

## Travail Libre Février 2026 – Sujet type CCINP – Algorithmic management

DOCUMENT 1	DOCUMENT 2	DOCUMENT 3	DOCUMENT 4
Report, <u>The New York Times</u> , March 2022 <b>Remarque: les noms des chercheurs / auteurs peuvent servir de source si vous les avez identifiés dans l'intro</b>	Opinion piece written by two researchers, <u>The Conversation</u> , October 2022	Report, <u>The Washington Post</u> , February 2023	An illustration by Christophe Nieman, <u>The New Yorker</u> , September 2019
<i>Examines the growing use of digital productivity monitoring in workplaces</i>	<i>Examines the growing rise of algorithms managers and the moral questions it raises</i>	<i>Analyses the use of AI in human resources decisions in a wave of lay-offs in technology</i>	<i>Shows the evolution of the relationship between computers and humans in the workplace</i>
<p>● <b>Starts from an example</b> illustrating inability of monitoring software to track her work properly which involves lots of us being in intellectual or interpersonal tasks → not paid enough</p> <p>● <b>Monitoring of workers is spreading</b></p> <p>→ <b>Not new</b> in lower skilled / low paid jobs. The large majority of American companies calculate the productivity scores of their warehouse workers / drivers / cashiers, etc.</p> <p>→ <b>Now, electronic surveillance / digital monitoring expanding</b> for remote work or in – person workplaces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- White collars, highly qualified jobs</li> <li>- Concerns many fields: health, banks, administration</li> </ul> <p>→ Experts say it will not stop / unstoppable</p> <p>● <u>Can be used to</u></p> <p>→ Companies believe it is fair in inefficiency, valuable tool to see more clearly</p> <p>→ Better calculate pay, reward or sanction, get penalties</p> <p>→ However, goes as far as helping to decide who gets laid off</p> <p><u>Limits – harmful effects</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- See example → wrong in calculating working time</li> <li>- Increasing pressure on workers who have to speed up at the expense of the service they provide</li> </ul> <p><u>Reporters underline</u> that workers who are the most watched in jobs are the most organized → rise of unionism in warehouses for example</p>	<p>Real, flesh-and-bone bosses may be <u>horrible</u> but now being seconded or replaced by <u>algorithm managers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Manager is being automated</li> <li>→ Software algorithms</li> <li>→ More and more tasks passed on to machines</li> <li>→ He said to increase as monitoring device has become easier to use and more sophisticated</li> </ul> <p><u>Benefits for companies</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Many functions: job applications / delegating work / assess worker performance, deciding who gets laid off</li> <li>- Lower costs: help optimize organisations (best ex: UBER)</li> </ul> <p><u>Problem – algorithm bias</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <u>Transparency</u>: Machine-learning algorithms end up operating in a more and more complex and opaque way</li> <li>→ Which means that decisions may be morally dubious and illegitimate</li> <li>→ <b>Even the experts do not necessarily understand</b></li> <li>→ <b>Employees are thus unable to contest</b></li> <li>● <u>Have removed the human function</u> of employment relationships: specificity of each worker cannot be taken into account</li> <li>→ Suffering</li> </ul>	<p>Numerous AI Tools ingrained in office life:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Particularly in human resources</li> <li>- <u>Use machine learning tools is to let software process data</u></li> <li>- Hiring / promotion / but also layoffs</li> <li>- HR departments and Cies overwhelmed → <u>need their assistance</u>: reassuring</li> <li>- Largely used: survey → 98%</li> </ul> <p><u>Some data and tools used to lay off</u></p> <p><u>Which raises issues</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Algorithm bias is possible since an AI tool may not recognize some specificities</li> <li>- Blind reliance on big data processed by AI → transparency</li> </ul> <p><u>Suggestions should be reviewed</u> to avoid discrimination</p>	<p><u>1<sup>st</sup> picture</u>: One of the first computers, which occupied half of the room. The man who is operating it is standing and looking up to the screen. It is plugged to the wall.</p> <p><u>2<sup>nd</sup> picture</u>: the computer is half the size of the previous one. The man is bending forward to look at the computer's screen. It is plugged to the wall.</p> <p><u>3<sup>rd</sup> picture</u>: the third generation of computers is a laptop, the man is holding it in his hands and is looking down at the computer's screen. It is plugged to the wall.</p> <p><u>4<sup>th</sup> picture</u>: the computer has disappeared, instead, the man is transparent as if it had become a hologram, and is plugged in to the wall.</p> <p>→ The computer which used to need a human being to be operated has now replaced the human worker.</p>

### Difficultés:

- Éviter toute approche binaire : « good / bad »
- Vous êtes nombreux à avoir négligé les notions de manque de transparence et de biais algorithmique

### **Proposition de problématique :**

Is the fast rise of AI and algorithms in office really good news?

### **Proposition de plan (topic sentences):**

#### **I) AI has become ubiquitous, even where not expected**

- Document 4 shows the evolution of computers in time, from the first computers to laptops that can be carried around anywhere by any worker // Just like the employee is the last image, workers can now be directly monitored / surveilled

#### **II) The underlying rationale is that AI / digital tools seem(s) to promote efficiency and productivity**

- Machines have become increasingly smaller and cheaper: from the computer that occupied half of a room to PCs to portable / wearable devices

#### **III) Actually, AI is – as yet – dangerously inaccurate, intrusive and increasingly opaque**

- In the end, the human worker seems bound to completely disappear, as he becomes transparent, and plugged to the wall, like some kind of hologram (doc 4)

### **Proposition d'introduction:**

Automation and the use of AI to replace human tasks at work has caused increasing alarm recently. It now concerns even highly-skilled jobs. The (growing) use of digital productivity monitoring is analysed in a report from The New York Times published in **March 2022** (document 1), while in The Conversation, issued in **October 2022** two specialists examine the moral questions raised by algorithmic management (document 2). The report for the Washington Post in February 2023 shows using AI in human resources is as problematic and the cover of September 2019 The New Yorker's technology issue illustrates how invasive computers have become (document 4). Is the fast rise of AI and algorithms in office really good news? They are fast spreading because they facilitate fast management but (also) carry ethical risks.