HON214
An argument about fairness

• Is what the consulting company did more or less fair?
  • Why?

• Roles:
  • City mayor
  • Citizen of district with 90% hit rate
  • Citizen of district with 10% hit rate

• Argument:
  • For or against
PASSPHRASE

• Kate Crawford
Relevant quotes

• "Then they asked themselves who would be the most affected by lead in the water. “The very young, the very old, and those with compromised immune systems,” McDaniel told me. They determined which homes had kids under 5 years old and adults over 70.”

• "The city administration “did not want to have to explain to a councilperson why there was no work in their district,”

• "Facing political pressure from some residents, Weaver demanded that the firm dig across the city’s wards and in every house on selected blocks, rather than picking out the homes likely to have lead because of age, property type, or other characteristics that could be correlated with the pipes.”

• "The program managers would have to tell people, “You’ll have to trust a computer model,” Wong told me. “The citizens are just not going to trust that.”"

• "“When we started this, people would say, ‘You did my neighbor’s house and you didn’t do mine,’” Weaver said.”

• "the three most significant determinants of the likelihood of having lead pipes were the age, value, and location of a home."
Trust in algorithms

• Think of a context where you would trust an algorithm
  • Why?
• Think of a context where you wouldn’t trust an algorithm
  • Why?
Reading 2
Major points

• Correlation is not causation, and we have to be very careful about using “folk theory” to explain correlations
  • What folk theory was used in the criminology paper?

• What is scientific racism? Can you think of examples not mentioned in the reading?

• Are machine learning models more objective than people? Why or why not?
Real or fake? Biased or unbiased? How?

• Researchers from Stanford developed a machine learning algorithm that could predict whether or not someone was gay with 81/71% accuracy (men/women) from dating website photos
  • “claimed that their findings provided “strong support” for the idea that sexual orientation is caused by hormone exposure in the womb, an unsubstantiated and unusual leap for scientists to make after an incremental study”
  • Important features (as claimed by authors):
    • Facial brightness (associated with testosterone)
    • Having a beard
    • Gay -> narrower jaws

• Humans could make these predictions only 61% of the time for men, 54% for women
Three questions to ask yourself

• Are these numbers believable?
  • Why or why not?
• What is the machine learning picking up on?
• How does this relate to sexuality?
Further critiques

- https://statmodeling.stat.columbia.edu/2018/03/16/fallacy-objective-measurement-case-gaydar/
- https://theoutline.com/post/2228/that-study-on-artificially-intelligent-gaydar-is-now-under-ethical-review-michal-kosinski?zd=2&zi=avllbkpr