

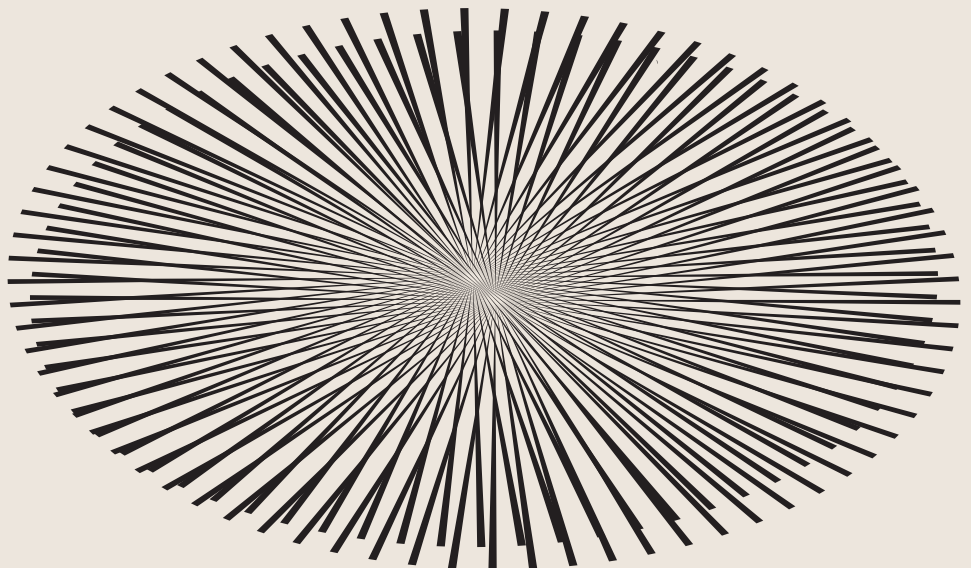
Monday
28 April 2014
7:30 pm
In English

How can we spot a disease 24 hours before symptoms appear? How can we predict which manholes in New York City may explode next year? Can we really identify criminals before they have committed a crime? Welcome to “big data” — the idea that we can do with a vast amount of data things that we simply couldn’t when we had less. The change in scale leads to a change in state. It upends the nature of business, how government works and the way we live, from healthcare to education. Big data will even change how we think about the world and our place in it. As we collect and crunch more data, the good news is that we can do extraordinary things: fight disease, reduce climate change, and unlock mysteries of science. The bad news is that it raises a host of worries for which society is unprepared. What does it mean if big data denies us a bank loan or considers us unfit for a surgical operation, but we can’t learn the explicit reasons because the variables that went in were so myriad and complex? How do you regulate an algorithm?

Viktor Mayer-Schönberger is Professor of Internet Governance and Regulation at the Oxford Internet Institute / Oxford University. In addition to his recent international best-seller *Big Data* (co-authored with Kenn Cukier), Mayer-Schönberger has published eight books (including the awards-winning *Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age* with Princeton University Press) and is the author of over a hundred articles and book chapters on the information economy. After successes in the International Physics Olympics and the Austrian Young Programmers Contest, Mayer-Schönberger studied in Salzburg, at Harvard and at the London School of Economics. In 1986 he founded Ikarus Software, a company focusing on data security and developed the Virus Utilities, which became the best-selling Austrian software product. He was voted Top-5 Software Entrepreneur in Austria in 1991 and Person of the Year for the State of Salzburg in 2000.

The lecture is part of the **ICI Lecture Series Constituting Wholes II**, which seeks to re-examine the critical potential of notions of wholeness by exploring the double movement in constituting wholes. How are wholes and other forms of association differently constituted and how do they constitute their parts or elements? How can one maintain a critical position towards persistent wholes without making them inescapable and foreclosing the possibility of reducing violence and arriving at more benign forms of association? Conversely, how can one be attuned to heterogeneities and potentialities without participating in the reparation of existing structures of domination?

Conceived within the framework of the multidisciplinary ICI Research Focus **Constituting Wholes**, the lecture series will address and debate these and similar questions from a variety of perspectives.



Viktor Mayer-Schönberger

**Big Data – A Revolution
That Transforms
How We Live, Work,
and Think**