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On the Problem of Masking Special Errors by Serial Signature Analysis

Bericht des Surveillance & Society

Kurzfassung

This paper opens up for scrutiny the politics of algorithmic surveillance through an examination of Facial Recognition Systems (FRS's) in video surveillance, showing that seemingly mundane design decisions may have important political consequences that ought to be subject to scrutiny. It first focuses on the politics of technology and algorithmic surveillance systems in particular: considering the broad politics of technology; the nature of algorithmic surveillance and biometrics, claiming that software algorithms are a particularly important domain of techno-politics; and finally considering both the growth of algorithmic biometric surveillance and the potential problems with such systems. Secondly, it gives an account of FRS's, the
algorithms upon which they are based, and the biases embedded therein. In the third part, the ways in which these biases may manifest itself in real world implementation of FRS's are outlined. Finally, some policy suggestions for the future development of FRS's are made; it is noted that the most common critiques of such systems are based on notions of privacy which seem increasingly at odds with the world of automated systems.