

Critical De-bugging Teaching Method

The past years of technological development has seen a growing distrust in the tools that are used in everyday life. The commodification of human attention in advertising revenue and the coming financialization of everyday life with blockchain technology is going under more attentive scrutiny from governments around the world. The general awareness of this technological failures, and false promises has be brought forward, not only by academics but also artists and designers who challenge the technological given, by exerting their right to critique. Critique in this case and for the purpose of this teaching format is intended as a bottom-up action to question what is given i.e. "normal", accepted or imposed by society at large. Critical studies of AI and technology have already shown the biases intrinsic to such systems, and the reproduction of racial and gender inequality. Debugging or better said de-bugging becomes an abstraction of its original purpose; namely the removal of error that make a computer program crash. For this teaching format de-bugging becomes a twofold activity:

1. Recognition of non universality of errors and the recognition that softwares are not only prone to technical failure but also social failures.
2. The rhizomatic approach to technology: the exploration of tools beyond their scope of use

In the scope of this teaching format the class will use browser built in debugging tools to analyze a website, and try out some techniques to render visible perceived bugs.

Q:

1. What is the difference between critical debugging and Hacking?
2. What are the benefits for students of such teaching method?

BIO

Yann Patrick Martins is a coder, artist and doctoral candidate of the Make/Sense Phd Programme, currently working at the IXDM as Research Assistant. Despite his practice rooted in programming, his doctoral research looks at the ways in which capitalist mode of production and machine learning are re-enacting forms of inequality and discrimination. He also has pioneered a teaching programme at the Critical Media Lab Basel that links technological education and cooking practices since 2018.