# Weapons of Math Destruction by Cathy O’Neil

Reading Discussion Questions for Chapters 2 and 3

Discussion will take place in class on 10/1/21

Written answers to these questions are worth 2 points, participation in discussion is worth up to 1 point, to a maximum of 2 points possible.

1. If creating or running a WMD is so profitable, how can we push back against them?

We can try to use less of them, which is sometimes impossible. Otherwise create your own algorithm that will profit yourself.

1. What is “dumb money” (p. 35) and why is it important to hedge funds?

This wealth was coming out of people’s pockets. For hedge sunken Spanish galleon. This wealth was coming out of people’s pockets. For hedge funds, the smuggest of the players on Wall Street, this was “dumb money.”

1. Imagine you had a company website. What would you include in an algorithm to distinguish “window shoppers” from buyers (p.47)?

The trace of the shoppers purchasing history and what they are interested. If the person has shopped before, it is likely that he will purchase again.

1. Do you find other university ranking schemes to be preferable to the US News one, either personally or within this book’s argument?
2. What factors do you consider when evaluating possible colleges?

Ranking from US News and Niche (which sometimes can be WMD), friends description, and other resources from various websites..

1. At one point the author suggests that gaming the US News ranking might not be bad for a university, as “most of the proxies… reflect a school’s overall quality to some degree” (58). What do you think?
2. What was your favorite passage or idea from these chapters? (write it along with pg. #)
3. What questions do you have?