

1 **Understanding AI Data Production & Community Impacts Worldwide: A
2 Multivocal Literature Review**

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4 Artificial intelligence (AI) depends on data production: the sociotechnical process that transforms human knowledge into computational
5 resources. The connections among AI systems, data practices, and impacts on Indigenous, underrepresented, and underserved
6 communities—though critical—have not been systematically examined. To this end, we conduct a Multivocal Literature Review (MLR)
7 integrating 350 academic and grey-literature sources to analyze how AI systems, data practices, and community impacts intersect.
8 Across five analytic domains—Data Relations, Data Labor, Data Representation, Data Infrastructure, and Data Governance—we
9 distinguish extractive data production mechanisms that centralize control from high-agency pathways in which communities exercise
10 authority. We contribute (1) a multivocal review that positions data production as a site of sociotechnical power rather than a technical
11 prerequisite; (2) implications for HCI research including upstream infrastructure as a design site, provenance-first architectures, and
12 federated data governance supporting community sovereignty; (3) methodological validation of multivocal synthesis for bridging
13 academic critique with community practice; and (4) an open corpus mapping sources across pipeline stages, historical eras, and
14 geographic contexts.

15 CCS Concepts: • **Do Not Use This Code → Generate the Correct Terms for Your Paper**; *Generate the Correct Terms for Your
16 Paper*; Generate the Correct Terms for Your Paper; Generate the Correct Terms for Your Paper.

17 Additional Key Words and Phrases: AI, ML pipeline, data production, extractive practices, underserved communities, Indigenous data
18 sovereignty, data collection

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23 **1 Introduction**

24 Contemporary artificial intelligence (AI) systems depend on data. As approaches have advanced over the past three
25 decades, the scale and composition of data needs has transformed: from small expert-curated datasets like MNIST [83],
26 to massive crowdsourced benchmarks such as ImageNet [38], and now to foundation models trained on billions of
27 scraped web documents, images, and interaction traces [128, 142]. The opacity and complexity of the ML pipeline [22],
28 as well as the diversity and amount of human knowledge and labor needed [126, 164], has expanded dramatically.

29 This trajectory matters because the choices made in gathering and curating data directly shape which communities
30 benefit from AI systems and which communities bear their costs. Data is made, not found—it is produced through
31 a series of choices about what to gather, how to curate it, and under what terms. Decision made upstream and all
32 along the pipeline can either create or mitigate harms, which fall disproportionately on underserved, underrepresented,
33 and Indigenous communities [7, 13, 78, 87, 100, 123]. Yet despite growing critical attention to algorithmic harms and

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⁵³ dataset bias, data production itself—the complex sociotechnical process through which human knowledge becomes
⁵⁴ computational input—has rarely been treated as a central object of inquiry within HCI.
⁵⁵

⁵⁶ Relevant literature is scattered across disciplines and publication ecosystems. Human–computer interaction (HCI)
⁵⁷ contributes a long-standing body of research on how sociotechnical systems enact power, from canonical postcolonial
⁵⁸ critiques [66, 155] to recent work analyzing “extractive” dynamics in ICT4D research [45], and epistemic injustice
⁵⁹ [5, 169]. Review literature in HCI and adjacent fields offers substantial insight into how AI systems affect communities.
⁶⁰ A scoping review by Shelby et al. [147] maps harms experienced by underserved groups, and a subsequent systematic
⁶¹ review by Wang et al. [166] builds on this foundation through a focused synthesis across disability contexts. Case-
⁶² based analyses examine how AI systems mismatch their contexts of use ([136]. Surveys of AI ethics and NLP bias
⁶³ identify structural gaps and the absence of lived-experience perspectives [16, 18], while dataset genealogies trace how
⁶⁴ collection and annotation practices embed exclusions [39]. Recent work analyzes how misabstraction cascades through
⁶⁵ sociotechnical systems [35] and takes stock of social-justice commitments within HCI [27].
⁶⁶

⁶⁷ This body of work illuminates important dimensions of a three-part relationship: AI systems, data production
⁶⁸ practices, and community impacts. Yet, most scholarship examines discrete pieces rather than synthesizing across all
⁶⁹ three. Most reviews also draw primarily on academic publications, capturing the scientific state-of-the art but leaving
⁷⁰ less visible the state-of-practice documented in policy reports, organizational materials, and community outputs. These
⁷¹ gaps call for synthesis across this three-part relationship. To this end, we use a multivocal literature review (MLR), an
⁷² approach designed to synthesize knowledge that circulates across many publication ecosystems. An MLR integrates peer-
⁷³ reviewed research with policy documents, organizational reports, technical specifications, and community-generated
⁷⁴ materials (“white” and “grey” literature), and as such offer a structured way to work with a wider evidence landscape
⁷⁵ [51]; see Appendix A.
⁷⁶

⁷⁷ We treat *data production* as the complex sociotechnical process through which data is defined, gathered, curated, and
⁷⁸ controlled across model pipelines.¹ This framing supports a move beyond understanding *data collection* as a routine
⁷⁹ methodological disclosure or neutral technical artifact. Instead, we center the institutional choices, power relations, and
⁸⁰ consequences that underpin AI development and determine who benefits from or bears its costs. Our approach leverages
⁸¹ Critical Computing as a diagnostic lens and Social Justice as a normative orientation. Critical Computing shows how
⁸² data practices reflect institutional priorities and labor arrangements rather than some objective “ground truth” modeled
⁸³ by engineers, and offers tools for analyzing power in dataset construction and use. Social Justice complements the
⁸⁴ diagnosis by asking how data work might redistribute agency, benefit, and governance toward the communities whose
⁸⁵ knowledge and labor support AI systems. Together, the two orientations clarify why upstream data production is a
⁸⁶ sociotechnical domain of timely concern for HCI and a site for upstream design intervention.
⁸⁷

⁸⁸ Overall, this work provides a literature review with novel concepts of data production as a sociotechnical site where
⁸⁹ power is negotiated and encoded, rather than a logistical preliminary to model development. We identify mechanisms
⁹⁰ where extractive practices and high-agency alternatives diverge across the ML pipeline, with implications for HCI. In
⁹¹ summary, we contribute:
⁹²

- ⁹³ • A multivocal literature review of 350 sources across academic and grey literature, resulting in five analytic
⁹⁴ domains where AI systems, data production, and community impacts intersect

⁹⁵¹⁰² We share with Miceli & Posada [96] an emphasis on “production” to foreground relations of power and knowledge in data and labor, which echoes the
⁹⁶ “assemblage” approach of Kitchin et al. [76], also rooted in Foucauldian critique.
⁹⁷

- Opportunities for HCI research and practice, including upstream data infrastructure as a design site, provenance-first architectures, federated learning for community sovereignty, and ethics review paradigms that scrutinize data production
- Methodological validation of multivocal synthesis for sociotechnical inquiry, showing how grey literature captures state-of-practice missing from academic venues;
- An open corpus of 350 sampled sources mapped across pipeline stages, historical eras, and geographic contexts, with structured summaries and documented rationales for relevance to the three-part inquiry, publicly available at <https://github.com/ADC-chi/ai-data-production-landscape>.

1.1 Key Terms and Definitions

1.1.1 *Artificial intelligence.* For clarity, we use “AI” in this paper primarily in its modern ML sense. An ML system learns patterns and rules from training data to create a predictive model [22]. The resulting model must then be evaluated for reliability and generalization using a separate, independent dataset known as test data [42]. We contextualize our discussion of AI within its broader historical trajectory of research and development but focus on the current statistical and data-driven era of AI that facilitates many contemporary extractive regimes [55]. We intend our discussion to be situated not merely as a critique of modern ML but as a reflection on a continuous thread within technological and social history.

1.1.2 *Extractive.* We use “extractive” in this paper to denote high-asymmetry or dispossessive practices, building upon its conventional association with Indigenous marginalization and digital forms of resource appropriation. This definition is designed to encompass diverse historical and contemporary manifestations of power imbalances that result in one party’s advantage at the expense of another’s autonomy or resources [19, 114]. Illustrative examples of such high-asymmetry practices are evident in historical contexts, such as the exploitative labor practices of UK coal mining [33]; the profoundly unethical nature of the Tuskegee syphilis experiment in the United States and the untreated carcinoma study in New Zealand [70, 121]; and contemporary issues like large-scale industrial mining [107] and pervasive AI surveillance [118]. By broadening this definition, our objective is to more accurately encapsulate the systemic character of extraction across various domains. In contrast, we describe as high-agency examples of principles and practices in the literature which prioritize active participation, equitable distribution of power, and community-defined obligations [124, 172]. These examples appear in contexts where communities, practitioners, or institutions negotiate shared authority, shape the terms of data contribution, or establish governance arrangements that align data use with locally grounded priorities.

1.1.3 *Communities and populations.* We use “underserved” to describe communities lacking adequate infrastructural, institutional, or economic support, and underrepresented to indicate groups whose knowledge, languages, or perspectives are numerically absent or devalued in AI research and development [88, 147]. We use the umbrella category “Indigenous,” which “enables historically and geographically separated peoples to recognize each other and their common plight, and to collaborate towards a better future” [133]. We avoid “marginalized” in the adjectival form to emphasize agency and resistance rather than positioning communities as passive victims. We use Global Majority to emphasize that most of the world’s population lies outside Euro-American contexts. Our chosen terms underscore structural asymmetries in power and resource distribution rather than deficits within communities themselves [156].

157 **2 Background**

158 **2.1 Critical Traditions on Extraction and Justice**

160 Foundational works from theoretical, historical, and community traditions establish frameworks for studying power in
161 knowledge production. Theories of epistemic violence and injustice [47, 151] and “situated knowledges” [62] interrogate
162 how knowledge systems encode relations of domination. Historical analyses of colonial resistance show alternative
163 epistemologies and organizing strategies [68].

165 Black feminist theory articulates intersectional approaches to structural power, from early collective statements [30]
166 to analyses of interlocking systems of oppression [31]. Gender and queer theory establish frameworks for analyzing
167 the production of normativity [23], binary logics [145], and classificatory power [29]. Indigenous studies center
168 community sovereignty and relational ethics [9, 37, 86] and provide frameworks for decolonizing knowledge production
169 in research [150] and AI data practices [20]. Critical data studies crystallize a complementary set of concerns for the
170 digital context, with a focus on datafication, surveillance, and governance [77].

172 Foundational works attune us to centuries of extractive patterns, resistance, and knowledge-making. They are
173 essential for understanding present and future technological worlds. Here, critical works anchor the conceptual
174 vocabulary of extraction and justice in the context of the global AI data production ecosystem.

178 **2.2 Evolution of AI Data Production Practices**

180 Since the advent of machine learning, there has been a constant need for data. Over time, how that data was produced
181 has undergone transformations beyond dataset sizes. These changes include how data is produced and who performs
182 the work [39]. As demands for larger models have intensified, practices have shifted from small, carefully curated
183 corpora, to large datasets assembled through web-scraping and crowdsourced annotations, to massive, automated
184 web-scraped collections supported by industrial-scale annotation.

186 *Era 1.* Early curated datasets were small, domain-specific, and selected by experts. A canonical example is MNIST, a
187 dataset of handwritten digits drawn from U.S. postal codes [83]. Choices about inclusion and categorization reflected
188 institutional knowledge and disciplinary priorities.

189 *Era 2.* Large curated datasets expanded scale through crowdsourced annotation of web-scraped content, exemplified
190 by ImageNet [38] and MS COCO [90]. This era accelerated deep learning [36, 56] but shifted labor from domain
191 experts to distributed workers, often in Global Majority regions, as well as automated web-scraping efforts, ultimately
192 emphasizing performance gains over contextual fit.

193 *Era 3.* Contemporary data production diverges into two parallel approaches. Massive, largely uncurated web-scraped
194 corpora such as Common Crawl, C4 [41, 130], LAION [142, 143], Refined Web [122], and ClueWeb22 [113]) are assembled
195 through automated scraping at an unprecedented scale. Such production efforts shape and are shaped by competitive
196 foundation model development [15, 154]. Alongside and often in response, smaller, highly curated datasets emerged,
197 produced through participatory methods and community partnerships. Examples include ROOTS [82], Masakhane’s
198 African language collections [109], and Cohere’s multilingual Aya Dataset [149].

199 Dataset hosting and governance practices have shifted over time as well: from freely downloadable units like MNIST,
200 to single-location storage on cloud services (e.g., AWS, HuggingFace), to URL-indexed collections like LAION that
201 disclaim responsibility for original sources, and to emerging federated “data spaces” designed to support locally owned
202 infrastructures and community governance [64]. Proprietary datasets are closed, and open-source alternatives range

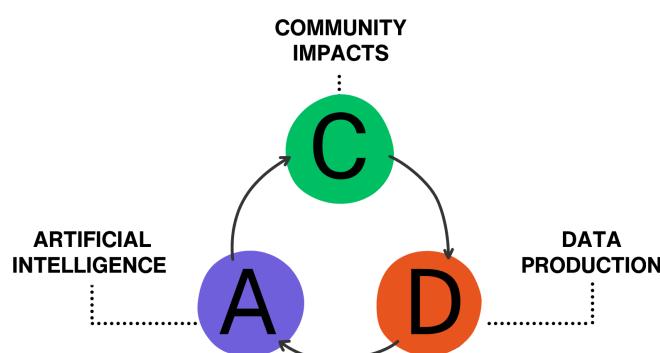


Fig. 1. A/D/C scoping framework for identifying relevant literature across three interrelated domains of AI (A), Data Production (D), and Community Impacts (C).

from massive scrapes to carefully stewarded community collections; each modality comes with distinct risks and obligations [89, 170].

The three eras feature distinct technical capabilities, institutional arrangements, and methodologies that enabled extractive patterns to scale industrially. While both eras 2 and 3 are founded in web-scraped datasets, the scale at which era 3 extracts data is unprecedented. As such, the current era hosts both the most expansive extractive practices and the most developed community-controlled frameworks. The future of AI data production is not determined.

3 Methodology

We conducted an MLR to assemble a structured body of evidence on AI data production and its impacts on underserved, underrepresented, and Indigenous communities. We treated academic and grey sources as complementary evidence streams. Figure 1 presents the research design and methodology.

Because our inquiry has three interrelated parts—AI systems, data production practices, and community impacts—we formalized it through what we call the A/D/C framework (Figure 1). This framework defined the scope of our inquiry, which was ultimately bounded by community impacts (C). All sources engage substantively with community experiences, power dynamics, or consequences in contexts relevant to AI data production. Sources varied in whether they directly addressed AI systems (A) and data production practices (D), or provided foundational understanding that informs interpretation of these dimensions. Section 3.2 provides more detail on how we created the corpus based on this framework.

3.1 Search Strategy

We developed the search strategy by deriving keywords from the A/D/C framework. We searched seven academic databases between August 2024 and January 31 2025: ACM Digital Library, IEEE Xplore, ScienceDirect, Taylor & Francis Online, Wiley Online Library, Springer Link, and Google Scholar. We iteratively developed boolean search strings with AND/OR terms across variants of A/D/C terms using Boolean operators. Titles and abstracts were screened first, followed by full-text assessment for items meeting initial criteria. Table 1 shows the key and supplementary search terms of our inquiry.

Table 1. Key and Supplementary Search Terms

Dimension	Key Terms	Supplementary Terms
AI Systems (A)	Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, AI, ML	Large Language Models, LLMs, Computer Vision, Foundation Models, Neural Networks, Automated Systems, Algorithmic Systems, Deep Learning
Data Production (D)	Data Collection, Data Production, Dataset Creation, Data Curation, Data Practices	Annotation, Labeling, Data Labor, Crowdsourcing, Web Scraping, Data Extraction, Dataset Development, Data Work, Data Gathering, Responsible AI
Community Impacts (C)	Indigenous, Marginalized, Underrepresented, Underserved, Community	Global Majority, Global South, Data Sovereignty, Linguistic Diversity, Cultural Context, Extraction, Appropriation, Bias, Fairness, Harm, Safety

We developed four primary query sets: foundational (targeting core data production practices in AI contexts affecting communities), extraction frame (targeting exploitative practices), data labor (focusing on crowdsourcing and platform labor), and alternatives (seeking participatory and community-led approaches). The ACM Digital Library search illustrates our results. Across the four query sets, 1,914 hits yielded 1,201 items screened, 153 meeting initial criteria, and 48 unique sources after full-text review and duplicate removal. Similar strategies applied to the remaining six databases. Database searches contributed 174 sources, representing 50% of the final corpus. See B for more search details.

For grey literature we used different methods. Following Garousi et al. [51], we used general Google Search and systematically examined organizational ecosystems engaged in AI data work, prioritizing organizational reports, policy documents, and community outputs from established entities. Three complementary methods supplemented database and grey literature searches. Citation snowballing [171] from 20 seed papers tracked forward and backward citations iteratively, contributing 51 sources (15%). Hand-searching of journals including CHI, FAccT, CSCW, *Journal on Responsible Computing*, ACL, *Big Data & Society*, and *AI & Society* contributed 21 sources (6%). Iterative gap-filling searches addressed underrepresented regions, concepts, or pipeline stages as the corpus took shape, contributing 31 sources (9%).

Inclusion criteria followed from the A/D/C framework. Sources entered the corpus when they engaged community impacts substantively. Most sources additionally provided direct evidence about data production practices or AI systems. This meant including sources that analyzed AI system behavior, deployment, or evaluation in relation to community outcomes; examined data sourcing, processing, annotation, governance, or infrastructure with implications for affected communities; provided community-governed protocols, sovereignty statements, or governance frameworks; or established theoretical or epistemological foundations addressing power, resistance, extraction, or marginalization in ways essential for interpreting AI data practices and their consequences. We excluded sources that, for example, discussed AI ethics, fairness, or responsible AI at a high level without addressing data practices or community impacts; focused solely on model performance, technical optimization, or algorithmic advances without sociotechnical analysis; reported community-based research unrelated to AI systems or data production; or were non-English (a pragmatic limitation we discuss more below).

Quality assessment varied by source type and followed guidance from Kamei et al. [72]. Academic items underwent venue peer review. Grey-literature items required additional evaluation; we assessed organizational authority, author expertise, community recognition, and the provenance of policy documents, and we interpreted community outputs through alignment with decolonizing methodologies and community endorsement. These criteria follow guidance for

grey-literature appraisal in multivocal reviews and draw on elements of Garousi et al. [51]’s framework, including stated aims, methodological clarity, contribution, and outlet type—adapted for community-governed and sovereignty-oriented materials.

Screening proceeded in two stages: titles and abstracts were reviewed for relevance to the C boundary, followed by full-text assessment. The first author led database and grey literature searches. Two authors independently read full-text articles, prepared summaries, and presented sources in batches to the full team for consensus review. Disagreements on inclusion criteria and relevance to the A/D/C framework were resolved through discussion. This process occurred in two rounds (August–September 2024), with each round reviewing approximately 100 candidate sources. These consensus rounds established shared standards before the two authors completed full screening of the 350-source corpus in February 2025. The final corpus contains 258 academic items (74%) and 92 grey-literature items (26%).

3.2 Corpus Creation

We created a datasheet that categorizes each source across multiple dimensions to provide maximum contextualization [35]. Coded categories included bibliographic metadata (author, year, venue, type), A/D/C coverage, pipeline stage, historical era, orientation, geographic focus, and author affiliation. For each source, we additionally recorded a unique rationale for A/D/C coverage and a brief summary to support traceability of sourcing and selection decisions. The same two authors who led source selection conducted categorization using the collaborative consensus approach established during screening.

A/D/C Coverage. We categorized each source based on where direct evidence appears across our three-part inquiry: AI systems (A), data production practices (D), and community impacts (C). Every source engages all three dimensions analytically, but sources vary in what they directly support versus what requires interpretive connection. We wrote rationales stating what each source contributes to A, D, and C to clarify where direct evidence appears and where relevance is interpretive and to provide transparent disclosure of our interpretive stance on each source. Tags indicate where direct evidence is present. We do not tag A or D dimensions alone because all sources must engage community impacts (C) to enter the corpus. Our coding produced four categories, described in Table 2.

Pipeline Stages. We mapped each source to stages of a simplified AI development pipeline (Figure 2): *Problem Understanding & Formulation* (institutional prioritization, funding decisions, and product conception), *ML System Design and Development* (data selection and enrichment, model architecture choices, and training processes), and *Deployment & Impact* (product testing, launch, and post-deployment effects) [95]. We mapped each source to a pipeline stage and sub-stage to make visible where specific mechanisms arise and how decisions at those points propagate through later phases—what prior work characterizes as cascading effects that compound downstream harms [134, 153]. Sources spanning multiple stages or describing cross-cutting dynamics were tagged accordingly.

Historical Eras. We distinguished three eras of data production, per discussion in 2.2: Era 1 (expert-curated datasets, pre-2009), Era 2 (crowdsourced benchmarks, 2009–2017), and Era 3 (web-scraped and foundation models, 2017–present). Multi-era sources were coded accordingly. No sources were coded exclusively as Era 1.

Orientations. Each source received a single orientation code reached through team consensus based on the primary analytical purpose the source served in this inquiry. *Extractive* sources provided direct evidence of practices undermining consent, compensation, or community benefit. *High-agency principles* advanced normative frameworks with explicit policy or governance recommendations. *High-agency practices* described operationalized initiatives with concrete implementation details.

365 Table 2. Triangle coverage coding definitions showing how corpus sources engage AI systems (A), data production practices (D), and
 366 community impacts (C)

368	Code	Description	Example Sources
369	ADC	Direct evidence relevant to AI systems, data production, and community impacts	Garcia et al. [49] on critical refusal as an intervention into extractive data logics and governance; Hall et al. [57] on participatory, community-engaged dataset production; Park et al. [117] on designing accessible infrastructures for collecting AI data from people with disabilities; Rifat et al. [131] on categorization politics and context erasure in annotating faith-based violence data; Lewis et al. [86] on Indigenous protocol-aligned dataset construction and culturally grounded AI applications
370	DC	Direct evidence for data production and community impacts; AI relevance is interpretive	Adley et al. [4] on ethical data collection with marginalized groups and power dynamics in practice; Cooper et al. [32] on community-collaborative research models emphasizing shared control and benefit; Hancock et al. [58] on tensions in data sharing and harms within a modern slavery data ecosystem; Taylor and Kukutai [157] on Indigenous Data Sovereignty and metadata governance; Pool [125] on colonial census practices replacing Māori knowledge systems
371	AD	Direct evidence for AI systems and data production; community impacts are clearly implied	Bhardwaj et al. [11] on evaluating ML datasets through a data-curation lens and FAIR principles; Koch et al. [80] on dataset reuse and benchmark concentration; Sambasivan et al. [134] on data cascades and hidden labor in high-stakes ML pipelines; Schiff et al. [141] on translating AI principles into practice via participatory, iterative impact assessment; Zhao et al. [175] on fairness-curation challenges faced by dataset curators across organizational and socio-political contexts
372	C	Direct evidence about community impacts only; A and D relevance is interpretive	Battiste [9] on Indigenous epistemologies and marginalization; Haraway [62] on situated knowledge and partial perspective; Igwe et al. [65] on non-extractive research principles; James [68] on colonial extraction economies and collective resistance in the Haitian Revolution; Shapiro and McNeish [146] on hyper-extractivism and resistance

399 **Synthesis.** We synthesized findings through iterative analysis across these dimensions. When multiple sources
 400 described similar mechanisms across different contexts, we consolidated these into recurring patterns. Individual
 401 sources could exemplify multiple patterns. Patterns were distilled into the five analytic domains described in Section 4.
 402 Complete coding definitions with examples appear in Appendix C.

405 3.3 Limitations and Reflexivity

407 We recognize that subjectivity shapes our interpretations, though transparent documentation and multi-researcher
 408 validation helped address this inherent limitation. Connecting multiple disciplinary traditions, historical eras, and global
 409 contexts proved challenging, creating “translation needs” across distinct vocabularies and epistemological frameworks.
 410 The sourcing strategy privileged networks in Africa and global Indigenous movements, yielding detailed coverage of
 411 those ecosystems. Parallel developments in Middle Eastern, Southeast Asian, and Latin American contexts appear less
 412 frequently, not because such initiatives were absent, but because they circulated in networks less accessible to our
 413 inquiry. We acknowledge that English-language search restrictions inherently reinforce Western-centric representation.

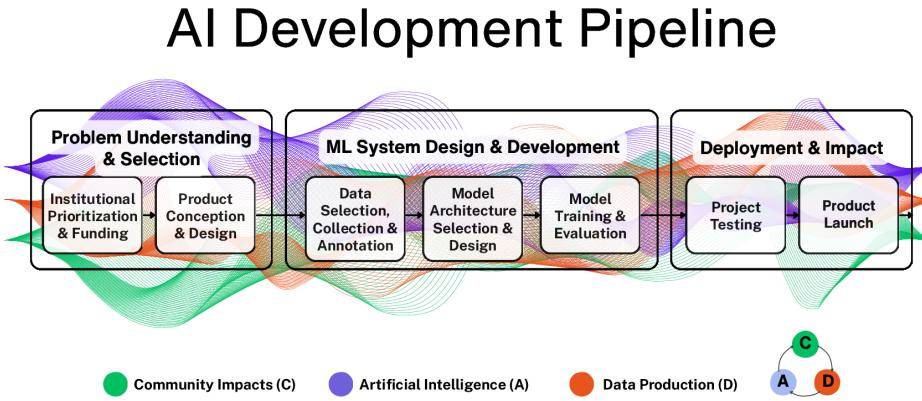


Fig. 2. Simplified AI development pipeline with three interwoven sine waves representing AI (purple), data production (orange), and community impacts (green) flowing continuously through all pipeline stages. Pipeline diagram derived from Martin [95].

Scholarly and community infrastructures condition what becomes visible in review corpora, creating unevenness despite our efforts. Therefore, we believe it is important to consider our own identities alongside the analysis of this work given that our backgrounds and perspectives may bias the interpretation of this work [34].

The authors hold diverse racial and ethnic identities (Black, White, Mixed-race) with cultural roots in the United States, Canada, South Africa, Ghana, Japan, and France. These backgrounds shaped our ability to recognize and access specific community-led networks (particularly in African and Indigenous contexts) while leaving others less visible to us. In terms of epistemic lens, we work across industry and academia, with backgrounds in computer science, HCI, and the humanities. This dual positioning allowed us to bridge the gap between technical documentation and critical theory, for example, recognizing “grey literature” as rigorous evidence of high-agency alternatives. However, our location within these professionalized research institutions also means we likely missed grassroots resistance tactics that do not circulate in written or digital forms. We recognize that we are observing extraction from within the institutions that often facilitate it, and we present these findings as a necessary, though partial, mapping of the landscape.

4 Findings

We structure our findings according to five domains of data production, which we have conceptualized as analytic elements. Rather than logistical steps, these domains function as sites where power is negotiated, contested, and encoded: **Data Relations** (the negotiation of agency and terms of engagement), **Data Labor** (the creation versus capture of value), **Data Representation** (the exercise of epistemic authority through categorization), **Data Infrastructure** (the allocation of capacity and provenance), and **Data Governance** (the enforcement of sovereignty and accountability). Within each domain, we identify specific extractive mechanisms—technical or institutional habits that centralize control—and contrast them with high-agency pathways where communities are actively reclaiming authority.

Although mechanisms associated with each domain can appear at multiple points in AI development, consistent tendencies emerge across the corpus: decisions about relations often arise upstream as problems are framed; labor

469 arrangements cluster within mid-stream annotation workflows; representational decisions crystallize where ontologies
470 and preprocessing pipelines are defined; infrastructural conditions span stages but become most visible as systems scale;
471 and governance concerns intensify downstream as models move toward evaluation and deployment. These tendencies
472 help situate each domain without implying a fixed or linear pipeline.
473

474 Each domain is introduced through a small set of examples that surface the mechanisms we observed across the
475 corpus. These examples are intended as points of entry into a broader landscape. The larger set of mappings, summaries,
476 and domain categorizations is available in the datasheet for readers who wish to trace these patterns in greater depth.
477

478 4.1 Data Relations

480 Data relations define the structural terms of engagement between model developers and the communities from whom
481 knowledge is derived. In mainstream industry discourse, these engagements are frequently reduced to legalistic questions
482 of copyright compliance or static “terms of service.” However, our corpus reveals that these legal frameworks often serve
483 to obscure the underlying power dynamics [119]. Relations are not merely contractual; they are the primary site where
484 agency is either stripped or substantiated. In extractive regimes, relations are characterized by the severance of ties
485 between data and its creators; as Leanne Betasamosake Simpson articulates, “extraction removes all of the relationships
486 that give whatever is being extracted meaning” [79]. High-agency relations, conversely, position data production as a
487 negotiated partnership where community authority persists even after data is collected.
488

489 **The assumption of availability** constitutes the primary mechanism of extractive relations. Technical workflows for
490 foundation models frequently operate on the premise that any data accessible on the public web is a “standing reserve”
491 available for ingestion. This logic converts public existence into implicit consent. Large-scale scraping initiatives, such
492 as the corpora used to train models like CLIP [142, 143] or T5 [128], for example, bypass the negotiation of relationship
493 entirely, including legally, by treating the act of publication as a forfeiture of rights [75, 139]. Relation-less forms of data
494 production systematically ignore the contextual intent of the data creator, whether it be repurposing religious texts or
495 intimate narratives as generic linguistic tokens, none of which are “just data” [63]. By removing the requirement to ask,
496 the assumption of availability structurally precludes the possibility of refusal, rendering the relationship unilateral.
497

498 **Transactional asymmetry** reinforces this extraction by decoupling value generation from risk. This manifests in
499 “digital extractivism,” where Global Majority communities provide the raw material while the risks—such as the loss of
500 privacy or the commodification of cultural heritage—are externalized back to them [67]. The dynamic functions through
501 “accumulation by dispossession,” where the terms of engagement are dictated by the extractor, treating communities
502 as resources rather than partners [161]. Relational asymmetries are both economic and epistemic. AI developers
503 gain a model of the world, while communities lose control over how they are represented within it, often leading to
504 “opportunity loss” where resources are withheld based on extractive profiling [147].
505

506 **High-agency relations** counter these mechanisms by shifting from static terms of service to dynamic and revocable
507 consent. Rather than viewing consent as a one-time gatekeeping mechanism, high-agency approaches frame it as an
508 ongoing relationship. The Speech Accessibility Project [2] and other initiatives that engage disability communities
509 aptly demonstrate how relationships can precede collection: communities are partners who co-define the terms of
510 engagement before recruiting paid volunteers and help ensure the protocol aligns with community safety needs
511 [2, 117]. Similarly, feminist frameworks for “embodied consent” argue for agreements that are specific, enthusiastic,
512 and revocable, challenging the broad permissions usually buried in click-through agreements [152].
513

514 In Indigenous contexts, high-agency relations manifest as relational sovereignty. Te Hiku Media’s approach to Maori
515 data rejects the concept of open-source availability in favor of whanaungatanga (connection/relationship), where data
516 Manuscript submitted to ACM
517

521 access is determined by the strength and trust of the relationship between the parties [28, 60]. This reintroduces friction
522 into the data pipeline by design: access is not a default state but a negotiated privilege that requires maintaining a
523 relationship with the originating community [81]. By replacing the assumption of availability with permissioned access,
524 these models force a structural acknowledgment of community agency.
525

526
527 **Key takeaway:** Data relations determine the flow of agency. Extractive mechanisms rely on the assumption
528 of availability, treating public data as a resource to be mined and severing the link between creators and their
529 data. This creates transactional asymmetry, where developers capture value while communities bear the risk.
530 High-agency relations replace this with dynamic consent and relational sovereignty, ensuring that data production
531 remains a negotiated partnership where community authority persists throughout the technical lifecycle.
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534 4.2 Data Labor

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536 Data labor encompasses the human energy and interpretive judgment required to bridge the gap between raw information
537 and computational capability. While often obscured by the metaphor of “autonomous” AI, our corpus confirms that
538 model performance remains strictly dependent on human workers who select, annotate, validate, and moderate content
539 [26, 54, 85, 104]. In extractive regimes, this labor is characterized by value capture, where the semantic value generated
540 by human judgment is stripped from the worker and concentrated in the model, often leaving the contributor with
541 little to no recognition or economic return. High-agency approaches, conversely, frame labor as expertise, positioning
542 annotators as skilled contributors whose situated knowledge is essential to system quality.
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545 **Invisibilization** by design constitutes the primary mechanism of labor extraction. Dataset and platform architectures
546 are frequently designed to present corpora as neutral technical artifacts rather than products of human judgment,
547 masking the interpretive decisions embedded in every labeled example [96]. This structural opacity serves to commodify
548 the worker; by decomposing complex cultural tasks into fragmented “microtasks,” platforms strip the work of its context,
549 rendering the worker interchangeable and the labor invisible [39]. Here, a structural design choice renders the human
550 contribution indistinguishable from the system’s output, with the upshot of systematically preventing workers from
551 asserting authorship claims or contesting the terms of their participation.
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554 **Reciprocity failure** reinforces this dynamic by extracting labor without returning value. This manifests most clearly
555 in “unwitting” labor, where user interactions (e.g., solving CAPTCHAs, tagging photos, or correcting autocomplete
556 suggestions) are harvested to train models without the user’s explicit knowledge or compensation [17, 102]. In Global
557 Majority contexts, this mechanism appears in the outsourcing of trauma-inducing content moderation or complex
558 annotation to workers in low-income regions, who perform essential semantic labor for wages that do not reflect the
559 cognitive intensity of the work [164]. The system is optimized to externalize the costs of dataset construction to the
560 worker while centralizing the economic benefits.
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562

563 **High-agency labor** counters these mechanisms by restructuring the economic and attributional relationship
564 between modelers and workers. These approaches restore context and visibility to the labor process. The organization
565 Karya, for example, demonstrates how data collection can function as a tool for economic redistribution; by establishing
566 ethical wage floors and data ownership structures for rural Indian workers, they reframe annotation as a skilled,
567 compensated profession [3]. Similarly, the Masakhane community creates participatory research models where African
568 language speakers function not as passive data subjects, but as credited authors and technical collaborators throughout
569 the pipeline [109]. Emerging initiatives like Ubuntu-AI attempt to encode these rights directly into the data lifecycle
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573 through profit-sharing mechanisms, ensuring that artists and creators retain a stake in the value their data generates
574 [108].
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💡 **Key takeaway:** Data labor is economic and political. Extractive mechanisms rely on invisibilization by design, decomposing expert judgment into fragmented tasks to obscure the worker and facilitate value capture. This severs the link between labor and downstream value. High-agency approaches replace this with labor as expertise, ensuring that contributions are visible, attributed, and compensated as skilled work that persists within the technical system.

5 Data Representation

Data representation determines how communities become computationally visible. It is less a question of inclusion ratios or diversity statistics than one of epistemic authority: who gets to define the categories, taxonomies, and labels that structure the digital world. In extractive regimes, representation creates visibility without power, often flattening complex, relational identities into rigid categories that facilitate control or consumption. High-agency approaches, conversely, frame representation as plural epistemologies, ensuring that data structures reflect community worldviews rather than forcing local knowledge into universalizing boxes.

Ontological imposition constitutes the primary mechanism of representational extraction. Institutional problem formulation often imposes external taxonomies on communities before they even enter the pipeline. This manifests as “data universalism,” where Western logics of property and individualism are treated as neutral defaults, overwriting Indigenous ontologies that emphasize relationality and collective stewardship [86, 99]. For example, psychological frameworks developed in “WEIRD” (Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic) contexts fail to map onto collective ontologies, yet are deployed globally as standard [40, 98, 101]. This mechanism ensures that even when diverse data is collected, it is structurally distorted to fit the model’s worldview, rendering specific cultural meanings “absent” even within inclusion efforts [12].

Context stripping reinforces this dynamic during annotation and processing. To make data “model-ready,” complex human experiences must be converted into discrete labels. This process often relies on “lazy” data practices that collapse distinct protected attributes like race and ethnicity into coarse categories to satisfy technical constraints, erasing intersectional realities [148]. Annotation workflows that lack community-defined criteria force workers to resolve ambiguity by falling back on institutional defaults, which appear neutral but encode specific cultural biases [138]. Automated filtering pipelines compound this by removing content that signals non-normative identities under the guise of “cleaning,” disproportionately purging data from non-Western contexts or disability communities [93].

Synthetic displacement introduces a new mechanism of extraction: representation without presence. As privacy regulations tighten, developers increasingly turn to synthetic data (e.g., fabricated medical records, artificial faces, and simulated identities) to populate datasets. While this bypasses the need for individual consent [84], it severs the link between representation and reality. Communities become represented in systems they never participated in, inheriting the risks of misidentification or caricature without any pathway to contest how they are depicted [168]. The resulting “diversity-washing” effect is such that models appear inclusive while structurally excluding actual community members.

High-agency representation counters these mechanisms by building pluralistic and community-grounded corpora. These initiatives prioritize depth and context over scale. For instance, the Abundant Intelligences project reimagines AI development through Indigenous knowledge systems, refusing to separate data from the land and relations that

625 generate it [87]. Similarly, examples from Africa and Oceania demonstrate how regional collaborations can curate
626 datasets that serve local linguistic needs—such as the InkubaLM model—rather than adapting to global benchmarks
627 [43, 163]. By maintaining representational authority, these projects ensure that visibility serves community goals, such
628 as language revitalization, rather than external commodification.

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631
632 **Key takeaway:** Data representation is epistemic and political. Extractive mechanisms rely on ontological
633 imposition and context stripping, imposing external taxonomies and flattening meaning to fit technical defaults.
634 This treats visibility as neutral even when it creates exposure. High-agency approaches replace this with plural
635 epistemologies, grounding representation in community-defined categories and preserving the specificity of local
636 knowledge against universalizing standards.
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640 6 Data Infrastructure

641 Data infrastructure allocates capacity and determines where data lives, who controls access, and how material circulates
642 across model pipelines. While often treated as neutral plumbing designed for efficiency, infrastructure emerges in the
643 literature as a primary site of political contestation. In extractive regimes, infrastructure is configured to maximize
644 velocity and volume, creating technical conditions where consent and context are structurally impossible to maintain.
645 High-agency approaches, conversely, design for traceability and distribution, ensuring that community authority travels
646 with the data.
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648 **Centralization without governance** configures extraction at an industrial scale. Foundation-model development
649 relies on automated pipelines that ingest content from large-scale web sources such as Common Crawl or LAION to
650 maximize throughput [41, 142, 143]. This configuration privileges actors with substantial compute resources and treats
651 data availability as a default condition. The asymmetry is infrastructural: collection mechanisms operate at speeds that
652 make oversight and contestation structurally unworkable for data subjects [169].
653

654 **Benchmark infrastructures** act as gatekeeping mechanisms that enforce dominant (Western) epistemologies as
655 universal standards. Reliance on a narrow set of legacy datasets, such as ImageNet [38] and MS COCO [90], entrenches
656 specific linguistic, cultural, and demographic assumptions as infrastructural norms [39, 80]. Because creating culturally
657 specific alternatives requires substantial institutional support, Euro-American category systems persist as de facto
658 standards through infrastructural path dependence [80].
659

660 **Provenance compression** serves as the third mechanism, severing datasets from their originating communities
661 and the relational contexts of their creation. Contemporary web-scrape datasets often operate through severe documen-
662 tation gaps—reinforcing “web-as-platform” assumptions that treat public accessibility as permission to extract [139].
663 Infrastructure that treats provenance as optional enables downstream actors to shift responsibility for data quality and
664 rights onto untraceable contributors [91].
665

666 **High-agency infrastructure** counters these mechanisms by embedding community-defined constraints directly
667 into technical architectures. Federated and distributed systems shift authority by enabling collaboration without
668 centralizing data. Emerging frameworks for “data spaces” allow communities to retain local control over storage and
669 access while supporting model development [48, 64]. Similarly, stewardship-based architectures like Masakhane’s
670 distributed research platforms operationalize co-designed metadata standards, ensuring that data does not become
671 “loose” but remains tethered to its community of origin [109].
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691 **Key takeaway:** Data infrastructure is about capacity and provenance. Extractive architectures rely on centralization without governance to maximize velocity and provenance compression to sever data from its originating obligations. This makes extraction structurally easy and accountability expensive. High-agency alternatives deploy federated and distributed systems, redistributing capacity to ensure that community authority remains technically enforceable as data circulates.

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7 Data Governance

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698 Governance establishes the rule-sets that authorize data production: it determines when collection is legitimate, what contextual grounding is required, and who holds authority over circulation. These rules operate upstream of participation, labor, and representation, guiding the conditions under which data production becomes legitimate. High-asymmetry governance frameworks create wide discretionary space for extractive practices, whereas high-agency governance embeds community control directly into the structures that shape data lifecycles.

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706 **Regulatory arbitrage** constitutes the primary mechanism of extractive governance. Often termed “ethics dumping,” 707 this practice exploits fragmented global regulations to harvest data in regions with weaker protections, converting 708 behavioral interactions into institutional assets without oversight [159]. This dynamic transforms regulatory variation 709 into a resource for extraction: vulnerable populations in low- and middle-income countries may receive limited digital 710 services (like Facebook’s Free Basics) in exchange for extensive, uncompensated data harvesting [110]. Coercive 711 collection in humanitarian settings, such as biometric registration in Ethiopian refugee camps, further illustrates how 712 governance gaps allow institutions to bypass the consent standards required in their home jurisdictions [160].

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715 **Open-loop extraction** reinforces this asymmetry by decoupling deployment from accountability. Models trained 716 on narrow, Western-centric data are frequently deployed globally, shifting the burden of performance failures—such 717 as diagnostic errors in healthcare AI—onto underserved communities [8, 112]. This mechanism externalizes risk: 718 communities excluded from the governance of training data nonetheless become sources of performance feedback 719 during deployment. Their interactions refine the system, yet they possess no authority to challenge the model’s adequacy 720 or recall the data they generate [162]. Governance here functions to protect the model developer’s intellectual property 721 while leaving the data subject’s sovereignty unprotected.

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723 **High-agency governance** counters these mechanisms through sovereignty-based licensing and critical refusal. 724 Rather than relying on open-access defaults, these approaches encode community authority into the legal terms of the 725 data itself. The Kaitiakitanga License, developed by Te Hiku Media, exemplifies this by legally binding data usage to 726 Māori tikanga (protocols), preventing extractive reuse by third parties [158]. Similarly, the Esethu Framework for African 727 language data establishes sovereignty provisions that mandate community benefit-sharing and protect annotators 728 [129]. Beyond licensing, critical refusal operates as a form of affirmative governance. By setting ex-ante boundaries on 729 participation, communities assert that unreadability is a safety condition. Longstanding tactics of opacity and masking 730 establish practical limits on what institutions may extract [21]. When viewed as governance, refusal is not a lack of data; it is an enforcement of sovereignty that limits extractive reach by design [49].

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Key takeaway: Data governance distinguishes accountability from exploitable discretion. Extractive mechanisms rely on regulatory arbitrage (ethics dumping) and open-loop extraction, engaging in collection without contextual grounding and turning deployment into unconsented data acquisition. High-agency approaches establish sovereignty-based licensing and critical refusal, creating enforceable preconditions that align data production with community-defined control and ensure authority persists beyond the point of collection.

8 Discussion

Our analysis of 350 sources across academic and grey literature reveals that AI data production is not merely a logistical preliminary to model development, but a distinct sociotechnical site where power is negotiated, contested, and encoded. By synthesizing evidence across the A/D/C framework, we identify a clear divergence: extractive practices that prioritize scale, opacity, and labor externalization, versus high-agency pathways that prioritize relationality, sovereignty, and context. Noteably, the five analytic domains we identify do not distribute evenly across the ML pipeline. Instead, the sources that comprise each domain cluster around the structural moments where key mechanisms take effect: Data Relations concentrates upstream in problem formulation and data selection; Data Labor anchors mid-pipeline annotation and enrichment; Data Representation spans early- to mid-pipeline ontology and preprocessing; Data Infrastructure forms a cross-cutting substrate most visible in mid-to-downstream development; and Data Governance clusters downstream where deployment, accountability, and sovereignty become salient. This patterned distribution indicates that extractive dynamics are not random but structurally embedded within distinct, yet interrelated, pipeline junctures.

For the HCI community, these findings suggest a critical reframing. While HCI has successfully interrogated downstream AI interaction (how users experience models) and mid-stream model behavior (bias and fairness), the upstream processes of data creation remain undertheorized in design venues. Below, we discuss how HCI scholars and practitioners can operationalize high-agency practices by treating data production as a primary site of design intervention. In doing so, we extend the nascent HCI scholarship that examines data production through the lens of data laborers and data subjects [73, 74, 97, 137, 140, 165].

8.1 Reframing Data Production as “Upstream” Design

Our findings challenge the industry norm of treating data as “found” infrastructure (Era 3). Instead, the evidence suggests data production is a series of design decisions—regarding relations, labor, and representation—that are often irreversible once encoded into a model. This recognition prompts us to argue that the “user” in human-centered AI must expand to include the data contributor—the artist, the annotator, the community member—whose agency is often circumvented by upstream infrastructure. Within HCI, this circumvention has predominantly been investigated in studies of data labor, which reveal how data annotators are frequently reduced to an interchangeable resource thereby constraining their subjectivities and interpretive work [73, 97, 165]. Building on this work, our review makes clear the various design choices—such as crowdsourcing interfaces that atomize tasks to obscure the worker’s context (Data Labor) or scraping pipelines that strip provenance metadata (Data Infrastructure)—that can circumvent agency and enforce extraction by design.

For HCI, this implies that data curation is a form of interaction design. The high-agency pathways our review surfaces make clear that alternative designs are possible. The community-led initiatives—such as Masakhane’s participatory NLP [94] or Māori data sovereignty protocols [81, 105]—succeed not by “fixing” extraction after the fact, but by designing

781 relational friction into the process. They replace the seamless, frictionless extraction of web scraping with protocols
782 that require consent, negotiation, and maintenance.
783

784 785 8.2 Toward High-Agency Practices: Implications for HCI

786 Moving beyond critique, our analysis of high-agency pathways points toward concrete mechanisms for less-extractive
787 AI development. We map these implications to three key shifts for HCI practice.
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789 8.2.1 *From Universal Representation to Pluralistic “Small Data”*. The dominance of massive, web-scraped corpora (Era
790 3) enforces a universalizing worldview that erases minority contexts and agency in general. Our findings suggest that
791 “de-biasing” these massive datasets is often less effective than building smaller, community-sovereign corpora. Indeed,
792 critiques of contemporary efforts to build more “inclusive” or “de-biased” technologies often highlight a technosolutionist
793 trap whereby the issue is purportedly addressed through large-scale capture of data about a community or culture
794 without meaningful agency [25, 126, 127]. Our review reinforces how failing to allow communities to set the terms of
795 inclusion for their data can inadvertently perpetuate extraction under the guise of inclusion. This extends critiques
796 of “fair” AI that don’t fundamentally shift power [71]. In contrast, high-agency pathways highlighted in our review
797 demonstrate how different actors and groups are proactively responding to extractive data capture by imagining
798 and building alternatives. For instance, efforts by Te Hiku Media to develop community led language datasets and
799 technologies [43, 158] and the Community-driven African Next Voices project [174] directly counter efforts by big
800 tech to seek out and capture cultural knowledge and data, by instead keeping data governed by communities. While
801 authors, organizations, and initiatives offer unique contributions, their coordination and totality points to systemic
802 alternatives that start with community needs and maintain community control, thus creating their own conditions
803 for thriving rather than adapting to external constraints. By developing their own evaluation criteria, publication
804 venues, funding mechanisms, and governance protocols, they establish parallel infrastructures that operate according
805 to different principles: sovereignty rather than extraction, reciprocity rather than accumulation, cultural preservation
806 rather than homogenization and standardization.
807

808 The HCI community has an opportunity to advance high-agency efforts by investing in federated data spaces rather
809 than centralized lakes. We need infrastructure that allows models to learn from community data without that data ever
810 leaving the community’s local storage or jurisdiction (e.g., federated learning tailored for Indigenous sovereignty [48]).
811 Furthermore, valuation metrics in AI research must shift away from scale at the expense of care [59, 69, 137, 173]. We
812 encourage the HCI community to value (and publish) contributions that curate high-context, small-scale datasets with
813 clear governance protocols, rather than rejecting them for lacking the scale of foundation model benchmarks.
814

815 8.2.2 *From Transactional Labor to Relational Provenance*. Our review highlights reciprocity failure and labor invisibility
816 as central extractive patterns. This transactional model commodifies the work of data laborers—including annotators,
817 content creators, and community members—distancing those performing the work from those capturing the value and
818 contributing to the perceived “magic” of AI [135]. This is further complicated by opaque data collection practices that
819 often make the data creator unaware of their contribution. While there is growing interest in data provenance as a
820 key intervention point for mitigating harm of AI technologies [91, 167], our review affirms how the current dominant
821 paradigm of data production is in tension with this end goal. We argue that this tension is, in part, a design challenge
822 for HCI researchers and call upon the community to explore how data capture and sharing platforms might implement
823 provenance-tracking mechanisms by design.
824

833 A provenance-first design approach could involve binding labor and authorship metadata to individual data points
834 so that creators retain "credits" (similar to the Ubuntu-AI model [108]) that persist through the pipeline. More broadly,
835 there is growing recognition that data annotation is fundamentally subjective and interpretive, often shaped by the
836 sociocultural backgrounds and lived experiences of annotators [44, 144?]. This motivates the design of data annotation
837 processes and infrastructure that allows workers to signal ambiguity, refuse tasks that violate community norms, and
838 capture disagreements in a structured form rather than forcing a choice that flattens cultural context. By doing so, the
839 HCI community can enable downstream pluralistic modeling approaches that can handle meaningful divergences in
840 perspectives [103].
841

842 *8.2.3 From Open-Loop Extraction to Closed-Loop Governance.* The governance gaps identified in our review show that
843 once data is scraped, communities often lose control. In contrast, community-led governance approaches exemplify an
844 alternative. For example, Māori data sovereignty frameworks in Aotearoa New Zealand demonstrate a coordinated
845 ecosystem: the Māori Data Sovereignty Network develops governance protocols, Te Hiku Media creates community-led,
846 culturally appropriate datasets and benchmarks, and the Kaitiakitanga License embeds community authority into legal
847 frameworks. Such agency-oriented practices require dynamic consent and enforceable boundaries and necessitate
848 technical implementations of Sovereignty-Based Licensing. HCI scholars can develop and standardize machine-readable
849 licenses (similar to Creative Commons but for ML training) that explicitly forbid certain downstream uses (e.g., military
850 application, generative mimicry) and trigger benefit-sharing clauses [129, 158].
851

852 To operationalize this, Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) and conference ethics reviews must look upstream, enforcing
853 data transparency standards that treat data collection as a distinct object of ethical inquiry [10, 52]. Within academic
854 peer review, data production is increasingly within scope of ethical inquiry. However, the focus remains largely on
855 individual privacy and consent within papers presenting novel datasets, rather than deeper inquiries into the conditions
856 under which data is produced and the extent to which communities retain any rights of refusal. This necessitates
857 new review paradigms that prioritizes community consent in addition to individual terms of service, echoing calls for
858 power-aware approaches that allow communities to attest and refuse data extraction [49, 71]. By scrutinizing these
859 data cascades at the source [134], the review process can identify where the agency of the data contributor has been
860 circumvented.
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862 **8.3 Methodological Contributions: The Value of Multivocality**

863 Finally, this paper validates the utility of the Multivocal Literature Review (MLR) for investigating sociotechnical harm.
864 A significant portion of our high-agency evidence came not from peer-reviewed academic venues, but from "grey"
865 literature—community manifestos, tribal resolutions, and worker inquiries. If we had limited our scope to academic
866 "white" literature, we would have successfully diagnosed the harms of extraction (which are well-documented in
867 academia) but missed the existing alternatives (which are often documented in policy and community organizing).
868 For the HCI community, this underscores that "state-of-the-art" knowledge regarding justice and equity often resides
869 outside the academy, as does the general "state-of-practice." Future work on AI harms should adopt multivocal methods
870 to ensure that community-generated resistance and innovation are recognized as rigorous evidence.
871

872 **9 Conclusions**

873 As AI development consolidates around foundation models trained on internet-scale scrapes, the risk of deepening
874 extractive relations is acute. However, this trajectory is not inevitable. By analyzing the data production pipeline
875

885 through the lens of Data Relations, Data Labor, Data Representation, Data Infrastructure, and Data Governance, we see
886 that every dataset is a record of power relations. This paper contributes a taxonomy of these relations, offering HCI a
887 diagnostic tool to identify extraction and a catalog of precedents for resistance. The shift to less-extractive AI requires
888 more than better algorithms; it requires designing the upstream sociotechnical infrastructures that determine whose
889 knowledge counts, how it is valued, and who governs its future. Our review affirms that a less-extractive future is not
890 merely an aspiration; it is actively being built by communities pursuing alternative to the status quo.
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1353 **A Review Methodologies in HCI**

1354 Review methodologies in HCI face persistent challenges when systematic transparency must coexist with interpretive
1355 expertise and when evidence circulates across fragmented publication ecosystems [46, 132]. Systematic reviews establish
1356 protocols for organizing evidence within bounded domains, and PRISMA frameworks support reproducibility [116].
1357 Both approaches reach limits in interdisciplinary settings where evidence types vary and epistemological frameworks
1358 conflict [6, 106].

1361 Multivocal literature reviews (MLRs) offer one way to meet these demands and balance rigor with practical utility, as
1362 recent work in responsible AI demonstrates [92]. The approach originated in educational research as a methodological
1363 framework to impose systematic rigor on reviews of diverse documents [111], initiating a discussion that clarified
1364 that the standard of rigor must be situational and secondary to utility for practitioners [120]. Software engineering
1365 later adapted MLRs to capture both state-of-the-art research and state-of-practice knowledge [50, 51]. MLRs integrate
1366 peer-reviewed academic literature with grey literature such as organizational reports, policy documents, community
1367 statements, technical documentation, practitioner outputs, and multimedia materials. The widely cited Luxembourg
1368 definition characterizes grey literature as material produced by government, academia, industry, or community groups
1369 that is not controlled by commercial publishers [53]. Diversity of source types and timeliness are core advantages, since
1370 emerging practices often circulate outside formal publication channels and appear earlier than peer-reviewed work
1371 [115].

1372 Credibility varies across grey-literature types, and assessments often depend on provenance, expertise, and rec-
1373 ognized authority [72]. Multivocal approaches are particularly important for scholarship involving Indigenous and
1374 underserved communities. Lewis et al. [86] show that multivocality preserves heterogeneous viewpoints. The authors
1375 combine essays, protocols, and artistic works rather than imposing a single scholarly mode, a stance aligning with
1376 decolonizing methodologies that emphasize community-generated knowledge and Indigenous epistemic authority
1377 [9, 150]. Additionally, influential contributions in AI ethics and data governance often appear in organizational reports
1378 [24, 67], investigative journalism [61], public initiatives [1], and widely cited preprints [14]. MLR methods accommodate
1379 a diversity of distributed knowledge production and support synthesis across venues not fully captured by academic
1380 indexing.

1381 **B Search Strategy & Corpus Composition**

1382 Database searches were conducted iteratively between August 2024 and January 2025, complementing network referrals
1383 and citation snowballing. The final structured ACM Digital Library search was executed on January 31, 2025, using
1384 the advanced search interface with abstract and full-text indexing via personal subscription. Table 3 reports the four
1385 primary ACM query sets and their outcomes.

1386 Aggregate results from the January 2025 ACM searches are summarized in Table 5. Across 1,914 hits, 1,201 items
1387 were screened, yielding 153 that met criteria and 48 unique sources after full-text review and duplicate removal. Similar
1388 comprehensive search strategies were applied to IEEE Xplore, ScienceDirect, Taylor & Francis Online, Wiley Online
1389 Library, Google Scholar, and Springer Link, following the same phased approach for queries.

1390 **Source Discovery.**

1391 **C Corpus Creation Details**

1392 **Datasheet Fields.**

Table 3. ACM Digital Library search queries and results.

Query	Exact search string	Results screened	Potentially relevant
Q1	((“data collection” OR “data production” OR “data curation” OR “dataset development”) AND (“artificial intelligence” OR “machine learning” OR “AI”) AND (“marginalized” OR “underrepresented” OR “underserved” OR “community” OR “indigenous”))	51 abstracts + 300 full-texts	45 (7 abstracts, 38 full-texts)
Q2	((“extractive” OR “exploitative” OR “data colonialism”) AND (“data practices” OR “dataset construction”) AND (“communities” OR “workers” OR “labor”))	3 abstracts + 182 full-texts	13 (1 abstract, 12 full-texts)
Q3	((“crowdsourcing” OR “platform labor”) AND (“bias” OR “fairness” OR “ethics”) AND (“marginalized” OR “vulnerable populations” OR “community harm”))	491 full-texts (200 screened)	32
Q4	((“participatory design” OR “community-led” OR “co-design”) AND (“ai development” OR “dataset creation”) AND (“sovereignty” OR “community engagement” OR “ethical data”))	122 full-texts	12

Table 4. Targeted ACM venue-specific searches.

Venue	Exact search string	Venue filter	Results summary
CHI Conference Proceedings	((“data collection” OR “data production” OR “data curation” OR “dataset development”) AND (“artificial intelligence” OR “machine learning” OR “AI”) AND (“marginalized” OR “underrepresented” OR “underserved” OR “community” OR “indigenous”))	CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (all years)	296 hits; screened: first 200; potentially relevant: 15
FAccT Proceedings	((“data collection” OR “data production” OR “data curation” OR “dataset development”) AND (“artificial intelligence” OR “machine learning” OR “AI”) AND (“marginalized” OR “underrepresented” OR “underserved” OR “community” OR “indigenous”))	ACM Conference on Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency	143 hits; screened: all; potentially relevant: 37

Table 7. Description of datasheet fields

Column	Content
Identifier	In-line APA citation (author surname and year) used as a unique ID for tracking within the corpus.
APA Citation	Full APA reference for the source.
Title	Title of the publication or output.

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1457 1458 1459 1460 1461 1462 1463 1464 1465 1466 1467 1468 1469 1470 1471 1472 1473 1474 1475 1476 1477 1478 1479 1480 1481 1482 1483 1484 1485 1486 1487 1488 1489 1490 1491 1492 1493 1494 1495 1496 1497 1498 1499 1500 1501 1502 1503 1504 1505 1506 1507 1508	Column	Content
	Analytic Domain	Controlled list, multiple possible:
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Relations: how data is scoped, justified, and negotiated • Data Labor: how curation work is arranged and carried out • Data Representation: how categories are constructed and based on what presences and absences • Data Infrastructure: how technical systems mediate data movement • Data Governance: how authority over data shapes downstream use
	Orientation	Controlled list:
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extractive: undermines consent, compensation, or benefit • High-Agency Principles: normative frameworks promoting stewardship, sovereignty, accountability • High-Agency Practices: operationalized, community-led, participatory, or sovereignty-based initiatives
	General Theme	Controlled list, multiple possible:
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community impacts and relations • Critical theory • Data labor • Data practices • Ethics frameworks
	Pipeline Stage	Specific process within a pipeline stage (controlled list):
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem Understanding and Formulation • ML System Design and Development • Deployment and Impact • Cross-pipeline

Column	Content
Pipeline Sub-stage	<p>Specific process within a pipeline stage (controlled list):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional Prioritization and Funding • Product Conception and Design • Data Selection, Collection and Annotation • Model Architecture Selection and Design • Model Training and Evaluation • Product Testing • Product Launch • Cross-pipeline
Historical Era	<p>Era of data production practice (controlled list):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Era 1: Curated datasets (pre-2009); no sources in corpus • Era 2: Crowdsourced benchmarks (2009–2017) • Era 3: Web-scraped/foundation models (2017–present) • Multi-era: Spans multiple eras or provides historical analysis
Primary Pattern(s) / Pathway(s)	<p>The specific extractive or high-agency behavior described in the source. Between one and three tags were assigned per source in order of relevance. For sources that provide conceptual, historical, or framing contributions without mapping directly onto an identified pattern, we assigned Other/NA (conceptual framing).</p>
Triangle Coverage	<p>Engagement with the three scoping domains that defined corpus eligibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A – AI contexts • D – Data production practices • C – Community impacts <p>Because community impacts (C) establish the outer bounds of the review, included sources substantively address all three domains, though with varying emphases. Codes (A, D, C or combinations ADC, DC, AD) indicate which domains are explicitly developed within the source. An accompanying Rationale column explains the basis for inclusion and the specific ways each source engages A/D/C beyond passing mention.</p>
How Source Was Found	<p>White literature (journal papers, conference proceedings, books) or Grey literature (reports, policy documents, theses, community outputs, blogs).</p>
Keywords	<p>3–5 terms for coding/search, ordered Geography → Data/technical → Community/impact.</p>

Column	Content
Geographic Region of Focus	Region or community under study (controlled list): Africa, APAC, EU/UK, LatAm, MENA, North America, Oceania, Multiple regions, Not regionally specific (globally framed advocacy, transnational collectives, or technical works not tied to one region).
Author Affiliations	High-level institutional grouping of authors. If multiple affiliations, code majority grouping here; record full details in Authorship & Positionality Context. Controlled list: Academic; Government; Industry; NGO/Non-profit; Mixed; Journalist/Other/Not sure
Geographic Area of Author(s)	Full institution name and country of the lead author(s)
Institution	Region of lead author's institution (controlled list, same regions as above).
Authorship and Positionality Context	Complete authorship profile, including all institutions, geographic distribution, equal contribution notes, and any relevant statements on positionality or disciplinary traditions.
Summary	≤ 120-word synopsis. Structure: Topic → Method → Findings → Link to AI data production + community impacts.

Table 5. ACM search results summary.

Category	Count
Total primary searches (query sets)	6
Total venue-specific searches	2
Total hits across all searches	1,914
Total items screened (varied by search size)	1,201
Items meeting inclusion criteria after screening	153
Items retained after full-text review	89
Final unique sources for corpus (after duplicate removal)	48

Table 6. Discovery method distribution (N=350 sources).

Method	Sources	Percent
Database searches	174	50%
Existing networks/organizations	73	21%
Citation snowballing	51	15%
Iterative keyword search	31	9%
Hand-searching journals	21	6%
Total	350	100%

Corpus Summary.

Received 4 September 2025; revised 4 December 2025; accepted 5 June 2009

Table 8. Corpus composition summary (N=350 sources)

Category	Sub-category	Count (%)
Orientation	Extractive Practices	141 (41%)
	High-Agency Principles	116 (33%)
	High-Agency Practices	93 (27%)
Source Type	White literature	258 (74%)
	Grey literature	92 (26%)
Geographic Focus	Not regionally specific	150 (43%)
	Multiple areas	61 (17%)
	North America	41 (11%)
	Africa	38 (11%)
	Oceania	19 (5%)
	APAC	15 (4%)
	EU/UK	11 (3%)
	LatAm	12 (3%)
	MENA	3 (1%)
Author Affiliation (lead only)	Academic	182 (52%)
	Mixed	96 (27%)
	Industry	37 (11%)
	NGO/Non-profit	20 (6%)
	Journalist/Other	11 (3%)
Pipeline Stage	Government	4 (1%)
	ML System Design & Development	183 (52%)
	Problem Understanding & Formulation	90 (25%)
	Cross-pipeline	55 (16%)
Historical Era	Deployment & Impact	22 (6%)
	Era 3 (2017–present)	241 (69%)
	Multi-era	95 (27%)
	Era 2 (2009–2017)	14 (4%)
	Era 1 (pre-2009)	0 (0%)