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Computer says no: understanding digital authority

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Propositions Based on the PhD Thesis
Computer Says No: Understanding Digital Authority

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1. Things are never just things.
2. If you think authority is dead, you are looking in the wrong place. A world is emerging in which authority applies to both people and technologies.
3. Governance in modern societies is increasingly characterized by socio-technical systems of humans and digital technologies. However, too often the focus of debate remains on technological capabilities and promises. This prevents us from understanding its impact.
4. In the context of digitisation, the field of security holds particular significance and merits considerable attention.
5. Digital technologies are often considered a means to support and augment human decision-making processes but can become a heuristic replacement for comprehensive information seeking and processing. This can be understood through the lens of digital authority.
6. Digital authority is intrinsically a product of a world that is experienced as inherently uncertain and overwhelmingly complex.
7. In many digital decision-making contexts, having a *human-in-the-loop* is crucial. However, in situations involving digital authority it may present an empty promise and not translate to meaningful input or control.
8. Enhancing individual efficacy and empowerment mitigates the risks associated with digital authority.
9. The digital governance of modern society is often less spectacular than imagined – sometimes maybe even disappointing.
10. Interdisciplinary thinking is invaluable to the future of science, but only when done with care and time. If not, it will only hinder scientific progress.
11. Philosophers are needed to develop vocabularies to grasp the complex body of empirical knowledge and observations.
12. No matter how much time and effort you put into it, for children, a dissertation remains simply a book with too few pictures.