DATA FOR BLACK LIVES II
@DATA4BLACKLIVES | DATA4BLACKLIVES | MIT MEDIA LAB | 1/11/2019
KEYNOTE ADDRESS - MEREDITH BROUSSARD @MERBROUSSARD

DATA JOURNALISM

FINDING STORIES IN NUMBERS

USING NUMBERS TO TELL STORIES

TALKING ABOUT MACHINE LEARNING

SOCIAL ISSUES + TECH SPACES

LANGUAGE GETS AT NUANCE

MATH CAN'T!

DESPITE THE BIAS

THAT MATH IS UNFAILABLE & QUANT DATA IS SUPERIOR

WHAT IS AI?

A BRANCH OF COMPUTER SC.

NOT SCARY ROBOTS FROM POP CULTURE

THAT'S GENERAL AI.

NARROW AI IS WHAT ACTUALLY EXISTS AND IT'S JUST MATH!

FUNCTION f:

MODEL

WE NEED TO CHALLENGE PEOPLE WHO WOULD SAY THIS (ML) IS A LEGITIMATE WAY OF MAKING EVERY DECISION IN THE WORLD

UNCONSCIOUS BIAS EMBEDDED IN TECH

POSITIVE ASYMMETRY

WHEN WE'RE IN GROUPS, WE ONLY TALK ABOUT THE GOOD.

WHO IS VULNERABLE?

WHO IS RECOGNIZED?

ESPECIALLY IN A WORLD OF SELF-DRIVING CARS

TECHNOCHAUVINISM

THE MINDSET THAT TECH IS ALWAYS BETTER THAN PEOPLE

WHOSE MINDSET?

WHITE MEN'S (WHO WENT TO THE SAME HANDBALF OF SCHOOLS)

WE NEED DIVERSE TEAMS.
Opening Panel: We are the leaders we have been looking for.

Organizing for Algorithmic Accountability

Moderator: Yeshi Mabett Milner

Panelists: Teresa Hodge, Joy Buolamwini, Rashida Richardson, Tamika Lewis

We need a vision that recognizes we are at a turning point in history.

- Grace Lee Boggs

Interdisciplinary & inclusive work changing pipelines.

Physics doesn’t change, priorities do.

In the front lines of change should not require being harmed.

What is the world we want to see?

What material conditions are needed to make that happen?

Visioning

Data is destiny.

(Right facial recognition has super high error rates for women + POC.)

Safe Face Pledge

We cannot lock 1/3 of our population out of opportunity.

How can communities survive in a surveillance state?

What data is being collected?

How can you fairly assess people & give them opportunity?

Banks Denny Capital to people deemed too risky.

Richardson

How can you fairly assess people & give them opportunity?

Most of the time, we have Cis het white men telling our stories.

- Lewis

Participatory Community Research - towards a shared language.
BREAKOUT SESSION: ABOLITION IN THE AGE OF BIG DATA

Moderator: Kade Crockford | Panelists: Janine Bonsu, Marbre Stahly Butts, Laura Hanna, Laura Moy

Abolition

THEORY & PRACTICE
POLITICAL VISION OF
DISMANTLING IMPRISONMENT
& BUILDING SOMETHING NEW

In & Beyond the Prison Industrial Complex

NARRATIVE SHIFTING

Changing How People Conceptualize Safety

Data Being Used to Justify Harmful Practices & Legitimize Whitewashing

Sanitizing Images of Control and Shackling

Technology is, was, can be cruel

Existing Disparities Reproduced Through Technology

Lending Legitimacy Sharing Information

If the input is trash, the output will also be trash!

Abolitionist projects must include data + reparations – we cannot erase the harm that came before

The Perpetual Lineup Report

Georgetown Law

More than half of US adults are in a law enforcement database

Laundrying Inequity

Importing Inequity

Racist tools used in racist ways

Law enforcement not always trained in using tools; info intentionally obscured & left out of court

Layers of Bias

Credit scores are a tool of social control

Asymmetrical access to data, power, information

There is no oversight of data - having different faces in power means nothing without structural change in data transparency
BREAKOUT SESSION: RISING ABOVE THE GATHERING STORM: EDUCATION JUSTICE + MATHEMATICS

Moderator: JAMELLE WATSON-DANIELS | PANELISTS: JITU BROWN, CLIFF FREEMAN, NICOLE M. JOSEPH, TARIK WARD

YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT IN SCHOOL STILL DESERVE ACCESS TO RESOURCES

The only way to kill the privatization movement is through people power.

This work is hard!

Education researchers often see identity as mutually exclusive, when they are actually intersectional.

**WHY MATH EDUCATION?**

- Math has been weaponized against Black Americans
- Logic + rationality are tied to perception of humanity
- Black people have been systematically denied access to mathematics

White comfort is not as important as Black self-determination.

HATRED IS THE BELIEF SYSTEM WE'RE UP AGAINST

Nothing is inherent — it all takes practice.

Sharecropper education makes black youth disposable.

NO MORE.

Math literacy as an organizing tool

Disrupting erasure of Black women

We have not even approached equality, let alone equity — journey, not notice.

Research where communities are subjects serves white supremacy.

Need to incorporate community knowledge.

It's all connected!

Community organizers are social scientists.

Cultural fluency — music + computer sci are connected, can help build skills.

Educators need cultural skills to teach the language of math.

Math is needed to participate in democracy.

[ Cultural capital ]

Solutions that matter for black + brown people.

We need alt. teaching methods, less high stakes testing.

Math + music are universal. Not mutually exclusive.
Workshop: Local Organizing + Movement Building: Who Counts?

Presenters: Dejuana Thompson + Deanna Reed (Think Rubix)

All of the work we're doing is through a liberation lens.

The most important tool we have is our integrity.

Who gets to decide which data are legitimate and which are not?

How we assign value will help us advocate through data.

Projects & systems determine who is considered human.

What stories are our data telling?

People can lie quicker to align with narratives.

Everything impactful has to be rooted in culture.

Context + power mapping & representation. (You can't map what you don't know - you need to include your colleagues. Community self-determination is priority.)

Center the idea of black power - black voices - black organizing.

How do we break the cycle of how people perceive safety?

Data models = flawed if based on select snippets of a life.

1. You still need to motivate communities when it's not an election or convenient.

2. Data ≠ power.

People don't have magical time to give your cause BC you want them to.

Data is in our neighborhoods - just synthesized differently.

Notes: Metadata, data ≠ power, data ≠ security.
**Breakout Session:** Black People vs. Robots: Reparations + Workers' Rights in the Age of Automation

**Moderator:** Jessica Fulton

**Panelists:** Nicol Turner-Lee, Erica Smiley, Anne Price, Katrinell Davis

- Shifts in automation and new opportunities are not new, but we are being sensitized to accept this.
- This affects legacy industries where African Americans have historically worked: "Negromation".
- Occupational crowding.
- What do you do for adult workers who will be displaced?

**Shift in Automation + Job Opportunities Are Not New: We Are Being Sensitized to Accept This.**

- People in power are really good at not paying black people for their work.
- What can we look forward to?
- This is not inevitable.
- We are not afraid of new technology.

**People in Power Are Really Good at Not Paying Black People for Their Work.**

- Who benefits from increased productivity?

**Who Benefits From Increased Productivity?**

- When workers unionize and organize, they can benefit.
- New technology can be safer for the workers who operate it, but they need training.

**When You See Automation Coming, You Can Negotiate Build Power.**

- UBI - a way we can change how we think about worker power.

**Decentralized Economy**

- Worker Power - Workplace Governance
  - Ability to stop production
  - Marketplace power
  - Associational power - amalgamating a workforce

- Some jobs shouldn't be automated.
ARE CLOSING PANEL: WHAT IS A MOVEMENT SCIENTISTS?

MODERATOR: RUMA BENJAMIN | PANELISTS: TIMNIT GEBRU, JERIC COONEY, TANANA PETTY, AL BARRENTINE

THE FACTS ALONE WILL NOT SAVE US

COMMUNITY VOICES ARE DATA

WHO HAS ACCESS TO INFORMATION + WHO DOESN'T?

YOU CAN MAKE FOIA REQUESTS WHILE WAITING FOR DATA TO BE RELEASED

SUPPORT PROGRAMS

"EXPERTISE" IS A PROBLEMATIC CONCEPT (EXCLUSIONARY)

AUTHORITY

LEGITIMACY

LEGALITIES

UNEVEN DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIAL SUPPORT

PARTS OF IDENTITY LESS VALUED

PEOPLE DO DATA SCIENCE EVERYWHERE

LISTEN TO MULTIPLE VOICES

HIERARCHIES OF KNOWLEDGE

YOU CAN'T COUNT BLACK BODIES WITHOUT LISTENING TO BLACK VOICES

COMMUNITIES WANT TO BE SEEN, NOT WATCHED

ORGANIZING IS AS IMPORTANT AS TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE

EDUCATION ≠ SCHOOLING

APPROFUTURISM INVOIVES "PLANTING SEEDS"

SOFTWARE IS PROSTHESIS

“ORGANIC INTELLIGENCE”

BLACK IN AI - PROVIDING CONNECTION VISIBILITY, + PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

OUR DATA BODIES, DETROIT DIGITAL JUSTICE COALITION, SURVEYS, OPEN DATA RECOMMENDATIONS, ZINES, DISCO-TECHS, CONSENT WORKSHOPS

DOCUMENTATION, LIBRARIES, LITERACY, COMMUNITY OUTREACH, ON THE GROUND DATA COLLECTION, STRUCTURE

EMPOWERING RETURNING CITIZENS IN FLORIDA, BY USING PLATFORMS, DATABASES USED TO HARM THOSE COMMUNITIES IN WAYS THAT ACTUALLY HELPED, REAPPROPRIATING

"ORGANIC INTELLIGENCE"

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APPROFUTURISM INVOLVES "PLANTING SEEDS"

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