**Rigoberto Lara Guzmán:** Hi, everyone. Welcome to Databite 144. My name is Rigoberto Lara Guzmán and I am the producer of this event alongside my production team behind the curtain. We will be spending the next hour together, so let's get ourselves grounded. Data & Society is an independent research institute studying the social implications of data and automation. We produce original research and convene multidisciplinary thinkers to challenge the power and purpose of technology in society and society began in New York City, an island in, uh, in a network of hills and rivers in the Atlantic Northeast known as Lenapehoking, the ancestral lands of the Lenni-Lenape people. Today, we are connected online via a past array of servers and computer devices, but in the United States, much of this infrastructure sits on stolen land acquired under the extractive logic of white settler expansion. As an organization, we recognize this history and uplift the sovereignty of indigenous people, data, and territory. We commit to dismantling all ongoing settler colonial practices and their material implications on our digital worlds,

Let me, uh, begin the program, uh, by introducing my guests today, Ellen Pao, Yang Hong, and the Mckensie Mack will be joining us to discuss the, their latest report on how remote works since COVID-19 is, has been exacerbating harm and what companies need to know and do, and also what they learned during the process about data equity, intersectionality, and positionality that might help you in your respective work. Project Include, which is the, uh, the, the, the organization that is bringing us here today, is a nonprofit that uses data and advocacy to accelerate diversity and inclusion solutions and the type of industry their mission is to give everyone a fair chance to succeed in tech. Uh, we've posted their bios in our event page here where you can read, but we'll save them so that we can get into the conversation. So welcome everybody. Thank you for your patience. Uh, Ellen, I'll turn it over to you now. The mic is yours.

**Ellen Pao:** Great. Thank you so much. I am a huge fan of data and society and the work that you do, this is my second time, um, in front of the group, and I'm very honored to be here with Mckensie Mack and Yang Hong, um, to talk about the work that we did on, um, on looking at how different communities of people are, are harmed by the changes that we've seen in the workplace. Um, one thing I wanted to note is kind of a context of this conversation where one year after the murder of George Floyd, um, we are a few months since, um, Google fired its AI lead, um, [inaudible] and, uh, kind of really, uh, kind of put down the research that she had been working on, um, as a Black expert in AI. And I think this conversation is incredibly important in this time. And in this context, I think, um, understanding the work that Yang really drove as our lead data scientist and the perspective that Mckensie brought to help inform all of the work that we did is something that I would love to see all organizations do.

I think it's really powerful. It really informed our report and our research, um, throughout the whole process. And, uh, and it's a much better report to, and we've seen a lot of response to it and we continue to have a long tail of inquiries because of the kind of novel approach and results that we found. So, um, I'm super excited to be back together with Mckensie and Yang to talk about it. Uh, we finished a report in March and, um, you know, I've, I really want to, um, hear Mckensie, uh, and their approach to, you know, what were the things that we learned from this research and from this report.

**Mckensie Mack:** And so just in, in, uh, thank you so much for the introduction for, so Ellen, um, and so I'm wondering, would you like me to go into some of those main findings at this point? Okay, great. So, um, it's interesting because at the very beginning of this call, before many of you joined, we had a mini conversation around, um, some of the ways in which we responded to the findings in the report. Um, and I, and I will say that, um, you know, what's been really interesting is encountering a number of folks. Some who were really some were really surprised by the findings and then others who I think were

finding themselves in a, in a space of, um, not being very surprised by a number of the things that we found. So just to kind of cover a few things around things that, um, came to light during our report and in our findings, uh, one is that 42% of trans respondents experienced increased gender harassment and age of COVID-19 during this time that Black, non binary people and women are nearly three times as likely as non binary people in women in general, to experience race-based hostility that 85% of workers are experiencing increased anxiety since COVID-19.

So that is across the board, um, that 98% of people who experienced increased gender based harassment were women and are non binary people. Um, and those are just a few of a few of the highlights of things that came out in this report, but there are many more so for us in general, you know, in thinking about the ways in which we are defining harm, thinking about harm, uh, we took a very highly intersectional approach to that, um, which I know that gained and speak to later in our conversation. Um, but, but what we're seeing is something that maybe many of us on this call may have already known it. Maybe some of us may be learning for the first time in that, right. Um, Asian, Black, indigenous, Latin X, um, workers, employees are disproportionately affected you by the waste of which harm is being experienced in the remote workplace. And that also is inclusive of, um, of women and non-binary people specifically.

**EP:** Thanks. And I'd love to hear from you again about what, um, I guess I'd love to get into the methodology, but from a high level, what were the results that really hit home for you?

**Yang Hong:** Yeah, it's really exciting to just have this mini reunion here and thanks to Dana society's community for having us too. Um, I think even before getting into, you know, how we looked at the data, um, I kind of want to reframe what we think of when we think of data in the first place. So I think we often think of it as facts. We often think of it as science, um, and we often think of it as neutral or objective. Um, and I like to challenge that, you know, data like technology, um, as a product of technology is not neutral or objective because the people in systems that create it are not neutral objective. Um, and that includes, you know, me looking at this data. Um, and so I think as part of that, you know, when we, when we had a survey design, you know, we asked all these questions, we asked about 150 different questions.

We had about 3000 survey respondents, um, from all over the United States and internationally, uh, you know, you think about how much data that is. Um, and you think about the whole universe of questions that we could possibly be asking. Um, and you know, when you look at everyone, uh, you know, average across all of these multitudes and complexities of people and their experiences, um, you know, you actually find very little and, you know, in our initial thing, the only thing that we found by just looking at everyone across every type of experience was that, you know, mental health was a pervasive issue for everyone. And, you know, I think if we just had a report that said that, um, it wouldn't have changed anything. And I think everyone would have realized that we were staying the obvious. Um, and so, you know, I think we then started to think, well, what other questions can we be asking?

And should we be asking? Um, and we really decided to focus on this question of well, who was being harmed and who was being harmed disproportionately and how, and why were they being harmed? Um, and we, you know, we use this word harm, um, to really encompass, you know, things beyond, uh, and including harassment, um, which may look really different for different kinds of people as well. Uh, so I think when we did that, you know, from a high level, we started to find a lot of things, um, including, you know, some of the things that Mackkenzie mentioned earlier. And, you know, I think for me personally,

um, part of what was, I guess, surprising is that none of it was surprising and I think reflect on that. It wasn't very validating. Um, and you know, what recognition of my personal experiences in tech, um, and I think that's been something that's been resonating for a lot of people as well.

EP: So one of the things that, um, we did was to really take a data equity approach along with the intersectionality, um, and the intersectional lens that we used. Um, we took a data equity approach and I'd love for you to, um, describe that approach Yang, and then also share, um, what that looked like in, um, in the work that we did.

YH: Yeah, absolutely. Um, so I'm just gonna share my screen really briefly, um, and just share this, uh, the set of questions. Um, and I think often, you know, speaking to myself as a data scientist, um, you know, we're very eager to want to dig into it, to find answers. And, you know, I think before we do that, there's this, um, we can take a step back and think, well, what questions are we even asking? And specifically, what questions are we not asking? And by not asking those questions, what are we missing? So, um, you know, this is just a little bit into our process. It can be born in our 10 page methodology and the report, um, and you know, it's questions for data storytellers. Um, and we know what I think of anyone who's interacting with data as a data storyteller. Um, it becomes really important to ask these questions across, you know, our data gathering, biography, investigation, interpretation, and data governance, um, and across all of these, I think the common theme is a power analysis and, uh, I don't mean, you know, statistical power analysis and sample size.

I mean, um, you know, what kind of powers of oppression or dominance exist, um, both within the context of our work and our data, and also how it affects us as our researchers, um, and our ultimate impacts and goals. Um, and, you know, I think maybe we can just take a moment to look at some of these questions, um, in particular, you know, when we think about data equity, um, there's this idea that, you know, one, we do not dis-aggregate our data, um, and, you know, desegregation looks like racial desegregation, it looks like gender desegregation. It looks like any aspect of desegregation that, um, if we don't do that would essentially erase or invisibilize people's experiences. Um, what we find that, you know, did equity is not just a nice to have. It is actually just better data science. Um, and I think that's really important to, to note it's better data science, it's better journalism. Um, it's better decision-making um, and, you know, I think ultimately us asking all of these questions and then iteratively trying to answer them, um, in ways that are complex and, you know, ultimately still limited, um, behind all of that is this idea that data, uh, again, it's not just about facts, it's not a story of neutrality. Data is a story of people in power, um, and how we create analyze, interpret and change based on it is a story we choose, um, and an outcome of power in society.

EP: Great. And one of the pieces that really came together in this report or the, where the different levels of power and how it was clear within these tech companies, that the power was held, um, by the white men and the, the rest of the workers were having different experiences. And when people can't see those experiences and aren't experiencing it themselves, you end up with, um, faulty solutions. So I, I was, um, just kind of, I was a little bit surprised at the level of, you know, the lack of harm to certain communities and then the level of harm comparatively, especially, um, for other communities. Um, I'd love to hear from you McKenzie, about how, um, what does it mean to be subjectively aware, which is a term that you've feel very strongly about for good reason, and also like how, how, um, you know, w how positionality comes into play and what, um, one of the things that we made a big effort to do was to include people from different backgrounds, you know, as our funders, as our interviewees, as our experts and within, um, our survey respondent pool, I'd love to hear your thoughts on, um, what impact that had and why it's important.

[Audio] DB144 (Completed 07/20/21)

**MM:** So I think just sort of, as a, as a first response, I'd say the positionality is everything. And I know that you mentioned that term, um, subjectively aware that was a term that was first impressed upon me by the trans journalists association, which is also known as TGA. So they have a style guide for editors, for journalists, for writers, for media makers. And it focuses on the ways in which people have very eroded erroneously and harmfully written about trans communities and the ways in which they can, um, be harm reductive in terms of the ways in which they write about trans communities in the future will trans and nonbinary communities. Um, and so when, uh, that term means that, you know, as opposed to us thinking that it's actually possible for us to be completely objective, it's actually possible for us to actually remove our bias.

We recognize that we can't remove bias from ourselves. If there's bias, bias in itself is not inherently evil or harmful or terrible. And then there's bias that because of the ways in which we've been conditioned to believe it is actually incredibly harmful and dangerous, especially for those that are most marginalized within our society. So to be subjectively aware means to be, um, aware of the ways in which our lived experiences are privileges, the privileges that we hold, the marginalizations that we experience shaped the ways in which we perceive ourselves and other people, and how that has an impact on how we make decisions. And then not also means to be aware of the fact that no matter how hard we try unconsciously, our bias is going to manifest itself. And the only way for, for that bias to be countered is if we're working in environments and in communities, especially when it comes to research with people that are, um, can name that people who've had that lived experience, it's different from our own, who are able to name those biases, and we're able to right.

Really be able to show that to us and make that visible. Um, and for us in this process, one of the reasons that was so helpful is if I can offer a brief story, um, it reminds me of when Ellen, when you had an interview a couple of months ago, right after the report came out, and there was someone who said, well, you know, this person is a leader in tech and some of the findings that you're sharing, they're not seeing that they're not experiencing that. And I remember you saying, um, well, you know, I validate that person's experience. Like I affirmed that this is something that they're not seeing, and at the same time, just because an individual person isn't seeing the harm being done doesn't mean the harm isn't happening. And that, for me, just like, you know, had a, um, something that I, that I knew and coming into that and seeing me being interviewed and speak to that.

But I think it's something that for many of us is something that we have to unlearn. Um, but in terms of our process and the ways in which we engage in data gathering and interpret that interpretation, and then reporting, we were very mindful of the ways in which our positionalities shaped, how we reviewing and considering those findings, and then even down to, um, one thing that I really, really appreciated is even down to our language and terminology, there's a lot of specificity in our report as it means it being, um, as open and as honest and explicit as possible about the ways in which we know language in itself can be really limiting. Um, and also there are ways in which we are learning a lot about positionality and identity, where English language, our language, the language of the report that it was written, then really hasn't even caught up yet. Right. So the ways in which we're experiencing identity. So for, for to answer your question, I think that recognizing that positionality is, was everything.

**EP:** Thank you. It's so helpful. It, um, I learned a lot in this process of, um, from everybody on the team, and that was a very, um, it was just great, like to have so many different perspectives and to be learning so many different nuances and to continue to evolve and to see, um, changes throughout. Um, I guess I'd love to hear from you Yang about, you know, how these, um, how these perspectives shaped an iterative process and what maybe one or two examples of that look like, because we really made a lot of

progress. And, you know, we talked about in our prep call, how we were meeting every week, and there were definitely conversations that were rich and productive and pushed and pushed the report in different directions. So it'd be great to hear, um, some of the examples that you've found really.

YH: Yeah, totally. Um, and then, you know, I think just echoing what Mckenzie was saying earlier about positionality, uh, I think as part of being able to come in with our positionality, um, there has to have, you know, there has to be a feeling of mutual trust and respect and, you know, to have that expertise and that personnel positionality be heard. Um, and so, you know, I just want to say even just thank you to both of you, um, and to our other co-author Caroline, um, so that we can have these conversations, because I think, you know, when we talk about equity, it's not just about, oh, let's just aggregate the state up is a question of how do we do that? And in the process of doing that, who are we, you know, choosing to erase or not erase, um, and also just cognizant of how, you know, the, the dominant way in which we did apply knowledge gathering here is, um, uh, from a framework of Western statistics.

Um, and, you know, I want to acknowledge, that's not the only way of knowledge gathering. Um, and it it's, you know, it favors noticing certain patterns across groups of people. Um, but it's particularly weak at understanding the how's and bias of how those patterns come to be. Um, I think that said, uh, I'll just go through, you know, maybe one or two examples of that complexity. Um, you know, we talked about intersectional analysis and one question we had at some point is, um, you know, when we think about who's experiencing race-based hostility at work, how does gender, you know, potentially factor into that? Um, and is there a difference? And so when you look at everyone, um, when you see as, you know, 7% of men, uh, and 15% of women and, or non-binary people experienced an increase in risk based hostility in work. And so the question is, if we just stop here, um, you know, what, what are we missing? And one thing I'll note here is when we aggregate everyone, we disproportionately emphasize, you know, the majority of respondents, um, in any category and here, you know, 57% of the respondents to this question about, you know, racial hostility were white, um, in contrast only what percent of those white respondents said, they experienced an increase in race based system.

Um, so, you know, if we separate that out, what we reflect is, uh, this average makes it, you know, 10 times, uh, as low for white people who are experiencing racial hostility. Um, and it's actually, you know, twice as high for people who, um, are, you know, identify as not white, who are experiencing racial hostility. So this average, this initial average, um, doesn't represent anyone. Um, and I think that's sort of a big thing to really reflect on. So then when we look at this, um, you know, with the ability to dis-aggregate across race and ethnicity, um, and I think that ability itself had to come way before the analysis I had to come in the survey design. It had to come in conversations that, you know, Ella and McKenzie conducted and informed, um, so that we could even do the desegregation. Um, well we find that, you know, only 7% of respondents to this question were Black.

Um, and so no average across everyone would have revealed their patterns of experience. And when we do dis-aggregate, we find that, you know, 41% of Black men and 43% of Black women and our non binary people experienced an increase in re spaces stilly. And we find that in fact, gender does make a difference, um, that women in or nonbinary people were twice as likely as men to experience, um, an increase in race-based system. Um, and, you know, I think especially, you know, from my positionality as an Asian woman, knowing, you know, the just vast distribution of differences, um, under that umbrella term, which was, you know, initially invented as a, as a political activist term. Um, if we can disaggregate further, we find that, you know, more south and Southeast Asian women, um, at about 38% experienced

increase in racial hostility, uh, compared with East Asian multiracial Asian women at 25% or East Asian men at 14%.

Um, and you know, here, I want to also note that this is both way more insightful. It's a much deeper understanding. Um, but even here, it's still limited. Um, and we had, you know, multiple iterative conversations, for example, around how do we think about people who are multi or biracial or ethnic in their identities. Um, and, you know, even noting the fact that there are other factors at play here, for example, colorism across the board, um, you know, dynamics of, uh, global notions of racial hierarchy like cast does and things like that, um, that we weren't able to really do justice to because, uh, you know, we don't have that kind of nuance in our, in our survey design. Um, so I think it's really important to think about like those complexities and also to think about them from the very beginning. Um, and, you know, I think the last thing I'll say here is, again, we were applying this, you know, Western statistical framework, which meant that, you know, what you didn't hear in any of these statistics is the experiences of indigenous people or, um, middle Eastern people. Um, and, you know, we didn't have enough sort of quote unquote statistical power to be able to make these, um, percentage claims, but at the same time, you know, we do include them in the report to acknowledge there is ongoing harm there as well. And, uh, you know, even if it's one person or three people that those experiences are just as valid as, you know, the 100 people, um, or 200 people,

EP: What I found really interesting and difficult was like this, this challenge of, you know, wanting to get to that level of, um, comfort with the number of respondents, um, and the pressure that put on us to try to like include multi-racial people into a category, or to try to prioritize the races within or ethnicities within, um, persons identities, and, uh, and, and the harm that you can create in that process.

YH: Yeah, absolutely. And, you know, I'm thinking also about how, um, even after the survey design and before the analysis, there was a period where we're just doing outreach for people to respond to the survey. Um, and I think, you know, initially, um, when I was looking at who was responding, it was, uh, overwhelmingly, um, you know, white, mostly cisgender women. Um, and again, you know, I think thanks to the efforts of Ellen Mackkenzie and, uh, you know, our other co-author Caroline, um, really made a push to do more deliberate outreach, um, and make sure that, you know, we are not just representing, uh, you know, a particular slice of people in tech. Um, and I think, again, there's like so many things that happened even before the analysis to enable the analysis to be a bit more equitable, um, regardless of, you know, how much we can, we can do or how much time we have, I think it's, it's always worth it because it means we have deeper understanding. We have deeper findings, um, we can, you know, reflect reality better.

EP: And I also, there were a lot of groups that helped us in that effort, like code 2040, and, um, Black girls code. And, uh, I'm going to forget some, um, lesbians who tech, um, uh, Black and brown founders. So there were some groups that helped us as we worked hard to trans tech, um, McKenzie notes. Yes. And they were very helpful in, in getting our numbers to where they were, but it's also hard in an industry where so many people have been shut out and have a hard time, um, thriving. So I want to take this last time. I think we're almost out of time. So very quickly to kind of, um, talk a little bit about race and gender as a social construct, um, and how that, you know, how should people be thinking about that as they go off and they do their work. You know, some folks might be, um, DEI practitioners, some folks might be, um, data scientists or data analysts. How should we be thinking about race and gender as we go through and do our work, maybe we can start with Mckensie.

**MM:** So I think, you know, this is a question that I think about all the time, especially with the kind of work that we do at MNG. Um, and, and something that I like to really impress upon people is the fact that yes, race and gender, just to give a few examples of, of identity based constructs are social constructs. And at the same time, the ways in which society has, um, taken those social constructs and then use them to marginalize and to disenfranchise people are very real. So, like, I think it's about creating the balance of understanding that they are social constructs and that we, we, that to attempt to use, um, the, uh, singular sort of aspect of a person's identity, as it means a defining them is always a bad direction, right? It's never something that we should be doing. And, and at the same time, right, there are ways in which we can be very aware or so to be very aware of the ways in which our bias has been created towards people based on their identities while also recognizing that because society has framed and created, um, hierarchies of power and privilege based, realize those identities, that their lived experience with that disenfranchisement is very real.

And it should be something that we're paying attention to. I think in addition to that, just going back to the language piece, um, it's also about recognizing that language and our understanding of identity and, and, and, you know, that would include myself as a Black non binary person. My understanding of my identity evolves, right? And it's constantly evolving so potentially five years ago, the way in which I put the way in which I felt affirmed in terms of how people referred to me is very different now. So I think it's also about recognizing that there is not going to be a singular gold standard in terms of the ways in which we talk about these issues. And we talk about inequities and oppressions. So it's, it's important to be as, as much as possible to be as mindful as possible and to be constantly researching and reading so that we don't get left behind, you know, in terms of our own evolution of understanding how people's understanding of their identities changes and, you know, is, is constantly transforming.

**EP:** Yang, I'd love to hear your thoughts on the same, um, question like how race and gender as a social contract, you know, affected, you know, played was a big part of the work that you did and, and how should people be taking that, you know, what your experience was in, in this research to their own work.

**YH:** Yeah. Um, I'm, I really love the question and, you know, it's, it's interesting because when like upcoming scientists are asking me for advice or mentorship, um, I note it's often focused on the technology, the tooling, you know, do I use Python or R and, um, I will ask them my favorite question to ask them is what do you know about history? Um, and, you know, I, I don't know how many data scientists are asked that question, but, you know, when Mckenzie is talking about race and racism, you know, gender and sexism, for example, you know, I'm thinking about the history of how those terms even came to be. Um, and how, why did we invent race as a social construct even, and, you know, there's this distinction between race and racism. And I, you know, in terms of language choice, again, in our studies, we often talk about, oh, race explains this in a way that, you know, can't be explained, for example, the racial wealth gap.

Um, you know, and I would question, is it race that explains that, or is it the system of racism predicated on the social invention of race, um, that continues to drive this racial wealth gap. Um, and I think that's where, you know, we really want to acknowledge that data can answer the what, um, but to understand the why and the, how, uh, it takes a lot of other ways of knowing it takes a lot of being in deep relationship with the communities we're studying. Um, again, you know, to your earlier point, Ellen coming from the communities that we're studying, um, and making sure that, you know, at the end of the day, it's not about getting that perfect number. It's about really advocating for people who are invisibilized, um, and not being heard. And, you know, I think to that, to that question, there's really interesting ways of seeing how obvious, um, our power as data storytellers is.

[Audio] DB144 (Completed  07/20/21)

Um, and just, you know, two things I'll say here is, um, just seeing how the U S Census has changed the constructions of race and gender over time. Um, and, you know, I'll quickly link to an example here. Um, but you'll note that it's essentially a history lesson in how data used to perpetuate, um, these, you know, systemic oppressions and, uh, you know, in another instance, again, this is, you know, this is not just about history. This history is our present day reality. Um, another example note is that, you know, in, uh, France Germany, that UK, there is this refusal, um, and in some cases in illegality to gather data on racial identity, um, and what that does is it fails to acknowledge that if we can't racially dis-aggregate data, um, it's actually a refusal to recognize patterns of racism. Um, so it's not just about, you know, we're labeling people in a certain way. It's about how these constructs have been used to harm people, um, historically, and also today. Um, and so, you know, when I think about, you know, data scientists and our role as, uh, data storytellers, I think about, you know, w what do you, what do you know about history? Um, and what do you know about how that shows up today?

EP: Um, and before we move on and people should ask questions in the Q and a window, um, Mckensie, you sent a link, um, hopefully Rigo can share that with the, um, attendees, um, saying that this is a resource, uh, of a resource that you share with data analysts and data scientists love to hear a little bit about why that, what, what you like about that piece and why it's important.

MM: Um, well, the title of the video is, um, is raised debunked, I think, in three minutes. So one of the reasons I like to share it is because, uh, it's three minutes long. And so I really want if, depending on what I'm talking to, I really want them to finish it. And so I'm like, Hey, here's something that's just three minutes. Please watch it. It gets done too, which is why I think it's so interesting what you mentioned Yang, because it actually does get into the us Census discussion where it's speaking specifically about Latin X communities and, and the ways in which specifically Mexican immigrants had constantly had their identity markers change from white to Mexican, to, you know, other identity markers, depending on where the us was at the time and how much of a need it had for, um, for, for, um, forced labor. And so I think, you know, for me, I really appreciate it as a reference because it goes all the way back to the ways in which the actual, um, markers of race were created and for what purpose. Right. And, and I think it's, it's something that is digestible and hopefully pretty accessible for a lot of folks,

EP: Right? I'm not seeing questions. I'm hoping people are not too intimidated by our awesome panelists to ask questions. Cause I think I could ask questions all day. So I'm going to keep asking until people, um, add their questions, but I, I think this is a great opportunity. This was such an interesting, um, interesting, uh, project. I hope people ask about even their own projects and how, um, and, and get these experts to weigh in. If you have questions about the work that you're doing, I'd love to hear, um, a little bit about, you know, some of the, um, you know, going back to the slide that Yang put up, one of the, you know, the first, um, section was about power analysis and Mckensie. I'd love to hear your thoughts on what, um, are the power dynamics that we should be thinking about in all of our work and especially in DEI work. And one of the things that we've found from our analysis was that there were not that many differences between the tech industry and other industries between different geographies between, um, you know, the, you know, the different, um, people who, who filled out the survey. So I'd love to hear your thoughts on, um, on power analysis in this project.

MM: Yeah. So I think where I would, would start and responding to that is that I for, especially for D and I practitioners and for researchers as well, I think right now, which I'm very happy about, we're having deeper, deeper conversations around race and gender, um, and around the LGBTQ plus community. And, and yet I think one of the spaces and areas where we lack is in having conversations around class. Um, and I think, you know, that's, that's for a lot of folks, maybe even given maybe their increased comfort

level with having an engagement in conversation to work less focused on dismantling racism, um, and dismantling, um, systems of white dominance and white supreMacky. I think that the class conversation can be pretty scary for a lot of folks because then it's getting directly into economy, right? And it's our economy that makes it to the, we're actually able to care for ourselves to look out for our families to feed ourselves, right.

Um, to, to ensure that we can lead lives that are not centered in survival, but are centered and as thriving and our future and our past present and our present and future. And so I think, um, that's one of those areas of something that we should definitely look at. I think for me, one of the reasons why I, I love being able to have intersectional conversations that also are conversations where we're talking about class. Um, and it's because I find that it, that it tends to help to de-center whiteness and conversations like that, because then it becomes less about right, the Black and white conversation, more about recognizing the multiculturalism of oppression. Um, so that's one of the things that I like to sort of go into it to discuss. I think there are a lot of folks that need a lot of prep to be able to enter into that space and to apply it to the kind of research that we're discussing, but it is so important.

And it also helps us to recognize that for example, being Black or being an indigenous person or Asian person, right. Or being, um, uh, uh, Latin X person that, uh, you know, the ways in which we experience our oppressions are heavily, heavily influenced and changed and shaped by our economy. Um, so I think for me, that's one of those things that in terms of power analysis that I find to be really important, I think also recognizing, you know, I know gang had mentioned this and you had talked about this earlier as well, Ellen, but about that objectivity myth that because we think that it's possible for us to turn a switch on and be objective and then turn it off and not be objective. And we don't want to be, um, that a lot of times we don't as researchers and as folks that are, that are leading research like this, we don't consider our own positionality.

And we don't think about our own power. Right. I recognize that it's such a major privilege just to be able to, um, be a part of research that is focused on harm in the remote workplace. And there are so many people in my community, especially from where I come from, who would never, ever have that opportunity because of the ways in which they don't experience privilege. Like I experienced it. So coming into a process like this, I come into it with so much humility in recognizing that just because I am present and contributing and bringing value, it doesn't mean that I'm the only person that should be doing that or that you know, that, um, I have the most expansive sort of vast knowledge around the themes that we're discussing, but because I'm present, I mean, it means that I do have a responsibility to be as mindful as possible, not just of my marginalization, but also the ways in which my privilege could be wilted to bring harm to other people. So it's pretty long answer, but you all know that, um, I'm very worried. I mean, we worked together for eight months, so y'all know I'm, we're both.

**EP:** I worry about the class issues. I think, you know, tech has been very good at creating two classes of employee, at least to where, you know, you have, and we tried very hard thanks to Yang, to, you know, think of all of, all of the people we surveyed as workers and not making the distinction between contractor and, and part-time, and full-time because of the way that, um, things that, uh, kind of the structures have been created within tech and it started many, many decades ago. Um, so thank you for that. I think it's really important and just, and remembering, and being grateful for our privilege and using our voices to just speak up for those who don't have that power. I think that's really important. Um, I'm going to go to, we have a couple of questions. Um, first question, and I think this is, I think both are kind of related, and I think Yang is going to be so happy to answer these. Um, I have a person who's, who's teaching an analytics course to undergraduates and wants to, um, include some materials on

[Audio] DB144 (Completed  07/20/21)

equity audits. Um, are there some good materials available? And there's another person who has a similar question. Do you have any guides you look to when you plan and prepare research on UX? Um, this person, the second person is in service designer and a UX researcher, and is looking for materials and, um, Yang was those source, um, who provided a lot of the materials that we looked at.

YH: Um, thank you for that question. I love it. And I love that you're putting this into practice. I think at the end of the day, it's not about talking it's about practice. Um, and, uh, I'll definitely include a lot of links in the show notes, but I'll just mention a few here. Also. Um, the urban Institute has a racial equity analytics lab, um, and, uh, another project called elevate data for equity, um, data for Black lives under the leadership of yesterday Milner. Um, actually just came out with a report on data capitalism. Um, and it's been really helpful for me personally, to look at other people's reports on a variety of subjects, um, you know, on experiences of sex workers on environmental racism, on missing and murdered indigenous women, girls, two spirit trans people on guaranteed basic income. Um, and I'll be writing a piece on data justice for data society's blog coming up soon, which will link to, um, a lot of these more specific, you know, tools and practices.

Um, and you know, I think the other thing we'll want to mention is just thinking much more holistically about not just, uh, you know, Western statistical ways of knowing. Um, but other ways of knowing for that, um, you know, I really want to thank Dr. Dezi small group regress, lone bear, um, who is creating the data warriors lab. Um, and as part of the United States indigenous data sovereignty network, um, on alternative ways of knowing, um, and you know, I think the other part of that is, um, at the end of the day, these are tools, um, just like any tool that we have, and these are frameworks for equity. And, um, I do want to make a distinction between data equity and data justice. And you know, when I think about data equity, I think about given our current systems, the ones that we live in, the classes we have to teach, you know, um, the companies we're trying to, you know, do DEI and given those systems, um, you know, what can we do?

So going back to the US Census, you know, how did equity, what asks, like how does the Census reach and count and reflect the complexities of our most vulnerable communities? Um, and did a justice, I would say is a much more expansive and holistic practice it's questioning the incentives, the impacts and the existence of those systems in the first place. Um, so did it, justice might ask, like, you know, what is the purpose of the Census? Like, why was it made, um, whose interests it ultimately serves, um, and, you know, imagines, like if we can abolish these more harmful data practices, um, what does it look like to create these more regenerative ones that are, you know, community led and community based? Um, and so I think as part of that on a very personal note, I think it helps a lot to, you know, not be studying the people that you don't know about, but really to be studying and bring recognition to the things that you are experiencing. And, you know, if you are advocating for other people to really be in deep relationship with them, um, and that, you know, that kind of personal level, deep relationship, uh, helps to build trust helps to expand beyond our own positionality, um, and helps us to make sure that whatever tool we are using, whatever practice we are using, that, you know, we're really, um, reflective about who that's helping.

MM: I think that makes so much sense. It's, um, it's not easy, but it's worth putting in that effort. I think, um, I have a question that I'm going to direct to Mckensie, um, from actually from Rigo and, uh, he's interested in knowing what you would say to an organization about to begin a DEI process.

Um, I really love that question. Thank you, Rigo. I think that something that I would say, um, given that I've been on so many calls with leaders and organizations and with organizers and organizations that are beginning, um, D I focus processes. And so one of the things that I often say is that you're not ready and that's okay that you're going to do it anyway. And you're going to proceed the recognizing that, um, like for example, with the conversation that we're having, just now around potentially an equity audit in a con in an organization that it's not like a financial audit. And I think sometimes people think of it as cut and dry. I show up, I do all the right things. I get the results, then I do all the right things again, and then I'm done versus, Hey, a DEI process that actually is informed by principles of justice.

And anti-oppression means that, um, we are extending a lot of our own emotional labor and that we're not just focused on the company or the organization, but we're focused on ourselves, on ourselves as individuals, um, changing and transforming, and also an interpersonal transformation. And that's really difficult. So, um, it's for me about priming folks. So they recognize they're going to be a lot of things have happened in the process that are going to make you feel vulnerable and that, um, also are going to make me feel uncomfortable and it's going to be okay because that's what the work is like, as opposed to them thinking, they're going to check some boxes be done. Um, and it's, and it's always feel great. And they're always going to feel like they're doing the right thing, but really helping folks to, to, um, be equipped with the tools so they can humanize themselves in the process.

**EP:** That's super helpful. Thank you. Um, and here's, the questions are getting harder, so they are, people are getting more comfortable, which is great. Um, this is for both of you, how can we navigate guilt in remote workplaces that may be quote unquote, better than environments that are more obviously harmful? So in other words, how can people employed at, you know, good places to work, bear, witness, to, and be in conversation with people in more, obviously violent remote environments while still tending to their own wellbeing? So this is a, um, this is a hard question and, um, I'm really glad that somebody asked it,

**MM:** I think if I were to rephrase the question for me, just to sort of help with, with the framing around this, um, it's like me asking someone, how do you offer the support to someone who's grieving, right. And when you're offering support to someone who's, who's grieving is to be in an environment that is toxic and it's harming you, you know, you're, you're, you're going to be in a state of grief because you are losing, you're losing time. It was an energy, right? You are, um, experiencing a lot of really difficult working dynamics that you really shouldn't even be at. You really shouldn't even have to experience with at a remote workplace. So if, uh, someone that you knew came to you and said, I'm having a really difficult time with XYZ, or I've just experienced loss, you definitely wouldn't respond by saying, oh, well, I haven't had that experience.

My life is great, right. But, but instead, you'd be showing up in a way that's really present doing a lot of listening, offering support. And then also, um, as opposed to offering that, open-ended, you know, call me if you need anything, because you know that they're at a state of need. You may not know what they need. I think it's about thinking about your own bandwidth and capacity and your boundaries, and coming up with a very short list of things that you can offer. You know, so if, for example, if they're looking to, to, to leave that, that specific organization or company, it could be, well, you know what, I can dedicate two hours on a Friday after work and I can help you find, um, potential other potentially other places where you can be applying to, or if it's potentially, you know, um, they're in a, in a place where they're not looking to leave, they want to stay and they need a listening ear.

It could be, well, Hey, you know, on Wednesdays for like 30 minutes at such and such a time during lunch or whatever, um, I can give you a call and I can check in on you on a regular basis and see how you're doing and see how you're feeling. So I think really it's about recognizing what our capacity and bandwidth is because it's, it's, it's interesting to think about the ways in which even if you're not in a situation and you're not in a toxic remote workplace environment, the people that are that, that has a cascading and expansive effect and all the people that, that are within their community. So it's not just about, it's not just impacting one person's life or a group of individuals lives. So it's also about mindful of the ways in which, um, those stories of that kind of trauma and harm are going to impact you and ensuring that you really have bandwidth and capacity to be able to hold this space. And if you don't helping that person to be able to find resources and people that, that do have the bandwidth and the capacity,

EP: That was one of the things that, um, one of the words that came up a lot during our research trauma, that people were actually experiencing trauma from COVID-19 in the remote workplaces. And it wasn't just trauma from COVID-19. It was trauma from dealing with, um, racism, ongoing racism, but all heightened by the murder of George Floyd and the protests that have gone on for the past year. Um, and there was climate change, uh, uh, you know, horrible incidents of climate change that, or, um, devastating to people's homes or people's health, or, um, or, you know, just the stability that they were feeling and, you know, all of these different traumas really, um, it's, it is interesting and really helpful to think of it as people grieving and needing that space. And, and, and how would you respond? And it's not just do your job, and it's not just go do your work and pretend it's not happening.

Um, and I, and I, and I think the piece that was also very, um, helpful for me to understand is that all of these pieces like this, this trauma from all of these outside forces, plus from COVID-19 the, um, harassment and hostility, people are experiencing the work pressures, they're feeling, um, the anxiety that they're experiencing. It was all kind of building up on top of each other. So the more anxious you are, perhaps the more likely you are to be hostile, or to harass somebody, or to feel more work pressure, or to put more work pressure on your coworkers or your reports and that, um, you know, it is a complex system and it's hard to, it's hard to, um, and, and you have to be thoughtful about how you're going to address it. I love to hear your thoughts, Yang.

YH: Yeah, absolutely. I'm just furiously nodding my head. Uh, whoever asked this question, I really love the question. Um, and you know, I'm hearing sort of like maybe three things in the question you're asking. So the first thing I'm hearing this notion of guilt, um, and you know, when I think about that, I think about how we can see this as a story of centering ourselves and asking, you know, by centering ourselves and our guilt, who are we de-centering in that process. Um, and, you know, asking like, if we are stuck in our guilt, how can we, you know, become unstuck, um, so that we can act on it. Um, and I think often behind guilt is the kind of fear or shame. Um, and you know, I, there are many people who talk about this, Bernie brown obviously studies this very deeply. Um, and you know, when I think about that, I think it's, it's actually very, uh, it's actually very important that we do, you know, move ourselves from a place of stuckedness in that guilt to a place of how do we act on it.

And I think by doing that, it actually alleviates some of that guilt in the first place, because now we're, you know, we're not just sitting there observing we are, um, actively participating. Um, the other thing I'm hearing is in the second part of that question is around rest, making sure that we're not burning out, making sure that, you know, we're not going to like five protests and then, um, not being able to get anything else in our lifestyle and taking care of ourselves. Um, and you know, when I think about that, I think of just how many things we've internalized growing up in this kind of society, um, and this kind of

[Audio] DB144 (Completed  07/20/21)

capitalistic, extractive labor society and our notions. You know, we talk about this in the report are notions of activity and productivity as a value of our humanity, rather than just, you know, seeing that our humanity has inherent worth.

Um, and so when I think about that, I think about how, you know, maybe there's also a guilt or shame around rest. And, uh, you know, I think, you know, I have my, I have my tea right here. I think it's important that you take the time and the practices to figure out what rest looks like to you and when you need to take it. And, um, to reframe the guilt around that, I would say, you know, we're not going to solve any of these oppressions in a day. Um, we're not going to solve it by applying data equity. We're not going to solve it by going to a protest, but we are going to move and make progress on it collectively in community and through, uh, you know, through time. And so when you're resting, like trust that your community is going to rise up and when they're resting trust that, you know, you will rise up.

Um, so when I think about that, me, I think about my rest allows me to continue this work in a whole lifetime practice, um, rather than just tomorrow. And then I think the last thing I'm hearing is the sense of, you know, I'm in a good workplace, but there's like a really nasty workplace there that, you know, maybe my friend's part of, or maybe, you know, I hear about. Um, and I would question, you know, just how, how good of that workplace, um, really is. And I think this goes back to what Ellen McKenzie said earlier about, you know, you may not be able to see everything that's going on for other people in the same way that they won't see everything that's going on for you. And I think about, you know, our spheres of influence and our spheres of power, and you have a sphere of influence.

You have a spirit of power that might be, and it's probably, you know, you're probably able to make more moves in your own organization then in another organization. And so, you know, I would maybe ask myself like, what am I not seeing? Um, in the ways that my organization like myself have been indoctrinated by the system, um, and how can I use my own power and spheres of influence to, you know, make that better. Um, and I think when we come back to our report, uh, you know, we, we talk about diversity inclusion. Um, and you know, I want to quote Dante Stewart here, uh, who was this? There's a difference between diversity and inclusion and liberation of justice. One enjoys the feeling of my presence, the other embraces the fullness of my humanity. Um, and so I think when we think about embracing the fullness of our humanity, both ours and everyone else's, um, it can really help move us into action.

**EP:** That was one of the reasons why I was so grateful to data and society for giving us this opportunity to talk with folks. We hope that you all are going to take, you know, what we've learned and what we've shared into your own work, and that we can spread a ripple effect across all sorts of research and all sorts of, um, information. And, um, I want to thank everybody for participating. Unfortunately, we don't have time for any more questions on, I think, Rigo who has been an amazing facilitator and introducer, and, um, has helped coordinate all of this and, and, um, really made this a wonderful event for, for us, um, uh, Diane and Eli for helping with, um, uh, behind the scenes. And then also of course, Mackkenzie and Yang, who I've learned so much from, and I continue to learn from both of you and am, um, just, uh, delighted to have been able to work with you. And, you know, I think we'll continue a little bit of research and hopefully we'll be able to, um, join forces again and, and keep continuing this work, which I think is really important.

**RG:** Thank you so much, Ellen, for guiding us through this incredible conversation, um, by evidence from the Q&A, I feel like we just are beginning to warm up into the depths of this discussion. Um, but we are

unfortunately out of time and I so just want to take this moment to give a huge shout out to the three of you. My guest today, our guests today, Ellen Powell of project include Yang, Hong association insights, and, um, McKenzie, Mack of MMG. Uh, please stay tuned for, um, the afterlife of this, of this conversation will be posting the recording as well as the show notes and on our websites website on the event page. Um, I want to, again, encourage everyone to please check out the report. Uh, I'm going to link the, the report again here in the chat, and it will be included along with all the amazing knowledge that was dropped today in the show notes. Um, and with that, I just want to say, have a beautiful rest of your day, keep an eye out also for a piece that Yang is working on for our points blog on data equity and data justice, which should be coming out soon. Um, and again, please follow the work of these three amazing, uh, researchers. Um, and hopefully you will join us again soon for another conversation.