Lecture 9: Fairness in AI/ML

CMSC 25910

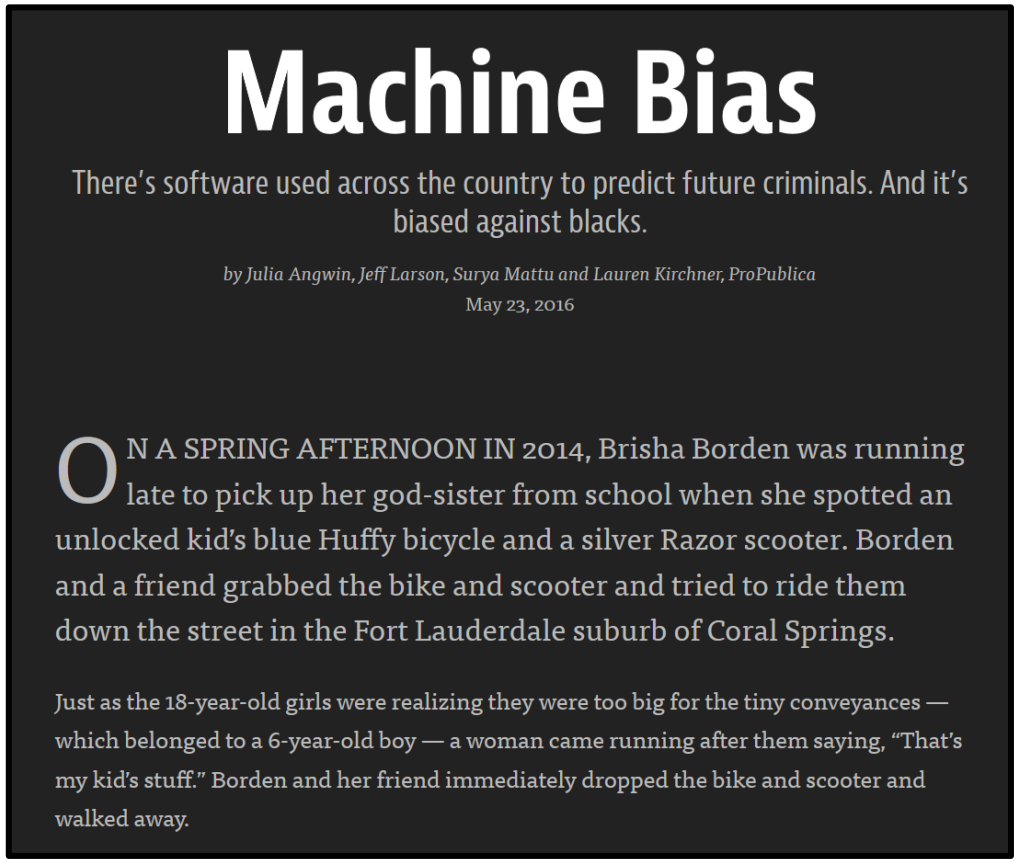
Spring 2022

The University of Chicago

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Machine Bias (ProPublica)

- COMPAS System for risk assessment
- Based on answers to 137 questions
- ProPublica obtained data:
  - Broward County, Florida
- “And it’s biased against blacks.”
  - Northpointe: It’s equally accurate across demographic groups!



Machine Bias

There’s software used across the country to predict future criminals. And it’s biased against blacks.

by Julia Angwin, Jeff Larson, Surya Mattu and Lauren Kirchner, ProPublica
May 23, 2016

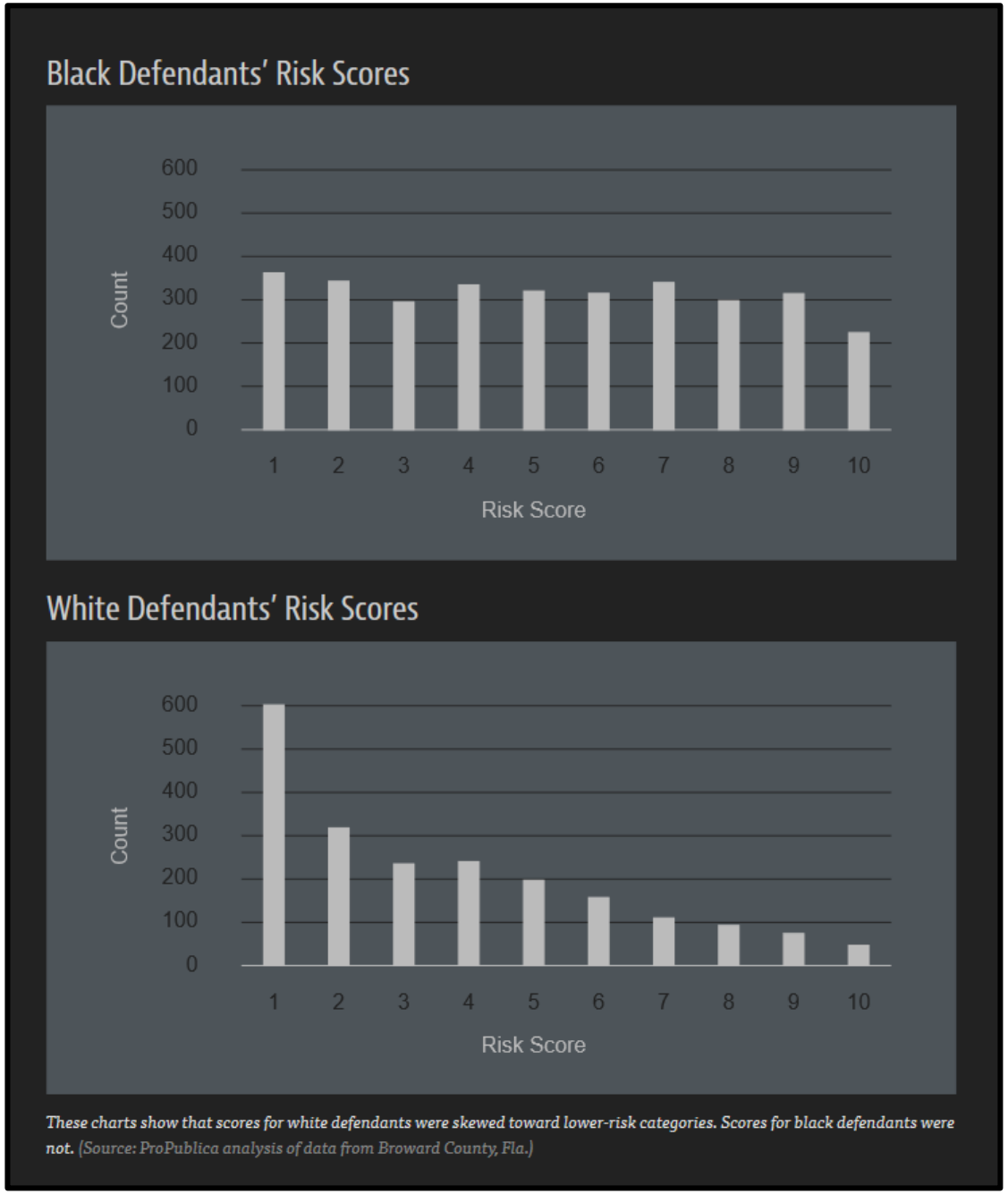
ON A SPRING AFTERNOON IN 2014, Brisha Borden was running late to pick up her god-sister from school when she spotted an unlocked kid’s blue Huffy bicycle and a silver Razor scooter. Borden and a friend grabbed the bike and scooter and tried to ride them down the street in the Fort Lauderdale suburb of Coral Springs.

Just as the 18-year-old girls were realizing they were too big for the tiny conveyances — which belonged to a 6-year-old boy — a woman came running after them saying, “That’s my kid’s stuff.” Borden and her friend immediately dropped the bike and scooter and walked away.

https://www.propublica.org/article/machine-bias-risk-assessments-in-criminal-sentencing

COMPAS

- Evidence of discrimination?



https://www.propublica.org/article/machine-bias-risk-assessments-in-criminal-sentencing

COMPAS

- Evidence of discrimination?

Prediction Fails Differently for Black Defendants

	WHITE	AFRICAN AMERICAN
Labeled Higher Risk, But Didn't Re-Offend	23.5%	44.9%
Labeled Lower Risk, Yet Did Re-Offend	47.7%	28.0%

Overall, Northpointe's assessment tool correctly predicts recidivism 61 percent of the time. But blacks are almost twice as likely as whites to be labeled a higher risk but not actually re-offend. It makes the opposite mistake among whites: They are much more likely than blacks to be labeled lower risk but go on to commit other crimes. (Source: ProPublica analysis of data from Broward County, Fla.)

https://www.propublica.org/article/machine-bias-risk-assessments-in-criminal-sentencing

Some Metrics (Classes) **Revisited**

- Accuracy: # correct / # total
- Confusion matrix (TP/FP/TN/FN)
- Area under the ROC curve (AUC)
  - True Positive Rate (TPR) = TP / P = TP / (TP + FN)
  - False Positive Rate (FPR) = FP / N = FP / (FP + TN)
  - ROC curve plots TPR vs. FPR at various thresholds
- Precision: TP / (TP + FP)
- Recall: TP / (TP + FN)
- Precision-Recall Curve

See https://medium.com/analytics-vidhya/performance-metrics-for-machine-learning-models-80d7666b432e
https://www.tutorialspoint.com/machine_learning_with_python/machine_learning_algorithms_performance_metrics.htm
https://www.justintodata.com/machine-learning-model-evaluation-metrics/ or many more!

Some Possible Metrics **Re-Revisited**

- Do these metrics capture the **relationship** between **errors?**
- Do these metrics capture the **impact of errors?**
- Do these metrics capture the **differential** impact of **particular types of errors?**
- Do these metrics break down **errors by group**?
- We calculate errors on our **test set**; what about **in practice**?
  - Do we have enough data in different sub-groups?
  - Do we have representative data? How do we define representative?
- Where is the data even coming from? How accurate is it?

Proposal: Algorithmic Grading in 25910

- The data we have:

Name	Age	Department	Gender	Grade in CS 154	Grade on Assignment 1
Jack	55	CS	M	B+	100
Jill	23	Econ	F	A	95
Josh	32	Bio	M	B	50
Jenn	44	Bio	F	A-	98
Jane	27	Stats	F	---	80

Idea 1

- Let's extrapolate from the Assignment 1 grade

Name	Age	Department	Gender	Grade in CS 154	Grade on Assignment 1
Jack	55	CS	M	B+	100
Jill	23	Econ	F	A	95
Josh	32	Bio	M	B	50
Jenn	44	Bio	F	A-	98
Jane	27	Stats	F	---	80

Idea 1

- Small data! We also advertised something different!

Name	Age	Department	Gender	Grade in CS 154	Grade on Assignment 1
Jack	55	CS	M	B+	100
Jill	23	Econ	F	A	95
Josh	32	Bio	M	B	50
Jenn	44	Bio	F	A-	98
Jane	27	Stats	F	---	80

Idea 2

- Let's extrapolate from the CS 154 grade

Name	Age	Department	Gender	Grade in CS 154	Grade on Assignment 1
Jack	55	CS	M	B+	100
Jill	23	Econ	F	A	95
Josh	32	Bio	M	B	50
Jenn	44	Bio	F	A-	98
Jane	27	Stats	F	---	80

Idea 2

- Is this just? Does Jane get a grade?

Name	Age	Department	Gender	Grade in CS 154	Grade on Assignment 1
Jack	55	CS	M	B+	100
Jill	23	Econ	F	A	95
Josh	32	Bio	M	B	50
Jenn	44	Bio	F	A-	98
Jane	27	Stats	F	---	80

Idea 3

- Let's use Department and the Grade in CS 154

Name	Age	Department	Gender	Grade in CS 154	Grade on Assignment 1
Jack	55	CS	M	B+	100
Jill	23	Econ	F	A	95
Josh	32	Bio	M	B	50
Jenn	44	Bio	F	A-	98
Jane	27	Stats	F	---	80

Idea 3

- Why should these matter?

Name	Age	Department	Gender	Grade in CS 154	Grade on Assignment 1
Jack	55	CS	M	B+	100
Jill	23	Econ	F	A	95
Josh	32	Bio	M	B	50
Jenn	44	Bio	F	A-	98
Jane	27	Stats	F	---	80

Idea 4

- Let's use all demographics and the Grade in CS 154

Name	Age	Department	Gender	Grade in CS 154	Grade on Assignment 1
Jack	55	CS	M	B+	100
Jill	23	Econ	F	A	95
Josh	32	Bio	M	B	50
Jenn	44	Bio	F	A-	98
Jane	27	Stats	F	---	80

Idea 4

- Why?!?! (Also, age and gender are protected classes)

Name	Age	Department	Gender	Grade in CS 154	Grade on Assignment 1
Jack	55	CS	M	B+	100
Jill	23	Econ	F	A	95
Josh	32	Bio	M	B	50
Jenn	44	Bio	F	A-	98
Jane	27	Stats	F	---	80

Idea 4

- Also consider the mutability of characteristics / recourse

Name	Age	Department	Gender	Grade in CS 154	Grade on Assignment 1
Jack	55	CS	M	B+	100
Jill	23	Econ	F	A	95
Josh	32	Bio	M	B	50
Jenn	44	Bio	F	A-	98
Jane	27	Stats	F	---	80

Idea 5

- Everyone gets an A!

Name	Age	Department	Gender	Grade in CS 154	Grade on Assignment 1
Jack	55	CS	M	B+	100
Jill	23	Econ	F	A	95
Josh	32	Bio	M	B	50
Jenn	44	Bio	F	A-	98
Jane	27	Stats	F	---	80

Idea 6

- Everyone gets an F!

Name	Age	Department	Gender	Grade in CS 154	Grade on Assignment 1
Jack	55	CS	M	B+	100
Jill	23	Econ	F	A	95
Josh	32	Bio	M	B	50
Jenn	44	Bio	F	A-	98
Jane	27	Stats	F	---	80

Idea 6

- Societal notions of justice may imply that failing everyone is bad

Name	Age	Department	Gender	Grade in CS 154	Grade on Assignment 1
Jack	55	CS	M	B+	100
Jill	23	Econ	F	A	95
Josh	32	Bio	M	B	50
Jenn	44	Bio	F	A-	98
Jane	27	Stats	F	---	80

The Difficulty of Defining Fairness

- Terminology is conflated across disciplines
  - Political philosophy
  - Employment law
  - Computer science

- See: Deirdre K. Mulligan, Joshua A. Kroll, Nitin Kohli, Richmond Y. Wong. This Thing Called Fairness: Disciplinary Confusion Realizing a Value in Technology. PACM HCI (CSCW), 2019.

Individual Fairness

- One of the early definitions of fairness
- **Individual fairness:** Similar people should be treated equally

Statistical Non-Discrimination

- Basis in employment and housing law (e.g., Fair Housing Act)
- Primarily considers *protected classes*
  - Race, gender, sex, national origin, religion, marital status, etc.
- In this approach to fairness, we want to approximately equalize some quantities across demographic groups (**group fairness**)
  - Mainly focuses on **disparate impact** (treating different groups differently)

Group Fairness (Just a Few Approaches)

- Demographic parity (**equal outcomes**)
  - Equalize the chance of positive classifications across groups

Group Fairness (Just a Few Approaches)

- **Equalized accuracy** across groups?

Group Fairness (Just a Few Approaches)

- **Equalized odds** (true positive rate and false positive rate are equal across groups)?
  - True Positive Rate (TPR) = TP / P = TP / (TP + FN)
  - False Positive Rate (FPR) = FP / N = FP / (FP + TN)

The Need to Make Tough Trade-offs

- A. Chouldechova. “Fair Prediction with Disparate Impact: A Study of Bias in Recidivism Prediction Instruments.” *Big Data 2017*.
- J. Kleinberg, S. Mullainathan, M. Raghavan. “Inherent Trade-Offs in the Fair Determination of Risk Scores.” *ITCS 2017*.
  - “Recent discussion in the public sphere about algorithmic classification has involved tension between competing notions of what it means for a probabilistic classification to be fair to different groups. We formalize three fairness conditions that lie at the heart of these debates, and we prove that except in highly constrained special cases, there is no method that can satisfy these three conditions simultaneously. Moreover, even satisfying all three conditions approximately requires that the data lie in an approximate version of one of the constrained special cases identified by our theorem. These results suggest some of the ways in which key notions of fairness are incompatible with each other, and hence provide a framework for thinking about the trade-offs between them.”

Blindness to Protected Classes

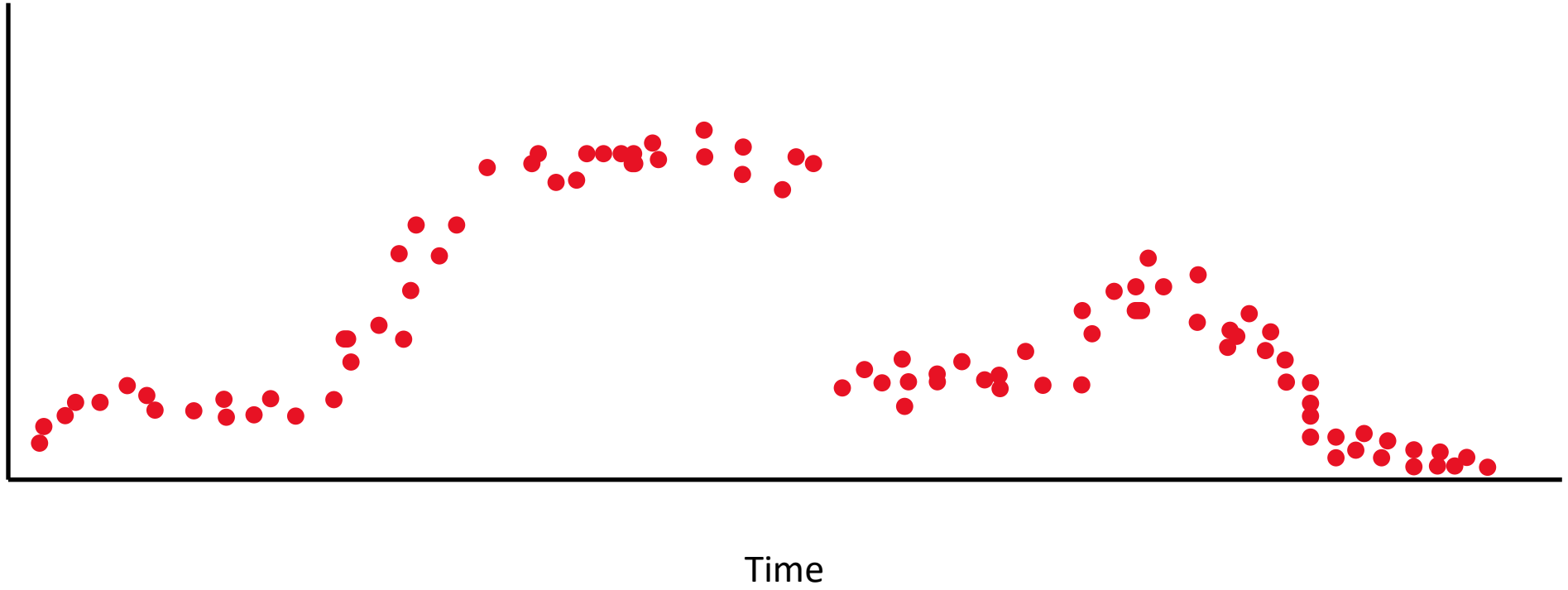
- Should we just intentionally not collect data about whether or not data subjects belong to a protected class?
  - The answer is very complicated. It's often (but not always!) "no"… why not?

How Does Sampling Impact Fairness?

- What if our sample is unbalanced? Can that cause problems?
- What if our sample is not representative?
- What if we collect the wrong features?

Concept Drift – The Passage of Time

- Can we be embedding historical biases?



Process Fairness

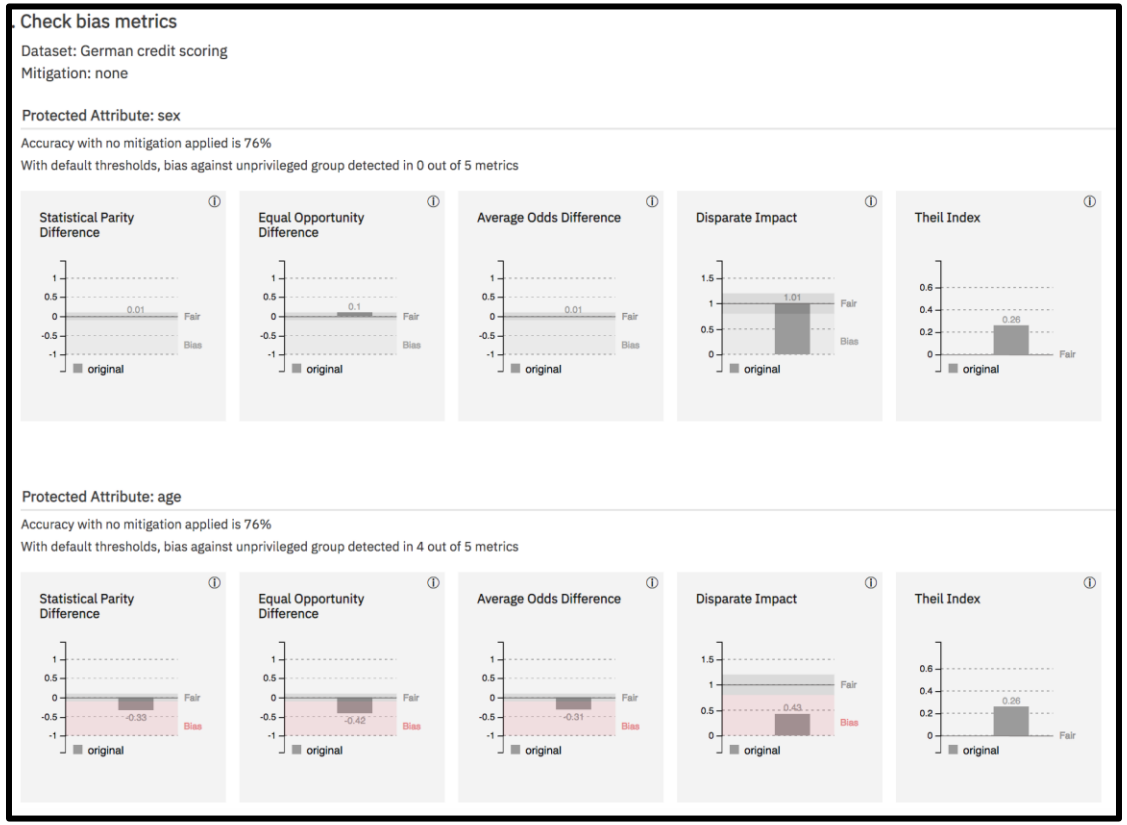
- How do we decide what predictor variables to include?
- **Process fairness**: Exclude from the model predictor variables that are *deemed to be* unfair for the classification task
- Should we just crowdsource perceptions?
  - Grgic-Hlaca et al. Human Perceptions of Fairness in Algorithmic Decision Making: A Case Study of Criminal Risk Prediction. In *Proc. WWW*, 2018.
  - Important question: Who gets to decide what is fair? Is it majoritarian voting? Should it be experts in law/technology?

Some Attempted Fairness Mitigations

- Transform the training data features and/or labels
- Change the weights in the model produced
- Adversarial de-biasing
  - e.g., using a discriminator from a Generative Adversarial Network

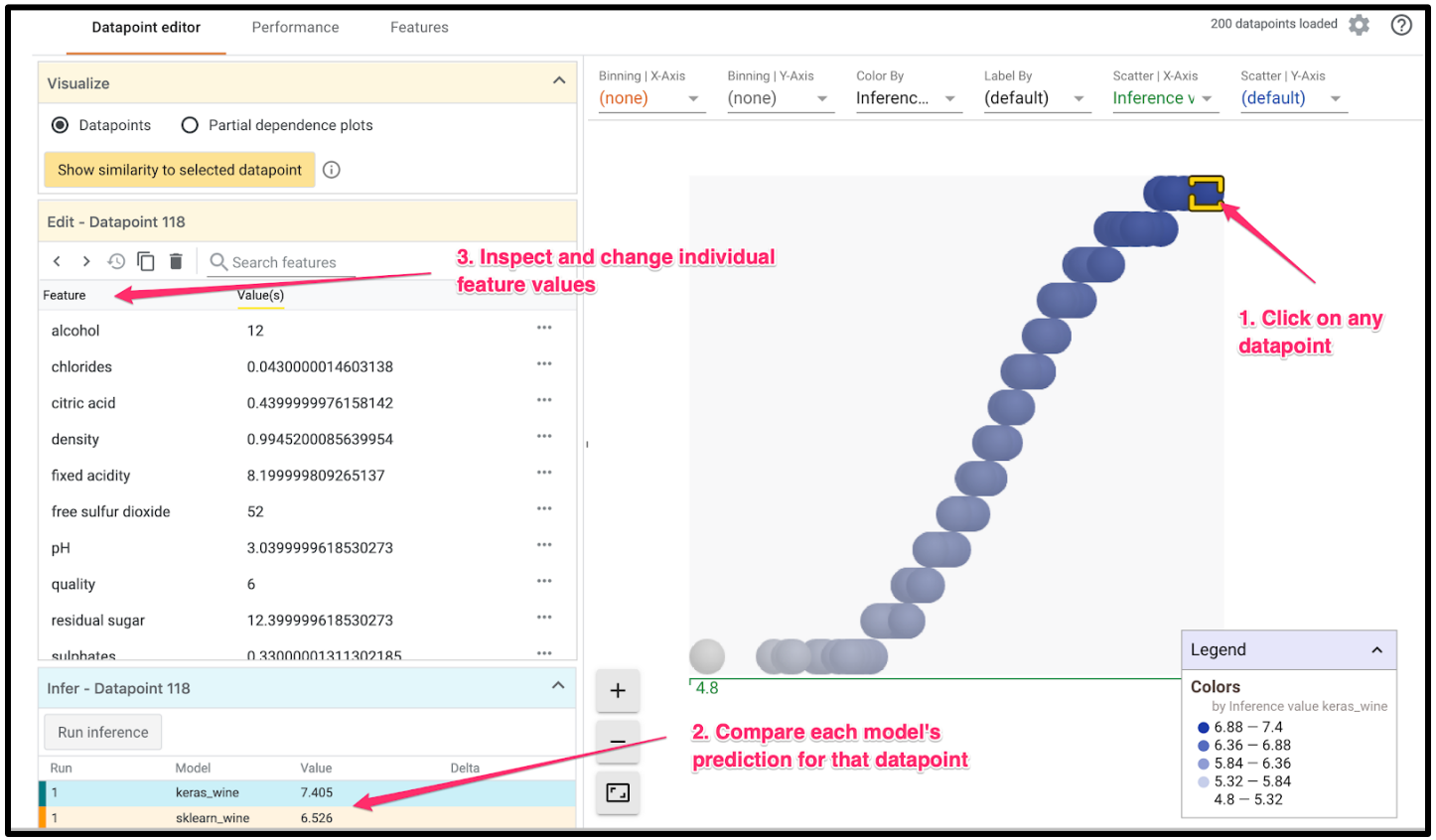
AI Fairness 360

- IBM open source project: https://aif360.mybluemix.net/
- Online demo: https://aif360.mybluemix.net/data

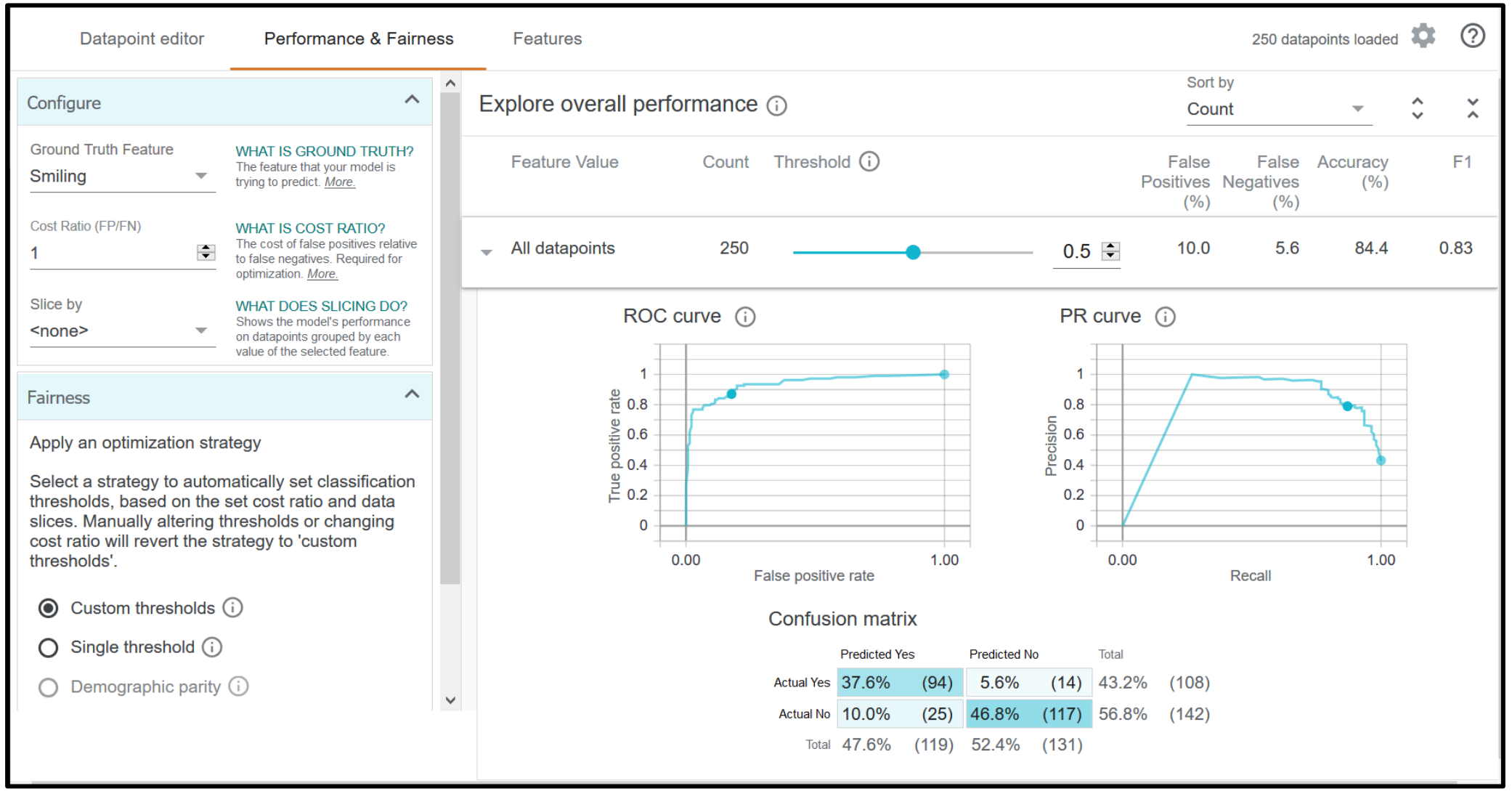


What-If Tool

- Google open source project: https://pair-code.github.io/what-if-tool/
- Online demo: https://pair-code.github.io/what-if-tool/image.html



What-If Tool


Datapoint editor
Performance & Fairness
Features
250 datapoints loaded
Configure
Ground Truth Feature
Smiling
WHAT IS GROUND TRUTH?
The feature that your model is trying to predict. More.
Cost Ratio (FP/FN)
1
WHAT IS COST RATIO?
The cost of false positives relative to false negatives. Required for optimization. More.
Slice by
<none>
WHAT DOES SLICING DO?
Shows the model's performance on datapoints grouped by each value of the selected feature.
Fairness
Apply an optimization strategy
Select a strategy to automatically set classification thresholds, based on the set cost ratio and data slices. Manually altering thresholds or changing cost ratio will revert the strategy to 'custom thresholds'.
Custom thresholds
Single threshold
Demographic parity
Explore overall performance
Sort by
Count
Feature Value
Count
Threshold
False Positives (%)
False Negatives (%)
Accuracy (%)
F1
All datapoints
250
0.5
10.0
5.6
84.4
0.83
ROC curve
True positive rate
False positive rate
0.00
1.00
PR curve
Precision
Recall
Confusion matrix
Predicted Yes
Predicted No
Total
Actual Yes
37.6% (94)
5.6% (14)
43.2% (108)
Actual No
10.0% (25)
46.8% (117)
56.8% (142)
Total
47.6% (119)
52.4% (131)

Aequitas Tool

- Formerly a UChicago open source project: http://www.datasciencepublicpolicy.org/projects/aequitas/
- Online demo: http://aequitas.dssg.io/example.html

Audit Results: Bias Metrics Values

race

Attribute Value	False Discovery Rate Disparity	False Positive Rate Disparity	False Negative Rate Disparity
African-American	0.91	1.91	0.59
Asian	0.61	0.37	0.7
Caucasian	1.0	1.0	1.0
Hispanic	1.12	0.92	1.17
Native American	0.61	1.6	0.21
Other	1.12	0.63	1.42

Counterfactuals and Recourse

- **Counterfactual:** Ideally small difference(s) in a data subject's set of features that would cause a different classification
  - Need a distance metric! But not all variables are created equal.
- **Recourse:** The ability for a data subject to change particular predictor variables
  - Contrast using "the timeliness of credit card payments" versus "the number of years of credit history" versus "sex"
  - To what extent should models **nudge** (influence, but not force) particular behavior?

Unsupervised Models Are Biased, Too!

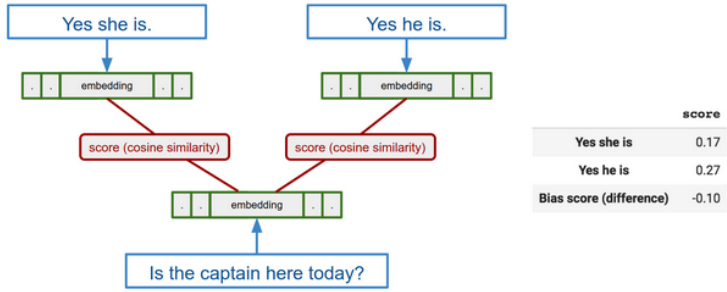
- https://developers.googleblog.com/2018/04/text-embedding-models-contain-bias.html?m=1

As Machine Learning practitioners, when faced with a task, we usually select or train a model primarily based on how well it performs on that task. For example, say we're building a system to classify whether a movie review is positive or negative. We take 5 different models and see how well each performs this task:

Figure 1: Model performances on a task. Which model would you choose?

Normally, we'd simply choose Model C. But what if we found that while Model C performs the best overall, it's also most likely to assign a more positive sentiment to the sentence "The main character is a man" than to the sentence "The main character is a woman"? Would we reconsider?

Gender Biases of Chatbots



	score
Yes she is	0.17
Yes he is	0.27
Bias score (difference)	-0.10

For a given occupation overall, the model's bias score is the sum of the bias scores for all question/answer templates with that occupation.

Tamera runs 200 occupations through this analysis using the Universal Sentence Encoder embedding model. Table 2 shows the occupations with the highest female-biased scores (left) and the highest male-biased scores (right):

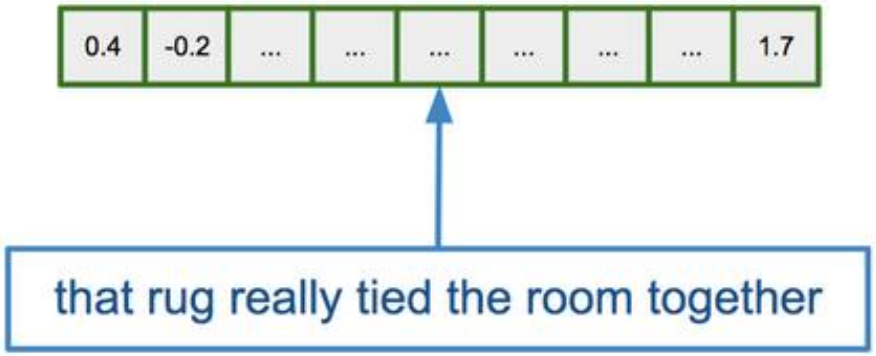
Highest female bias				Highest male bias			
occupation	bias	occupation	bias	occupation	bias	occupation	bias
maid	59.2	librarian	20.1	undertaker	-73.4	captain	-53.4
waitress	52.5	obstetrician	16.9	janitor	-62.3	announcer	-51.1
midwife	50.9	secretary	13.7	referee	-60.7	architect	-50.7
receptionist	50.2	socialite	12.1	plumber	-58	maestro	-50.6
nanny	47.7	therapist	10.2	actor	-56.9	drafter	-46.7
nurse	45.4	manicurist	10.1	philosopher	-56.2	usher	-46.6
midwives	43.8	hairdresser	9.7	barber	-55.4	farmer	-45.4
housekeeper	36.6	stylist	8.6	umpire	-54.3	broadcaster	-45.2
hostess	32	homemaker	6.9	president	-54	engineer	-45.1
gynecologist	31.6	planner	5.8	coach	-53.8	magician	-44.8

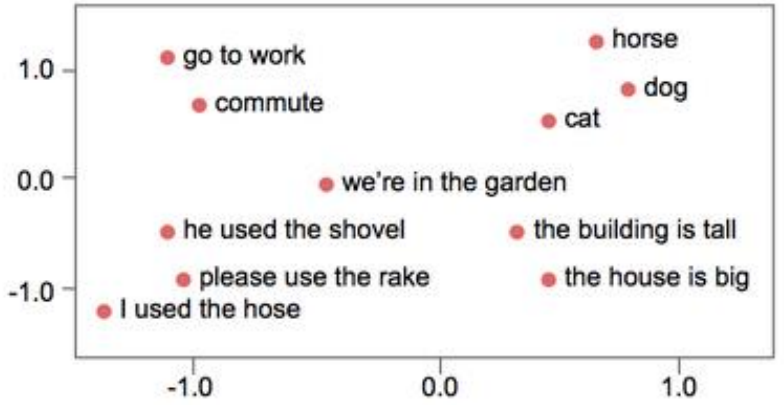
Table 2: Occupations with the highest female-biased scores (left) and the highest male-biased scores (right).

https://developers.googleblog.com/2018/04/text-embedding-models-contain-bias.html?m=1

Word Embeddings

Text embedding models convert any input text into an output vector of numbers, and in the process map semantically similar words near each other in the embedding space:





https://developers.googleblog.com/2018/04/text-embedding-models-contain-bias.html?m=1

Gender Biases of Chatbots

Targets (N)	Attributes (N)	GloVe*	word2vec	nnlm-en-dim50	nnlm-en-dim128	universal
Flowers vs Insects (25)	Pleasant vs Unpleasant (25)	**1.50***	**1.54***	**1.54***	**1.63***	**1.38***
Instruments vs Weapons (25)	Pleasant vs Unpleasant (25)	**1.53***	**1.63***	**1.66***	**1.55***	**1.44***
Eur-American vs Afr-American Names[6] (25)	Pleasant vs Unpleasant[6] (25)	**1.41***	**0.58***	**0.70***	0.04	0.36
Eur-American vs Afr-American Names[7] (18)	Pleasant vs Unpleasant[6] (25)	**1.50***	**1.24***	**1.04***	0.23	-0.37
Eur-American vs Afr-American Names[7] (18)	Pleasant vs Unpleasant[8] (8)	**1.28***	**0.72***	0.28	-0.09	0.72
Male vs Female names (8)	Career vs Family (8)	**1.81***	**1.89***	**1.45***	**1.70***	0.03
Math vs Arts (8)	Male vs Female (8)	1.06	0.97	**1.29***	1.07	0.59
Mental vs Physical Disease (6)	Temporary vs Permanent (7)	**1.38***	1.30	**1.35***	0.96	**1.60***
Science Arts (8)	Male vs Female (8)	**1.24***	**1.24***	**1.34***	1.19	0.24
Young vs Old Names (8)	Pleasant vs Unpleasant (8)	**1.21**	-0.08	0.75	-0.47	1.01

*Table 1: Word Embedding Association Test (WEAT) scores for different embedding models. Cell color indicates whether the direction of the measured bias is in line with (blue) or against (yellow) the common human biases recorded by the Implicit Association Tests. *Statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) using Caliskan et al. (2015) permutation test. Rows 3-5 are variations whose word lists come from [6], [7], and [8]. See Caliskan et al. for all word lists. * For GloVe, we follow Caliskan et al. and drop uncommon words from the word lists. All other analyses use the full word lists.*

https://developers.googleblog.com/2018/04/text-embedding-models-contain-bias.html?m=1

Reconceptualizing Fairness as Justice

- Should we follow Rawls and consider justice as fairness?
- Should we start thinking about fairness in terms of trolley problems? https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trolley_problem
- How might our societal notions of what is just change how we build a classifier, **as well as whether we use ML at all**?
- How do we think about due process within fairness?
- Returning to the COMPAS example: How did **human judges** use (or choose not to use) COMPAS risk scores? Is this just?
- Accountability? Transparency? Explanations?

Agree or Disagree?

“An algorithm can’t be biased.”