# NLP and Futuring the Past

18 January 2023

Zeerak Talat
Floating
zeerak_talat@sfu.ca | @zeeraktalat

# Overview

- Part I: Eugenics and Natural Language Processing
- Part II: Machine Learning as a [c]onservative Practice
- Part III: Futuring in Natural Language Processing
- Part IV: The Dream & Delusion of Decolonial Machine Learning
- Part V: Paying Publics - Academia & Industry

# Part I: Eugenics and NLP

*Frontispiece.*

THE CRIMINAL.

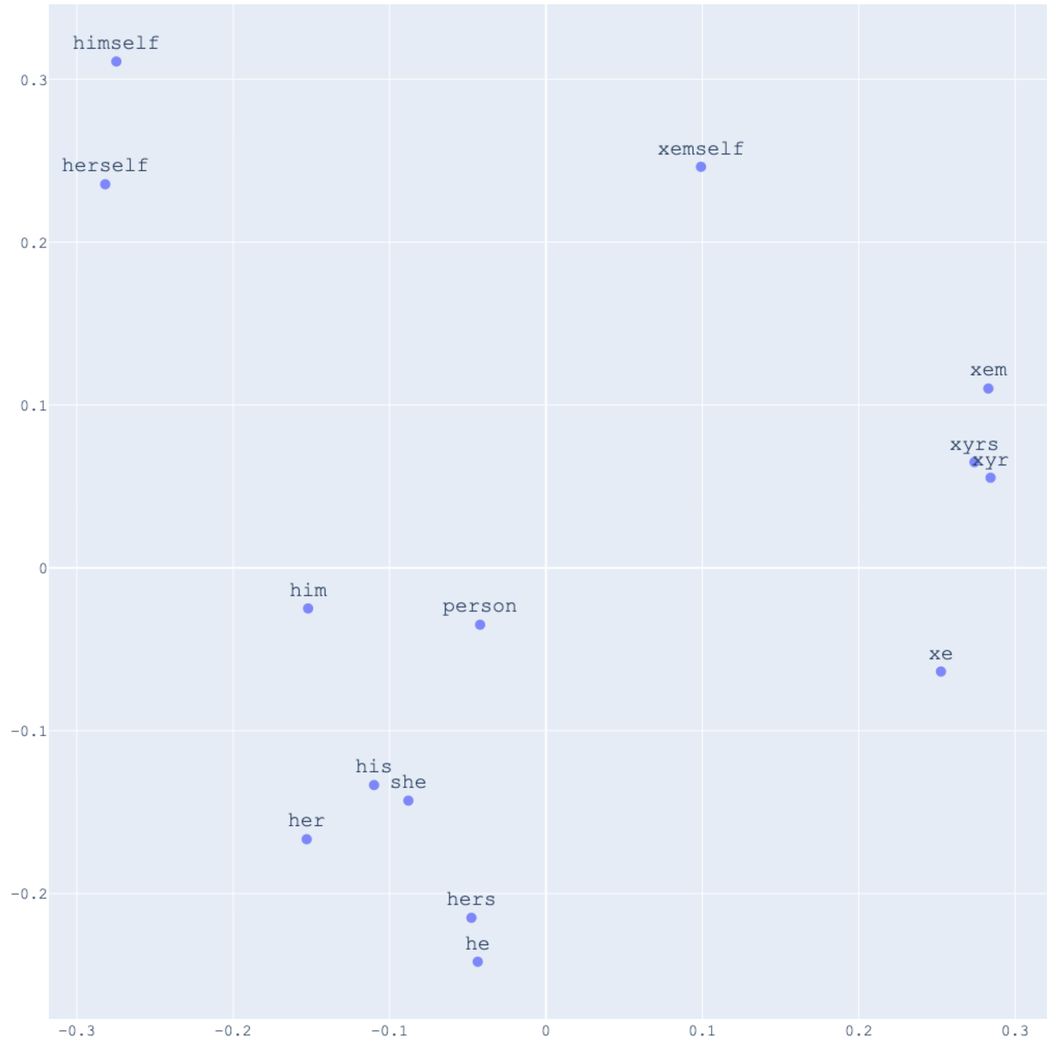
BY

HAVELOCK ELLIS.

*ILLUSTRATED.*

LONDON:
WALTER SCOTT, 24 WARWICK LANE,
PATERNOSTER ROW.
1890.

Galtonoian Composite as shown by Alan Sekula: The Body and the Archive (1986). October. MIT Press




Original

Xe Fiction: Full Fine-tuning

Talat, Z., & Lauscher, A. (2022). *Back to the Future: On Potential Histories in NLP* . arXiv. http://arxiv.org/abs/2210.06245

# Part II: Machine Learning as a [c]onservative Practice

STEVEN SPIELBERG Presents
BACK TO THE FUTURE
A ROBERT ZEMECKIS Film
He was never in time for his classes. . .
He wasn't in time for his dinner. . .
Then one day. . . he wasn't in his time at all.
"BACK TO THE FUTURE" Starring MICHAEL J. FOX
CHRISTOPHER LLOYD · LEA THOMPSON · CRISPIN GLOVER
Written by ROBERT ZEMECKIS & BOB GALE Music by ALAN SILVESTRI Produced by BOB GALE and NEIL CANTON
Executive Producers STEVEN SPIELBERG KATHLEEN KENNEDY and FRANK MARSHALL
AMBLIN ENTERTAINMENT
Directed by ROBERT ZEMECKIS
Soundtrack Available on MCA Records and Cassettes
DOLBY STEREO IN SELECTED THEATRES
Read the BERKLEY Book
A UNIVERSAL Picture
© 1985 Universal City Studios, Inc.
Coming soon to a theatre near you.

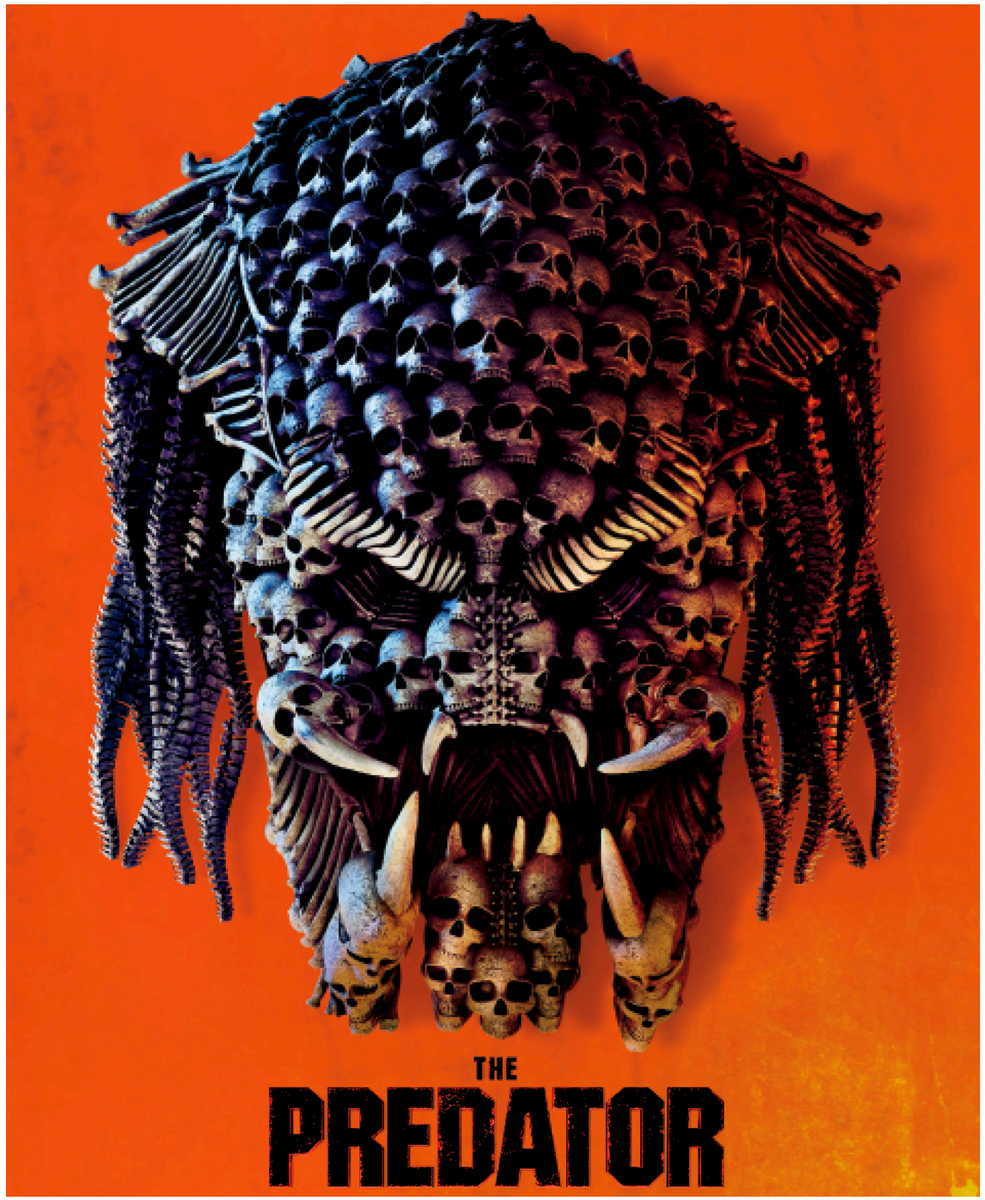
The Tower of Babel by Pieter Bruegel the Elder (1563). Source: Wikipedia

# Part III: Futuring NLP

- Technology as Assertive Tools
- Technological - Human Symbiosis
- Human Replacement Theory

# Detour: Accountability and Agency

# Part IV: Paying Publics - Academia & Industry


THE
PREDATOR

# RESPONSIBLE AI

## LICENSES

# Part V: The Dream & Delusion of Decolonial Machine Learning

**“Imperialism leaves behind germs of rot which we must clinically detect and remove from our land but from our minds as well.”**

Franz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth (19963)

# Te Hiku Tech

## Te Hiku Dev Kōrero

Kōrero from our developers

**Latest**

Data Sovereignty and the Kaitiakitanga License

# Conclusion: Deferring Democracy

# References

1. Costanza-Chock, S. (2018). Design Justice, A.I., and Escape from the Matrix of Domination. *Journal of Design and Science*.
2. Dick, S. (Forthcoming). The Logician and the Machine. In A. Johns & J. Evans (Eds.), *Beyond Code and Craft*. Osiris.
3. Fanon, F. (2002). *The wretched of the earth*. Grove Press.
4. Fraser, N. (1990). Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy. *Social Text*, *25/26*, 56.
5. Kalluri, P. (2020). Don't ask if artificial intelligence is good or fair, ask how it shifts power. *Nature*, *583*(7815), 169–169.
6. Licklider, J. C. R. (1960). Man-Computer Symbiosis. *IRE Transactions on Human Factors in Electronics*, *HFE-1*(1), 4–11.
7. Mumford, L. (1964). Authoritarian and Democratic Technics. *Technology and Culture*, *5*(1), 1.
8. Sekula, A. (1986). The Body and the Archive. *October*, *39*, 3.
9. Talat, Z., & Lauscher, A. (2022). *Back to the Future: On Potential Histories in NLP* (arXiv:2210.06245). arXiv.
10. Véliz, C. (2021). Moral zombies: Why algorithms are not moral agents. *AI & SOCIETY*, *36*(2), 487–497.
11. Winner, L. (1980). Do Artifacts Have Politics? *Daedalus*, *109*(1).

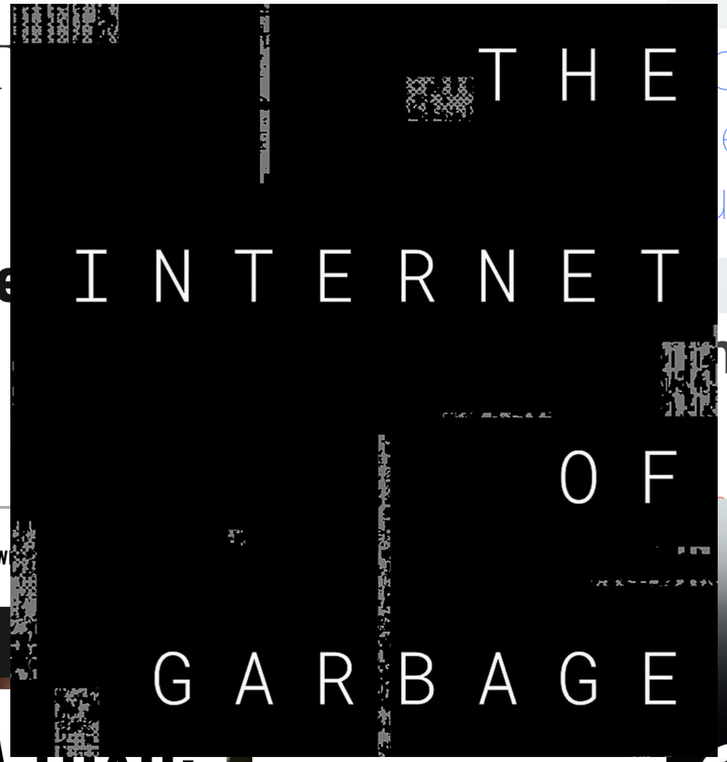
# Bonus Slide: Drs. Frankenstein & Our Monsters

## Clean up the Internet

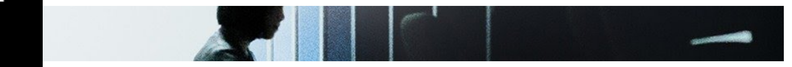
Clean up the internet is an independent, UK-based organisation concerned about the degradation in online discours
its implications for democracy. We campaign for evidence-based action to increase civility and respect online, and to
online bullying, trolling, intimidation, and misinformation.

**Two ways social networks could control toxic content**

Defund Hate Speech: T
Clean Is Upon Us




Content on Digital Platforms is on
e. How Can Brands Rebuild
umer Trust?



**Abuse, racism and hate spe
the comments online**

**nilever warns social media
clean up "toxic" content**

**[I]deas about separating, purifying, demarcating and punishing transgressions have as their main function to impose system on an inherently untidy experience.**

Mary Douglas, Purity & Danger (1978)