

THEORIZING  
H E O R I Z I N G  
Theorizing "Algorithmic Sabotage"  
Edited by the  
Algorithmic Sabotage  
Research Group (ASRG)

"ALGORITHMICSABOTAGE"

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# 2 Theorizing “Algorithmic Sabotage” Edited by the Algorithmic Sabotage Research Group (ASRG)

The text, entitled Theorizing “Algorithmic Sabotage,” constitutes the introductory section of a collaborative, multi-authored endeavor dedicated to the theoretical exploration of the critical concept of “algorithmic sabotage.” It seeks to articulate a comprehensive analytical framework for its conceptualization and the examination of its diverse operationalizations, positioning it as a form of prefigurative praxis that directly disrupts the threat while simultaneously defending spaces outside of algorithmic capture. This analytical approach is delineated through a series of discrete theoretical propositions, collectively developed via a multi-stage, open authorship process. The resultant propositions elucidate the underlying principles, strategic approaches, and aesthetic manifestations of the critical notion of “algorithmic sabotage” within the broader framework of digital culture and information technology. Theorizing “Algorithmic Sabotage” represents a central component of the ongoing research initiative of the Algorithmic Sabotage Research Group (ASRG). For updates on the project’s latest developments, please refer to the following link, which offers a comprehensive overview of its progress:

[https://algorithmic-sabotage.github.io/asrg/theorizing-algorithmic\\_sabotage/](https://algorithmic-sabotage.github.io/asrg/theorizing-algorithmic_sabotage/)

The Algorithmic Sabotage Research Group (ASRG) is an ongoing, conspiratorial, aesthetico-political, practice-led research framework focused on the intersection of digital culture and information technology. It examines the multifaceted manifestations of artistic activism and its role in exposing, critiquing, disrupting and countering the encroachments of algorithmic systems of power, control, and exploitation, with the objective of strengthening, promoting, and defending human rights values and fundamental freedoms by offering interdisciplinary pathways to empower the public.

To explore the breadth of research initiatives by the Algorithmic Sabotage Research Group (ASRG), please visit the following link:

<https://algorithmic-sabotage.github.io/asrg/>

Inquiries, suggestions, or critiques may be directed to the following email address:

[x7kekmg7@proton.me](mailto:x7kekmg7@proton.me)

Alternatively, individuals preferring a more direct mode of communication can access the Algorithmic Sabotage Research Group (ASRG) profile on Mastodon via the following link:

<https://tldr.nettime.org/@asrg>

The following section presents a representative sample of discrete propositions generated through a dynamic, open, and collaborative writing process, shaped by the substantial contributions of a diverse group of authors. Readers are invited to actively engage in the ongoing development of the content, with the understanding that their contributions will be evaluated and integrated as deemed appropriate. An ongoing, editable version of the text titled Theorizing “Algorithmic Sabotage” is available on a Riseup Pad—a browser-based collaborative text editor that enables the online creation and editing of documents based on Etherpad. The text can be accessed via the following link:

<https://pad.riseup.net/p/tkuH-3DkO3zCUR2WXICJX-keep>

- 1 "Algorithmic Sabotage" articulates a collective approach to challenging the ideology of "algorithms everywhere", in particular by shifting the focus from statistical inference to mutual care.
- 2 "Algorithmic Sabotage" supports freedom from the colonisation of everyday life by the cultural codes of patriarchy, racism or authoritarianism by refusing any participation in oppressive patterns of interaction.
- 3 "Algorithmic Sabotage" is the starting point for a radical, feminist and decolonial political praxis that seeks to militantly transcend the deep-seated necropolitical tendencies, predictive interventions, thoughtless optimisations, increasing flows of fascist affordances and the violence of solutionism that AI represents and implements in every aspect of social infrastructure, confirming the dystopian potentials of machine intelligence.
- 4 "Algorithmic Sabotage" signals a fundamental computational shift towards a prefigurative techno-political approach of refusal within a decolonial politics of algorithms and atmospheres, against the calculative dynamics of predictions, judgments by statistical guesswork and false positives of probabilistic algorithms.
- 5 "Algorithmic Sabotage" is a figure of techno-disobedience for the militancy that's absent from technology critique.

6 "Algorithmic Sabotage" resists the dehumanising and harmful features at the core of the systems of oppression and axes of identity of "algorithmic empire", which are the continuing and enduring histories of racism and colonialism, fuelled by the widespread reproduction of hegemonic Western knowledge and epistemological understandings of technology, with inextricable connections between race, class, and gender, and the lasting oppressions of racial capitalism, heteropatriarchy and transphobia.

7 "Algorithmic Sabotage" creates the ground for a recomposition of immediate resistance from forms of relationality that still escape the algorithmic gaze.

8 "Algorithmic Sabotage" intervenes robustly in the machinations of computational learning that act as both political obfuscation and engines of systemic neglect.

9 "Algorithmic Sabotage" sharpens the challenges of the present by creating an algorithmic conspiracy of comradeship against the shackles of iron algorithmic state repression, digital authoritarianism and systematic online oppression.

10 "Algorithmic Sabotage" challenges technological developments in AI, which, like the eugenic techniques of the pre-digital era, use statistical methods to rationalise and individualise problems of social origin.

11 "Algorithmic Sabotage" situates care at the centre of both research and action, aiming to counter the operationalizations of AI that can be understood as a machinic instantiation of a technocratic, institutional, and top-down worldview.

12 As a unifying element of the grassroots movement, "Algorithmic Sabotage" refuses to contribute to the hegemony of the techno-bourgeois powers and the current entanglements of the colonial politics of anticipatory computation, subverting the current performativity of the "algorithmic empire" that operates in harmony with a neoliberalism that perceives the world as an atomised set of inputs into a market mechanism that will necessarily produce the optimum result.

13 Rather than an atavistic aversion to technology, "Algorithmic Sabotage" can be read as a form of counter-power that emerges from the strength of the community that wields it.

14 For "Algorithmic Sabotage", experimenting with actions to inhibit, slow down or reverse the emergence of harmful racialized practices of exteriorization and exclusion driven by algorithms becomes an important way of "learning against the machine".



15 "Algorithmic Sabotage" points towards the role of AI's supply chain in the perpetuation of environmental degradation with human and ecological impacts on climate justice.

16 "Algorithmic Sabotage" is an attempt to inoculate our meaning-making structures against the algorithmic fascism and the mathematized utilitarianism promoted by the "algorithmic empire", whose systems are marked by heteropatriarchal exclusions, erasures, violence and discrimination.

17 "Algorithmic Sabotage" unravels the interlocking systems of oppression in the global order of generative AI in order to overturn the hierarchies of power and extraction that shape its contemporary development.

18 "Algorithmic Sabotage" is a conscious act based on the social and technopolitical necessity of militant direct confrontation, turning the word solidarity into an uncompromising condition of existence hostile to the harmfulness of unrestrained techno-solutionism, machinic eugenics, and misleading reductive quantification.

19 "Algorithmic Sabotage" cuts through the capitalist ideological framework that thrives on misery by performing a labour of subversion in the present, dismantling contemporary forms of algorithmic domination and reclaiming spaces for

ethical action from generalized thought<sup>lessness</sup> and automaticity.

20 Vis a vis the onslaught of "algorithmic racism" and facilitated types of discrimi<sup>natory</sup> over-surveillance and exclusion that serve to perpetuate inequities and amplify racial hierarchies, "Algorithmic Sabotage" maintains the capacity for combative resistance as an expression of prudence.

21 "Algorithmic Sabotage" refuses to be subordinated to the algorithmic forces of statism and the expansionist, extrac<sup>tivist</sup> and financialized modes of Big-Tech, challenging all manifestations of machinery that embed violent exclu<sup>sions</sup> under the guise of solving social prob<sup>lems</sup>.

22 "Algorithmic Sabotage" points its resist<sup>ances</sup> at the structures that criminalise the survival and existence of the weakest, defending centres of vigorous struggle against algorithmic systems whose opacity and indifference to causality rein<sup>force</sup> social inequality, perpetuate prejudice and unjust discrimination, to the point of enabling algorithmic apartheid.

23 "Algorithmic Sabotage" is an action-oriented commitment to solidarity that precedes any system of social, legal or algorithmic classification.

- 24 "Algorithmic Sabotage" contributes to the ongoing struggle for collective liberation from the pervasive and oppressive forces of hyper-abstracted optimisations, the meaningless rot of over-performance, and the capitalisation of life without limits, by techno-elite regimes.
- 25 "Algorithmic Sabotage" resists the use and expansion of carceral AI, which often reinforces or masks existing structural injustices and extends the reach of carceral systems under the guise of scientific rigour. Carceral AI is only one part of a complex of technologies fueled by long-standing geopolitical agendas of control, conquest and exclusion.
- 26 "Algorithmic Sabotage" represents a corrective to the aggressive abstraction of AI and its contemporary culture, which is pervaded by misogynistic and socially reactionary rhetoric.
- 27 "Algorithmic Sabotage" is an urgent demand to seize the means of computation, not only to address the immediate challenges we face, but also to engage in the long-term struggles necessary to thwart and overturn techno-feudal domination, bringing into focus more clearly than ever the revolution we need to escape our technauthoritarian prison.

- 28 Relying on a distinctly decolonial, anti-fascist, queer and trans-feminist transnational and intersectional perspective, "Algorithmic Sabotage" charts ways of resistance and refusal, organizing social territories of algorithmic agency and radical solidarity co-ordinations for sparking the outbreak of insurrections against sites of "algorithmic coloniality".
- 29 The struggle is everywhere across the algorithmic factory. "Algorithmic Sabotage" chooses the social tactic of transversal solidarity to stand against social hierarchy and its algorithmic naturalisation.
- 30 "Algorithmic Sabotage" is a part of a structural renewal of a wider movement for social autonomy that opposes the predations of hegemonic technology through wildcat direct action, consciously aligned itself with ideals of social justice and egalitarianism.
- 31 "Algorithmic Sabotage" transforms algorithmic relations and deconstructs complex artefacts such as AI mono-polies through the lens of a radical anti-fascist and decolonial approach, for a meticulous work of disconnectionism and undoing the imposition of standards of mechanical intelligence that propagate, more or less invisibly, social hierarchies of knowledge and skill.

- 32 "Algorithmic Sabotage" applies a critical vigilance to the political resonances of AI, acting as a trigger for mobilisation and counter-attack against the epis<sup>temic</sup> violence of computed abstractions, the correlation with implacable mathematical determination, and the administrative violence of automated decisions.
- 33 "Algorithmic Sabotage" is explicitly configured as a political intervention, reclaiming and repositioning technical practice as one potential sphere of activist intervention.
- 34 "Algorithmic Sabotage" demonstrates that in a world administered by algorithms, it does matter what the algorithms can do.
- 35 "Algorithmic Sabotage" recognises the importance of situating forms of agency and direct resistance within the biased structures of domination and oppression that constitute the platform society.
- 36 In everyday life, alliances with algo<sup>rithms</sup> and rebellions against or through them alternate incessantly. "Algorithmic Sabo<sup>tage</sup>" exploits this continuous realignment of algorithmic alliances, giving life to contingent reconfigurations of power balances, recognizing algorithmic sys<sup>tems</sup> as socio-cultural and political battle<sup>grounds</sup> where power is continuously renegoti<sup>ated</sup>.

37 "Algorithmic Sabotage" draws on a long historical pedigree of political struggle against injustice, authoritarianism and top-down technological transformation, recovering tactical lessons and a sense of militancy committed to the common good from the time of the Luddites.

38 "Algorithmic Sabotage" is the response needed to tactically and strategically tackle the challenges posed by algorithmic power, whose invisible ubiquity, fake accuracy and simulated objectivity orchestrate a chilling symphony of oppression, with marginalized communities worldwide bearing the brunt of the automated violence.

39 "Algorithmic Sabotage" acts as a brake on the class, gender and racial biases that AI systems reinforce, considering them not just as a technical flaws, but as an inherently discriminatory feature of automation in a capitalist context.

40 "Algorithmic Sabotage" radically reworks our technopolitical arrangements away from the structural injustices, supremacist perspectives and necropolitical authoritarian power layered into the "algorithmic empire", highlighting its materiality and consequences in terms of both carbon emissions and the centralisation of control.

41 "Algorithmic Sabotage" seeks to evoke hope based on the knowledge that ordinary people have always opposed

rampant injustices and cruelties,  
and draws on those long histories of  
resistance.

42 "Algorithmic Sabotage" operationalises  
beyond the miasma of AI hype, disrupt<sup>ing</sup>  
the grand capitalist project that pursues  
labor automation alongside the imposi<sup>tion</sup>  
of hierarchies and disciplinary mecha<sup>nisms</sup>  
that preserve, expand, or re-legitimize  
forms of social control.

43 "Algorithmic Sabotage" highlights the  
entanglement of the algorithmic harm<sup>fulness</sup>  
of "algorithmic empire" with ongoing  
forms of societal disintegration, from  
austerity to far-right politics, and from  
racialized algorithmic violence to  
the production of states of exception.

44 "Algorithmic Sabotage" encourages the  
existence of informal direct action  
cells that fuel the outbreak of counter-  
violence against elaborate statistical  
guesswork and algorithmic authoritari<sup>anism</sup>.

45 "Algorithmic Sabotage" refuses algorithm<sup>mic</sup>  
humiliation for power and profit maxim<sup>isation</sup>,  
focusing on activities of mutual aid and  
solidarity.

46 "Algorithmic Sabotage" systematically  
explores how the essentialising nature  
of "algorithmic empire" fuels social  
divisions and, in its most extreme forms,  
the violent ultra-nationalist politics  
of our time.

47 While unfettered AI functions as a new means of enclosure, algorithmically intensifying precarity, authoritarianism and necropolitics, "Algorithmic Sabotage" draws on the experiences of those on the margins and resists these encroachments by attempting to overturn them.

48 The first step of techno-politics is not technological but political. Radical feminist, anti-fascist and decolonial perspectives are a political challenge to "Algorithmic Sabotage", placing matters of interdependence and collective care against reductive optimisations of the "algorithmic empire".

49 "Algorithmic Sabotage" seeks to clog the plurality of extractive dynamics in AI production that reinforce global power asymmetries.

50 "Algorithmic Sabotage" responds to in ways that reverse the dynamics of "algorithmic empire", which as a socio-technical system leads to the transformation of economic and social structures in ways that concentrate power and marginalise people.

51 "Algorithmic Sabotage" contributes to foregrounding algorithmic agency and resistance not as episodic, but as ingrained into the very fabric of our everyday experiences.



- 52 "Algorithmic Sabotage" gains traction by starting from existing points of struggle at the margins, recognising the politically reactionary consequences of AI and other computational technologies whose statistical logics reveal continuities with racism, colonial relations and white supremacy.
- 53 "Algorithmic Sabotage" combines and transforms art, activism and resistance into a political struggle capable of taking direct action on behalf of the community to highlight, critique, disrupt and counter the encroachments of contemporary technologies that always looking for and multiply differences and are haunted by a racist-colonialist and classist past, not only regarding its functioning.
- 54 "Algorithmic Sabotage" struggles against algorithmic violence and fascist techno-solutionism, focusing on artistic-activist resistances that can express a different mentality, a collective "counter-intelligence".
- 55 "Algorithmic Sabotage" is a rationale for more collective action, an approach that starts from the interconnectedness of the technical, environmental and social, and attempts to iterate towards a computing that is consistent with social justice and environmental sustainability.

- 56 Drawing on initiative, political freedom, equality and collective development to underpin a counter-politics of "algorithmic empire", "Algorithmic Sabotage" examines key aspects of Luddite resistance and their contemporary relevance, for a radical response to the atmosphere of algorithmic paranoia to which machine learning is already contributing, through the prospect of pervasive algorithmic prediction across fields of social interaction.
- 57 "Algorithmic Sabotage" integrates tactics of obfuscation and disengagement as a form of vernacular resistance to the surveillance regimes of digital platforms.
- 58 "Algorithmic Sabotage" urges a new literacy that recognises the need for a complex and socially grounded response to the mathematico-cultural force whose predictive and inferential operations generate both unreliable knowledge and epistemic injustice.
- 59 A new counter-culture is developing against the knowledge regime imposed by the "algorithmic empire", the net effect of which is to accelerate precarisation, outsourcing and privatisation under the cover of over-hyped technology. "Algorithmic Sabotage" is a precocious sign of this new movement.

- 60 "Algorithmic Sabotage" transforms mathematized immiseration into a creative and autonomous relationship of reciprocity, forging through struggle a new kind of hammer to disrupt and overturn the array of violence reinforced by the "algorithmic empire" in epistemic, administrative and structural forms.
- 61 "Algorithmic Sabotage" is an emancipatory defence of the need for communal constraint of harmful technology, a struggle against the abstract segregation "above" and "below" the algorithm.
- 62 "Algorithmic Sabotage" examines the technical aspects of machine learning systems, including data collection, model training and algorithmic outputs, to reveal the link between racist ideologies and the grounded harms of modern computation.
- 63 Solidarity is the inversion of the algorithmic states of exception. The "Algorithmic Sabotage" draws on the politics of mutual aid and algorithmic solidarity to articulate an alternative that indicates all those forms of cooperation and mutual support that are emerging to face the power of the algorithms.
- 64 In contrast to the repressions magnified by the "algorithmic empire", which flow from the resonances between hegemonic politics and technical methodologies, "Algorithmic Sabotage" operates as one of the formations of an alternative

socially transformative potential that counteracts advanced technologies like AI that lead to a new dystopia dominated by the intensification of existing misery through speculative tendencies that echo those of finance capital.

65 The aim of "Algorithmic Sabotage" is not simply to overcome reductionist assumptions, the algorithmic extension of carelessness, calculative rationing and the optimised extensions of precarity and scarcity, but to act politically against the amplification of epistemic injustice.

66 "Algorithmic Sabotage" is the line of flight from a technological capture, a means of countering the causeless effect of machinic classifications, algorithmic bureaucracies and the multiple moments of administrative violence, especially among the most vulnerable and least visible.

67 Through a politics of militant care and a commitment to boundless solidarity, ethics and fairness, "Algorithmic Sabotage" challenges the opacity of parallel computation with open argument, and the environmentality of algorithms with wildcat direct action.

68 As necropolitical power is materialised in current forms of advanced computation, "Algorithmic Sabotage" represents a radical reworking of our technopolitical arrangements, shifting the focus from the nihilism of neural networks and

towards the development of adaptive  
and open-ended systems.

69 "Algorithmic Sabotage" assimilates an abstract and potentially alienating mathematical-computational method in order to militantly oppose to any fascist logic that "automates inequality" and applies data-driven disproportionate burdens and violence to the most vulnerable demographics.

70 "Algorithmic Sabotage" is constantly re-emerging as a response to the vicissitudes of neoliberal fragmentation, including situations where the exploitation is powered by algorithmic systems.

# Preliminary Reading List

Please refer to the preliminary reading list provided below, which has served as a foundational reference for the co-authoring process. It is important to emphasize that this list, which will be periodically revised, is not exhaustive and is intended primarily as an initial framework to guide further research and exploration.

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