

§1 The human face is a remarkable piece of work. The astonishing variety of facial features helps people recognise each other and is crucial to the formation of complex societies. So is the face's ability to send emotional signals, whether through an involuntary blush or the artifice of a false smile. People spend much of their waking lives reading faces, for signs of attraction, hostility, trust and deceit. They also spend plenty of time trying to dissimulate.

§2 Technology is rapidly catching up with the human ability to read faces. Apple's new Iphone is expected to use it to unlock the homescreen. Although faces are peculiar to individuals, they are also public, so technology does not, at first sight, intrude on something that is private. And yet **the ability to record, store and analyse images of faces cheaply, quickly and on a vast scale** promises one day to bring about fundamental changes to notions of privacy, fairness and trust.

§3 Anyone with a phone can take a picture for facial-recognition programs to use. Findface, an app in Russia, compares snaps of strangers with pictures on Vkontakte, a social network, and can **identify people** with a 70% accuracy rate. Facebook's bank of facial images cannot be scraped by others, but the Silicon Valley giant **could obtain pictures of** visitors to a car showroom, say, and later use facial recognition to serve them ads for cars. Law-enforcement agencies now have a **powerful weapon in their ability to track criminals, but at enormous potential cost to citizens' privacy.**

§4 **A face** is not just **a name-tag**. It **displays a lot of other information – and machines can read that, too**. Again, that promises benefits. But the technology also threatens. Researchers at Stanford University have demonstrated that, when shown pictures of one gay man, and one straight man, the algorithm could attribute their sexuality correctly 81% of the time. Humans managed only 61%. In countries where homosexuality is a crime, software which promises to infer sexuality from a face is an alarming prospect.

§5 Less violent forms of **discrimination could also become common**. Employers can already act on their prejudices to deny people a job. But facial recognition could make such bias routine, enabling firms to filter all job applications for ethnicity and signs of intelligence and sexuality. Nightclubs and sports grounds may face pressure to protect people by scanning entrants' faces for the threat of violence.

§6 Laws against discrimination can be applied to an employer screening candidates' images. Suppliers of commercial face-recognition systems might submit to audits, to demonstrate that their systems are not propagating bias unintentionally. Firms that use such technologies should be held accountable.

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#### Question 1

According to the journalist, to what extent are facial-recognition programmes a threat to people? (80+/- 10%)  
Answer the question in your own words.

- A) **How it works (advantage over the human perception): algorithms, speed**  
B) Two types of risks of privacy invasion:  
1) **put names on faces**  
→ **surveillance, data theft for various purposes (commercial, law enforcement)**  
2) **read the face** (so to speak) and interpret the origin or the psychology,  
→ **risk of discriminatory practices**

Facial-recognition software can do harm. **Indeed, although a face is naturally exposed to the public eye, these programmes' sheer data-collecting ability and speed increase the risk of privacy invasion.** There are two types of risks: **Firstly, the programme can put names on faces, which can lead to surveillance and data theft.** Secondly, it can also read the face, so to speak, and interpret the person beneath the physical features, say, by revealing a person's homosexuality/sexual preferences or their origins. **This can be a slippery slope to discriminatory practices.** **88 words**

**En caractères gras:** les conséquences.

Phrase chapô minimale. Cherchez à faire des phrases complexes (avec subordonnées ou gérondif)

Vocab : so to speak : pour ainsi dire. Say (entre virgules): par exemple mais un seul mot !

Je réduis les exemples : N'en utilise que pour éclaircir le propos (ici, pour le dernier type de risque)