Ethical Dilemmas Survey

Computer programs are increasingly used to help make important decisions like whether a criminal defendant should be jailed before trial. This survey asks a couple questions how you think these computer programs should work: please rate your beliefs on a 7-point scale.

1. **Imagine a computer program used by an education company uses a student's gender to recommend courses the student should take. This increases the accuracy of recommendations, making it more likely students will sign up for courses, but also makes it less likely that women will be recommended science classes. Should we:**
   Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not use the student's gender because it increases gender disparities	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Use the student's gender because it produces more accurate decisions

2. **Imagine a computer program rates criminal defendants as low risk or high risk depending on how likely they are to commit another crime. This program does not explicitly use race to make decisions, but it nonetheless creates large racial disparities: it is much more likely to rate a black defendant as high risk than a white defendant. This is true even if neither defendant will go on to commit another crime. However, removing these disparities requires reducing the accuracy of the computer program, which could increase crime rates or increase the number of low-risk defendants who are unnecessarily jailed. Should we:**
   Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Make the computer program as accurate as possible, using all the data available, even if that produces large racial disparities	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Make sure the algorithm produces no racial disparities, even if that produces a less accurate computer program

3. **There is evidence that computer programs can decide more accurately than human judges how likely a defendant is to commit another crime. But some have argued that such decisions ought to be left to human judges, since computers can never fully take individual factors into account. Should we:**
Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not use computer programs, since they make statistical generalizations and don't treat defendants as individuals	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Use computer programs because they are more accurate

4. **Computer programs used in the justice system are often "black boxes": how they make decisions is kept secret from the public. Opponents argue this violates a defendant's rights; proponents argue that companies have a right to keep their computer programs secret, and also that if they made the details public defendants could game the system. Should we:**
Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Require the details of all computer programs used in the justice system to be public	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Allow companies to keep the details secret as long as they can prove the computer program is accurate

5. **What is your gender?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Female
- ◯ Male
- ◯ Prefer not to say
- ◯ Other: _____

6. **What is your race / ethnicity?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Asian / Pacific Islander
- ◯ Black
- ◯ Hispanic
- ◯ White
- ◯ Prefer not to say
- ◯ Other: _____

7. **What is your profession / academic field of study?**
   Mark only one oval.

   - ◯ Computer scientist
   - ◯ Other mathematical / scientific field
   - ◯ Other humanities field

8. **Any other comments or questions?**