

Discourse Machines

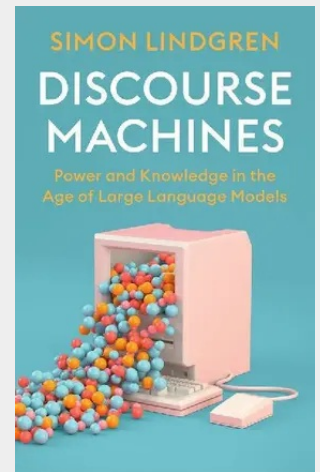
Power and Knowledge in the Age of Large Language Models

Large language models are everywhere, from chatbots and search engines to content generators and decision-making systems. But what is actually happening when they 'speak'? *Discourse Machines* argues that LLMs are not neutral tools but active producers of meaning, knowledge, and power. Drawing on critical theory, post-structuralism, and discourse analysis, Simon Lindgren situates LLMs within longer traditions of thinking about language, power, and knowledge. Through close readings of interactions with ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, and other systems, he reveals how these machines reproduce truth, perform authority without understanding, simulate care without embodiment, and enact the 'death of the author' while projecting a coherent voice. As these systems become embedded in education, healthcare, journalism, and governance, the stakes could not be higher. Offering a critical perspective on generative AI, *Discourse Machines* is essential reading for understanding what happens when language itself is automated, and what we must do to reclaim discourse from the machines.

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62,50 €

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*vorbestellbar, Erscheinungstermin ca.
November 2026*

Artikelnummer: 9781509575114

Medium: Buch

ISBN: 978-1-5095-7511-4

Verlag: Polity Press

Erscheinungstermin: 13.11.2026

Sprache(n): Englisch

Auflage: 1. Auflage 2026

Produktform: Gebunden

Seiten: 184

