

TO MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE?

A FEW PROVOCATIONS ABOUT BIG DATA

Global Conference @ Geneva
Tuesday, November 18th 2014

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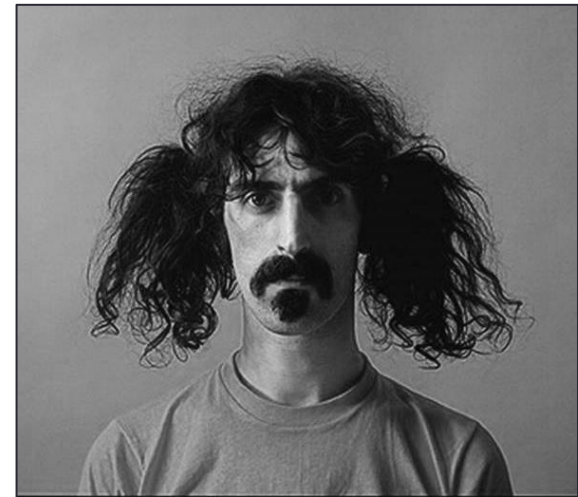


1. Which Type of Knowledge?

- Causality doesn't matter anymore. What matters is correlation/efficiency (MAYER & CUKIER 2013)



JOE PYNE, Vietnam veteran:
“So Frank, you have long hair. Does that make you a woman?”



FRANK ZAPPA, Musician:
“You have a wooden leg. Does that make you a table?”

2. Big Data is not Social Inclusion

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3. Big Data is not Democracy

- New actors of peculiar type of knowledge
- From *rational-legal* authority (WEBER 1968) to *technocratic* authority
- Porosity of power between private/public (COLL 2013)



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4. Privacy is not the Antidote

- *Proportionality* principle is obsolete
- Defining *privacy* is political, who defines it?
- *Privacy* is a tool of governance (COLL 2014)
- *Privacy* and *surveillance* are not opposed



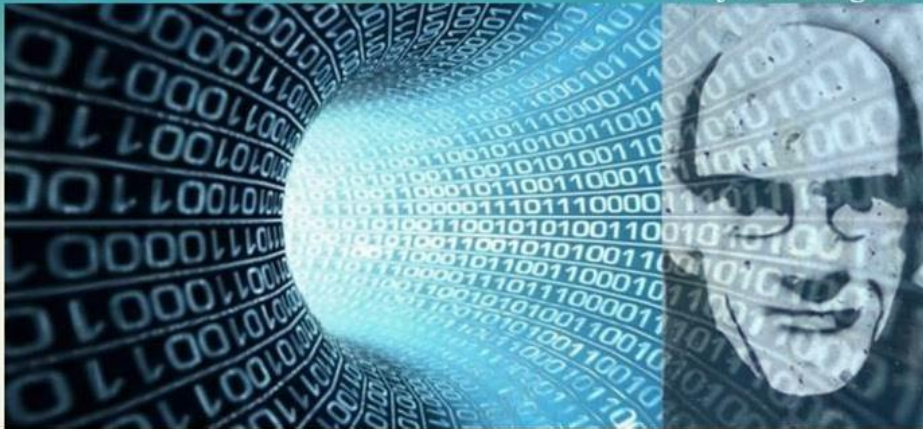
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bigdataispower.net

Power, knowledge and the subjects of big data



UNIVERSITÉ DE GENÈVE

FACULTÉ DES SCIENCES DE LA SOCIÉTÉ
Fonds de recherche en sociologie

What is big data?

The term 'big data' points the fact that in our digital age, by using every day technologies, we generate loads of data that are collected in large databases with the goal of using them for current or future purposes. Even if you are not aware of it, you are a 'subject of big data' in the sense that you are producing data that can be used to produce knowledge. This knowledge has an indirect or direct effect on how decisions are made, e.g. distribution of goods, prevention of diseases, traffic regulation, risk management, innovation of services, etc.

Is big data a big brother?

We don't think so. Most studies show that users let companies gathering their data because they trust them and appreciate the services they provide. So do we. However, development of large

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