

## WMD Chapter 1 Reflection

For the use of winning a world series, much like the author reasons, baseball does benefit from predictive modeling. However, I think that it hinders the opportunity for crowds to experience real, unaffected, probabilities and gambles. By gambles I do not mean gambling per se; I mean that an audience member's chance to experience baseball as a game rather than a statistical competition is ruined. Similarly, there are other 'domains', as the question calls them, that should not be influenced by modeling. For instance, the US Census data is used to cut costs and allotments for future scenarios using data from the present and the past. I have no opinion on whether this process of predictive modeling should have been applied. But I do think using data from the past is not an accurate measure to use in organizing the locations of resources like supplies and money in the future.

The most blatant use of predictive modeling is that of Twitter's trending categories. This model considers the likes, shares, and views of a given tweet to determine how popular it is to the public. The result is a tab available for users to directly access a list of these posts, a list that changes throughout the day. While it does appear to be invisible in implementation, many Twitter users and others in greater society recognize that a social media app must use predictive modeling in some capacity to decide which posts are the favorite in the moment. The interesting side to this type of model is that the results may not be accurate in the scope of what an individual user is interested in. Thus, many of these results are not subject to the interests of Twitter's users. In the concluding paragraph of the reading in *Weapons of Math Destruction*, O'Neil attests to the changing subject-matter of a given predictive model. A worry rose that predictive modeling among prisoners can possibly spread to the economic interests of major companies. That "[t]his menace is rising" (O'Neil, 31). To keep with this thinking, the predictive

modeling of most popular posts and topics at a given time could very well be transformed into a government tool for attacking the most popular issues in society. Such a process would likely be done regardless of any real-life pushes for activism on a topic.

## References

O'neil, Cathy. *Weapons of Math Destruction : How Big Data Increases Inequality and Threatens Democracy*. London, Penguin Books, 2018.