AI and Data Science in Fiction and Society

Seminar Kick Off
Goals

• Why should we read fictional literature at university at all?
  – given that we are not humanities students

• Fiction is a mirror of society
• Technology is developed in research labs
  – ...but its impact on society is seldom discussed therein

• In this seminar, we will discuss those impacts
Organization

• Requirements
  – Read a novel and present it in the seminar
  – Write a seminar paper
  – Review others’ seminar papers
    • it is a good idea to also read the books for the seminar papers you review

• First step
  – Pick a novel
  – If not done yet, send a ranked list to Ms. Bianca Lermer me
  – You are invited to propose books not on the list on the Web page
Organization

• Getting your book
  – we have copies in the library (of books listed on the Web page)
  – you may need them for some time

• After assignment is finished, you can borrow “your” copy
  – personally at Mr. Scheuermann at the library
    (office SW 287 in the castle)
Organization

• We will use a process called “peer review”
  – widely used (and discussed) in science
  – you will review your fellow students’ seminar papers

• Timeline
  – Prepare a draft until October 28th
  – You will get two seminar papers to review
  – Submit your reviews until November 11th

• Seminar (i.e. ,presentations, discussions)
  – November 21st and 28th, 13.45-17.00
  – Participate *actively*

• Final seminar paper submission: December 9th
Preparing Your Seminar Paper

• Synopsis
  – Brief summary of the novel’s contents
  – Main themes, characters, plot points

• Characters
  – Main characters? What do they represent?

• Technology
  – Which technology is described?
  – What does already exist, what is still to be invented?

• Interaction of technology and society
  – Which of the characters appreciate the technology?
  – Who are rather sceptics?

• Anything else you want to discuss

• Use further literature!
Preparing a Review

• 1st rule: be constructive!

• What you should point at
  – can you follow easily? is there information missing at any point?
  – are all claims well supported?
  – do you have any questions not answered?
  – aspects underrepresented

• What you should not do
  – provide general criticism ("don’t like the paper")
  – correct every spelling mistake
  – rewrite the seminar paper
Preparing the Presentation

• Remember
  – we are here to discuss

• Therefore
  – don’t just report facts
  – raise questions
  – be provocative
Questions?
Straw Poll (will be repeated at the end)

- Do you consider AI rather beneficial or harmful?
Thought Experiment: Universal Paperclips