

## **Data & Racial Capitalism (with Sareeta Amrute and Emiliano Treré)**

**Annie Galvin (AG):** Hello, and welcome back to *Public Books 101*, a podcast that turns a scholarly eye to a world worth studying. I'm Annie Galvin, an editor and producer at *Public Books*, which is a magazine of arts, ideas, and scholarship that is free and online. You can read the magazine at [www.publicbooks.org](http://www.publicbooks.org).

**Natalie Kerby (NK):** And I'm Natalie Kerby, digital content associate at Data & Society. Data & Society is a research institute that studies the social implications of data-centric technologies and automation. You can learn about our work at <https://datasociety.net/>.

**AG:** This is the third season of our podcast, so if you're listening for the first time, I invite you to subscribe to Public Books 101 in your podcast feed and listen back to season 1, which was about the internet, and season 2, about the novel in the 21st century. This season, we are excited to partner with Data & Society to explore the past, present, and future of human life being quantified as data. Natalie is your host this season, so I'll let her take it from here. Thanks for listening.

**NK:** In this season, "Becoming Data," my guests and I are considering a few main guiding questions. How long has human life been quantified as data, and in what contexts? What are some major implications of humans being quantified or measured as data? How are people pushing back against the datafication of human life, work, health, and citizenship, among other things?

Today, my guests are Sareeta Amrute and Emiliano Treré. We'll be discussing racial capitalism, the ways that data-centric systems perpetuate it, and how different communities have resisted this datafication. Much of our conversation is grounded in the Global South, which Sareeta and Emiliano each define for us in this episode.

---

**NK:** So thank you so much for joining us today. If you could say your name and tell us our listeners a little bit about the work that you do, that would be great. Sareeta, why don't we start with you?

**Sareeta Amrute (SA):** Thank you, Natalie. Good morning. My name is Sareeta Amrute. I am an anthropologist. I work at the University of Washington as an associate professor. And I'm also director of research at the Data and Society Research Institute.

**NK:** Great. How about you, Emiliano?

**Emiliano Treré (ET):** Hi, all. My name is Emiliano Treré and I'm a senior lecturer in Media Ecologies and Social Transformation at Cardiff University. And the co-director of Data Justice Lab based in the School of Journalism, Media, and Culture at the same institution.

**NK:** Great. Thank you. This is a podcast about data, and so I'd like to start with the question: what is data? This is something that we've been asking each of our episodes, and I think it's really interesting to see how others answers the question. Emiliano, why don't you go first.

**ET:** Well, that's an interesting question and a question that my students ask a lot. And I always start with the definition from Vishkin that I like a lot. I like his work a lot and he's really clear. It's material produced by a process of abstraction from the word which make in two categories measures or other kind of representation of forms that constitute the building blocks from which information and knowledge are created. When data does not – they do not exist but data emerge through this process of abstraction. Something is taken from things and processes, something that wasn't previously there in this form before and then we process it and we make it data. So and another author I'd like to quote when talking about data is Lisa Gitelman about raw data being an oxymoron. The fact that raw data does not exist there is no such things as data in the real world it's always something that needs to be extracted, interpreted, abstracted from. So I think that this definition sums pretty well what data is. And especially if we refer that from the transformation of human life into data which is I think something that interested both of us.

**NK:** Could you give us an example of one of those abstractions?

**ET:** Well, anything. Data in relation to people in a hospital. Data in relation to students in a university. Data in relation to data that I have just been collecting from my interviews as instrumental data collection and then I need to interpret those data. Those data are not there, I just do research, I interview people, I extract this data and then data produce around people, then I analyze those data and establish patterns. And I make inferences based on those data. I interpret those data. They weren't there before, there needs to be specific aims that I have in mind, a specific need that I need for those data. Of course in other cases the extraction of data is automated or is let's say algorithmically mediated as in the case of digital environments or social media platforms. So there's a more sophisticated way. But there's always this process of making data mean something for somebody in their particular circumstance. So there's always a kind of intention beyond.

**NK:** I think you hit on an important point there. That it is also about who is collecting the data, right? And that's something we talked about in one of our other episodes.

So, Sareeta, for you, how do you define what data is?

**SA:** Thanks. I really like the way Emiliano was playing on the threads of abstraction and also the point from Gitelman that raw data is an oxymoron. Because for me, especially in the current moment, I really think of data as a performative, by which I mean when you call something data and your audience or the public culture in general accepts it as data then it becomes data. A performative is actually a term from linguistics, or linguistic anthropology in the classic example from the work of a scholar called Austin is the phrase, "I now pronounce you man and wife." That actually does something in the world but only when the person saying that phrase is

authorized to marry people. And I think pronouncing something data has that similar effect when someone who is authorized to pronounce something as a body of information that can be used to make claims in the world then it becomes data. And of course, those practices are undergirded by practices of collection, classification, and deployment that other people are always at pains to point out that this is how it's being made.

So I think of data as a performative, but then to historicize how we got to this current moment in which most of the time when people say data they mean quantification things that are represented numerically really at its base. I think for me, and this is something I point out in my classes, we have to go to these twin moments of colonization and capitalism with the attendant history of enslavement that came with both of those. Because in fact, historically if we look back it was the appropriation of land, keeping statistics about enslaved people, and also dividing colonized people into categories that could be governed. Those are the three sources of this real obsession with quantified data and its archives. And one of the articles that I really like best on this is Arjun Appadurai's "Number in the Colonial Imagination." In which he shows that enumeration really became an obsession of British colonial officials in order to prove that they were doing their job to people back in London. So their own governors back in London. So once again it has this kind of performative aspect to it.

Something else that I've been thinking about lately is a kind of data fetishism the way in which in our current moment there is a belief in the power of the data abstracted away from the social processes that actually went into producing it. I think those are some of the way that we can approach data just to build on what Emiliano was saying.

**NK:** Thank you. I think that's really helpful to contextualize it historically. Data has always been about power, I feel is kind of what you're saying there.

This episode is specifically focused on data and racial capitalism, and I think your answer leads us really nicely into this next question. Can you tell us, when you're talking about racial capitalism, what are you describing? And then can you contextualize that term with an example from your book on Indian IT workers in Berlin?

**SA:** Racial capitalism is a term found in the scholarship of, I think his name is Cedric Robinson. And this term is really important because what Robinson was trying to do was really, really fundamental in the sense that he was trying to show that race and capital have been entwined from the start. You can't really think about capitalism without thinking about processes of racialization and racial exploitation.

The reason it was so important for him to say that is within the Marxist tradition which he was writing, most thinkers thought of racism as something that came later, something that we could call epiphenomenal which really just means coming after the real problem or the crux of the argument, kind of an additional wrinkle in the problem of labor exploitation. And what Robinson was trying to do was to actually reverse that. He was trying to say that race and racialization

predates the advent of industrial capitalism even within Europe. And so therefore when capitalism arises through an expropriation of land, a creation of the proletariat, the creation of a new system of value that values people's lives in terms of their labor power, all of that of necessity incorporated race and racialization into how it unfolded. And of course those processes got intensified through historical experience of industrial slavery and everything that flows out of that. So really at its base racial capitalism means you cannot think about capitalism without at the same time thinking about race. That's what it means.

But how does that work in practice? Well, there the point of the analysis is to pull out all the ways that race is made and remade and functions within a particular historical time period and a particular mode of capital relations. So in my work I really focus on the global programing industry and how race functions within that. So going back at least a decade we were all in a sense living under this. Maybe not all of us, some of us were living under this false assumption that digital technologies would actually solve or move away from the problem of race and racism because of this bizarre assumption that if people were communicating through the transfer of digital packets of communication those communications would be free of all the prejudices that have come before. And a lot of the impetus for my book was to show that and make a strong argument for the fact that all of this stuff that seems virtual, that seems immaterial is completely bodied, it's materialized in wires and connections and silicon tips, but it's also materialized in the bodies of people doing the work. And that very basic fact if you begin with that presumption again just like Robinson did you have to take race into consideration into your analysis because that labor stack within programing economies is thoroughly racialized. Race and also gender, ethnicity are the ways in which people's labor are valued and organized even within this economy that seemed to be so free of these earlier modes of division and exploitation.

What I found in my book when I was doing my research is that for Indian programmers they occupy this really important seminal, one could say, but conflicted and ambivalent position they were as Marx would say sort of the light infantry of capital moving from site to site around the world where they were doing their programming their work. And they were mostly at that time working in what we call backend jobs, that is not client facing jobs and paid less. Their jobs are always tied to their visa status so when the visa expired they would be moved back to India or moved on to another site in the global economy. And all of the way in which their labor was undervalued, or devalued was always justified through racial categories such as Indian supposed love of abstract labor, their aesthetic qualities that they could work for long hours without break. And at the same time they became a resource for understanding cultural difference which made them valuable in a kind of post racial multicultural imaginary that was really regnant.

**NK:** Yes. Thank you for that explanation. So, Emiliano, can you give us an example of how racial capitalism shows up in your work around social movements?

**ET:** Well, it connects to what Sareeta just so fascinatingly portrayed, but in a different way. It became evident, and I think it's not just me, but it's a way of new scholars researching digital

activism, that somehow we need to understand power. The fight and the struggle of digital activism, not just this digital activism and social movement activists on one side against this big power materialized somehow reified on the other, like black or white categories like these sorts of opposite sides.

But instead we also need to look within digital activism practices themselves. Looking at inequalities, looking at barriers, looking at tension within digital activism practices and social movements. And this implies looking at the issues of class infrastructure, ideology, and race. So what are the barriers for activists to use these technologies effectively, to even access them and what are the problems, the drawbacks that they face.

It became evident when I was starting to study, well I studied different movements in Mexico, the movement for peace and justice and dignity that fought against the narco traffic and industry and the Yo Soy 123 which means I am 132 movement which is more a student movement but then become kind of a symbol of media democratization against the biases of the mainstream media in Mexico, and other tech collectives around the country that fight against injustices and so on and so forth. It became evident that for example indigenous people and activists with indigenous backgrounds were the ones whose possibility to engage in digital activism was problematic to say the least. And the consequences of carrying out digital activism were not equally distributed, were not equally lived with indigenous people especially but also other kind of marginalized groups were being heavily racialized and oppressed especially for their race and for the gender as Sareeta was also saying, and they were particularly vulnerable to injustices, problems, violence of authority, repression, and often displaced and marginalized. So I guess it shows really in the way we approach digital activism not as some kind of unique block, not as we got two kind of followers from above and from below top down, bottom up, no it's not like that. It's much more complex than this and class, race, gender all these issues, disability, they are what make digital activism what it is.

**NK:** Yeah. I think the mainstream has really become aware of how it's not just fighting social movements, fighting for their rights online, but yes, how the far right is also manipulating the spaces for their own.

So the next thing I want to talk to you both about is theories of the Global South because I think both of you engage with these in your work and I think the way that you define them also kind of pushes us out of this binary of south, north. Which Emiliano, I feel just came up in your work where it's not power up here, no power down here but it's much more complex and maybe shifted on its side. I'd be interested to hear how you define the Global South. I know you kind of push back on this geographic notion of it.

**ET:** In my work and in my work especially with the Big Data from the South Initiative which I established with Stefania Milan from the University of Amsterdam four years ago. We have a more flexible kind of expansive I'll say plural definition of the South. This is why we always

adopt the “s” at the end so it’s Souths. There are many souths, it’s a plural thing. The thing is that we cast the South as a place and a proxy for authority resistance, subversion, and creativity, innovation also. This is to kind of embrace the dynamism, the multiplicity of interpretation that somehow is going as you were saying beyond these just geopolitical domination. To expand it.

So there are countless souths also in what we will say is the West of the Global North and increasingly so discrimination resistance against injustices and oppression fight for better life condition against data capitalism, racial capitalism. So with this definition of The Souths we think that we can engage in this kind of exercise of disaggregating the geographical dimension.

**NK:** So it’s less about where it’s taking place but the actions that are taking place and how people are resisting. That’s really interesting.

Sareeta, how about for you? You understand the Global South as a method, as relational so what does that mean and why is it important to consider the Global South when we’re thinking about racial capitalism?

**SA:** Again, Natalie, I really like this question you’ve posed. It’s a really smart question because I think this is where some differences that come from maybe a disciplinary position as well as histories of embodiment of the authors really come into play because I was kind of with you, Emiliano, most of the way but not fully. In part because of what Emiliano, what you said in the last answer about the need to deromanticize. And to me I also feel this very strong need to deromanticize the South.

I also began my lineage of thinking about the Global South from Gramsci’s essay on The Southern Question but I read that essay as pointing out that the South needs to be thought of as a relation and I moved through Édouard Glissant and work particularly of Jean and John Comaroff to get there because for me the importance of thinking through the Global South is really a question of reversing optics. So rather than looking at any problem and the problem on the table before us right now is something to do with data and algorithmic systems rather than looking at that problem from what we often think of as the hegemonic, meaning dominant sites of its production, what does this field look like when we look at Emiliano said from the margins? And when I do that I see a very complex field that’s not only about resistance, resistance is a part of it but it’s also about creating other kinds of centers of power, forms of oppression, and desire. And to me the reason why that’s so important to do is because we really can only get a diagnosis of the harms, the dangers, the as Emiliano said before the uneven landscape of risk when we begin our analysis from those positions.

So just to tell you a little story to flesh this out. In my current work which is to kind of build on Emiliano’s scholarship looking at activism I’m looking currently at the social, emotional effective but also material infrastructures that activists are currently building around the world. And what’s become really clear in the communities that I’m working with is how differentially risk is distributed. So in a recent case just to flesh this out there was an activist named Disha

Ravi who was arrested in India for sharing a social media toolkit or for working on, actually for editing a social media toolkit and the reason she was arrested was because Greta Thunberg tweeted this toolkit, right? And then a bunch of right-wing actors tried to do some digital diagnosis on the toolkit. They did some digital sleuthing and realized that it was created on a Google document that was public out of Vancouver, British Columbia. And this activist among others, there were two others was editing it in public mode, right? So here this is a really, to me this is a really good case of why the lens of the Global South is really key because you have a case in which something produced in Vancouver in Canada, right, shared by a globally known activist, edited by somebody sitting in India on an open Google doc and Google's a company cooperating with the Delhi police giving the Delhi police the IP addresses of the people who are working on the document, that person is arrested. And unless you're thinking from the position of people located outside hegemonic regions of power you cannot recognize the risk that those people are taking when they do something like edit a social media toolkit in the support of a protest movement on the ground.

So that's what I'm trying to do with the term. I'm trying to use it to get us to reverse the lens of analysis. Sometimes it's very useful as a term of solidarity to bring people together around common cause. But I think it's really important in my own work especially coming out of India to recognize the forms of caste oppression against indigenous communities in India, Adivasi communities that are also comprised within the term Global South to deromanticize it.

The way it connects with racial capitalism is really complicated. For me it does two things. One, it helps us to get out of an overly simplistic black/white binary when it comes to thinking about race. This is true as soon as you go past the U.S. Mexican border for sure, but also within the United States and Canada, within North America. And two, it allows us to start doing the work of thinking through cognate terms. So for instance what is the relationship I think we can pose between something like an abolitionist movement in the U.S. and what Ambedkar in India called for as the annihilation of caste. And there is kind of a growing literature trying to once again this is an old idea, but once again think about caste and race in the same frame. And Isabel Wilkerson's work or Suraj Yengde's work. So that's to me why the term Global South is so interesting to think through.

NK: Yes. Thank you both for that. I think that sets us up nicely for our next question about data colonialism. So I think that's a term that we often hear especially with regards to the Global South involve colonialism and racial capitalism are inherently tied up together, and the exploitation of people's labor. Both of you have pushed back against the term data colonialism. Sareeta, can you give us an example of data colonialism and then explain to us why you find the term limiting. What you might propose as an alternative.

SA: Yes. So I have tremendous respect for people like Nick Couldry who are using the term to describe a field of study. I think it's very useful in that way. But I can't give you an example of data colonialism because it's not just one thing. And also, Natalie, in the set up to the question

linking data colonialism to the Global South is also very problematic because it assumes that processes of extraction, of the devaluation of labor, of classification, categorization, and especially violence are not happening in places like the United States when we know they absolutely are. So I thought a lot about this. I don't really have an alternative frame. I think the frame is great if we want to describe a field of study. But I don't think it's very useful to analyze things. And instead I think we need to go to terms that have been around in the study of colonialism for a very long time.

Data orientalism or ornamentalism might be interesting to think about. Terms like surveillance or data-veillance to describe specific processes. So I think that the problem is that often it becomes a term that only gets applied outside of the so-called West or the North. Or it only gets applied to processes of extraction. But there is so much else going on in the relationality of things so we also have to talk about complex forms of desire. We have to talk about forms of labor stratification. All of that goes into what is often called data colonialism. And back to the very top of our discussion when we were defining what data is, the point to me about pointing out the performativity of data is also to raise this question of who gets to do data. And so for me we also have to think about forms of counter-data that communities are producing in order to make their own claims. But of course keeping in mind that those claims are being made within a field that values certain things as legitimate forms of data.

**NK:** A core component of both of your work is examining how different people resist topless systems that are perhaps mediated through technology or they're using technology as the tool of resistance, right? And so, Emiliano, can you give us an example of resistance in your work? What strategies – I know you talk about disconnection a lot do people employ. And what exactly are they resisting?

**ET:** We start from the recognition that algorithmic power, and algorithms are everywhere and that permeates whatever we do from going on Spotify, on Tidal to get a music recommendation and then you discover a new group that you like to actually see if your kid, you want to send it to a school or not, you're being discriminated, and then we know all the thing about bias while we wish we know all the things about bias but there is of course discrimination, bias, biases, injustices and all the problems that are connected to algorithms. But at the same time we live in a algorithmic condition because they're all around us. They make a lot of decision that effect our everyday life. So now I have this understanding of the pervasiveness of algorithm. But before when I entered these kinds of studies of resistance in relation to algorithms I witnessed this in activism when I was in Mexico and that was ten years ago when I started to look well before we started to think about it also in the U.S. context with Trump and the election. I started to look at how social movements on one side were adopting them as their repertoire in their tactics. So for example knowing when to game or create a particular hashtag and knowing that the algorithm of Twitter works in a way of course ten years ago it worked in a particular way now it's different but the activists of course are sensitive, are collaborative following this kind of changes and are adept to their tactics accordingly. So I started to see that much of activism, because much of

activism has moved to the realm of social media platforms is determined and is configured and reconfigured within algorithmic environments. And alliances between people as the activists. And the algorithms that govern and shape these platforms. And this means a continuous dance between algorithms on one side that say no human actors if we want to SDS lexicon and human actors on the other side. So this dance represents for me one of the most defining and most interesting element of today's digital activism what I call algorithmic activism. With acts of algorithmic resistance that activists need to perform in order to play this game for visibility, in order to maintain their narrative, of course to penetrate the mainstream media agenda, and so on and so forth.

And after Mexico I started to look at what is probably until now one of the most powerful movements in using these tactics which is the 15-M Movement the so-called Indignado's Movement in Spain they were incredibly good at using and domesticating the algorithms of Twitter with this novelty pushing their hashtag to be trending topics for so many weeks, so many months knowing that it needed to be – knowing that it needed to be something that drove the narrative of the movement. Knowing that it needed to be Tweeted simultaneously and my work and my ethnography with them I look at how they acquire what can be thought as an algorithmic awareness of the how the platforms work. These are all kind of folk theories, ways that we imagine how the affordances, you know, the way the platforms work and we make the most out of what we know to push the agenda of the movement, to push the visibility, to push the narratives and so on and so forth. And after that I think that I have witnessed these kinds of activism escalating to a lot of platforms with many, many sophisticated kinds of tactics. Think about TikTok, and I'm thinking about the new platforms where also Black Lives Matter works the way Instagram where the embed particular kind of information in slides to do kind of slides activism and the creativity of activists knows no limit. And they adapt to the new platforms but these kinds of concerns, these kind of preoccupations with how the algorithm works and this trying to understand how to use it to your own advantage, for your own needs I guess this is at the center.

Dis connection from social media, disconnection refusal and all these other vocabularies that has somehow erupted in the last years point instead to a kind of refusal abandoning these platforms or at least temporarily or forever in order to exercise some kind of agency in order to exercise some kind of power to fight back. And my point briefly is that there's a problem with this narrative is that most of the time the people that are kind of disconnecting in these kind of detox apps or going to detox retreats, you name it, are actually people that are privileged enough to take a kind of disconnected holiday or a break or whatever because of their position in society. Usually middle-aged kind of white people that are working in the tech industry that take these breaks and then say okay I've disconnected, I'm a new kind of person, I can go back to produce for the system in a kind of more motivated kind of way. And I think this is a dangerous way to frame disconnection as empowering when this is actually a privilege. And in my work during the first lockdowns that I did last year I saw actually that disconnection is stratified and traversed by

so many inequalities and divides and privileges that make for some people impossible to disconnect.

So the point is that we're not only witnessing a digital divide now or different kind of digital divides that still exist and persist but at the same time we have what some of my interviewees called the impossibility to disconnect because gig workers and other people especially the people that I interviewed in Brazil, in Colombia, and Mexico they couldn't take a break because they are tied to the algorithm. They are tied to the app. They are tied to their smart devices. And they cannot for their own survival disconnect. So disconnection is really more complex than that. And if you want to resist it we need to resist especially and we need to come back to what we were discussing and also Sareeta was pointing out before labor, rationalized condition of when these kind of people work different kind of precarious job conditions and so on and so forth. So that's for me it's a way of flipping disconnecting and turning it to make real life to people and scholars that actually we need to push for a different kind of understanding about disconnection. And a different kind of resistance to disconnection in our datafied society.

**NK:** That really reminds me of this op-ed that two former Data and Society researchers wrote for *Wired* when there was this 4<sup>th</sup> Amendment case being heard by the Supreme Court about whether police can search cellphone data, location data that's captured by your phone and the argument was, well, you know you're voluntarily giving up your data to a cellphone company and Julia and Andrew's argument was well no, it's no longer voluntary, right? People's livelihoods are tied to their phones and so actually police should not be able to just take their location data.

So, Sareeta, I guess same question to you. I'd really like you to bring us back to your original example of IT workers in Berlin because in your book you have this really interesting point where you talk about how workers develop a special relationship to the code that they write and I'm curious if you see that as an act of resistance and if so why is it an act of resistance?

**SA:** Thanks for that. I'm very, very always intrigued by materiality and the tools, the material tools that can come in so many forms that people use to make sense of an act on their own lives. So when I was doing my work I began to notice that a lot of these short term migrant coders would use their work practices of writing code, cutting code, debugging to comment on the condition that they were living in. So one thing I found is that they were often commenting on the way that code is ideologically designed to move across borders. Even if it's proprietary it moves within a company. But at the same time they were always stopped at all borders and essentially sent back or sent on. And out of that critique grew a practice of doing things that would make them less replaceable including doing things that really went against the logic and the stricture and ideologies of being a good coder. Such as leaving really bad and hard to interpret comments so that the next person really couldn't understand what they were doing and they could stay on to the contract for a long time. Or a longer time. But this is of course a really double-edged sword if you don't comply to what people think you should be doing as a backend replaceable coder then you will of course individually but also as a group because these

processes are always racialized, not be employable or be replaced by another location or another group of people.

So for me this is definitely a form of resistance but it's not necessarily politicized. It's still within the frame of an individual or group ideology that emphasizes middleclass status. It doesn't really critique any of the larger structures or the larger political economy in which all this takes place. So it's really a tempered or minor form of resistance. And one of the other questions that really drives me is to think about what those forms of pushing against everyday structures where they can lead. And that's why I'm also very interested in things that are outside what Emiliano calls the algorithmic condition not entire but maybe adjacent to it, sites of pleasure that don't necessarily hook into a strict purpose of monetary gain or establishing a middle or upper middleclass lifestyle or all those usual markers of individual success. And I'm very interested in them because I think they do offer an alternative imaginary of what life could look like. But again they are every day. They aren't organized into a political movement except in the moments when they do get organized that way.

One of the things that's really driving my work forward in the current moment is how do people like the people I studied for my first book, fairly successful immigrants from South Asia, how do they turn their critique or their nascent critique of the political economies that make their work possible but also limit them, how do they turn those toward other directions? And again what I'm finding is a lot of that work happens through thinking adjacent to the algorithmic condition. And of course ironically a lot of that thinking is happening through social media platforms. I completely agree with Emiliano that for so many of us they've become a necessity. And turning off is often really only understood as a kind of failure. But at the same time what people share, right, often we get so obsessed with the platform, are they sharing on Twitter, or Instagram, or Clubhouse or whatever the newest thing is. What people share is also really, really important and how they talk about what they're sharing creates these moments of collective effervescence which is a very old term from Durkheim but I think really useful because it describes what happens when people get together, when they assemble in spaces together and produce a sense of shared identity and for progressive movements for activists in particular the way that they share stories about what happened to them, scenes of discrimination or share stories or do learning clubs together all of that creates some other form that is nascent and imperfect and always shot through with contradictions and forms of oppression. But nevertheless is moving toward imagining a world that isn't only bounded by our performance as measured by an algorithmic imaginary.

I think that's really important and I think we need to recognize those every day moments of as I call them in my book, counter conducts, something opposed to the way we usually conduct our lives to recognize them as the seeds of a more formalized activist politics.

**NK:** Yeah. I think that's actually a really lovely way to end this conversation. As bringing us back to the idea that there is life outside of our algorithmic worlds. Thank you both so much.

And that's our series! A huge thank you to Sareeta Amrute and Emiliano for sharing their thoughts about data and racial capitalism. You can find links to their work in the show notes to this episode.

We want to thank you so much for giving us your time and attention throughout this season. If you're just tuning in for the first time, feel free to explore earlier episodes from the season. We'd love to hear your thoughts; you can tweet at us by tagging @DataSociety or @PublicBooks.

Thank you, so much, for listening. We hope this season left you with some new ways to think about your own relationship to data and sparked your imagination as to what a more equitable and just future could look like.

This podcast is a production of *Public Books*, in partnership with the Columbia University Library's Digital Scholarship Division. Thank you to Michelle Wilson at the library, for partnering with us on this project. This episode was produced by Annie Galvin and edited by Annie Galvin and Shelby Lohr, with editorial input from Kelley Deane McKinney and Monda Slaone. Our theme music was composed by Jack Hamilton, and our logo was designed by Yichi Liu. Special thanks to Data & Society Director of Research Sareeta Amrute and Director of Creative Strategy Sam Hinds, and to the editorial staff of Public Books for their support for this project. Thank you for listening.