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SAUL ROOM

WHY AN EQUITY LENS IS CRITICAL IN THE DESIGN AND DEPLOYMENT OF AI

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**TURNER-LEE:** Well, good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for showing up in person. I know that we are in a movement now where we show up virtually and in person, but I always like to make sure we do stuff in person. So I get to actually connect with many of you, which I happen to see on LinkedIn or around the halls here, Brookings or around the city. I'm Dr. Nicol Turner Lee I'm a senior fellow in Governance Studies and the director of the Center for Technology Innovation. If you don't know already, I am the author of a new book called "Digitally Invisible: How the Internet is Creating the Underclass," available at the Brookings Bookstore. And most importantly, today, I want to talk about a project that I've been engaged with for the last year, which is the equity lab of which I am the founder and my co-chair who happens to right now be overseas in Paris. Rene Cummings and I have worked very closely on, given our particular interest in AI equity. For those of you who are following us online, greetings to you as well. We're happy that you took the time to spend the next hour plus with us as we take on this issue and our hashtag for those of you following us who would like to ask questions is AI Equity Lab. And I would encourage all of you in this room, if you are an active tweeter, to also do the same or share it on the social media platform of choice. What I wanted to do before we got started is to do something that I rarely do, because many of you who know me know that I tend to be either on a panel moderating, but normally not necessarily presenting content before all of you actually want to do that today. I spend a lot of time, not just the last 30 years, but the last year, plus thinking about AI and thinking about how it's contextualized in ways that we live, learn or love and communicate. And most importantly, today is both an exciting day and equally tough because we're somewhat uncertain as to how the next administration will potentially value equity and how we create and execute AI models that embolden appropriate opportunities while protecting people from consequential harms. I'm reminded by your talk that I recently heard my fellow sociologist, Dr. Rahab Benjamin. We both were in Barcelona, Spain, and she asked the crowd, which I was included, to take some responsibility and have some agency and how we imagined AI systems for the good and how the role may also manifest itself. And after hearing her, I came back not only jazzed about amplify the work that I do, but equally committed to keeping this word equity in my mouth. We know in this group that there are consequential outcomes like discrimination, unnecessary surveillance, stereotyping and profiling. So many of my other colleagues, as some of you that you will hear today, are engaging in watching and interrogating this resurgent practice that is actually dominating some of the conversation. But what I want to do today in my talk and what I'm going to do as part of the panel is to talk a little bit about why so important is still framed equity as a pivotal part of AI design and deployment. Now, I hope that you can sit still for just a moment to hear me out on this. And when we bring up the panel will definitely preserve some time for Q&A. But again, let me walk you through why this particular topic keeps me up at night. And let me start by sharing this particular side as to why equity still matters. It matters

because we still have consequential outcomes from rogue AI systems that actually in some instances can create irreparable harm. And I'm going to talk a little bit about what and who has been subjected to that. Why equity matters is because at the end of the day, there are people in their communities who are commoditized in many respects by AI models without agency or repair. I just recently, earlier today, as a matter of fact, presented at the Foci conference on what we were talking about, AI as it relates to young people, and what are the words that just kept coming up is the word agency. And so this is a conversation that we hope to have and one I hope to share as part of something that we're doing for the AI equity lab. Now, I want to make sure that I'm going down your lane when I say equity, that you recognize that I'm not sharing it as a politicized concept, nor should it be for anyone who actually speaks this word. But I know we're in the backdrop of a conversation around banning books, removing Dei, suggesting that racial representation in military and corporations run counter to the American dream of meritocracy. But friends, as a sociologist, I know that we have a lot to do to catch up and ensure that the bits and bytes that dominate. Everyday conversations include just about everyone and the people right now. War training AI systems have been commoditized. If you don't own a copyright or trademark or patent, you are a subject of the technology, which is actually incredibly changing our lives. And for those of us who know what that term means, and for those of you that may be confused, let it not spark controversy. But as Dr. Benjamin has suggested in her new book, *Let It Spark Imagination*. The last reason why equities still matters is that AI research and researchers need to include, not exclude, the people who are the subject of their models and applications. There are many of us that sit in this room and we're not often asked about what that means in terms of our viewpoints. The lived experience is to be at the table when these models are designed. And much of the reason why we talk about equity is because of the absence of their voice, the invisibility, as I call it, my book, the digital invisibility that we as researchers have, thinktank and advocates, etc., have to think about the right framework to make sure that their voices go included. Equity matters, my friends, because we don't live in a vacuum. And I can't say that enough that the world in which we live is only better because all of us exist in it. And that's why we have to create technologies that is much more susceptible and much more appreciative of those values. This is how I developed the equity lab last December on the back of a napkin, thinking about what could I do to make sure people kept this top of mind. Now I've got a lot of friends who work in this space. Don't get me wrong, they're all over the country. Many people that you probably know are read their own books or research. But one of the things that was pretty consistent among all of us is that we're not always invited to actually have these conversations. So the equity lab was created with the goal to create inclusive and equitable AI, where subjects are visibly engaged. You're going to hear a little bit about that, work with the panel and creating purposeful policies and practices which result in nondiscriminatory and

more competitive outcomes. Let me say that again. It is about making people see and that is the goal. The equity lab. I'm a sociologist. I'm not a computer scientist, but I know as a sociologist, I wasn't in many of those conversations. And so how we've been doing that is by convening interdisciplinary and cross-sector experts around high risk, critical consequence potential use cases like health care, criminal justice, financial services, etc.. We've also done something that is near and dear to my heart. Couple of years ago, I think I testified before Congress, so I was on some type of commission at least nine times in a year. And I said to myself, I cannot be the only person that is doing this work. And that back of the napkin idea for the equity lab also led us to compile the expertise of people that I call on it in figures. How many people in this room are familiar with the story of Katherine Johnson, who worked at NASA? So raise your hand. Just a few years ago, she had a book and a movie written about her. She was 96 years old. That book actually talks about how Dr. Johnson, among two of her colleagues, were the ones that averted some of the worst spatial space disasters in our nation's history. But guess what? Nobody knew about her till she was 96 years old. And four years later, Dr. Johnson passed away. It is my goal in my commitment to unhide I figures and not necessarily figures like myself who stand on beautiful podiums before beautiful podiums at a great institution like Brookings. But people who work in health care, people who understand criminal justice as advocates for the justice, impacted, people who understand what it's like to be a consumer advocate for financial services, people who are practitioners, who can sit alongside technologists and have the same conversation we're going to have today, but do in a way, we go back to purposeful, pragmatic practices and policies. It's time for us to be unhidden and to be in that room. So that's why Rene Cummings and I put this together. We sat one day, we realized that the trauma that's baked in the data of AI systems and the conversations that actually lend themselves to traumatized outcomes. They happen because we're hidden. We're not visible. And more important than that, they're technologists who have not yet opened up the doors to other people with practical expertise. Why does this unsettle me? And I'll tell you a few reasons why. There's a woman in Detroit whose name I cannot get out of my head no matter how much I try. Her name is Portia Woodrooff. She was actually subjected to facial recognition technology, which is used by the Detroit Police Department. She's not the first person that's had this problem. She's probably the six or the seventh. But in her instance, she was eight months pregnant when she was accused of robbery. Not only was she identified through facial recognition, who many of us in this room know that it's faulty. Her match came through a 2015 photo. And the person who committed the crime was not even pregnant. And let me take you a little further. She was actually arrested in her home before her children as they prepared to go to school. She went to the police department, from what we know, from publicly available information, and she almost suffered a miscarriage. A mother who was not the person in the CCTV video, but yet was brought to the station. One of seven

people in Detroit who's now actually suing the Detroit Police Department. But her name resonates with me because here is a case where we didn't do our part to make sure that technology sees us. But she's not alone. Let me introduce you to Crystal Marie McDaniels. She was denied a mortgage more than ten times after paying more than \$6,000 out of her pocket. Her husband and herself. And it wasn't because it had bad credit. It was because an algorithm was used to determine her eligibility and the way the algorithm was trained. In addition to the proxies that were inputted. She was a self-employed worker. And as a result, it did not see in her application steady employment. Mrs. McDaniel shared when her story broke, It was a big story that was actually covered just a couple of years ago about the hidden bias in housing verification that she at first didn't think that the algorithm acted overtly to be racist. She thought it was just a mistake by the inputs that she was actually given to the application. But when she realized that colleagues of her white colleagues were the same employment background didn't have the same problems. It peaked her interest. Now she finally got that home, but it took her 16 tries. The algorithm actually determined her fate. And just last month, if I could take you down this lane. A company by the name of Safe Rent Solutions settled a \$2.2 million lawsuit after a woman named Mary Lewis accused a third party firm who works diligently on housing eligibility on behalf of landlords and property managers. Basically, they do a risk assessment of your ability to pay. It was discovered that they were denying black applicants based on their race and income. And what makes this story particularly compelling. Ms. Lewis was a housing voucher recipient, so she had guaranteed income to pay for her housing. But yet she was denied that right to live in friends. This is not civil rights time. This was last month right before many of us sat down with family and friends to enjoy Thanksgiving. A lawsuit was settled about an algorithm that continues to place people on the cusp of the quality of life and social opportunities. And let's move beyond just individuals for just a moment and let's think about the context or the contextual use, I like to call it, in which these models live. Whether they're journalism and AI. And we intentionally in the equity lab, just so you know, we don't lead with AI. We lead with the sector because the sector was here before the AI technically, even though some people could argue with the right about AI being around for a long time. But some of these sectors were well baked and well developed. The technology's just been integrated into that. So think about this plethora of contextual use cases, journalism and AI. We'll talk a little bit about that on the panel. Entrepreneurship and AI they're still models that help persist. The type of systemic inequalities that happened for founders, global development in AI. I'm so happy as part of the project that we hired a young woman. Her name is Dr. Shin Nasser Okolo. She could be with us today. She reads our she leads our global majority work. And you may know her name because she made Time's 100 list of the best and brilliant minds in this space. A Brookings Fellow Election civic engagement in AI, Education and AI Climate and environmental Justice and AI. There are people and there

are communities that are equally affected when AI goes wrong or has consequences. Friends. We're at a crossroads. Do we allow machines to regret civil rights and human protections? Do we allow machines to manage our society and humanity over the things that people fought for? Do we reinsert the value of public interest into conversations that exclude the impacted? That's what we're doing here at Brookings. The equity lab in the last year has convened more than 100 subject matter experts in journalism, education, health care and criminal justice. And you'll hear some of the moderators talk about their work. We've developed some white papers, many of which will be released in the next week or so, two weeks on journalistic integrity and equity, health care and equity, education and equity. I'm most proud of all three of these. We've got two of the folks that moderated these sessions and one contributor. But at one point in education, if I can actually boast for just a moment, we had 70 people in this building rolling up their sleeves to figure out how we actually build equitable air in education, from teachers to social service case managers to government. It was just beautiful to see this conversation happen. We grounded our work and global majority use of AI and equity. What good is it for us to solve the domestic issue if we don't get the international context correct? It's on the global majority side. Dr. Okolo and other partners and friends have been thinking very carefully on how do we close the language divide? How do we think about sustainable community development issues? How do we ensure that digital workers have equity when it comes to conditions? And we brought on two new fellows that I'm particularly happy for for the equity lab. Dr. Saraf Raedler is one that looks at this intersection of equity and as it relates to government functions like eligibility on benefits, among other things. And we also brought I'm Raj Corporate, who's at Hunter College, who actually not only looks at participatory robotics, but he also looks at queer and identity as it's actually factored into the AI models that we actually release. Their sensitivity, their empathy to identity is really important. So we've been busy. We've been so busy that I'm tired. But this last piece is most important. The unHidden Figures repository is going to be one of the first to amplify these leaders, among others, who are actually working for more equitable I. Now. For next year. We've got our work cut out for us. I think we've set a pretty good standard. But most importantly, you see that book again. One of the things that this country is I know I'm so selfish, self shaming, but I thought about it when I was preparing this talk. And the reason why I show my book is if you look at the title that says Visually invisible. Who in this room can look at that presentation or think about yourself or your community and know that there's an intersection between being on the output side of the eye and being digitally visible. Who in this room can think about people that they know that are doing work in this space but don't get the credit. I spent a lot of time when I'm out now just getting names of people that I meet that are doing really interesting stuff that none of us in Washington know who they are. They're totally invisible. I think about this last point with the high range computing power of AI technology and

the necessary infrastructure. How in the world, if we have a digital divide, will we ensure that people will get access to these advanced capabilities? I'll close here because the work that we're doing is not done. It's just a continuum. But I'll close with a story from my book that I think points to this intersection between digital equity and AI equity. I went to a place library in Phenix, Arizona, and I talk about this in my book. And I met a woman by the name of Francis. And Francis was arguing. And if you read my book or read if you have it, is a bunch of stories that sort of lead us to the digital divide is more issue of competitiveness. And Francis, within this library really arguing with the library to get a library card to the point where she had tears come down her face. And I found Francis down to the parking lot. And I said, Ma'am, I heard you say you needed a library card. I just want to find out what was going on. And she said, I do, and I can't get one. And I just found out I have stage four breast cancer. A woman, a black woman sitting at a parking lot trying to get a library card to check her doctor's results. This was actually a year before the pandemic. And I was on a panel talking about Francis at a book talk. And a woman said to me, But when Francis benefit by having a guy in her life because then her breasts and her diagnosis could have been caught a little sooner. And then I was reminded by the work I've done with people like Michael Crawford and other health practitioners who remind me that black women's density of their breasts doesn't always show up on the radiology reports. They're not always represented in the clinical trials that trained eye models. In other words, Frances could die without a library card and she could die without an appropriate screening of her breast friends. This is what equity is about. It's not all this other stuff. It is an imperative if we're going to create a society for people like Frances to exist, that we get this right. And that's what we're committed to doing at Brookings. Getting it right. So I hope you'll go along this journey with us. We have a Web page, the equity lab. We will be promoting and posting a lot of stuff we're writing. You can connect with me on LinkedIn if you want to stay in touch with all the activities that are happening. And most importantly, just keep saying this word. Skip saying it because if you don't win the race, the people that many of us in this room want to keep working for. So thank you for that. I want to move now to the panel. I'm getting a little hot up here as I was feeling like a Baptist preacher for a minute. So let us do a little change here of the podium. But thank you so much for coming today. And for those of you online. Thank you, Catalina. I'm going to ask our distinguished panel to come on up. Thank you. I appreciate all of you. I appreciate all of you. Please, friends, welcome our panel to the stage. I appreciate all of you. Please, friends, welcome our panel to the stage. So you all heard me speak about the stuff that I care about and stay up at night. Michael knows because he gets emails from me at two in the morning. I want to jump into just the conversation on the work we've done with the lab, particularly for those who have been leading groups. For those of you are not familiar, the lab has not actually involved me. It's actually involved people who work in the space. And so you're going to meet and let me just do that formally

so that you just don't start talking. Michael Crawford, who is the assistant vice president for strategy and Innovation at the Office of Health Affairs at Howard University and the founder and executive director of Howard University's 1867 Health Innovations Project. Courtney Radish is a nonresident fellow in governance studies at the Center for Technology Innovation. She's also the director of. We didn't Put This Down, but the Liberty and Justice Right?

**RADSCH:** Center for Journalism and Liberty.

**TURNER-LEE:** Center for Journalism and Liberty, where she's working on ways to advance a more inclusive and equitable information democracy. Kevin Johnston. He was actually a participant in the group, so I invited him back. Is a student privacy and Accessibility lead at the Office of Educational Technologies at the US Department of Education. And if you know Damon Hewitt, he doesn't necessarily always have to be there. But at the work of the Lawyers Committee always resonates when we're talking about equity. And Damon, who was actually part of the Criminal Justice Working Group, is president, executive director of the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, but can talk about all of these issues as we implicate equity in the conversation. So I want to start, Michael, with you. I mean, the equity lab, your job was to look at health care and health care. And I and you work with about 20 plus people over the course of a couple of months to really think about what does that mean? Opportunities, risk nondiscrimination, etc.. I'd love to hear more, particularly with your background in health care and AI, the major findings of the group, and maybe talk to folks about how that process looked as well.

**CRAWFORD:** Well, before I get started, I just want to thank you, Nicole, for your leadership and the opportunity to collaborate with Brookings on this meaningful project. I think that the time that we're in the explosion of ACA with respect to health care, this work is not only necessary, but it is imperative that we get it right. Health care for too long has left too many people behind. As we look at social determinants of health and we look at health disparities. The data is very clear in terms of the groups that have been heavily marginalized by our health care system. So as we move to this 21st century health care posture and it becomes more digitized, it is important that we think through how we develop and deploy our models within the health care system. So with that being said, it was a pleasure to collaborate with the AI Equity Lab. As Nicole mentioned, we convene an interdisciplinary group of individuals across the health care ecosystem to explore the positive and negative effects of AI on individuals and communities, especially those communities that are underserved. And we did that with the express goal of trying to gather opportunities and best

practices of air use cases from an administration and clinical deployment perspective. We looked at existing legislation and regulation around AI in health care. We explored pragmatic programs and public policies to advance inclusive and representative AI models. And then we looked at some innovative and pioneering best practices that will ensure the responsible and ethical use of AI. We did that through the lens of four distinct discussions, and we did it in a model of sessions. So we are session one. We explored the relationship between AI in health equity along with the opportunities and challenges to cultivate a more inclusive AI health system. Session to discuss the required governance structures, policies and frameworks to promote inclusive and responsible AI. Session three looked at explored the infrastructure and resources needed to enable the widespread development and deployment of AI models. And then our final session looked at who are the most important stakeholders that should be included in this discussion. And we started the discussion with a basic question What comes to mind when you think about. In health equity and do that within three words. And the three prominent words that came up throughout the course through that exercise was potential misunderstood and inevitable, which was very interesting when we asked that question as kind of like a flash point before we got started. What we concluded the discussion. The three words that really resonated after our sessions was inclusive innovation and impactful. So as we engaged the group, the group had a perspective at the beginning of the process and at the end of the process we noticed that behavior, perspectives and context change throughout the process. And I'll just touch on a couple of themes before we move on to the next question. During session one, a real theme emerge around complexity and aspirations and challenges around what we call some of the subgroups. And when we think about some of these subgroups, we think about community based organizations, right? That are often digitally invisible. Within this process, the faith community, the workforce and some of the workforce within health care that are not at the tables when we're developing these models. When we think about trust. Trust was a big underlying theme throughout our sessions, talking about moving from trust, building to trust earning. And now we're in a posture where we really have to think about how do we earn the trust of patients and providers within the health care system. And then when we talked about session two, there was a lot of dialog around data collection, how data was being collected. Are we do we have standardized data definitions to be able to understand the data that we are collecting? How are we incorporating race and ethnicity within that process? And is that a positive or negative in terms of how algorithms are being trained and looked at? In Session three, we talked a lot about infrastructure, Nicole's area of expertise around broadband and computing power in our communities able to participate if they don't have access to broadband or hardware or data plans that are affordable to leverage this powerful technology that we call AI. And then session four, we talked a lot about stakeholders, the invisible groups that Nicole mentioned that are not included in this process, which is

incredibly important when we talk about governance structures, how we're looking at data governance structures, how we're looking at developing digital health tools that have underlying AI capabilities, how do they come to the table, how do they participate within this process, all of which you will see in our white paper. So I just wanted to preview some of the themes from our group, and all of this will be compiled and collated within our whitepaper. That will be out soon. Last thing I will mention, because everyone has inspiration with respect to why we do this work. And as I think about my digital journey and working in this digital development process, I'm also reminded of a patient that I talked to that we wanted to participate in a digital health clinical trial. And he said, Michael, the only reason I will participate in this digital health clinical trial is because of you. And others have asked me to participate, but no one has shown genuine interest and went out of their way to establish trust with me. So he said, When you're in the rooms that I know I will never be in. Make sure that you articulate our voice and amplify our voice in this discussion. That's why I think it's so incredibly important that we're doing this work within the health equity work group and that we are able to speak to folks online in this room that have the power and agency to effect change.

**TURNER-LEE:** Thank you. Thank you, Michael. And I'm so appreciative of the work that he's doing on this seriously and and the group just so you get a color of the types of people that are in these working groups. You had pharma, you had health insurance providers, you had community health clinics, you had academics. So we really were pushing the envelope to make sure that we had a very diverse group of stakeholders.

**CRAWFORD:** And we had the technology.

**TURNER-LEE:** And the technology for.

**CRAWFORD:** Some of the some of the one of the one of the largest tech firms in the world participated in the call and was very active in terms of their engagement and what the final product would look like.

**TURNER-LEE:** Thank you. Courtney. You know, we've talked about and you saw the way I presented it, right? It's people in context, people in context. And I was thinking about when we did the journalism roundtable, that was context for people because as we know and as we've been working on this news matters and where information sort of originates also matters. Talk to us a little bit about that experience. But

I know you push the envelope even further based on the erasure of AI when it comes to content creators, journalists and other newsmakers.

**RADSCH:** Thank you. So I would also reiterate the thanks to you, Nicole, and to Brookings for convening these sort of multidisciplinary transdisciplinary conversations, because I think they're really important and it lets us delve into the, you know, comparisons. You know, you mentioned a couple of words trust. You know, trust is also the currency of journalism, and there's certainly a trust deficit. And so one of the issues grappling with is how do you use AI in journalism in a way that builds trust? How do you do that with communities that are already very distrustful of institutions, of journalism, of historic marginalization? And how does that, you know, historic marginalization, not being present in news stories, get reinterpreted and reiterated into AI systems? Because one of the very interesting things about journalism that came up is journalism is not only affected by, you know, AI systems. It not only, you know, represents issues and people and concepts. It is also the foundation of AI systems. And so it's like doubly implicated in artificial intelligence because if you look at the data sets that are underlying all of the major models, the most important datasets are comprised overwhelmingly of quality sources, including news sources. So like Common crawl, big training, corpus news sources. But which news sources? Right. There are the dominant hegemonic news sources. Almost all of them are American. Almost all of them are based in major urban liberal areas. They do excellent journalism. I work for the New York Times. I don't want to denigrate that. But let's be honest. You know, the fact that you don't have the same representation of, say, the historic black press in that training material, if you don't have representation of multilingual content, of global majority content, of journalism from, say, contacts, right? We know lots of contexts around the world. Journalism is not operating in a free environment. It's dominated by state journalism outlets, if you can call them that, state media outlets. What does that do to the type of content that is even created at the beginning of journalism that is then ingested to train these large language models and foundation models that are underlying every other system that then health care or education or whatever area is building on top of. And so, you know, we discuss things like what are the ideological biases inherent in the underlying foundation models due both to what data? Is available in the first place to be digitized. Which news organizations were able to afford to digitize their archives? To even be used as training data. Indigenous communities that have objected to the inclusion and digitization of native languages and what, you know, their media and not wanting those to be just out in the world for, you know, what many consider to be theft by these big corporate AI companies that are leading the generative AI and, you know, innovation flywheel. We talked about what the implications are for for opting out as well as for opting in. And, you know, there's a really interesting case about as a large a retrieval augmented generation system, which

is an inference model. So you've got both the underlying foundation models, large language models, but then you've got these other models that they put on top to like make your chat bots or your search engines more relevant, right? So they'll return these results from you. So, you know, these interesting opportunities for black newspapers to come together and create a collective where they will basically create a system that AI systems can plug into that will be then trained on the black press, which offers really interesting opportunities for rethinking what our ground truth is, for how we think about and deal with inclusion. But then we also dealt with the political economy implications of how our AI systems are being developed. So right now, you know, all of the major foundation models have been built premised on a business model of theft. Taking intellectual property without paying compensation, without credit, and without compensation. What does this do to the durability of professions like journalism? Especially for diverse community, local, you know, specific communities that want to have their, you know, journalism to cover their communities. Already, journalism is not a sustainable business, like it's not a sustainable business for the vast majority of media companies. So this has all sorts of implications. If you if we see yet again that journalism is sorry, that big tech is building its business model premised on taking and yet not giving back through, for example, paying licensing fees, which is how we've traditionally dealt with copyright for the past several hundred years. What is this going to do for companies, for for journalistic organizations that can't afford to sue? Right. You've got The New York Times suing. You've got News Corp's doing. But how do you know the Hispanic press, the LGBT press afford to sue? How can they figure out how to license when they don't have access to information to even value their product? So we really covered a lot of different issues as well as how these how AI is being integrated into the newsroom and what this means, again, for the way that we build trust for data collection. Like on the one hand, you want more representative systems. On the other hand, that implies more surveillance, mortification. And that has massive implications for marginalized communities, for communities of color that have historically been over surveilled and for the type of economy and politics that we're building. And so, you know, one of the things I think that really stood out for me is that, you know, it seems like we're talking about journalism, but we're actually talking about the very foundation of artificial intelligence and all of these different socio technical and political economic issues that we're dealing with.

**TURNER-LEE:** And thank you for that, Courtney. I mean, this is again, Michael and Courtney, what papers coming out of this. But what was so interesting on the journalism side, it's Courtney is reporting it was that a whole range of people that were participating so this reality of the black press for example coming together was true was someone said, I don't know how many you from New York, if you've ever heard of the Amsterdam News or Baltimore with the Afro, the curated archives of both of those newspapers is so

extensive, but yet they're digitized, but not to the return of the ailing nature of their revenue models. And so things like that, again, I'm hearing some themes, which is one of my goals of that lab, like trust, like data governance, like how we look at the market. But we'll talk more about this as we evolve. And hopefully, again, if you're watching us online, please send us questions. Getting the conversation hashtag AI Equity Lab. And for those of you here, we'll have time for Q&A.

**RADSCH:** But also, I would say extraction. Yeah, I think that is something that comes out, I would assume, in the health care domain, but also in journalism, like the extraction from those without power by the wealthiest companies in the world, by billionaires running trillion dollar companies that are creating new facts on the ground that we then have to grapple with without having sufficient voice or opportunity to impact and shape. And I think that's why things like, you know, the executive order was a step in the right direction, you know, getting some of these safety institutes. But there's so much more that needs to be done.

**TURNER-LEE:** And just to let you all know, there were technologists at that meeting as well. So these are really were intentionally designed to have a whole range of stakeholders to get to some of these issues. There was never consensus. That was the thing that was true. But it was obvious.

**RADSCH:** That I was.

**TURNER-LEE:** That. Yeah, I figured in DC there's an organization that could do consensus show me because I think we're better off doing convenings. All right, Kevin, I want to jump to you because you came as a contributor, just a participant, right to the I an education that I workshop. And a lot of that discussion had a lot to do with shifting pedagogical areas and how we should look at that in the Department of Education. You've been in a trek to democratize technology as well. Just talk about some of the findings, but more so what you're doing ideally to make sure some of these trust concerns are being mitigated in particular?

**JOHNSTUN:** Yeah. So I think one of our big taglines on this actually comes out of the OMB memo, which is kind of the little the younger child to the to the EO. But one of the taglines there is mitigating the risks in order to harness the benefits. And in the education space, I can say there's a lot of folks who are really interested in getting to some benefits because we all know. There's a ton of unmet need. And there's a lot more that people would like to make good on that they just don't have the tools to quite get that far. And so I think that's

the lens I think that was brought that day was like, we all know that we want something good out of this, but how do we do it? Because we can guarantee it's not going to happen by default. There's got to be a lot of norming, a lot of sense making a lot of figuring out. And so that's one of the things I thought was great about that day, was we did have such a broad array of folks, and Nicole already alluded to this, but I mean, all the way from, you know, classroom level practitioners to, you know, school level administrators to system level administrators to policy folks, nonprofits, philanthropy technologists. And there was a lot of hashing out that I feel like did go on in that about, you know, like what degree of transparency should someone expect? What what is the what are they even able to provide? What are the limits of transparency on really big models and things like that? And I think one of the things that was really great, too, and this has been a common theme across many of our reports, is the need to build AI literacy across the ecosystem so that you can do that kind of hashing out. Because if there are broad misconceptions or if there are folks who are coming at this with different paradigms but aren't able to figure out the common language that they need to, to do that, it makes it really hard. And so we started the day, I think, with just setting out like, let's get some baselines on things. And we were really grateful. One group that I would absolutely recommend all of you follow along with if you're not already, is this the National Institute for Standards and Technology coming in and talking about some of the really foundational pieces to frame to frame that day? I think connected to that and following on from that, we had, you know, a great chance to release a number of pieces of guidance. One, the tagline is Building trust, and it's building trust between developers and educators. One of the main pieces that we bring up there is that if there's going to be trust, it's going to have to start with intentional co-design. You know, that means that there should not be products that are brought to the education space unless they were brought to the education space with educators integrally involved. And we talk all the time with developers. We're like, what are you doing to co-design? You're only like, What? We have some focus groups. Like, is that really? Like, we're like. We really want intentional.

**TURNER-LEE:** Yes.

**JOHNSTUN:** Involvement. And that also means that we released the developer's guide. And when I talk to groups of educators, I say, before you go and think this is a, you know, a guide just for the entrepreneurship, one on one class, hold on. Because educators also need to be familiar with the guide so that they can participate, right? So that they're familiar with some of the terminology, some of the tests, some of the assurances that developers are going to be interested in, and they can figure out how they best get involved quickly because they also have very limited time. We also then followed on to that with a resource that was a

guide for education leaders. I think we're really excited about this was released most recently and this. So we looked at supply side. Now let's look at demand. Yes. What does demand need to know about how to meaningfully integrate technology into their settings? And it starts with the question of should we? Does it even make sense? Which is largely goes down to a couple of questions of like, do you have a legitimate use case? And do you have a theory of teaching and learning that you're going to try to bring this into? Because if it's just for the sake of we know how that ends. So we really tried to push on. Do you have it? And then the last thing that I'll kind of highlight here, and I think this was brought up in the day too, was the importance of building evidence around when it is implemented. A lot of people can have a lot of ideas about what would make sense and where and under what circumstances. And the history of EdTech, we've seen a lot of those ideas be flat out wrong. When it comes to actually if we did the evaluation and we saw no significant difference. Right. But we thought it was going to change everything. And this is another case where evidence is going to be absolutely crucial and evidence is going to be absolutely crucial for equity, because it turns out that what might have worked in one setting might not work in another. And so one of the things that I think is really important in the equity conversation is that we think about equity as not just like how to do right from some kind of duty or civil rights standpoint, which is really important, but also how to do right by the most people. And if things are inequitable, especially in a broad use technology, you don't know where it's where that next great idea is going to come from. You don't know how to adapt things for the community. And so what you're going to get is inefficiency and you're going to get inefficiency about the things that we all care about most. And so if we're going to be inefficient, if we're going to be inequitable, we're also going to end up being inefficient. And I think that was a big theme of that day.

**TURNER-LEE:** Yeah. And it was so interesting, too, because we started that conversation wanting to just lead in with equity, which I know Damon is going to get to in just a moment. Right. But we found ourselves looking at the exact things you should talk about, like what is the procurement policy? What is the guidance of an AI enabled teacher in the 21st century? What are the resources that go with that? How do you start passing out leadership roles? Who's responsible for what? The administration, the educator, the parent, the community, the student? So I'm looking forward to that. That paper is really hard to write like that because there's so much that you could say. But at the end of the day, it goes back to preserving and protecting civil rights, right? And so I appreciated your involvement there as well as the other 60 plus people because it turned out to be a day of a lot of learning, which again, folks, this is the reason why this is such an important project for me, because it's not just one person sort of talking, but it's a reciprocity of ideas that actually occurs. Now, Damien, I'm looking at you, all right? We're getting ready to embark on criminal justice. But I

know that the Lawyers Committee deals with all of these issues when you listen to these conversations that you're hearing. Right. And you think about the the essence of your entire career, which is protect protecting civil rights, preserving human liberties. Where do you get most concerned? What keeps you up at night?

**HEWITT:** Well, first, I want to, as others do, thank you, Nicole, for this. This platform is based on the ongoing work of the equity labs is very important for the reasons you've heard. I do want to share a bit about the Lawyers Committee just for context. You know, organization was founded at the height of the civil rights movement in 1963, nine days after Medgar Evers was assassinated in a driveway of his own home in Mississippi. The NAACP field secretary, the President Kennedy, convened a meeting of almost 250 lawyers, and he wanted to get lawyers from the private bar into the game, into the work of defending and advancing civil rights. Fast forward 61 years. We have litigated many, many cases, hundreds, thousands of cases. In fact, in the last decade alone, we've leveraged over 1,000,000 hours of pro bono time from the private bar. The idea is that we have private lawyers who are what we call private attorneys general trying to advance civil rights in all facets of American life. And so, you know what I think about that's a segue way to your question, Nicole, because I think about the different facets of life that we're talking about here. Some that many of you represent on this day is some of which you mention in your presentation. I think about health care, I think about education, I think about criminal justice. I think about lending and credit and housing. All of these applications that you've heard about today. Think about this as long as we've had. Education in its schools in this country, public schools in this country. We've had racial discrimination in education as long as we've had. Police in this country. We've had racial discrimination in law enforcement. In fact, police were created to corral enslaved Africans who were trying to seek freedom. And so we've had elections in this country. We've had racial discrimination in voting. And so, yes, I am saying that there are underpinnings in the fabric of how this nation has long operated, where there is, if not invidious, intentional racism, discrimination that is at the very least, structural discrimination which we would submit is more difficult to root out. So if we have systems built into those context on overlaid on top of those contexts, they can either make those things better, they can maintain the status quo, or they could actually make things a lot worse. And so the choice point is a very intentional one. Right. And all of these contexts. And so you mentioned so many of them already. I would say across these contexts, though, it's important to think. And I think what my fellow panelists said about journalism is very interesting, because journalism, the writing of journalism is the foundation for so much of your research. Right. I think about this analogy as well. In all of these contexts, people are both the consumers and the product.

**TURNER-LEE:** Yes. Commoditized.

**HEWITT:** Commoditized, Right. The both the consumers and a product. Right. And so I'll put it now in and speak of my friends who are commute organizers. Anything about us without us can never really be for us.

**CRAWFORD:** That's right.

**HEWITT:** So if there is data in all of these contexts that is being mined and used, whether it's your personal data from your online searches or what have you, or whether it's assumptions being made about you, then if it's not done with you at the table or with someone who represents your interests at that table or your sector or your community at that table, then you're likely going to get a result that is really not designed to benefit you at all. In fact, you may be on a spectrum of making things much, much worse. You mentioned somebody in a context already that I didn't want to talk about. I did want to just say, you know, there's sometimes assumptions about. Tools are technology driven policy that people say will make things better for us than the green one. Before the session, I was talking about how after the Newtown school shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School, there were calls to bring more police into schools to bring even have armed teachers. We knew before then and we knew after them. That's not policy that actually makes us safer, right? That's actually policy that sometimes the news to the detriment of students in the classroom, especially black and brown and poor students. But it hasn't proven to make us safer. There was an armed guard at Columbine High School in the 90s. There were it was an armed guard at Stoneman Douglas High School in Florida. Right. I'm not saying that those those single examples are the rule. What I'm saying is there is no panacea in terms of what will actually make us make us safer. And so when we think about the context, what people say, what use air is going to actually benefit everyone, that's not necessarily the case. It's really not necessarily the case. I do worry that in the context of artificial intelligence or facial recognition excuse me in particular, that there is this misapprehension of what it can do for us. People use their iPhones to see your face. That's actually fairly primitive technology because it's just your face. What about if it's a thousand faces or a million faces? You know, testing has shown that these technologies are not normed against people with pigmentation like mine, whether it be in an airport, whether it be by law enforcement, whether it be me trying to use sometimes as sad and comical a faucet in a public restroom like I got tried a couple of times. And so I'm just thinking, gosh, like sometimes it's just, you know, bad hardware, but sometimes it's also bad tech as well. Does it actually recognize who I am? Well, an automated car won me over. Yeah, right. I think they have a problem with the white vans more than black people. But. But you get the point, right? There is no

panacea with the technology. And so I don't mean to over speak on this because I don't know all the details of the investigation, but I understand of facial recognition technology we were talking about is not being used by NYPD as a general standard. It's not leveraged by law enforcement. And then some people who say, you could just use facial recognition to find the guy who killed the CEO of United Health Care. Well, it's just not that easy, folks. It's just not that easy. I imagine if that shooter were a black person.

**TURNER-LEE:** Yeah.

**HEWITT:** And you know, it's a horrible well happen. It's horrible no matter what horrific thing for anyone to do. But I wonder what kind of dragnet people would have been calling for, hauling in people who may fit the description. I hope that there's no dragnet of white people either. Right. But but it's very is very disturbing. Right. So that's the particular context that bothers me. I will also say when I think about lending and credit, you had one example.

**TURNER-LEE:** And now why did it take so long to get the housing, the lending issue.

**HEWITT:** For me to get to it.

**TURNER-LEE:** Into? But for us to recognize that this is an issue as a civil rights attorney, I'm curious.

**HEWITT:** Well, you know, I think that part of it is that in all these contexts, what we're seeing is extent structural discrimination or just status quo that people are willing to expect. And sadly, except people take it as well, this is just how things are, right? Look, in a lot of these use cases, I can't say that in every use case it makes things worse in terms of having a an even worse result. But it depends on what worse means. Worse people say, it's just the status quo, garbage in, garbage out, bad debt. All right. But I don't want to settle for that. I also think if that bad debt accelerates the decision making, if I also deprives people of touch points and opportunities for actual nuance, as you alluded to earlier, then that's problematic as well. I think there's also assumptions across the board. Crime is racialized, race is criminalized. There goes your facial recognition when it comes to housing markets. People make lots of assumptions about the credit worthiness of people of color. And I think the example you shared was a particularly troubling one because it reminds me of other let's call it I won't call it bad policy, but policy. What holes in it? Remember, one response to pandemic was PPE loans, right? Those were designed to help employers ostensibly pay their workforce.

Right. But, you know, it wasn't designed for sole proprietors, people who own barbershops, beauty salons. And you know what else it reminds me of that black people are a statistic, especially black women, statistically more likely to be entrepreneurs, people. Those were not designed for entrepreneurs. And so I just think about I know that's not a high, but it is an existing, an extent dynamic where policy can actually help people in those situations. It can hurt them or it can make things just the same. In fact, I think what I'm getting to Nicole is really that anything that says and maintains the status quo is just reflective of society actually is inherently tinged with some bad. Right. I think there really can't be a neutrality when it comes to being on the side of civil rights and racial justice.

**TURNER-LEE:** And I want to come back to that because I had another question for you. But Courtney, she's like, I want to jump in, too, right?

**RADSCH:** Because I think we have to be so careful about thinking that equity means that our air systems are better at surveillance and identification decision making. I just like I hear what you're saying, but part of the assumption then is, okay, well, we need to like do more training on black and brown faces, more training on women's breasts, more training on women's health care. And maybe there are there are reasons to do that in certain domains like health care, but there might be other domains where actually the problem is not that we need better facial recognition technology. The problem is that it's being integrated into our CCTV cameras and we are doing away with our ability to have any ability to freely associate to protest in the streets while, you know, maybe helping us catch those criminals. But this is I mean, this is the tradeoff that we see. You know, we have this we're building the same technology as China to enable us to facially identify our biometrics, our, you know, all the sensorial devices that companies are creating to get our biometrics to read our brainwaves. The only difference is that they're not in the hands of the government yet. They are, you know, dispersed among private among the private sector. So I do think we have to be very careful in the equity discussion that we're not kind of implicitly assuming that we want to have perfect surveillance, perfect facial recognition, perfect biometric biometric analysis.

**TURNER-LEE:** Yeah.

**HEWITT:** Yeah, I agree 100%.

**CRAWFORD:** And I just make one comment. Yeah. Yeah. I think that the notion of striving for perfection is flawed. Right. Yeah. I mean, reaching perfection is flawed. The notion of striving for it should be a pursuit. Right? Knowing that it might not be an achievable goal. But if we fall short, then we're better off than we would be if we did not pursue it. And I think to your point about infrastructure and talking about how do we aspire to attain a perfect model, a large language model, a training platform, we have to address the underlying structures because one of the biggest problems with AI that folks talk about is that you're just using existing data that is describing a problem that we already have in society. And I'm talking about it from a context of health care. So how do we incorporate different datasets or disaggregate the existing data that we have to better understand what we are using to train models? Right. And then bringing those other folks to the table to contextualize the data that already exists because some of the insights are in the data exists. You just don't have the right people at the table that can help contextualize that data and help train those algorithms.

**JOHNSTUN:** Again, I want to jump in here because I think in education we've seen a lot of cases where we say, is that AI going to be helpful here or not? Yeah, we saw one, you know, especially around AI detection for student writing. And we met with a lot of teachers, a lot of educators. And one of my, like reflections from that is don't do things that are going to undercut your relationship with a student test. Just because an automated tool gives you the affordance to look into something. And so I think in AI there's long been this rule of don't use deep learning where a simple rule will do. And I would propose don't use an automated system when a relationship is what you need. Right. Yeah. And so for these educators, you know, we're really trying to help them think about how do you stay informed, connected, involved, and how does the AI help you do that? But don't let it ever supplant that student teacher relationship, because that's when we get into places where we have machines acting in ways that are a little quirky or outright biased or racist. And we don't want that on our students when the educator could be right.

**HEWITT:** The barrier between and I love that the example of that line of thinking, because I think about the reports about teachers in California K through 12 using AI to grade essays and. And the exams. And I'm thinking so much for partial credit, right? Like, guess that that's not happening at all. And I think you're right. I love that that framework because it goes I think grading anything that is subject can be subjectively graded. Right. Using a shortcut like AI tools actually does alter that teacher student relationship. It eliminates all the nuance. It eliminates all the context. And it also undermines the ability to help with future learning, which really is what education is supposed to be about.

**TURNER-LEE:** Well, I. Go ahead.

**RADSCH:** And with journalism, it's the same exact thing, right? It's like, let's let's have you know, and I bought produce a bunch more content and journalism and like as a journalist, we we agonize over what term to use. What are you going to call call what's happening in Gaza, You know, how do you describe things and the humanness, you know, you're talking about relationship. I think it's that same sort of thing like in journalism. We also talked about where should you integrate AI? Where shouldn't you where do you keep the human in the loop? And I think one of the values of journalism is that human observation, like, anyone can use a chat bot, right? But you can't send a chat bot into prison to do the reporting into the hospital to talk to the mom, you know, and get those stories. So I think we have to I like that framing as well. So really thinking about the new meaning to human in the loop and what that actually means. Right.

**TURNER-LEE:** So okay, so I've been sitting here thinking about this question that, you know, as the observer of all these groups. Right? There's something that resonates as I listen to the findings and get a chance to talk to all of you. One, going back to this question of and I, I like the way you phrased it, you know, just because it actually some exists. So to paraphrase you, do you want to make it better even if it's going to be a contributor to surveillance? Right. It's basic what I heard you saying. So do you really want to make facial recognition better? Because if you do, you're going to just make it easier to target people who have been previously surveilled. Here's a question I throw out to all of you, which again, I think has been the tension, positive tension of these groups. You may not want to make it better, but without agency, you're still subjected to it. Right. And so to a certain extent. When I was at the National Academies of Sciences and I was on the facial recognition committee that President Biden appointed, there was a lot of struggle on that, Right. Should there be the standard of how you deploy facial recognition in policing even? And should the focus be on getting it better so that you could do better identification to face that? But the challenge that came up at one of these meetings was but if you put it on the metro train station, will everybody want to be subjected to it? And so undergirding many of these discussions is about power. That's right. Who has the power to control not just the system design, but where it's deployed? And, you know, I'll start with you, David. It's the rice journey. At the end of the day, are we looking at democratizing systems so that there is equal access for everybody? Because in China you're surveilled no matter what? Or is it going back to, I think what Michael sort of talked about? Are there points in which the I should have a red line and there should be more

discussion as to whether or not this is going to be a pertinent use case that will not lend itself, you know, in trouble with certain levels of ambiguity when it comes to civil rights.

**HEWITT:** Well, I think there are red lines, some brighter red than others, all abundant throughout context. I would say that at the end of the day, to me, this is really about harm reduction. Yeah, right. You know, so those of us who spend our lives and careers trying to address the impacts of intentional and structural structural racism, we pretty much know that we're not going to eliminate it in our lifetimes. Right. And but we're still fighting the fight in creating better and new policy and stronger laws and enforcing them to try to do harm reduction. So I think that we do have to have an approach that I think balance isn't always 5050.

**TURNER-LEE:** Right.

**HEWITT:** Well, just like the whole concept of equity is superior to equality because equality assumes formalistic 5050 equity or even justice or more heightened and nuanced and evolved concepts. Right? And so I do think that when I think about harm reduction, we want to be at the table. We were at the table when, you know, we have our digital justice initiative at the Lawyers Committee. We have, you know, policy staff and litigators working on these issues all the time. And, you know, we were at the table because of their work with the Office of Science and Technology Policy for the rollout of the blueprint for an AI Bill of Rights for the roll out of the executive order. I was asked to serve because of their work on the Homeland Security Advisory Board. Right. So that was a board that was dominated by corporate governance.

**TURNER-LEE:** There were three of us.

**HEWITT:** On it together and one of the some vice president and some other really good progressive tech people. But Sam Altman is on that body and other interesting people. This is not to denigrate them. I'm just naming like the CEO of Delta Airlines. Right? It was dominated by tech and corporate, but it was important that were at that table. Not so that whatever comes out, heads am premature, check the box, but so that we can actually try to influence what it looks like. And so we appreciate Secretary Marcus for his leadership in doing that. I also was very clear that we're here to try to reduce harms of what otherwise could come through.

**RADSCH:** Okay. That is very important harm reduction. But I think to your point about power, we have to step back from harm reduction because harm reduction takes as a given that these systems are already in place. And the problem is that these systems are being created because of vast concentration of power in the hands of a few very wealthy, very powerful companies that that control entire the entire ecosystem of AI from access to compute to data to the talent that they need to. And then, you know, translate that into vast profits that they use to influence the political system and the regulatory system so that we, you know, we end up having to work far downstream on reducing harms without being able to control the systems that are being developed in the first place. So, you know, yeah, we're sitting at the table, but that the table was, you know, created in a way where, you know, we're like these little tiny peons sitting next to these giant thrones. And if it's one thing like, at least we live in the US where most of these companies are based and we already have vast discrepancies in representation here. But I work a lot with journalists and media around the world. Their entire systems are information systems and increasingly, you know, their political and economic systems are shaped by the concentration of power in our technology companies that are, of course, now way more than just technology companies because air is being integrated into all of our systems. So when we talk about power, I think we look need to look at concentration of power like throughout the air tech stock and within a few powerful companies. And especially to get out of this idea that the big tech companies and some Altman's etc. are perpetuating that somehow US innovation is concurrent and our safety is concurrent with protection for big tech. We will be far safer if we get to get innovative companies that want to be more privacy protecting, that want to have a different business model, that want to build an equity from the outset in the design rather than like, let's not again, not to say that harm reduction is an important but like. To your point about perfection, let's strive for something more ambitious as well.

**TURNER-LEE:** And we're going to go to questions next.

**HEWITT:** Not no.

**TURNER-LEE:** This is what happens in the AI equity lab. Just so you know.

**HEWITT:** One of one of the things that we've done to lawyers committee did goes to the question of power is we rolled out a year ago model legislation. Right. Because one of the most powerful things we can do is regulate. You know, if you used a toaster to make breakfast this morning, it's more regulated than it is. Yes, actually. Right. And so the model bill we rolled out has now been adopted for the most part. Most

components of it by Susan have been Markey of Massachusetts, who introduced a few months ago his bill. It's the Civil Rights Act. Yeah, right. And so that legislation would have things like a duty of care, which means companies have an affirmative duty to make sure, just like if you make a toaster for burning down your house, somebody is going to pay, it harms you. Then somebody has to be accountable, but also have some prophylactic pieces that we've pushed for, at least in our model bill, about data minimization, right? So that's a little bit of harm reduction, but also trying to cut things off before they get in the hands of folks who can do whatever they wish with it. So we need meaningful regulation. I think, frankly, all of the equity lab ideas to me, I pray that the yield is not just here's what innovation should look.

**TURNER-LEE:** Like now.

**HEWITT:** It's going to be his or her regulation must look like to exactly address that power imbalance we talked.

**TURNER-LEE:** About when I and I you know, I want to jump into question answer, but it's so interesting because like when we were I think about this, Rene, like how you actually take this. I think the question is, as a sociologist, I think the questions are really real and the concerns are real. The challenge is we spent probably the last 4 or 5 years in Washington with no regulation, right? And so we've been striving for perfection at this level that doesn't exist. And so the question for the equity lab was, and how do you create it in sectors that have more agency because you have practitioners and subject matter experts. But I want us to be sensitive, though, that AI is very widely distributed. I mean, yeah, it's not just big tech companies, right? It's your health care company is using your housing lenders, using AI, your EdTech providers using AI. So the bigger question we'll have to have and for all of you in the room is how do you begin to look at this distributed impact in ways that you could come up with some type of either sectoral guidance or some common themes like trust and governance and other things that we spoke it about in ways that it makes sense. So I would say in health care, no one wants to redo Hipa, right? No one in education wants to go back and relitigate the titles. Right. But what people want to better understand is how do you interpret them under this new context? And so I appreciate it. Is it harm reduction? Well, maybe it's not far enough, but that's why we're doing the AI lab on entrepreneurship, because we can't get people to make products if they can't get foundation funder funding from founders. That's right. So there's a quagmire, right, which exist, which I find to be just incredibly interesting that came out in this conversation. And probably for all of you, perfection has been the thought out aspiration for the last four years in terms of government policy. What

happens when you bring the people who actually do the work together? You might get a little further than perfection. You actually might get to a space where you can get collaboration is. Roubini That's my \$0.02 on that one. So thank you because this is kind of what I want to get at. Okay. We're going to go to Q&A. Do we have microphones again? And please state your name so we know who you are. And for those listening, we're using a microphone to the people on line. Okay?

**AUDIENCE QUESTION:** Okay. My name's Bob Wyman. Sorry if I'm going to Meta here, but I'm concerned about the idea that sort of the the way to counterbalance sort of the implicit learned bias that air systems may maybe be subject to are subject to is to sort of explicitly inject pro equity bias into the system. Obviously, there are questions about what what does it mean to be pro equity? Bernie Sanders Donald Trump would have those two would have very different, very different ideas on what that was.

**TURNER-LEE:** Non textbook.

**AUDIENCE QUESTION:** But but there's this other sort of a little bit more insidious problem in that. If what happens when we as a people become aware of the fact and become sort of internalized the idea that the models are being explicitly manipulated? Let me give you a really heavy handed example that that recently happened. And that is I don't know if, you know this Chatty Kitty or Gemini or whatever. During prior to the election, they refused to answer questions about the candidates or the subjects. And so as you're using that, you become very well aware of the fact that there are questions that must not be asked. Okay. And there are answers that will not be given and that someone has decided what those are. And so you're always aware of the fact that essentially what you can know, what what you can experience is being limited by someone who you do not know. Even though they may claim to represent you. And I wonder, you know, how do we address this issue without having this insidious effect of essentially causing the consumers of these systems, in many cases to be aware that they are being explicitly manipulated in the very use of the systems as opposed to just sort of like you have put together a model based on stuff that you just suck off the web. I think we've all got a pretty good idea of what the biases are going to be. Okay. But we have no idea what the biases are of some system that's been emulated by a committee, no matter how how good thinking they are. So so how do we deal with that societal issue of maintaining people's confidence in the various information sources, in the various algorithms and such that that. Rule their lives.

**TURNER-LEE:** Anbody to answer that?

**RADSCH:** I mean, I don't think we should have confidence in the systems as if they're perfect now. I mean, you go to Google Gemini, and because they were trying to address issues around, say, racial bias in certain professions and historical issues, you know, they ended up, you know, I think it was Dolly sorry, creating, you know, images of black founding fathers and Nazis, which just doesn't comport with reality. So there is this tension between trying to address the fact that the data inputs reflect the existing biases of the data that is edified in the first place and be used to train, because it's not all Internet data, right? As I mentioned, news is a preponderance. Social media is a preponderance. You can see that part of it is to have more transparency into data sources, both in terms of the training model and in terms of the inference data. So citations, content, provenance, that is one way, because I mean, any way that we get our information, even your library is making choices about what books to present, etc., you know, schools, what you learn, etc.. So I don't think we can look at everything as by biased manipulation, but we do know that there are ideological biases in all of this chat bots. Elon Musk's Grok, for example, is specifically trying to be un-PC and, you know, counteract what's seen as like the normative dominance of chat GPT and Gemini. The more that we understand and know that, I think that that awareness, that literacy about those issues is the first step.

**CRAWFORD:** You know, and I'll say education right now, I mean, there's a significant deficit of trust throughout society in health care, specifically about who do you trust in terms of who do you go to in terms of a problem, especially if you're from an underrepresented community. So I think that there needs to be a significant AI education campaign so people can just understand what we're talking about. I don't think we have the same nomenclature. What we describe the issue similar to when we have a pro equity bias. I mean, no one person describes it one way, another person describes it another way. And I think if you ask my mother how she describes AI and what it is, it would be completely different from the way that I interpret it and look at it. So I think that there needs to be a national campaign around AI education, and then you can look at it through these verticals. Now that may be ambitious. And will people will that resonate with the populace? I don't know. But we need to figure out a way to be able to educate people around some of these rudimentary elements of AI, specifically in health care, so that we can start to engender trust. Because otherwise I think the folks that have been left behind previously will be left behind in this new era of technology and the digitization of health care, because they're fearful to use tools that will help them and the tools can help them. But there's a fear around the data privacy and security. Some of the ransomware events, the data breaches have impact and eroded a lot of public trust. So how do you regain that back? And it's a big question, but I think that you have to start with educating folks.

**TURNER-LEE:** Yeah. And if I can just add on to that, this is an area that I'm particularly interested in. There's a difference between marketplace speech and determinations of what people considered to be pro equity or not. And the difference, I think from what we're talking about, from the sociological constructs in which data emanates. And so if data emanates from a point of inequality because of, you know, certain populations grew up in environmentally polluted areas or certain groups had deficiencies when it came to employment. I mean, these are very well-documented, well-stated historical phenomena. I think the key is to have people at the table who can actually help you infer that this model will actually replicate those things. That's different than which candidate should be represented on on a platform or not. We're talking about when I am developing like health care algorithms, and this is the same thing with facial recognition or same thing when we look at health care or criminal justice, when I'm developing these tools, am I thinking about right? Some of the historical constructs that is going to do is going to influence the consequential outcome. As a researcher, I have to think about that, right? I have to think about what I'm putting a study together. Does this honor human subjects? Is this going to actually create the type of relevance when it comes to the way that I'm constructing the study? Have I oversampled have I under sampled? I think in this marketplace of technology, we sort of forget that we have to do that diligence if we're going to create. Products that have reduce reputational risk. And that's my research. Brookings is like, how do I reduce reputational risk? I go into the table with my eyes wide open. And oftentimes because of the marketplace of the digital political economy, we're kind of going in, say we had to rush to market, we got to create it out Where that's going to do this. We've got to make sure people procure edtech and we don't realize that we're replicating the same things that people see. So I was interviewed this morning about voice assistants, and the interviewer said, Well, do you think that there are certain voices used for certain professions? And I said, yes. The carry economy primarily uses women's voices. So that is just going to be a tendency that they're going to lean into because most people think that most industries are women when really it's a very diversified field. But unless you have experts who can help you mitigate through what that potential consequence will be, it's not a pro equity deal for me. It just makes sense, right? That's just like.

**RADSCH:** A different thing than saying like, okay, is the General foundation's models going to, you know, have some sort of equity bias? And part of that is because we say AI and what we should say are like predictive statistical representations. Yes, algorithmic decision making. You know, we need to, I think.

**TURNER-LEE:** The language more.

**RADSCH:** Precise about what exactly are.

**TURNER-LEE:** We talking? I love that question because that's going to that's some of the pushback as to why people haven't caught on to why this is so important. So thank you for that. We got a couple of more questions that we got to wrap up. So I got to do the two at the same time and then have everybody answer and then Catalina is not going to give you that look because we're running out of time.

**AUDIENCE QUESTION:** All right. Hello, How are you? My name is. Tim. I graduated from a Howard University. My mother graduated from Howard University and my sister graduated from Howard University.

**TURNER-LEE:** My dad graduated from Howard University.

**AUDIENCE QUESTION:** All right, cool. Your dad did. Yeah. Okay. Okay. All right. So the question I'm asking is that when I know it, you said, you know, sit at the table, but, you know, if you sit down at a restaurant and you expect to eat, you know, you don't expect to just sit at the table just for the heck of it. Yeah. And so basically, I want to know what what about the the justice in terms of the people who actually put together AI because it's all come down to people. That's how you know, you got all your job. You interview with a person. Hopefully it stays that way. So you know I talk to people. So that's what this is all about. That's how I feel about it. So that's just my question. No, that's real. You know, that having a seat at the table is necessary but insufficient to achieve justice. You know, as a frame, I would certainly say that, you know, and at that table, there weren't many black folks at that table.

**TURNER-LEE:** Yeah. Yeah, that's the thing. Yeah.

**HEWITT:** You know, and so it was a sample to say is representative of a field or is not representative of the nation. It's not representative of the consumer products who are being impacted. And so I also do think that having, you know, this is this is not what you're saying, but I did a bit of work in law enforcement for a while and the Paterson administration in New York. And there was this talk about, well, if we only had more black and brown officers, then things would be better. But data shows that is not experience shows that is actually not true. We covered all kinds of incidents where black folks are being shot and killed and accosted by black officers, too. Right. And so simple representation to to your point at the table is insufficient. Similarly, I do

think it does matter to have black content creators and to have black tech tech folks that that are scientists. That in of itself is insufficient. Yeah. I think is harm reduction. Yeah but but but but so I do think one last thing I say did say that of Katharine Graham who was publisher of the Post said freedom of the press is for those who own one. And so if you extrapolate that concept to to I, what does it mean? It could be what Bob asked a question about who do you trust? Like whose air machine is the one that you can actually leverage you use. So I think we're in a logic trap no matter where we are and what we do. I do think the answer can't be to do nothing, especially for people to purchase because other people are doing a heck of a lot.

**RADSCH:** So your point about needing to eat when you're at the table is really important because we keep expecting people to do this work for free. We're like, you know, So I work a lot with and like the global majority, you know, come be, you know, tell us about the problems in Kenya and Ethiopia and Lebanon like wherever. Give these especially big tech because they're the ones you can afford to do, like these multistakeholder consultations, which are important but insufficient because you cannot expect the people doing the work to have the time to also freely input their advice and oftentimes to get nothing in return from some of the wealthiest companies in the world or the. Companies that are, you know, trying to become the wealthiest companies. So like, I think that's a really interesting point, especially as we talk about needing more representation and outsourcing so much of this work to the global majority where, okay, you've got a lot of i annotators in Kenya. That does not mean that they have any awareness of the African American situation because they both happen to have black skin.

**TURNER-LEE:** Yeah, we just actually Dr. Color just wrote a nice piece on the data Annotators. And to your point, you got to have AC2 table. You have to have somebody to pay bill. And most importantly, you got to eat. But you don't have to have just one seat at the table. You should have multiple seats at the table. Right? Right. Which is what the California congresswoman once said to me, the multiple seats at the table. But that's a great conversation. That's sort of where the unHidden Figures repository is going to make this information available to all types of media journalists. As policymakers, we have run out of time. I apologize, but we have three. But it's over. Can we give a huge round of applause to the panelists? I feel like if I opened up one more question that I would probably be here to 4:00. First and foremost, please follow the equity lab. We're still continuing this work. The reports will come out in the next 7 to 10 days before the end of the year at least. Let us know if you want to be a part of it. We are constantly looking for updated figures to be a part of this because as you heard me say, this is about the plethora of people whose voices are not represented

in the scheme of how we think about these issues. Thank you again and thank you all for coming and thank you to those online.