



Reining in Facebook and the Platform Economy

How Can Society Benefit from AI and Digital Technology?



Achtung: Demokratie
WZB-Reihe zu den Fragen unserer Zeit

Tuesday, April 24, 2018, 6 p.m., Room A 300

Facebook and Google suck up our personal data and allow it to be turned into fake news, engagement algorithms and “psychographic messaging” for Brexit and Donald Trump’s election. A battle is looming over who will control this sea of Big Data and artificial intelligence (AI) - the public interest or Internet-based platform companies? What can be done to develop innovative policy approaches and a social economy for the digital age?

To register, please reply by
April 23, 2018, to Friederike
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French president Emmanuel Macron has outlined a forward-looking strategy that seeks to inject European values into the race for AI development. When combined with efforts by EU competition commissioner Margrethe Vestager, and the EU’s forthcoming General Data Protection Regulation, a vague vision is taking shape that could provide an alternative to Silicon Valley. Yet many parts of the European blueprint remain incomplete. What is the German contribution to this discussion?

Should individuals become “data shareholders” who get paid for permitting Facebook and Google to mine our personal data? Or should our data be re-conceptualized as “social data” that is protected as part of the commons? Do we need to establish a collaborative CERN-type organization for the development of AI, to ensure the availability of open-source datasets used in the public interest? Do we need to create “digital licenses” which make clear the rules and conditions for allowing platform companies to access the German and EU markets, and develop the technological tools to protect one’s “digital borders”?

We invite you to discuss these questions together with:

Steven Hill, US journalist currently a Journalist in Residence at the WZB Berlin. He is author of seven books, including „Die Startup Illusion: Wie die Internet-Ökonomie unseren Sozialstaat ruiniert“ and „Europe’s Promise: Why the European Way Is the Best Hope in an Insecure Age“. His articles have appeared in international and national media, e.g. in the New York Times, Washington Post, Die Zeit, Handelsblatt.

Prof. Dr. **Peter Wedde**, Professor of Labour Laws and the Right of the Information Society at Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences, scientific director of consulting firm d + a consulting GbR.

Dr. **Rena Schwarting** works as a research fellow at the WZB in the area „Digitalization and Societal Transformation“. She studies the use of big data and decision structures in and by organizations as well as the impacts on different societal spheres.

Dr. **Aljoscha Burchardt**, German Research Center for Artificial Intelligence (DFKI GmbH), Lab Manager at the Language Technology Lab and an expert in Artificial Intelligence and Language Technology.

The discussion will be held in English and is organized by the WZB in cooperation with the Weizenbaum Institute for the Networked Society.

Our event location is
wheelchair-accessible. If you
need support, please let Frie-
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