# Algorithmically-Encoded Bodies

Emily Denton Alex Hanna Dylan Baker

### Community guidelines

- There are no bad questions
- Resist assumptions about others
- Be kind to yourself
- Confidentiality

# Workshop goals

Make visible the classificatory work we are all engaged in during our own work practice

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- Examine the (sometimes hidden) ethical and political dimensions of this work and understand the impacts and potential harms individuals from marginalized communities
- Develop a set of practices that can help researchers remain self-critical in their work creating, using, and studying classification systems

#### Agenda

#### Part I: Nov 19

- Introductory lecture
- Torquing the Individual

#### Part II: Dec 3

- CYO admin. violence A
- Classification analytic

#### Microsite

https://alexhanna.github.io/algo-identity

All materials and readings linked from here

#### Cheat sheet

#### Algorithmically Encoded Identities Cheat Sheet

Infrastructure typically brings to mind the idea of the built environment, such as roads, bridges and water pipes. Here, we are typically referring to informational infrastructure, which refers to decentralized technologies that are embedded into and act as foundation for other social structures, tools, and technologies. Data formats, calibration test images (e.g. Lena in signal processing), and ISO standards all make up that infrastructure. When an infrastructure works, it's typically invisible. We typically see it when it breaks down.

Infrastructural Infrastructural inversion is a method of turning an
 inversion infrastructure on its head and understanding what's
 behind it. The method deconstructs the assumptions,
 values, and measurement issues with particular elements
 which are taken for granted within elements of
 infrastructure.

YOUR LOGO								
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#### **Company Name**

#### **Employment Application**

1		App	plicant I	nform	ation			
Full Name:							Date:	
	Last	Fin	st.			MI		
Address:	Street Address						Apartment/Unit #	_
	City					State	ZIP Code	
Phone:				Email_				
Date Avails	ible: Soc	cial Securi	ty No.:			Desire	nd Salary:\$	
Position Ap	oplied for:							
Are you a c	citizen of the United States?	YES	NO	If no,	are you	authorized to v	work in the U.S.?	NO
Have you e	over worked for this company	YES	NO	If yes,	when?			
Have you e	over been convicted of a felon	y? D	NO					
If yes, expl	ain:							
1			Educ	ation				
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From: _	To:	Did you g	graduate?	YES	NO	Diploma:		
College: _			Address:					
From: _	To:	Did you g	graduate?	YES	NO	Degree:		
Other: _			Address:					
From: _	To:	Did you g	graduate?	YES	NO	Degree:		
10			Refer	ences				
Please list	three professional reference	05.						
Full Name:						Relatio	nship:	
							hone:	
Company:							TAKENO.	

# Example

# **Employment applications**

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#### **Company Name**

#### **Employment Application**

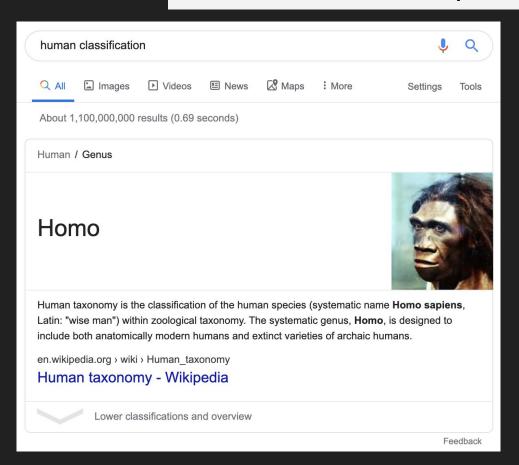
		APP	olicant I	inform.	ation			
Full Name:							Date:	
	Last	Fin				MI		
Address:	Street Address						Apartment Unit #	
	City					State	ZIP Code	
Phone:				Email_				
Date Avails	sble: Socia	l Securit	y No.:			Desire	nd Salary.\$	
Position Ap	oplied for:							
Are you a c	citizen of the United States?	YES	NO	If no, a	ire you	authorized to v	vork in the U.S.?	NO
Have you e	ever worked for this company?	YES	NO	If yes,	when?			
Have you e	ever been convicted of a felony?	YES	NO					
If yes, expl	ain:							
8			Educ	ation				
tigh School	ot		Address					
From: _	To: C	id you g	raduate?	YES	NO I	Diploma:		
			raduate? Address:	0		Diploma:		
College: _		_		YES		Diploma:		
College: _		id you g	Address	YES	NO NO			
College: _ From: _ Other: _	To: C	id you g	Address:	YES	NO NO			
College: _ From: _ Other: _	To: C	id you g	Address: raduate? Address: raduate?	YES	NO NO	Degree:		
College: _ From: _ Other: _ From: _	To: C	old you g	Address: raduate? Address: raduate?	YES O	NO NO	Degree:		
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#### Example

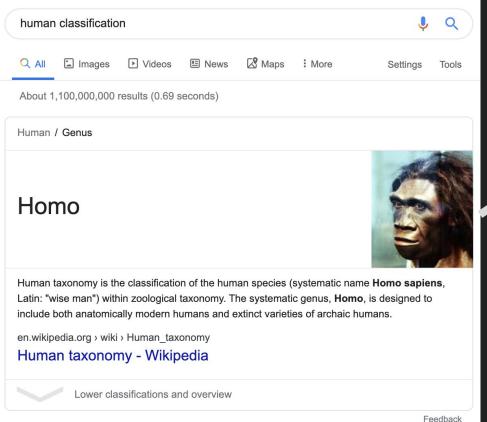
#### **Employment applications**

- Citizenship
- Work authorization
- Felony conviction
- Graduation

# "To classify is human"

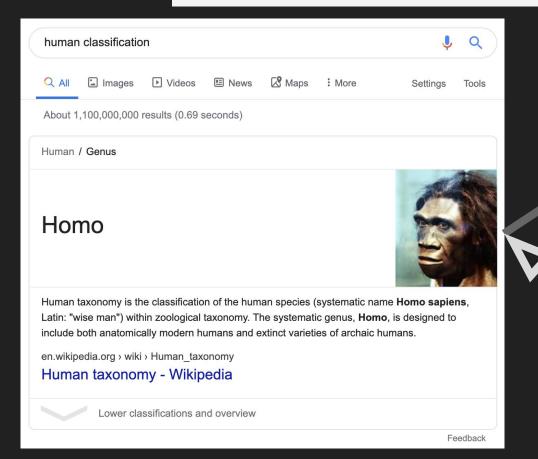


# "To classify is human"





# "To classify is human"







What are they?

"A set of boxes (metaphorical or literal) into which things can be put to then do some kind of work"

What are they?

# Technologies of classifying humans

_	NOTE: Please answer BOTH Question 5 about Hispanic origin and Question 6 about race. For this census, Hispanic origins are not races. Is this person of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?  No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin  Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano
	Yes, Puerto Rican Yes, Cuban
	Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin — Print origin, for example, Argentinean, Colombian, Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, Spaniard, and so on.
6.	What is this person's race? Mark ▼ one or more boxes.  White Black, African Am., or Negro American Indian or Alaska Native — Print name of enrolled or principal tribe.   ▼
	□ Asian Indian □ Japanese □ Native Hawaiian □ Guamanian or Chamorro □ Filipino □ Vietnamese □ Samoan □ Other Asian — Print race, for example, Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Pakistani, Cambodian, and so on. ▼
	☐ Some other race — Print race.   ✓

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census questionnaire.

max

What are they?

I Infrastructure

I Embed a perspective

III Technologies of power

Embedded into and act as foundation for other social structures, tools, and technologies

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Contextual, situated, and shaped by specific aims

Embedded into and act as foundation for other social structures, tools, and technologies

Contextual, situated, and shaped by specific aims

Invisible when they work; visible upon breakdown

Embedded into and act as foundation for other social structures, tools, and technologies

Contextual, situated, and shaped by specific aims

Invisible when they work; visible upon breakdown

Information infrastructures become naturalized

#### III. Classifications embed a viewpoint

No universal ordering of the world

Classification systems arise from situated negotiations

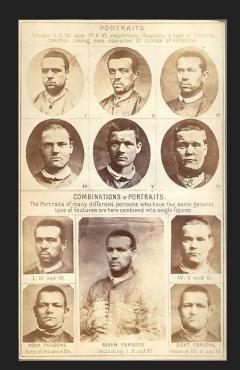
Classifications are political (i.e. they deal with power) - they emphasize one view of the world and not others

Practices of counting and sorting are central to state-building

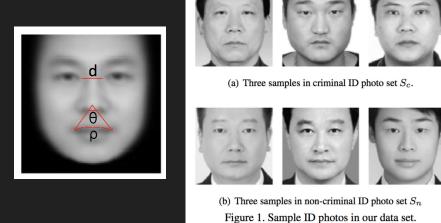
Imperatives to count and sort people grew out of colonial projects

Colonial projects necessitated racial classifications

Pseudoscientific classifications of types of bodies lent support to white supremacist projects

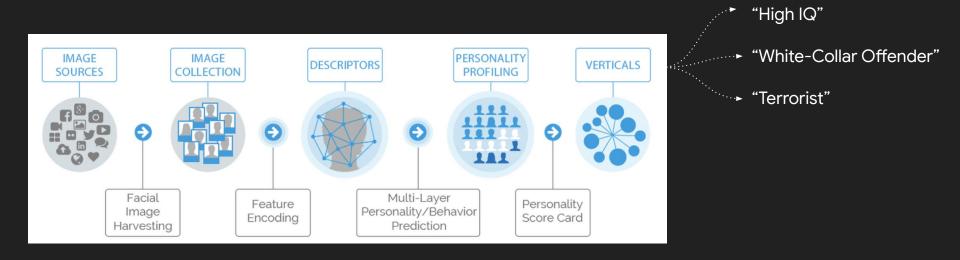


Francis Galton (1877). Composite portraits of human 'types'



Wu and Zhang (2016). Automated Inference on Criminality using Face Images

"Faception is first-to-technology and first-to-market with proprietary computer vision and machine learning technology for **profiling people** and revealing their personality **based only on their facial image.**"



total of 3.9 million people were counted in the first census.

#### What Census Calls Us Explore the different race, ethnicity and origin categories used in the U.S. decennial census, from the first one in 1790 to the latest count in 2020. The category names often changed in a reflection of current politics, science and public attitudes. For example, "colored" became "black," with "Negro" and "African American" added later. The term "Negro" was dropped for the 2020 census. Through 1950, census-takers commonly determined the race of the people they counted. From 1960 on, Americans could choose their own race. Starting in 2000, Americans could include themselves in more than one racial category. Before that, many multiracial people were counted in only one racial category. See this related blog post for more information ■ 1960 onward: People could choose their own race 2000 onward: Americans could be recorded in more than one race category on the census form. AMER. INDIAN/ALASKA HAWAII/PAC, ISLANDER OTHER 1790 2020 The Return for SOUTH CAROLINA having been made fince the foregoing Schedule was originally printed, the whole Enumeration here given complete, except for the N. Western Territory, of which no Return has LATEST CENSUS AMERICANS WERE RECORDED IN THESE PACE/ETHNICITY CATEGORIES ON THE CENSUS FORM Free white males. Free white females White [+] All other free persons Black or African American [+] Slaves American Indian or Alaska Native Chinese The nation's first census was a count of the U.S. population as of Aug. 2, 1790. U.S. marshals and their assistants were supposed to visit each U.S. household and record the name Filipino of the head of household and the number of free white males, other free persons and slaves in each household. A

#### Source:

https://www.pewresearch.org/interactives/what-census-calls-us/

# Check your understanding

You're designing a survey to assess the effectiveness of a social policy intervention that is supposed to address the gender disparity in childrearing labor in your city. You need to obtain information about gender.

- 1. What are different considerations for gender measurement?
- 2. What are possible ways of designing this question?

### Check your understanding

#### RECOMMENDED MEASURES FOR THE "TWO-STEP" APPROACH:

#### ASSIGNED SEX AT BIRTH

What sex were you assigned at birth, on your original birth certificate?

- Male
- Female

#### CURRENT GENDER IDENTITY

How do you describe yourself? (check one)

- Male
- Female
- Transgender
- Do not identify as female, male, or transgender

The GenIUSS Group (2014)

# Check your understanding

In general, how do yo	ou see yourself? Plea	ase answ	er on both s	cales below	v.		
	Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	Very
Feminine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Masculine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Third-order gend	er scale						
In general, how do m	ost people see you?	Please a	nswer on b	oth scales b	elow.		
	Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	Very
		91023			0.440	-	0
Feminine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Feminine Masculine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
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Masculine  Sex at birth  What sex were you a	ssigned at birth?		Cate	0		ntificatio	
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Masculine  Sex at birth  What sex were you a	ssigned at birth?		Cate	gorical ge		ntificatio	
Masculine  Sex at birth  What sex were you a (For example, on you	ssigned at birth?		Categ What i	gorical ge		ntificatio	

Magliozzi et al. (2016)

How they work on bodies

I Residual categories

Torque

Agency

The "not elsewhere classified" categories that don't fit into a classification scheme

No classification schema is universal and thus (labeled or not) residual categories will always exist

What are the residual categories and why are they residual?

What are the residual categories and why are they residual?

Gender:  male	
○ female	

I identify my ethnicity as:
<ul><li>○ Asian</li><li>○ Black/African</li><li>○ Caucasian</li><li>○ Hispanic/Latino</li></ul>
Native American     Pacific Islander
○ Mixed Race ○ Other
O deller

- What are the residual categories and why are they residual?
- What happens to the residual categories

- What are the residual categories and why are they residual?
- What happens to the residual categories
- What are the consequences of being residual?

#### II. Torque

The individual experience of being twisted or pulled by classification systems

Results from misalignment between lived experience and classifications or misalignment between multiple intersecting/overlapping classifications

### III. Agency

Who is doing the classifying and for what purpose?

Are classifications visible? Are classification reversible? Do individuals have an opportunity for recourse?

## Torquing the Individual

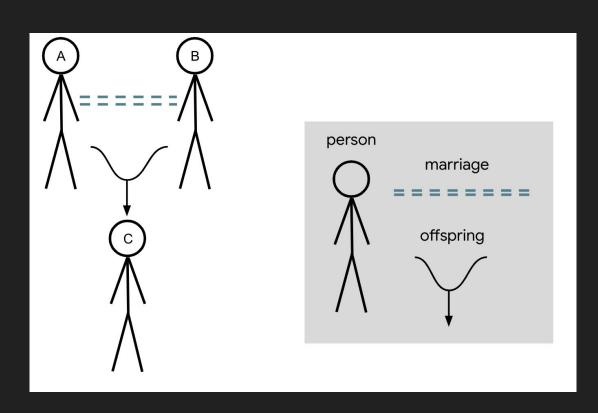
## Suppose a government has decided to start creating formal records of

who an individual's immediate family

members are.

### Policy proposals

- Medical care
- Citizenship
- Housing
- Policing



### Part 1: Defining

Family members are individuals who are your siblings, children/parents, spouse, or co-parents, as defined:

**Sibling** Somebody who shares the same parents as you (legally adopted or

biological)

**Child (or** Somebody who is your direct offspring or somebody you have legally

parent) adopted (or somebody you are the child of)

Spouse Somebody you have a legal marriage certificate with

**Co-parent** Somebody you have biological offspring with

### Part 1: Defining

https://bit.ly/3282NRA

Consider Groups 1-5.

Who are family members to whom?

In which cases do people consider themselves family but are not captured by this definition?

Come up with one additional rule for Definition 1 that better captures who considers themselves family in Groups 1-5.

### Part 2: Torquing



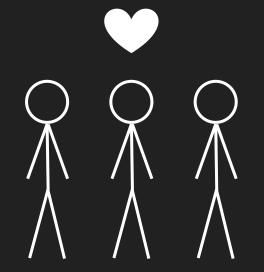
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#### MARRIAGE REGISTRATION

Registration Office: Thalang District Province: Phu Ket.

The following married couple are fully qualified in pursuance of the Civil and Commercial Code, and, in the presence of the registrar, have openly agreed to be husband and wife.

Description	Malc	Female Miss Natalie Jane Harrison 0-0000-00000-00-0 10 December 1979	
J. Name:	Mr. Dean Adrian Daniels		
2. Personal No.:	0-0000-00000-00-0		
3. Date of Birth :	23 August 1977		



ADOP1-215	Adoption Order			
1 Your name (adoptin	g parent(s)):		_	
b				
Relationship to child	j:			
Street address:				
City	State:	Zin:		

Fill in court name and street address:

Superior Court of California, County of

Child's name after adoption:

Lawyer (if any): (Name, address, telephone number, e-mail address,

Daytime telephone number:

and State Bar number):

Middle name:

Court fills in case number when form is filed

### Part 2: Torquing

Relationships describable by the diagram = **obvious or important distinctions**.

Relationships *not* described in the diagram = irrelevant personal details.

### 2.0

With family-member registration implemented with Definition 1, and this policy being enacted, what life changes might your prototypical family make?

The Complete Homebuying Guide

**+** GETTING STARTED

+ BUDGETING

FINDING YOUR HOME

How to Find and Buy Off-Market Homes

Alternatives to Zillow and Trulia

**Finding a Good Location** 

**Buying a Foreclosed House** 

What to look for in a Starter Home

Two-Family House Considerations

Moving Up: Dream House or Money Pit?

### Managing a Bigger Mortgage

Big houses come with big <u>mortgages</u>. A mortgage of several thousand dollars a month is likely on the horizon if you plan to move up. It's a high number, but it won't come as a surprise so you can plan for it. Similarly, a bigger space will require more money to heat and cool. Once again, you know these expenses are coming and can prepare accordingly.

While the size of the mortgage and the cost of utilities are items that you are likely to take into consideration before making a move, there are lots of other factors to consider. They fall into two categories: time and money. These categories are closely intertwined.

### The Time Commitment of Upkeep When You Upsize

The size of the responsibilities and the time commitment required to address them both rise directly in proportion to the size of your new home. What once seemed like a great idea can soon become a burden. For example, a big new deck needs to be stained, and a large lawn needs to be mowed. A big house needs to be cleaned. Without help, you may find every spare moment of your time filled with home maintenance chores from cleaning the grout in the bathroom and

wined.

The Complete Homebuying

### Managing a Bigger Mortgage

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# Moving in Together Checklist

Ask Yourself Why

You both need to be on the same page before you sign the lease.

Understand What it Entails

Practice first! Stay at his place for a week or two, or vice versa.

Talk Finances

Discuss who pays for what, how much rent each person is responsible for, and how to handle day-to-day expenses and unexpected costs.

Divvy Duties

Have a plan for handling the household responsibilities.

□ Talk About the Possibility of a Breakup

Know upfront what your plans are in the (unlikely) event of a breakup.

Commitment of Upkeep When You Upsize

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The Complete Homebuyin

### Managing a Bigger Mortgage



Service Canada

#### PROTECTED B (when completed)

Personal Information Banks ESDC PPU 116 and 146

### STATUTORY DECLARATION OF LEGAL MARRIAGE

Social Insurance Number

#### **SECTION A - TO BE COMPLETED BY THE APPLICANT**

Canada PROVINCE / TERRITORY OF		To Wit:	In the Matter of the Canada Pension Plan and the Old Age Security Act and in the Matter of Legal Marriage
I,			
of the (City, Town, Village)		county of	
in the province / territory of			
Solemnly Declare, that: I am/was legally married to			
My spouse/former spouse and I were marrie	ed at (Name of church or City H	all etc.)	
of the (City, Town, Village)		county of	
in the province / territory of		1	
	on the(day)	day of(m	nonth) (year)
The ceremony was performed by			

# Moving in Ch

☐ Ask Yourself Why

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Know upfront what your plans are in the (unlikely) event of a breakup.

	Investopedia		EDUCATION	MARKETS	SIMULAT	OR YOUR MONEY
People al	so ask					
What are 4	types of adoption?				~	PROTECTED B (when complete on all Information Banks ESDC PPU 116 and 1
What is the	legal process of adoption	?			~	Social Insurance Number
Can you be	legally adopted after 18?					Matter of the Canada Pension Plan and the Olecurity Act and in the Matter of Legal Marriage
Do you need	d a lawyer to adopt a child	i?			~	
	You both need to be on the same  Understand What it Enter  Practice first! Stay at his place for a v	Solemnly Declare, that: I am/was legally married to My spouse/former spouse and	d I were married at (Name o	f church or City Hall etc.)		<u> </u>
٥	Talk Finances Discuss who pays for what, how muc for, and how to handle day-to-day ex	of the (City, Town, Village) in the province / territory of	0	county of	of	
0	Divvy Duties Have a plan for handling the household to Talk About the Possibility of		l by	rom cleaning the	(month) grout in the	bathroom and

Know upfront what your plans are in the (unlikely) event of a breakup.

### 2.0

With family-member registration implemented with Definition 1, and this policy being enacted, what life changes might your prototypical family make?

With family-member registration implemented with Definition 1, and this policy being enacted, what life changes might your prototypical family make?

How might these life changes change social dynamics in this world?

Brainstorm a new definition of "family member" that better captures your prototypical family.

How would this definition classify Groups 1-5? Can it classify Groups 1-5?

## Coffee break!

How are you being classified?



# Choose your own administrative violence adventure

## Introducing administrative violence

## You are Bo.

### Discussion questions

- What are points in which administrative practices (e.g. forms + policies) caused harm to your character?
- What administrative changes could have mitigated these harms?
- What systemic changes could have mitigated these harms?

(an exercise in critical self-reflection)

- Identify a classification system you would like to explore
  - > Ideally, a system you have some degree of familiarity with

- Task specification
  - Defining the problem space
  - Specifying a measurement model
- Data collection and curation
  - Determining what data gets collected
  - During data cleaning, e.g. filtering out instances according to some criterion
  - Labelling or otherwise structuring data
- Model development and training
  - Determining output space of a model
  - Determining input space of a model
  - Determining model thresholds
  - Interpreting representations, clusters, and other model outputs
- Evaluating and studying algorithmic systems
  - Disaggregated analysis

- identify a classification system you would like to explore
  - Ideally, a system you have some degree of familiarity with
- Mix of individual reflection and group based discussion
- Not everyone has to share!
- Utilize your group to help understand new and different perspectives
- This is not a test! Some questions you just won't be able to answer!

Find a group of 3-4 people

Individually, settle on a classification system to reflect upon and analyze

### 10 minutes

Relationship to the classification system
Objects of classification
Category structure and classification process

### 10 minutes

Residuality

**5 minutes** Origins

### 10 minutes

Considering stakeholders // alternative futures

How has your understanding of the classification system changed?

How did the different perspectives in your group contribute to new/different understandings the classification system?

What questions were challenging to answer? And why?

### Thank you!

If you have feedback on this workshop, please contact us!

Dylan Baker (dylanbaker@google.com; @dylnbkr)
Emily Denton (dentone@google.com; @cephaloponderer)
Alex Hanna (alexhanna@google.com; @alexhanna)

### Thank you!

If you have feedback on this workshop, or would like to be involved in our write-up, please contact us!

Dylan Baker (dylanbaker@google.com; @dylnbkr)
Emily Denton (dentone@google.com; @cephaloponderer)
Alex Hanna (alexhanna@google.com; @alexhanna)

Come through CtrlZ.Al tomorrow!