ZeMKI-Forschungskolloquium

ZeMKI Research Seminar

Linzer Str. 4, Room 60.070, 28359 Bremen, DE

27.11.2024, 16.15 – 17.45 (CET)

Daniel Whelan-Shamy

(Digital Media Research Centre at the Queensland University of Technology, Australia)

The Cultural Form of Machine Learning: Towards a Critical Understanding of Simulation as a Goal of the Technological Sublime

Abstract:

The work of this PhD research is to situate Generative Artificial Intelligence systems – specifically the machine learning architectures of Diffusion and Transformer Models that power them – amongst a longer history of simulation and to investigate the increasing commodification of simulation as a product by OpenAI. To do this I develop an understanding of Diffusion Transformer Models as computational architectures and then contrast them against a wider history of simulation theory that works through a rich history of thinkers that have discussed simulation and its links to religion and ideal forms namely: Plato, Pierre Klossowski, Gilles Deleuze and Jean Baudrillard. The aim of this research is to go beyond superficial discussions of simulation to understand how Generative Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning models are driving changes in how we make sense of form, creative expression, and authenticity. To do this I undertake a close reading of key texts that have helped shape the idea of simulation throughout history and offer a textual analysis of a variety of materials made public by OpenAI throughout their marketing of Generative Artificial Intelligence systems.In doing so, I offer an interpretation of Machine Learning systems through the lens of simulation and describe how simulation is increasingly positioned as an object of the technological sublime.

Bio:

Daniel Whelan-Shamy is a PhD candidate at the Digital Media Research Centre at the Queensland University of Technology. He was born and raised in Otautahi (Christchurch), Aotearoa, New Zealand.