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Propositions Based on the PhD Thesis

Computer Says No: Understanding Digital Authority

Daan Weggemans

- 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.