You may use the following sentence as a template:

"I used [AI-enabled service of choice] (version X, accessed on [date]) to support [specific task(s)] in the preparation of this paper. The final content and arguments are my own. See Appendix for a list of prompts and AI-generated outputs."

Important:

- You are fully responsible for the accuracy, originality, and academic integrity of your submission. Undocumented use of AI tools, as well as plagiarism, fabricated sources, or misattributed content, will be treated as violations of academic standards. Submissions containing non-existent references, fabricated quotations, or unattributed AI-generated passages will result in an automatic failure of the course.
- When grading, we may place greater emphasis on aspects where AI models typically perform poorly (e.g., originality of argument, conceptual framing) and may discount sections where AI excels (e.g., generic summaries, surface-level edits).

If you are unsure whether your use of AI is appropriate, please ask in advance or reach out during office hours.

Background Readings:

- Jungherr, A. (2023c). Using ChatGPT and other large language model (LLM) applications for academic paper assignments. *SocArxiv*. <https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/d84q6>
- Mollick, E. (2024). *Co-intelligence: Living and working with AI*. Portfolio/Penguin.

2 Course plan

Mondays 14:00–16:00 c.t. | Room: FMA/03.03

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Week 1: Introduction and Housekeeping (April 28)

Week 2: AI and Democracy (May 05)

Required Readings:

- Jungherr, A. (2023a). Artificial Intelligence and democracy: A conceptual framework. *Social Media + Society*, 9(3), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051231186353>
- Przeworski, A. (2024). Who decides what is democratic? *Journal of Democracy*, 35(3), 5–16. [10.1353/jod.2024.a930423](https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2024.a930423)

Presentations:

- Risse, M. (2023). Artificial intelligence and the past, present, and future of democracy. In *Political theory of the digital age: Where artificial intelligence might take us* (47–72). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009255189.004>

Background Readings:

- Bobbio, N. (1987). *The future of democracy: A defence of the rules of the game* (R. Dellamy, Ed.; R. Griffin, Trans.). University of Minnesota Press. Trans. of *Il futuro della democrazia*. (1984). Einaudi.
- Dahl, R. A. (1998). *On democracy*. Yale University Press.
- Przeworski, A. (2018). *Why bother with elections?* Polity Press.

Week 3: What is AI (May 12)

Required Readings:

- Narayanan, A., & Kapoor, S. (2025, April 14). *AI as normal technology*. Knight First Amend. Inst. <https://knightcolumbia.org/content/ai-as-normal-technology>

Presentations:

- Agrawal, A., Gans, J., & Goldfarb, A. (2022). *Prediction machines: The simple economics of Artificial Intelligence* (Updated and Expanded). Harvard Business Review Press. (Original work published 2018). Chapters 1-2 (pp. 1-22).
- Farrell, H., Gopnik, A., Shalizi, C., & Evans, J. (2025). Large AI models are cultural and social technologies. *Science*, 387(6739), 1153–1156. [10.1126/science.adt9819](https://doi.org/10.1126/science.adt9819). For additional comments see: Shalizi, C. (2025, April 16). *On feral library card catalogs, or, aware of all internet traditions*. <http://bactra.org/weblog/feral-library-card-catalogs.html>.
- Shanahan, M. (2024). Talking about large language models. *Communications of the ACM*, 67(2), 68–79. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3624724>

Background Readings:

- Benaich, N. (2024, October 10). *State of AI report 2024*. <https://www.stateof.ai>
- Kokotajlo, D., Alexander, S., Larsen, T., Lifland, E., & Dean, R. (2025, April 3). *AI 2027*. AI Futures Project. <https://ai-2027.com>
- Lee, K.-F., & Quifan, C. (2021). *AI 2041: Ten visions for our future*. Currency.
- Mitchell, M. (2019). *Artificial Intelligence: A guide for thinking humans*. Farrar, Straus; Giroux.
- Narayanan, A., & Kapoor, S. (2024). *AI snake oil: What Artificial Intelligence can do, what it can't, and how to tell the difference*. Princeton University Press.
- Nilsson, N. J. (2010). *The quest for Artificial Intelligence: A history of ideas and achievements*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511819346>
- Smith, B. C. (2019). *The promise of artificial intelligence: Reckoning and judgment*. The MIT Press.
- Wolfram, S. (2023, February 14). *What is ChatGPT doing ... and why does it work?* <https://writings.stephenwolfram.com/2023/02/what-is-chatgpt-doing-and-why-does-it-work/>

Week 4: AI Alignment and AI Risk (May 19)

Required Readings:

- Buyl, M., Rogiers, A., Noels, S., Dominguez-Catena, I., Heiter, E., Romero, R., Johary, I., Mara, A.-C., Lijffijt, J., & De Bie, T. (2024). Large language models reflect the ideology of their creators. *arXiv*. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2410.18417>
- Gabriel, I., & Keeling, G. (2025). A matter of principle? AI alignment as the fair treatment of claims. *Philosophical Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11098-025-02300-4>

Presentations:

- Bommasani, R., & Liang, P. (2024). Trustworthy social bias measurement. In *AIES 2024: Proceedings of the seventh AAI/ACM conference on AI, ethics, and society* (pp. 210–224, Vol. 7). The AAI Press. <https://doi.org/10.1609/aies.v7i1.31630>
- Rismani, S., Shelby, R., Smart, A., Jatho, E., Kroll, J., Moon, A. J., & Rostamzadeh, N. (2023). From plane crashes to algorithmic harm: Applicability of safety engineering frameworks for responsible ML. In A. Schmidt, K. Väänänen, T. Goyal, P. O. Kristensson, A. Peters, S. Mueller, J. R. Williamson, & M. L. Wilson (Eds.), *Chi '23: Proceedings of the 2023 CHI conference on human factors in computing systems* (pp. 1–18). ACM. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3544548.3581407>

- Weidinger, L., Marchal, N., Rauh, M., Manzini, A., Hendricks, L. A., Mateos-Garcia, J., Bergman, S., Griffin, C., Bariach, B., Gabriel, I., Rieser, V., & Isaac, W. (2023, October 18). *Sociotechnical safety evaluation of generative AI systems* (tech. rep.). Google DeepMind. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2310.11986>

Background Readings:

- Barocas, S., Hardt, M., & Narayanan, A. (2023). *Fairness and machine learning: Limitations and opportunities*. The MIT Press.
- Christian, B. (2020). *The alignment problem: Machine learning and human values*. W. W. Norton & Company.
- Wallach, H., Desai, M., Pangakis, N., Cooper, A. F., Wang, A., Barocas, S., Chouldechova, A., Atalla, C., Blodgett, S. L., Corvi, E., Dow, P. A., Garcia-Gathright, J., Olteanu, A., Reed, S., Sheng, E., Vann, D., Vaughan, J. W., Vogel, M., Washington, H., & Jacobs, A. Z. (2024, November 17). Evaluating generative AI systems is a social science measurement challenge. In *Neurips 2024 workshop on evaluating evaluations*. EvalEval. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2411.10939>
- Weidinger, L., Raji, I. D., Wallach, H., Mitchell, M., Wang, A., Salaudeen, O., Bommasani, R., Ganguli, D., Koyejo, S., & Isaac, W. (2025). Toward an evaluation science for generative AI systems. *The Bridge*, 55(1), 9–19. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2503.05336>

Week 5: No meeting (May 26)

Week 6: Regulating AI (June 02)

Required Readings:

- Dafoe, A. (2018). *AI governance: A research agenda*. Centre for the Governance of AI Future of Humanity Institute University of Oxford. <https://www.fhi.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/GovAI-Agenda.pdf>

Presentations:

- Engler, A. (2023, April 25). *The EU and U.S. diverge on AI regulation: A transatlantic comparison and steps to alignment* (tech. rep.). Brookings. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-eu-and-us-diverge-on-ai-regulation-a-transatlantic-comparison-and-steps-to-alignment/>
- Feldstein, S. (2024). Evaluating Europe’s push to enact AI regulations: How will this influence global norms? *Democratization*, 31(5), 1049–1066. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2023.2196068>
- Sheehan, M. (2023, July 10). *China’s AI regulations and how they get made* (tech. rep.). Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2023/07/chinas-ai-regulations-and-how-they-get-made?lang=en>

- Wolff, J., Lehr, W., & Yoo, C. S. (2024). Lessons from GDPR for AI policymaking. *Virginia Journal of Law & Technology*, 27(4), 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4528698>
- Zhang, A. H. (2024). The promise and perils of China’s regulation of Artificial Intelligence. *Columbia Journal of Transnational Law*, 63, 101–157. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4708676>

Background Readings:

- Bradford, A. (2023). *Digital empires: The global battle to regulate technology*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780197649268.001.0001>
- Bullock, J. B., Chen, Y.-C., Himmelreich, J., Hudson, V. M., Korinek, A., Young, M. M., & Zhang, B. (Eds.). (2024). *The Oxford Handbook of AI governance*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780197579329.001.0001>
- Creemers, R. (2025). The regulation of generative AI in China. In P. Hacker, B. Mittelstadt, S. Hammer, & A. Engel (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the foundations and regulation of generative AI*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198940272.013.0039>
- European Commission. (2025, February 4). *Annex to the communication to the commission: Approval of the content of the draft communication from the commission—commission guidelines on prohibited artificial intelligence practices established by regulation (eu) 2024/1689 (ai act)*. <https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/redirection/document/112366>
- European Union. (2024). Regulation (eu) 2024/1689 of the european parliament and of the council of 13 june 2024 laying down harmonised rules on artificial intelligence and amending regulations (ec) no 300/2008, (eu) no 167/2013, (eu) no 168/2013, (eu) 2018/858, (eu) 2018/1139 and (eu) 2019/2144 and directives 2014/90/eu, (eu) 2016/797 and (eu) 2020/1828 (artificial intelligence act). *Official Journal of the European Union*, (2024/1689). <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1689/oj>
- Jarovsky, L. (2025). *Luiza’s newsletter*. <https://www.luizasnewsletter.com>
- Kastl-Riemann, G. (2025). Regulation of generative AI speech: An EU perspective. In P. Hacker, B. Mittelstadt, S. Hammer, & A. Engel (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the foundations and regulation of generative AI*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198940272.013.0022>
- Maslej, N., Fattorini, L., Perrault, R., Gil, Y., Parli, V., Kariuki, N., Capstick, E., Reuel, A., Brynjolfsson, E., Etchemendy, J., Ligett, K., Lyons, T., Manyika, J., Niebles, J. C., Shoham, Y., Wald, R., Walsh, T., Hamrah, A., Santarlasci, L., ... Oak, S. (2025, April 1). *The AI index 2025 annual report (tech. rep.)*. AI Index Steering Committee, Institute for Human-Centered AI, Stanford University. Stanford, CA. <https://hai.stanford.edu/ai-index/2025-ai-index-report>

- White & Case. (2025). *AI watch: Global regulatory tracker*. <https://www.whitecase.com/insight-our-thinking/ai-watch-global-regulatory-tracker>

Week 7: No meeting (June 09)

Week 8: AI in Government (June 16)

Required Readings:

- Committee of Public Accounts. (2025, March 17). *Use of AI in government* (tech. rep. No. Eighteenth Report of Session 2024–25). House of Commons. <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/47199/documents/244683/default/>
- Margetts, H., & Dorobantu, C. (2019). Rethink government with AI. *Nature*, 568, 163–165. <https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-019-01099-5>

Presentations:

- Johnson, N., Silva, E., Leon, H., Eslami, M., Schwanke, B., Dotan, R., & Heidari, H. (2024). Public procurement for responsible AI? understanding U.S. cities' practices, challenges, and needs. *arXiv*. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2411.04994>
- Straub, V. J., Morgan, D., Bright, J., & Margetts, H. (2023). Artificial Intelligence in government: Concepts, standards, and a unified framework. *Government Information Quarterly*, 40(4), 101881. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2023.101881>

Background Readings:

- Brizuela, A., Combetto, M., Kotoglou, S., Galasso, G., Martin Bosch, J., Polli, G., & Tangi, L. (2025). *Analysis of the generative AI landscape in the European public sector* (tech. rep.). European Commission. <https://doi.org/10.2799/0409819>
- Noveck, B. S. (2015). *Smart citizens, smarter state: The technologies of expertise and the future of governing*. Harvard University Press.
- Pahlka, J. (2023). *Recoding America: Why government is failing in the digital age and how we can do better*. Metropolitan Books.
- Reuel, A., Bucknall, B., Casper, S., Fist, T., Soder, L., Aarne, O., Hammond, L., Ibrahim, L., Chan, A., Wills, P., Anderljung, M., Garfinkel, B., Heim, L., Trask, A., Mukobi, G., Schaeffer, R., Baker, M., Hooker, S., Solaiman, I., ... Trager, R. (2025). Open problems in technical ai governance. *Transactions on Machine Learning Research*, (4). <https://openreview.net/pdf?id=1nO4qFMiS0>
- Scott, J. C. (1998). *Seeing like a state: How certain schemes to improve the human condition have failed*. Yale University Press.

Week 9: AI and Autocracies (June 23)

Required Readings:

- Feldstein, S. (2019). The road to digital unfreedom: How Artificial Intelligence is reshaping repression. *Journal of Democracy*, 30(1), 40–52. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2019.0003>
- Yang, E. (2024). The limits of AI for authoritarian control. *Working Paper*. https://www.eddieyang.net/research/AI_limits.pdf

Presentations:

- Beraja, M., Kao, A., Yang, D. Y., & Yuchtman, N. (2023a). AI-tocracy. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 138(3), 1349–1402. <https://doi.org/10.1093/qje/qjad012>
- Beraja, M., Kao, A., Yang, D. Y., & Yuchtman, N. (2023b). Exporting the surveillance state via trade in AI. *NBER Working Paper Series*. <https://doi.org/10.3386/w31676>
- Beraja, M., Yang, D. Y., & Yuchtman, N. (2023). Data-intensive innovation and the state: Evidence from AI firms in China. *The Review of Economic Studies*, 90(4), 1701–1723. <https://doi.org/10.1093/restud/rdac056>

Background Readings:

- Brussee, V. (2023). *Social credit: The warring states of China's emerging data empire*. Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-99-2189-8>
- Creemers, R. (2018). China's Social Credit System: An evolving practice of control. *Social Science Research Network*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3175792>
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Week 10: AI in Political Communication (June 30)

Required Readings:

- Davenport, T. H., Guha, A., & Grewal, D. (2021). How to design an AI marketing strategy. *Harvard Business Review*, (4). <https://hbr.org/2021/07/how-to-design-an-ai-marketing-strategy>
- Foos, F. (2024). The use of AI by election campaigns. *LSE Public Policy Review*, 3(3), 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.31389/lseppr.112>

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- Bai, H., Voelkel, J. G., Eichstaedt, J. C., & Willer, R. (2023). Artificial intelligence can persuade humans on political issues. *OSF Preprints*. <https://doi.org/10.31219/osf.io/stakv>
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Week 11: AI and the Public Arena (July 07)

Required Readings:

- Jungherr, A., & Schroeder, R. (2023). Artificial Intelligence and the public arena. *Communication Theory*, 33(2–3), 164–173. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ct/qtad006>

Presentations:

- Guinaudeau, B., Munger, K., & Votta, F. (2022). Fifteen seconds of fame: TikTok and the supply side of social video. *Computational Communication Research*, 4(2), 463–485. <https://doi.org/10.5117/CCR2022.2.004.GUIN>
- Milli, S., Belli, L., & Hardt, M. (2021). From optimizing engagement to measuring value. In *Facct '21: Proceedings of the 2021 ACM conference on fairness, accountability, and transparency* (pp. 714–722). Association for Computing Machinery. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3442188.3445933>
- Simon, F. M., Altay, S., & Mercier, H. (2023). Misinformation reloaded? Fears about the impact of generative AI on misinformation are overblown. *Harvard Kennedy School Misinformation Review*, 4(5), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.37016/mr-2020-127>

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- Jungherr, A., & Schroeder, R. (2022). *Digital transformations of the public arena*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009064484>
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Week 12: AI in Journalism (July 14)

Required Readings:

- Simon, F. M. (2024). *Artificial Intelligence in the news: How ai retools, rationalizes, and reshapes journalism and the public arena*. Tow Center for Digital Journalism, Columbia University. <https://academiccommons.columbia.edu/doi/10.7916/ncm5-3v06>

Presentations:

- Bohacek, M., & Farid, H. (2024). The making of an AI news anchor—and its implications. *PNAS: Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 121(1), e2315678121. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2315678121>
- Helberger, N. (2024). FutureNewsCorp, or how the AI Act changed the future of news. *Computer Law & Security Review*, 52, 105915. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.clsr.2023.105915>
- Hermida, A., & Simon, F. M. (2025). AI in the newsroom: Lessons from the adoption of The Globe and Mail's Sophi. *Journalism Practice*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2025.2471781>

Background Readings:

- Diakopoulos, N. (2019). *Automating the news: How algorithms are rewriting the media*. Harvard University Press.
- Nielsen, R. K. (2020). Economic contexts of journalism. In K. Wahl-Jorgensen & T. Hanitzsch (Eds.), *The handbook of journalism studies* (2nd ed., pp. 324–340). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315167497-21>
- Nielsen, R. K. (2024). How the news ecosystem might look like in the age of generative AI. *Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism*. <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/news/how-news-ecosystem-might-look-age-generative-ai>

Week 13: Discussion and Open Questions (July 21)