


NO ROBOTS 
NO AUTOMATION!
COMMUNITY EFFORT
SUPPORT ILWU!

WHAT STORIES DO WE HEAR ABOUT AI AND ETHICS, EQUITY, AND JUSTICE? AND WHOSE STORIES ARE THEY?

THIS IS A STORY ABOUT AI, BUT IT MIGHT BE A LITTLE DIFFERENT THAN YOU EXPECT.

THIS IS A STORY OF PEOPLE ORGANIZING, MOBILIZING, USING THEIR POWER TO RESIST AI, AND REWRITING A STORY THAT WAS BEING WRITTEN FOR THEM, WITHOUT THEM.

THIS IS A STORY OF THE PEOPLE OF THE LOS ANGELES HARBOR



$$M\ddot{x} - mg\theta = \dot{x} + l\ddot{\theta} + g\theta$$

$$\omega = \sqrt{\frac{g}{l}}$$

AI FOR

$$\rho \frac{\partial^2 w(y,t)}{\partial t^2} - \frac{\partial}{\partial y} \left(P(y,t) \frac{\partial w(y,t)}{\partial y} \right) = M \frac{\partial^2 w(y,t)}{\partial t^2} - P(0,t) \frac{\partial w(0,t)}{\partial y}$$

$$P(y,t) \cong mg + pg$$

WHOSE GOOD?



LESSONS FROM COMMUNITY RESISTANCE TO AUTOMATION AT THE PORT OF LOS ANGELES



BY SOPHIE WANG AND TAYLOR M CRUZ



THIS IS A STORY ABOUT



COMMUNITY
RESISTANCE

AGAINST

ARTIFICIAL
INTELLIGENCE,



HOW THE EXISTING NARRATIVE
RENDERED IT 'INVISIBLE', AND

HOW THE COMMUNITY



WROTE THEIR OWN
STORY INSTEAD.

IT CONCERNS THE INTEGRATION OF AI,
ALGORITHMS, AND MACHINE LEARNING
INTO LOGISTICS WORK, SOMETIMES
SIMPLY REFERRED TO AS

AUTOMATION.



SO LET'S MAKE THIS A REAL STORY,
WITH A REAL PLACE - A REAL
WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE,
AND WHY.



THIS IS A STORY ABOUT LOS ANGELES.

IT'S A STORY ABOUT HOW ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
APPEARS IN MANY DIFFERENT PLACES IN MANY
DIFFERENT WAYS ACROSS LA.



IT'S A STORY ABOUT HOW POWER APPEARS IN
DIFFERENT PLACES AND DIFFERENT WAYS
ACROSS LA.

IT'S ALSO A STORY ABOUT

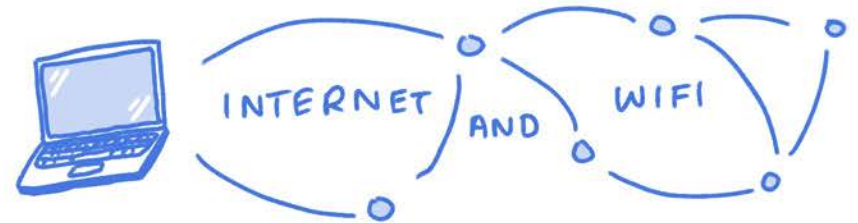
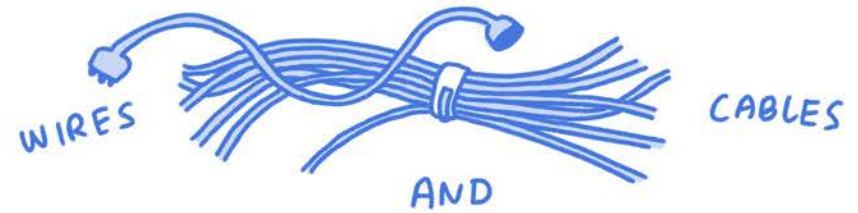
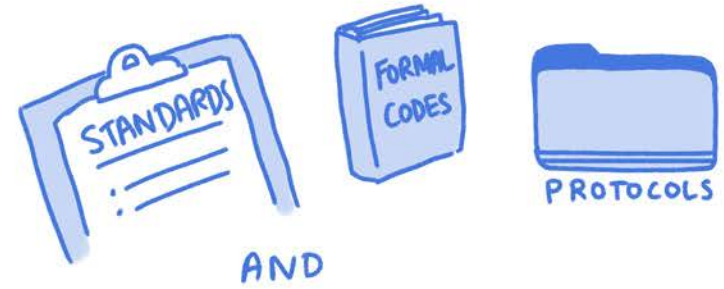
INFRASTRUCTURE:

PEOPLE AND TECHNOLOGIES THAT OTHER THINGS RELY ON, BUT THAT OFTEN FADE INTO THE BACKGROUND.

IT INVOLVES MANY CHARACTERS...



... ARTIFACTS...



... AND OFTEN TAKEN-FOR-GRANTED ARRANGEMENTS.

WHO COUNTS AS AN "AI EXPERT"?

WHO SETS THE TERMS OF THE DEBATE?

WHO SPEAKS FOR WHOM?

WITH SUCH A CAST OF CHARACTERS TO CHOOSE FROM, HOW DO WE DECIDE WHERE TO START THIS STORY OF AI +

AUTOMATION?

LET'S LOOK TO 2 SCHOLARS WHO PROVIDE USEFUL INSIGHT INTO HOW KNOWLEDGE IS MADE, WHO WE BELIEVE AND TRUST, AND WHERE TO START RESEARCH AND INQUIRY - SCHOLARS OF FEMINIST EPISTEMOLOGY -
→ THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE



SANDRA HARDING

THE PRODUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE IS NOT VALUE-FREE, AND USUALLY RESPONDS TO AND REPRESENTS THE INTERESTS OF DOMINANT GROUPS. STARTING INSTEAD FROM THE LIVES OF THE OPPRESSED + EXPLOITED CAN PRODUCE LESS PARTIAL + DISTORTED BODIES OF KNOWLEDGE.



PATRICIA HILL COLLINS

KNOWLEDGE FOR KNOWLEDGE'S SAKE IS NOT ENOUGH. CRITICAL SOCIAL THEORY MUST BE COMMITTED TO JUSTICE FOR ONE'S OWN GROUP AND OTHER GROUPS.

SO FOR US, STARTING FROM THE LIVES OF THOSE WHO HAVEN'T BEEN DOMINANT IN THIS STORY OF AI AND AUTOMATION IS A POLITICAL STARTING POINT -



SOPHIE TAYLOR

IN OUR PERSONAL VALUES OF SOLIDARITY AND WORKER JUSTICE, AND RESPECT FOR HUMAN DIGNITY AND WELLBEING, AND OUR COMMITMENT TO BUILDING A WORLD WHERE EVERYONE CAN THRIVE.

SO LET'S BEGIN THERE, WITH THE COMMUNITY MEMBERS SITUATED IN A WORKING-CLASS, RACIALIZED AREA WHO ARE PART OF KEY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR ALL OF SOCIETY...



...YET ARE OFTEN MADE WITHIN

PUBLIC DISCOURSE

INVISIBLE

ON AI + MACHINE LEARNING.

PART 1: CENTERING COMMUNITY IN THE LA HARBOR

LET'S GO TO THE

PORT of LOS ANGELES



THE PORT OF LA IS IN THE LA HARBOR AREA. WHO IS THIS COMMUNITY?

- MULTIPLE GENERATIONS OF LABOR TIED TO THE PORT - FISHING, CANNING, PORT + DOCKWORKERS.
- STRONG CULTURAL IDENTITY + BLUE-COLLAR PRIDE TIED TO WORK.

- A STRONG ILWU PRESENCE + COMMUNITY ALIGNMENT, BOTH IN MEMBERS OF THE UNION AND NON-UNION PORT WORKERS, AS WELL AS OTHER NON-PORT WORKERS (LOCAL SHOPS, RESTAURANTS, ETC)

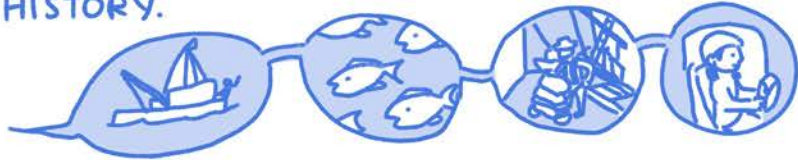
- A COMMUNITY OF IMMIGRANTS - HISTORICALLY JAPANESE, ITALIAN, MEXICAN, CROATIAN, NORWEGIAN, SWEDISH

- ACTIVE ADVOCATES FOR THEIR SCHOOLS, CHILDREN, COMMUNITIES, PUBLIC SPACES SURROUNDING THE COAST, ENVIRONMENT AND WILDLIFE

- SPATIALLY ISOLATED FROM THE REST OF LA

YOU'LL HEAR MORE ABOUT THEM IN THEIR OWN WORDS IN A MOMENT.

THIS IS A COMMUNITY THAT REMEMBERS AND MEMORIALIZES (AND LIONIZES) ITS HISTORY.



THESE NARRATIVES ARE NOT ONLY IN THE PAST THAT CURRENT WORKERS COME OUT OF, BUT KEPT ALIVE TODAY.

AND A BIG PART OF THESE STORIES IS HOW PREVIOUS PROMISES KEPT AND BROKEN BY DISTANT POLICYMAKERS AND EXPERTS HAVE IRREVOCABLY CHANGED THE PEOPLE AND LANDSCAPE OF THE LA HARBOR REGION.



THOSE DECISIONS HAVE BROUGHT INDUSTRY AND THUS JOBS AND INCOME TO THE COMMUNITY...



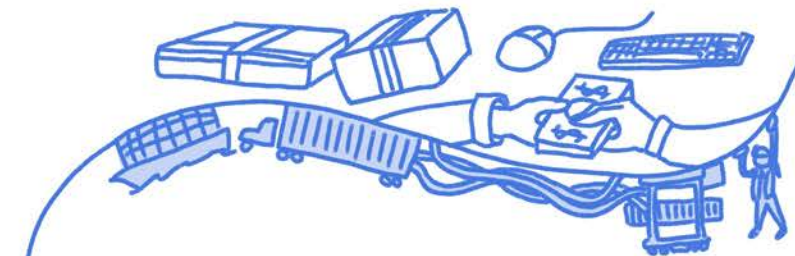
ONE KEY SITE FOR THE LA HARBOR COMMUNITY IS THE PORT OF LOS ANGELES, AN ECONOMIC POWERHOUSE WITH OVER \$276 BIL OF CARGO MOVING THROUGH IT IN 2019, AND A MAJOR EMPLOYER OF LOCAL COMMUNITY MEMBERS.

AND WHAT THE PORT SUPPORTS AND CREATES IS, WELL, COMPLICATED-

IT'S LIVELIHOODS AND COMMUNITY,



COMMERCE AND CONSUMPTION,



POLLUTION AND OVERDEVELOPMENT-



- OPPORTUNITY AS WELL AS HARM.

IT WAS IN THIS CONTEXT THAT WORKERS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS CONFRONTED THE THREAT OF AI, OFTEN SIMPLY DESCRIBED IN THIS CONTEXT AS

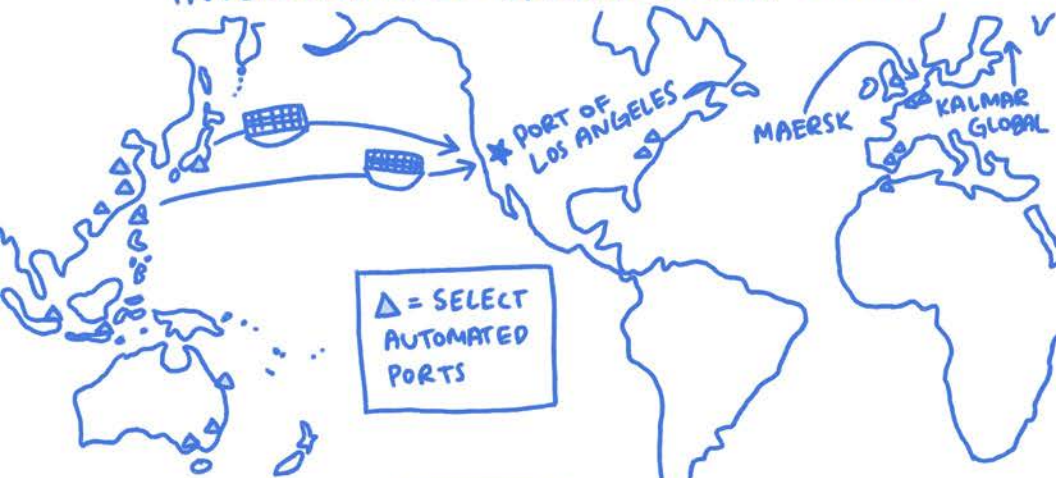
AUTOMATION.

IN 2016, THE PORT OF LA STARTED WORKING WITH DANISH SHIPPING CONGLOMERATE MAERSK TO UPGRADE CONTAINER SHIPS AND THE PORT TERMINAL, CONTRACTING WITH FINNISH AUTOMATION COMPANY KALMAR GLOBAL TO INTRODUCE AUTOMATED STRADDLE CARRIERS.



TRADITIONALLY DRIVEN BY LONGSHORE WORKERS. AUTOMATION WOULD REMOVE HUMAN WORKERS FROM THIS JOB.

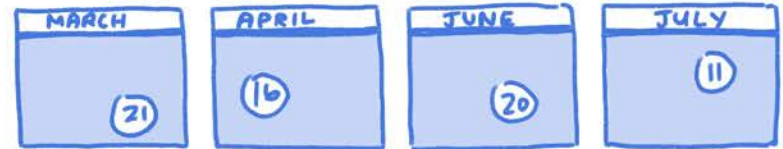
THIS AUTOMATION IS ALREADY HAPPENING AT PORTS AROUND THE WORLD, AS PART OF THE INTERCONNECTED GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN.



SO IT'S A GLOBAL STORY...

... AS WELL AS A LOCAL ONE.

IN RESPONSE TO PERMIT APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS AND LOCAL COMMUNITY RESISTANCE, THE PORT OF LA HELD A SERIES OF PUBLIC HEARINGS -



- WHERE HUNDREDS SHOWED UP WITH PREPARED STATEMENTS, PETITIONS, AND LETTERS OF SUPPORT TO SPEAK OUT AGAINST AUTOMATION.



THE COMMUNITY ASSERTED ITSELF BY PARTICIPATING IN THE PUBLIC HEARINGS AND REFRAMING THE TERMS OF THE DEBATE.



HERE'S WHAT THEY HAD TO SAY:

1

AUTOMATION IS
NOT JUST LEGAL
OR TECHNICAL,
BUT MORAL.

THE PUBLIC HEARINGS APPEARED TO BE ABOUT PERMIT APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SPECIFIC TECHNOLOGICAL UPGRADES. IN THIS FRAMING, APPROVAL OF AI INTEGRATION MIGHT BE LIMITED TO TECHNICAL/LEGAL PERMISSIBILITY OF AUTOMATED STRADDLE CARRIERS.

PORT OFFICIALS REPEATEDLY EMPHASIZED THERE WAS NO LEGAL JUSTIFICATION FOR BLOCKING AUTOMATION.

B
U
T

WORKERS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS CHALLENGED HEARING PARTICIPANTS TO BROADEN THE ISSUE TO INCLUDE CONCERNS OF PUBLIC MORALITY, VALUES, AND PRIORITIES IN AUTOMATING LOGISTICS WORK.

BECAUSE COMMUNITY MEMBERS ANTICIPATED HARM TO EVERYDAY PEOPLE, APPROVAL OF AUTOMATION FROM PORT OFFICIALS WOULD REFLECT DEEPLY IMMORAL VALUES FROM THE INSTITUTIONS EXPECTED TO STAND FOR THE PUBLIC.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS:



ISN'T THERE A CONTRACT AGREEMENT IN WHICH THE TERMINAL OPERATOR HAS THE RIGHT TO AUTOMATE?

I'M NOT HERE TO SPEAK ON THE CONTRACT - THE ISSUE OF AUTOMATION IS BIGGER THAN THE CONTRACT.



I'M SPEAKING ON THE EFFECT IT'S GOING TO HAVE ON MY COMMUNITY AND WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE FOR OUR KIDS, THE PEOPLE THAT LIVE HERE...

IT IS NOT THIS BOARD'S RESPONSIBILITY TO NEGOTIATE OUR CONTRACT. YOUR RESPONSIBILITY IS TO THE CITIZENS RIGHT HERE IN OUR COMMUNITY.

I AM HERE AS A COMMUNITY ACTIVIST, AND THIS IS GOING TO BE DEVASTATING TO OUR COMMUNITY IF IT HAPPENS.

2

AUTOMATION IS NOT JUST ABOUT

RECONFIGURED

WORK TASKS, BUT

CONTEXTUALIZED LABOR



AI PROMOTERS AND INDUSTRY ACTORS TEND TO APPROACH AUTOMATION AS THE RECONFIGURATION OR REPLACEMENT OF ROUTINE WORK TASKS, WITH COMPUTER TECHNIQUES VIEWED AS STAND-INS FOR HUMAN LABOR.

AUTOMATION IS SPOKEN OF AS A VALUE-NEUTRAL CHANGE IN SIMPLY THE TYPE OF WORK.

BUT

WORKERS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS EMPHASIZED THEIR SEVERAL GENERATIONS OF STRONG TIES TO THE LA HARBOR AREA THAT GAVE PORT LABOR HISTORICAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXT. AND THROUGH THIS DEEP UNDERSTANDING OF HISTORICAL CHANGE, THEY VIEWED AUTOMATION AS A CHALLENGE TO THEIR FUTURES AND A DIRECT ASSAULT ON THE PEOPLE THEMSELVES.



I WAS BORN AND RAISED HERE, AND THEY TAUGHT US HARD WORK... BUT NOW THEY'RE TRYING TO REPLACE US WITH ROBOTS. TODD SHIPYARD NO LONGER HERE. THE FISHING INDUSTRY IS PRETTY MUCH GONE, CANNERIES ARE GONE. INSTEAD OF WORKING TOGETHER, THEY JUST WANT TO GET RID OF US.

I'VE LIVED IN SAN PEDRO MY WHOLE LIFE. I'VE WORKED IN THE PORT OF LOS ANGELES FOR THE PAST 20 YEARS.

I WAS HERE WHEN PIER 400 WAS BUILT. THE FEW THINGS I HEARD WAS IT WOULD NOT TAKE AWAY THE COASTAL BEAUTY THAT WE SEE EVERY DAY FROM THE HILLS OF SAN PEDRO.



THEY LIED.

THEY ALSO SAID IT WOULD CREATE MORE JOBS FOR OURSELVES IN OUR COMMUNITY.

NOW IT'S TIME TO KEEP YOUR PROMISE.

WE NEED THOSE JOBS, WE NEED OUR CHILDREN'S JOBS, WE NEED OUR FUTURE.


3

AUTOMATION IS NOT JUST ABOUT THE FUTURE OF **WORK**, BUT ABOUT THE FUTURE OF **COMMUNITY**

AI PROMOTERS AND PORT OPERATORS PROMISE PRODUCTIVITY GAINS WITH PORT AUTOMATION. BY QUANTIFYING CHANGES FROM AUTOMATION SOLELY IN TERMS OF JOBS, EFFICIENCY, THROUGHPUT, PRODUCTIVITY, AND CAPITAL, THEY REDUCE HUMAN ACTORS AND COMMUNITIES TO JUST THEIR LABOR.

BUT

COMMUNITY MEMBERS EXPRESSED CONCERNS ABOUT HOW THE IMPACT OF AUTOMATION WILL HAVE ADVERSE EFFECTS WITHIN THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY- BEYOND A SIMPLE FLOW OF SALARY MONEY. THEY DREW A STRONG DIVIDE BETWEEN WHAT HUMANS AND ROBOTS CAN + CANNOT DO OUTSIDE OF THE PORT AND HOW THAT IMPACTS THE LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY.

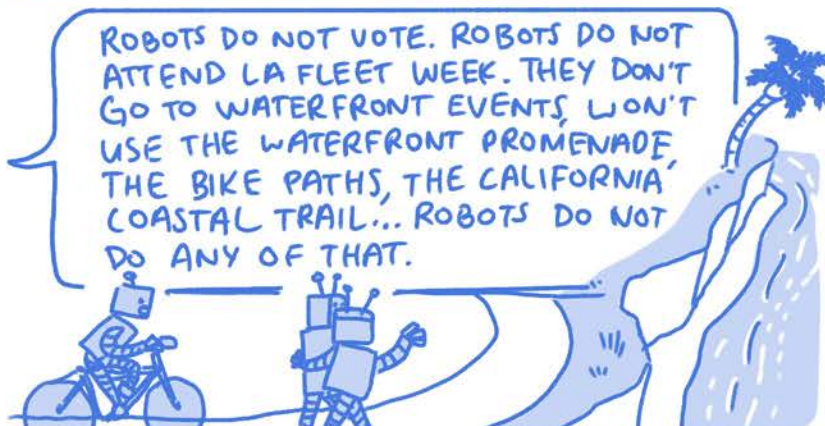


THESE ARE THE PEOPLE WHO ARE HERE EVERY DAY WORKING AND SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY. WHEN YOU DRIVE DOWN THE 110 SOUTH AND SEE THE BRIDGE AND CRANES COME INTO FOCUS, THAT IS THE SYMBOL OF THIS TOWN... A SYMBOL FOR THE WORKING MAN, A COMMUNITY BUILT BY HIM THAT RELIES ON HIM.



WE TALK ABOUT JOBS AND HOW THE MONEY INFUSES A COMMUNITY, BUT THERE'S ANOTHER THING: THE PEOPLE HERE ARE NOT JUST LABOR. THEY'RE MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY.

THEY COACH LITTLE LEAGUE TEAMS... THIS IS NOT JUST ABOUT VALUE ON THE DOCK, BECAUSE A ROBOT WILL NEVER GO TO OUR CHURCHES, OR GO ON STRIKE WITH TEACHERS.



ROBOTS DO NOT VOTE. ROBOTS DO NOT ATTEND LA FLEET WEEK. THEY DON'T GO TO WATERFRONT EVENTS, WON'T USE THE WATERFRONT PROMENADE, THE BIKE PATHS, THE CALIFORNIA COASTAL TRAIL... ROBOTS DO NOT DO ANY OF THAT.

IN SUMMARY:

3 POINTS OF MOBILIZATION AGAINST AI + AUTOMATION AT THE PORT OF LOS ANGELES:

1 AUTOMATION IS NOT JUST LEGAL OR TECHNICAL, BUT MORAL.

THE HEARING WAS SET UP TO BE ABOUT THE LEGALITY OF AUTOMATING STRADDLE CARRIERS



TAKING INTO ACCOUNT CONCERNS OF PUBLIC MORALITY, VALUES, AND PRIORITIES BY THOSE SUPPOSED TO REPRESENT THE COMMUNITY.

2 AUTOMATION IS NOT JUST ABOUT RECONFIGURED WORK TASKS, BUT ABOUT CONTEXTUALIZED LABOR.

AUTOMATION WAS SPOKEN OF AS SIMPLY REPLACING OR RECONFIGURING CERTAIN WORK TASKS.



WORK AS HAVING HISTORICAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXT- AUTOMATING AWAY WORK AS A DIRECT ASSAULT ON PEOPLE THEMSELVES.

3 AUTOMATION IS NOT JUST ABOUT THE FUTURE OF WORK, BUT ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE COMMUNITY.

CHANGE FROM AUTOMATION IS QUANTIFIED IN PRODUCTIVITY, JOBS, EFFICIENCY, ETC- REDUCING HUMANS TO LABOR



CHANGE FROM AUTOMATION IS MORE THAN SALARIES AND JOBS LOST. IT IS AN ANTICIPATED LOSS OF A WAY OF LIFE.

WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THE HEARINGS?



LA CITY HALL

THAT TAKES OUR STORY BACK TO THIS PART OF OUR FAIR CITY.

WHILE THE BOARD OF HARBOR COMMISSIONERS ORIGINALLY VOTED 3-2 IN FAVOR OF ALLOWING AUTOMATION IN JUNE 2019, THE COMMUNITY'S TRANSFORMATION OF THE NARRATIVE AND VISIBLIZATION OF THEIR ROLES AND LIVES ALREADY MADE AN IMPACT

THE IMPACTS (BEING WEIGHED) MUST INCLUDE THE DECIMATION OF THE WORKFORCE... THIS IS A BATTLE FOR THE SURVIVAL OF OUR COMMUNITY.

NO TO AUTOMATION PERMIT



YES TO AUTOMATION PERMIT

- 1 OF 2 COMMISSIONERS IN SUPPORT OF UNION APPEAL

AND THE IMMENSE SHOW OF COMMUNITY POWER AT THE HEARINGS LED THE LA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS TO APPROVE A MOTION TO WRITE MAYOR GARCETTI AND CITY COUNCIL "TO SUPPORT THE EFFORTS OF THE ILWU."

THIS ALL LED UP TO A JUNE 28TH VOTE WHERE 12 OUT OF 15 CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTED IN FAVOR OF A MOTION TO OVERRULE THE BOARD OF HARBOR COMMISSIONERS' VOTE!



REJECT AUTOMATION PERMIT

NOT PRESENT

BY PLACING THEMSELVES
**FRONT
AND
CENTER**

AT THE PROBLEM OF "AUTOMATION" COMMUNITY MEMBERS PRESENTED AN OPEN CHALLENGE TO THE OTHERWISE SEEMINGLY INEVITABLE MARCH OF TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT, BY REJECTING THE NOTION THAT ADVANCES IN AI SHOULD COME AT THEIR EXPENSE.

AND THE WAYS THAT DOMINANT CONVERSATIONS AROUND COMMERCE AND AUTOMATION

INVISIBLIZE  **INFRASTRUCTURE**

MAY MAKE IT SEEM LIKE AUTOMATION IS JUST CHANGING PARTS IN A BLACK BOX ANYWAY.

BUT BY MAKING THEMSELVES VISIBLE, WORKERS MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO LOOK AWAY FROM THE REAL COSTS OF AUTOMATION.



LIKE THE OFT-MISREPRESENTED LUDDITES SMASHING MECHANIZED LOOMS REPLACING THEIR LABOR IN THE 1810S, THIS ISN'T RESISTANCE THAT COMES OUT OF IRRATIONAL FEAR OR LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF TECHNOLOGY.

IT'S RESISTANCE THAT COMES OUT OF DEEP EXPERIENTIAL, HISTORICAL, AND COMMUNITY KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT HAPPENS TO LABORERS WHEN AUTOMATION COMES.

AND OF COURSE, THE STORY ISN'T OVER.

PUSHES FOR AUTOMATION IN THE LA HARBOR REGION CONTINUE AS OF 2023, AND LIKELY WILL INTO WHATEVER TIME YOU ARE READING THIS FROM.

SO NOW WE TURN TO

YOU!

- WHAT IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THIS FIGHT?
- WHAT CAN YOU CONTRIBUTE?

AND BEYOND THE PORT OF LA,

- WHAT INFRASTRUCTURES ARE YOU A PART OF? BENEFIT FROM? TAKE FOR GRANTED?
- WHAT CAN YOU DO TO BUILD COMMUNITY POWER?

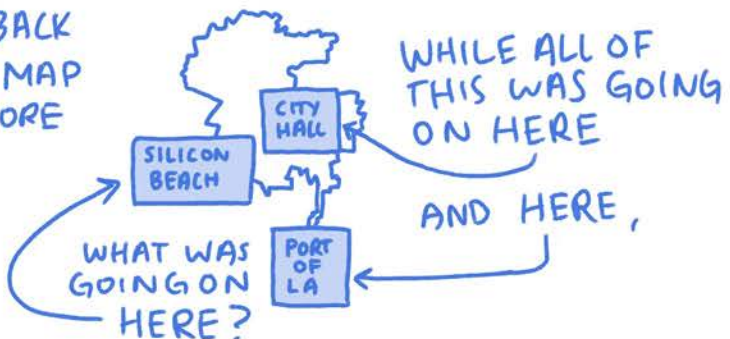
THIS STORY SHOWS WE ALL HAVE THE POWER TO CHANGE THINGS- AS LONG AS WE BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER.

AND WE ALL HAVE THE POWER TO BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER.

PART 2

WHOSE FAIRNESS?
 WHOSE ACCOUNTABILITY?
 WHOSE TRANSPARENCY?
 A NEW STARTING PLACE FOR AI ETHICS

OKAY, BACK TO THE MAP ONE MORE TIME.



WHILE THESE HEARINGS ABOUT THE FUTURE OF AI AND AUTOMATION IN PRACTICE WERE HAPPENING IN THE PORT OF LA, LESS THAN 30 MILES AWAY TECH COMPANIES AND TECH WORKERS WERE HAVING THEIR OWN CONVERSATIONS ON "AI ETHICS."



(MAYBE THIS IS MORE WHO YOU IMAGINED AT THE BEGINNING WHEN WE ASKED ABOUT THE "WHO" IN AUTOMATION?)

AND JUST AS THE AUTOMATION AT THE PORT OF LA IS PART OF A GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN, THESE CONVERSATIONS ARE PART OF A LARGER GLOBAL CONTEXT OF AI/ML/AUTOMATION DEVELOPMENT, WHICH CIRCLE BACKS TO SHAPE OUR LOCAL LANDSCAPE.




AFTER ALL, MANY DEVELOPERS TODAY CLAIM TO RECOGNIZE AND ACCOUNT FOR THE SOCIAL IMPACTS OF AI THROUGH CONFERENCES AND PAPERS ON AI AND TECH ETHICS, AND GROUPS AND SYMPOΣIA CENTERED AROUND "TECH FOR GOOD" OR "AI FOR SOCIAL GOOD," WHERE ETHICS, JUSTICE, AND EQUITY ARE OFTEN CHARACTERIZED THROUGH THE TERMS OF **FAIRNESS, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND TRANSPARENCY.**

FOR MORE CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THIS TREND: "THE FORGOTTEN MARGINS OF AI ETHICS" BY




ON THE SURFACE, THAT MAY SOUND GOOD-

- BUT IN REALITY, WHAT IS THE OUTCOME OF THESE STATEMENTS?

↳ ARE EXISTING LINES OF DOMINANCE AND POWER BEING REPLICATED OR CHALLENGED BY THESE "FAIR" AI SYSTEMS? 

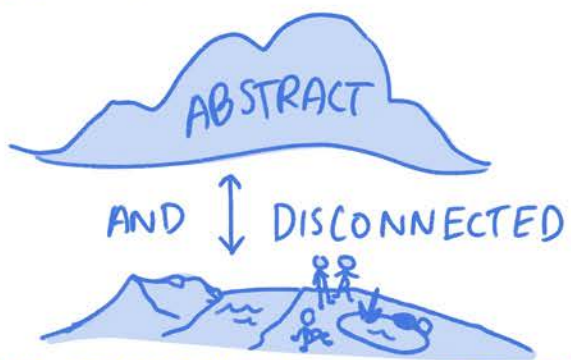
↳ WHO IS BENEFITING FROM THEM AND WHO IS BEING HARMED? 

↳ WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF THE AI SYSTEM ON THE MOST MARGINALIZED? (AND NOT JUST ABSTRACTLY/HYPOTHETICALLY) 



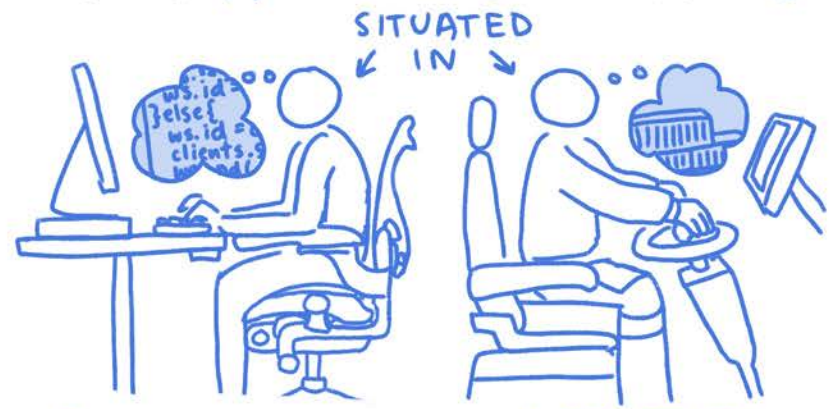
AND WHO ISN'T BEING INCLUDED IN THESE CONVERSATIONS, AND HOW DOES THAT LIMIT THEIR ABILITY TO TRULY ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS - QUESTIONS OSTENSIBLY SPECIFICALLY ABOUT IMPACT?

WHEN THESE QUESTIONS AREN'T ASKED, THE CONVERSATION ON AI IS OFTEN



FROM STRUCTURAL/SOCIAL FACTORS AND SPECIFIC IMPACTS.

CLEARLY, PEOPLE RELATE TO INEQUALITY IN TECH AND AUTOMATION IN VERY DIFFERENT WAYS, DEPENDING ON WHAT PUBLICS, CONTEXTS, AND EXPERIENCES THEY ARE



SO HOW DOES THE CONVERSATION CHANGE ON WHAT



THE PERSPECTIVES OF THE WORKERS MARGINALIZED BY THESE SYSTEMS

WHOSE IDEAS HAVE NOT BEEN INCLUDED IN THIS CONVERSATION UP TO THIS POINT? LET'S FIND OUT!

FAIRNESS

IN CONTEXT

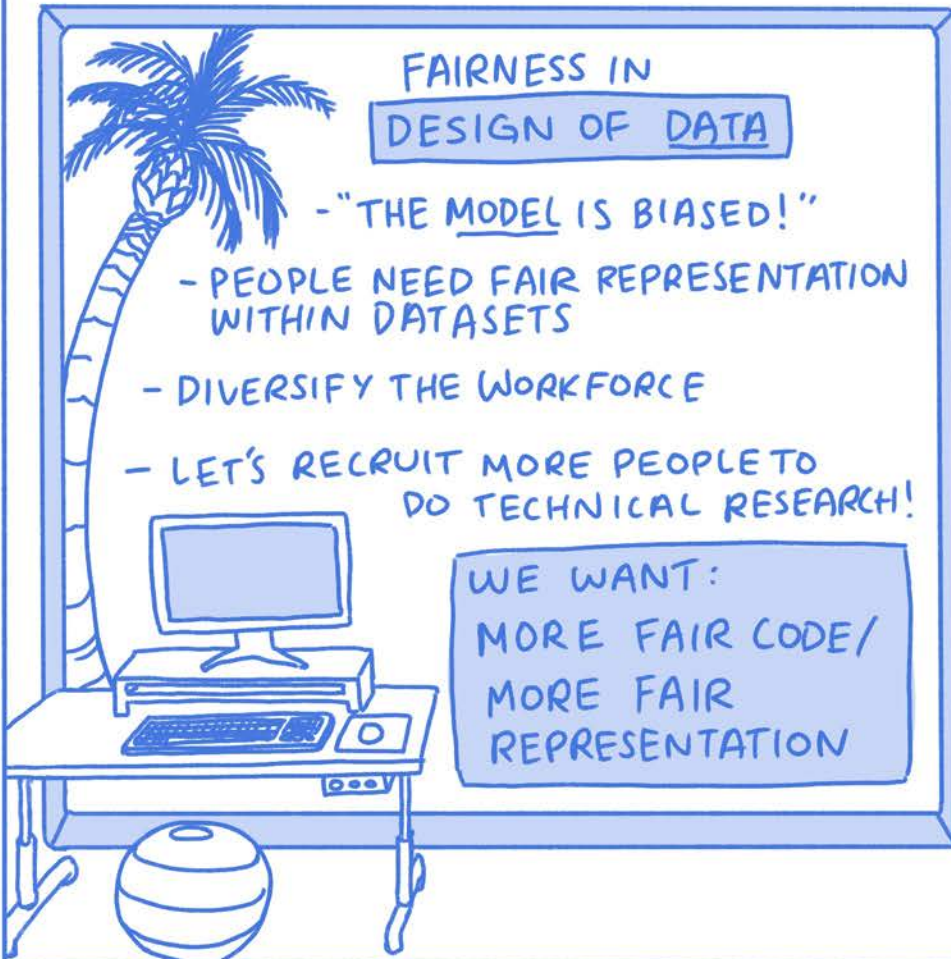
SILICON BEACH

FAIRNESS IN DESIGN OF DATA

- "THE MODEL IS BIASED!"

- PEOPLE NEED FAIR REPRESENTATION WITHIN DATASETS
- DIVERSIFY THE WORKFORCE
- LET'S RECRUIT MORE PEOPLE TO DO TECHNICAL RESEARCH!

WE WANT:
MORE FAIR CODE/
MORE FAIR
REPRESENTATION



PORT OF LA

FAIRNESS IN DESIGN OF SOCIAL SYSTEM

- "THERE IS NO BENEFIT TO THE COMMUNITY!"
- POLITICAL + ECONOMIC POWER AS STRONG DRIVING FORCES SHAPING AI
- BENEFITS AND HARMS OF AI IMPLEMENTATION ARE UNFAIRLY DISTRIBUTED

WE WANT:
MORE FAIR SOCIETY/
MORE FAIR IMPACT



ACCOUNTABILITY

IN CONTEXT

SILICON BEACH

INTERNAL ACCOUNTABILITY

WHO IS ACCOUNTABLE?

CREATORS OF TECHNOLOGY

ENGINEERS, DESIGNERS, TECH WORKERS, PROGRAMMERS

WHO ARE THEY ACCOUNTABLE TO?

...CREATORS OF TECHNOLOGY

...YEAH THE SAME PEOPLE

IT'S IN OUR HANDS!

WE NEED TO BUILD SOMETHING INTO THE MODEL BEFORE IT GETS OUT OF CONTROL!

IDEAL OUTCOME: TECHNICAL SOLUTIONS

PORT OF LA

EXTERNAL ACCOUNTABILITY

WHO IS ACCOUNTABLE?

ENABLERS OF TECHNOLOGY

POLICY MAKERS, PUBLIC OFFICIALS, GOVERNMENT

WHO ARE THEY ACCOUNTABLE TO?

THOSE IMPACTED BY TECHNOLOGY

USERS OF TECH, COMMUNITIES ALTERED BY TECH

YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO REPRESENT US!

WHO IS SUPPORTING OR REGULATING AI DEVELOPMENT AND DEPLOYMENT HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE?

IDEAL OUTCOME: POLITICAL ACTION

TRANSPARENCY

IN
CONTEXT

SILICON BEACH

TRANSPARENCY AROUND
"HOW THE MODEL WORKS"

WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND HOW THE MODEL ARRIVED AT ITS OUTCOME

DID THE MODEL BEHAVE APPROPRIATELY?

WE NEED TO FEEL SATISFIED WITH THE AI AS DECISION-MAKER

FOCUS SHOULD BE:

LOOK AT THE MODEL

PORT OF LA

TRANSPARENCY AROUND
"IMPACT OF MODEL ON SOCIETY"

WHY ARE WE INVESTING IN AI?

WHAT WILL AI LOOK LIKE WHEN OPERATIONALIZED?

HOW MANY JOBS WILL IT CREATE? REMOVE? DISPLACE TO SOMEWHERE ELSE?

WILL IT IMPACT THE ENVIRONMENT?

WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF OUR COMMUNITY?

HOW WILL IT IMPACT BROADER SOCIETY?







FOCUS SHOULD BE:

LOOK AT US

HOW WILL THIS IMPACT PEOPLE?

SUMMARY

OF FAIRNESS, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND TRANSPARENCY IN CONTEXT

	SILICON BEACH	PORT OF LA
FAIRNESS	<p>FAIRNESS IN DESIGN OF DATA</p>  <p>- MODEL IS BIASED WE WANT: MORE FAIR CODE</p>	<p>FAIRNESS IN DESIGN OF THE SOCIAL SYSTEM</p>  <p>- SOCIETY IS BIASED WE WANT: MORE FAIR SOCIETY</p>
ACCOUNTABILITY	<p>INTERNAL ACCOUNTABILITY</p> <p>CREATORS ACCOUNTABLE TO CREATORS</p>  <p>HOW TO ACHIEVE: TECHNICAL SOLUTIONS</p> 	<p>EXTERNAL ACCOUNTABILITY</p> <p>ENABLERS ACCOUNTABLE TO THOSE IMPACTED</p>  <p>HOW TO ACHIEVE: POLITICAL ACTION</p> 
TRANSPARENCY	<p>TRANSPARENCY AROUND "HOW THE MODEL WORKS"</p> <p>FOCUS SHOULD BE ON LOOKING AT THE MODEL</p>	<p>TRANSPARENCY AROUND "IMPACT OF MODEL ON SOCIETY"</p> <p>FOCUS SHOULD BE ON LOOKING AT PEOPLE'S LIVES</p>
	CODE-CENTERED	COMMUNITY-CENTERED

HOPEFULLY, THIS PROCESS OF VISIBLIZING THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE WORKERS MARGINALIZED WITHIN A CAPITALIST AI SYSTEM NOT ONLY BRINGS IN THEIR VOICE, BUT ALSO MAKES IT CLEAR THAT THE PERSPECTIVE OF TECH PRODUCERS ON TECH ETHICS IS NOT THE UNIVERSAL, VALUE-FREE KNOWLEDGE THAT IT'S OFTEN HELD UP AS -



- BUT JUST AS CONTEXTUAL AS THE PERSPECTIVES OF THE IMPACTED WORKERS.

AI "EXPERTS" AND THEIR KNOWLEDGE CLAIMS DO NOT STAND OUTSIDE OF SOCIETY...



DONNA HARAWAY, FEMINIST EPISTEMOLOGIST
FOR MORE, SEE "SITUATED KNOWLEDGES"

THE VIEW OF INFINITE VISION IS AN ILLUSION, A GOD TRICK

ALL KNOWLEDGE IS SITUATED, AND THAT MEANS IT HAS A VANTAGE POINT, IS LIMITED, AND IS LOCATABLE. THAT ALSO MEANS IT CAN BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE.

... BUT ARE SITUATED WITHIN IT.



AS BRIAN WYNNE SAYS IN HIS FOUNDATIONAL WORK ON THE RESPONSE OF SHEEP FARMERS TO THE CLAIMS OF NUCLEAR SCIENTISTS ABOUT RADIOACTIVITY ON GRAZING LAND:



IN OUR CASE, THINKING ABOUT TRANSPARENCY AS

"MAKING SURE A MODEL'S DECISIONS ARE VISIBLE AND UNDERSTANDABLE TO PROGRAMMERS"

SILICON BEACH

IS JUST AS CULTURAL AS THINKING ABOUT TRANSPARENCY AS

"MAKING SURE HUMAN DECISIONS ABOUT DEPLOYMENT AND IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY ARE VISIBLE AND UNDERSTANDABLE TO COMMUNITY"

PART OF LA

ANTHROPOLOGIST DIANA FORSYTHE RECOGNIZED A SIMILAR PHENOMENON DURING HER ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH IN AI LABS IN THE 1990s.



THE COMMUNITY OF SCIENTISTS AND RESEARCHERS SHE STUDIED TENDED TO PRIORITIZE

FORMAL MATHEMATICAL MODELS AND CODING

$$T^r(h, a^r, w) = \sum_i T_i \pi_i^{a_i}$$

$$\forall s_i \in I; A_i^r(s_i) = \{1, 2, \dots, |I|\}$$

OVER

THE CONTEXTUAL NATURE OF KNOWLEDGE AND WORK.



SHE THUS ARGUED THE FIELDS OF AI AND INFORMATICS WOULD ROUTINELY

"delete the social"

IN TODAY'S LANDSCAPE, AI PRACTITIONERS MAY CLAIM TO ATTEND TO SOCIETAL IMPACTS BY HOSTING PANEL DISCUSSIONS ON "ETHICS" OR BY RELEASING GUIDELINES ON "FAIRNESS, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND TRANSPARENCY," YET:

- THE DECONTEXTUALIZED FOCUS ON CODE,
- THE DEVALUATION OF CERTAIN KINDS OF WORK, AND
- THE PRIVILEGING OF AN ELITE GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO COUNT AS "EXPERTS"

... SUGGESTS THE FIELD STILL "DELETES THE SOCIAL," EVEN AS IT APPEARS TO ADDRESS IT.

SO WHAT WOULD AN ALTERNATIVE FRAMING OF EQUITY, ETHICS, AND JUSTICE LOOK LIKE, ONE THAT CENTERS SOCIAL INEQUALITY AND THE COMMUNITIES WHOSE VOICES CONTINUE TO BE MARGINALIZED?

FOR MORE: "THE CONSTRUCTION OF WORK IN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE"

ONE VISION FOR A FRAMING THAT STARTS ELSEWHERE COMES TO US FROM LA-BASED COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

STOP LAPD SPYING COALITION



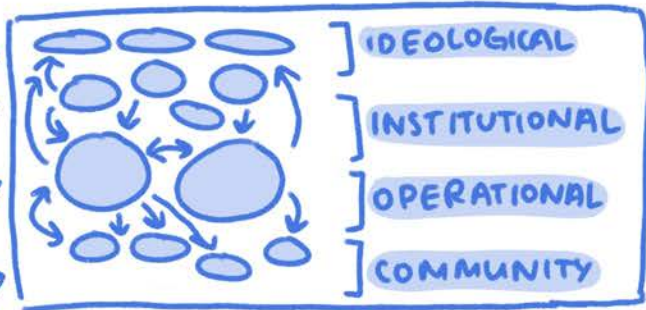
AND

FREE RADICALS



WHO DEVELOPED AN ORGANIZING TOOL CALLED

THE ALGORITHMIC ECOLOGY



INSTEAD OF FOCUSING ON THE TECH ITSELF AND ITS CAPACITY TO BE MADE "MORE EQUITABLE,"

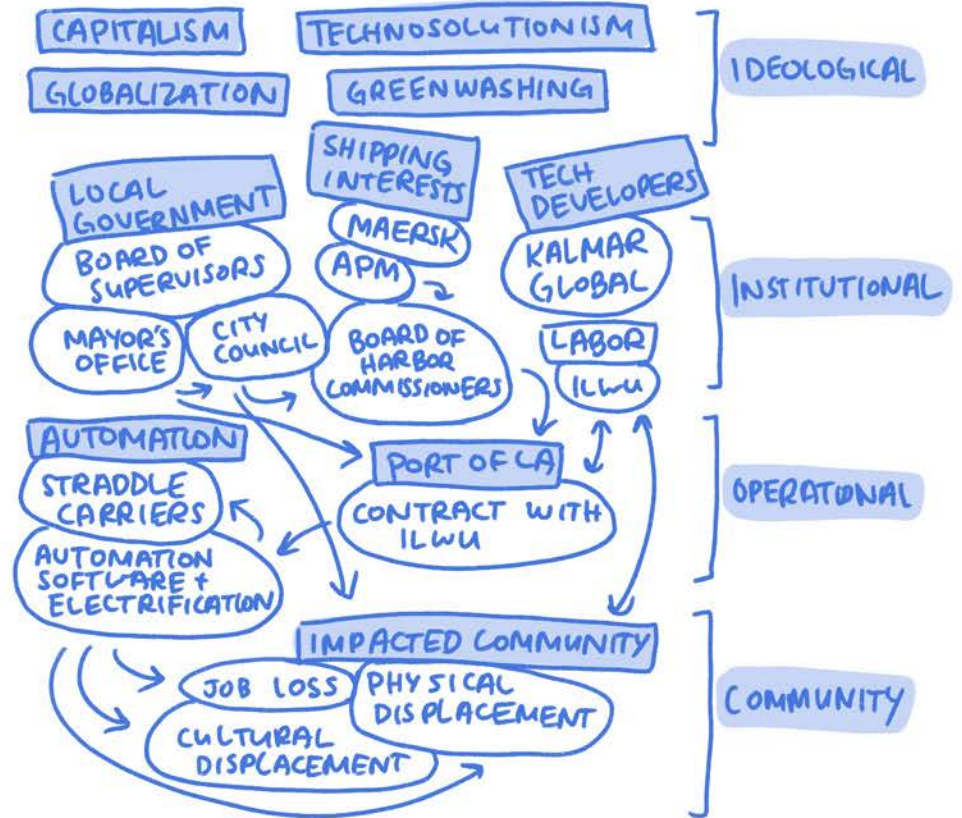
LOOK FIRST TO WHO IS BEING IMPACTED AND IN WHAT WAYS,

LOOK BEYOND TO WHAT INSTITUTIONS ARE DEVELOPING AND FUNDING THE TECHNOLOGY, AND FOR WHAT PURPOSES AND WHOSE BENEFIT?

LOOK OVER TO WHO IS OPERATIONALIZING THE TECHNOLOGY AND HOW, AND

LOOK OUT FOR WHAT IDEOLOGIES THE TECH IS UPHOLDING AND REIFYING.

THE ALGORITHMIC ECOLOGY FOR OUR CASE OF AUTOMATION IN THE PORT OF LA MIGHT LOOK SOMETHING LIKE THIS:



IT'S A ROAD MAP FOR WHERE POWER AND PRESSURE CAN BE APPLIED AT WHAT POINTS, A VISIBLIZER OF THE ACTORS WE KNOW AND ALSO WHAT WE DON'T KNOW, AND IT'S A COMMUNICATION TOOL FOR THE FIGHT.

SO ASK YOURSELF SOME QUESTIONS:

- WHERE DO YOU FIT INTO THIS ECOLOGY?
- WHAT OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUSHING FOR JUSTICE DOES YOUR SITUATEDNESS GIVE YOU ACCESS TO?
- WHERE IS THE WORK ALREADY HAPPENING AND HOW CAN YOU CONTRIBUTE?

AND AS SUSAN LEIGH STAR AND ANSELM STRAUSS REMIND US,



"NO WORK IS INHERENTLY EITHER VISIBLE OR INVISIBLE. WE ALWAYS "SEE" WORK THROUGH A SELECTION OF INDICATORS: STRAINING MUSCLES, FINISHED ARTIFACTS, A CHANGED STATE OF AFFAIRS. THE INDICATORS CHANGE WITH CONTEXT, AND THAT CONTEXT BECOMES A NEGOTIATION ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE WORK.

HOW CAN YOU INVERT

INFRASTRUCTURES OF INJUSTICE

TO MAKE THE PREVIOUSLY
INVISIBLE NEWLY VISIBLE,



ABOUT THE AUTHORS



SOPHIE WANG IS A RESEARCHER, EDUCATOR, ARTIST, AND ZINE GREMLIN CURRENTLY BASED IN THE TWIN CITIES. SHE MAKES ZINES/COMICS/ART THAT BRING A CRITICAL POWER LENS TO SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, EPISTEMOLOGY, AND FORMS OF KNOWLEDGE-MAKING, AS PART OF MAKING THESE CONVERSATIONS MORE ACCESSIBLE OUTSIDE OF THE ACADEMY. SHE IS A CO-FOUNDER OF FREE RADICALS, AN ACTIVIST COLLECTIVE AT THE INTERSECTION OF SCIENCE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE. YOU CAN FIND HER OFFLINE LOOKING AT LEAVES BY THE WATER OR BAKING PLUM CRUMBLE, AND YOU CAN FIND HER ONLINE AT WANGSHUF.COM.

TAYLOR M. CRUZ IS A SOCIOLOGIST OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND MEDICINE BASED OUT OF LOS ANGELES AND ORANGE COUNTY. SHE CONDUCTED THE MULTI-SITED ETHNOGRAPHIC FIELDWORK INFORMING THIS COMMUNITY-BASED PROJECT ON AI/ML, ATTENDING MANY PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT EVENTS ACROSS THE LA HARBOR AND SILICON BEACH (AS FEATURED IN THE ZINE YOU JUST READ!). TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HER RESEARCH OR TO DOWNLOAD FREE COPIES OF THIS CRITICAL STS ZINE, VISIT HER ONLINE AT TAYLORMCRUZ.COM.

WE SHARE THIS STORY TO USE THE RESOURCES AND POWER AND OPPORTUNITY THAT WE HAVE, GIVEN OUR SITUATEDNESS, TO AMPLIFY AND SUPPORT ORGANIZING, BRING THE KNOWLEDGE GENERATED BY THIS COMMUNITY TO A CONVERSATION THAT HASN'T THOUGHT TO INCLUDE THEM, AND TO BROADEN THE AUDIENCE THAT KNOWS ABOUT THE FIGHT (AND INTRODUCE SOME RELATED SCHOLARSHIP THAT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO YOU ALONG THE WAY)

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