Missing Data

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BY
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Introduction

There are several different definitions of missing data. While some might refer to data that is literally absent, as in statistical approaches to missing data that attempts to interpolate what might fill in the gaps,[1] others, such as the artist and educator Mimi Ọnụọha, take "missing data" to mean something more political — "something [that] does not exist, but it should."[2] In the same line as Ọnụọha, our definition of missing data refers to information that goes uncounted (or otherwise unrecorded), despite social and political demands that such data should be collected and made available. Our concept of missing data may include entirely absent data, as well as data that is sparse, neglected, poorly collected and maintained, purposely removed, difficult to access, infrequently updated, contested, and/or underreported.[3]

Missing data, in the expanded definition we propose in this essay, is a political concept. On one hand, missing data can function as a challenge from civil society to formal institutions, including governments, religious institutions, and corporations. In these cases, it represents a demand from specific communities about public issues that concern society writ large. On the other hand, missing data may be actively desired and produced by marginalized groups seeking to protect information about their community and culture from the eyes of institutions. In these cases, the data is "missing" for institutions, which make a demand for information that is actively

1 Dirk Temme and Sarah Jensen, "Missing Data – Better 'Not to Have Them', but What If You Do? (Part 1)," *Marketing: ZFP – Journal of Research and Management* 41, no. 4 (2019): 21–32, https://www.jstor.org/stable/26873605.

2 Mimi Ọnụọha, "On Missing Data Sets," GitHub, January 24, 2018, https://github.com/MimiOnuoha/missing-datasets; Mimi Ọnụọha, "The Library of Missing Datasets," Mimionuoha.com, https://mimionuoha.com/the-library-of-missing-datasets.

3 Catherine D'Ignazio, *Counting Feminicide: Data Feminism in Action* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2024); Catherine D'Ignazio and Lauren F. Klein, *Data Feminism* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2020).

protected by and kept within a community. In this sense, missing data is also a relational concept because it implies a directionality — an informatic demand *from* one group or institution *to* another group or institution. Missing data is not always a bad thing, nor always a good thing. Instead of thinking of it normatively, the locus of analysis should be on the social context, who is making the demand to whom, and the political context for which specific information is deemed to be missing. Our definition differs from other more technical notions of missing data that may not consider or highlight the unbalanced power relationships between different social actors, such as marginalized communities and the state. In this sense, the definition of missing data proposed here explicitly includes a political demand, because the group making the demand for information is trying to charge another group or institution with the responsibility for the absence of this data. When this relates to marginalized groups making demands on the state, groups are also trying to assert the institutional neglect of the group or issue represented by the data. Given the focus on the datafied state, this article will focus particularly on missing data related to governments, where civil society groups demand that the government collect specific data or where the government demands data that communities seek to protect.

Missing Data and the State

Different examples worldwide illustrate missing data's relational and political characteristics in the state-society interaction. For instance, during the second half of the 20th century, social movements in Latin America struggled to find data on the disappeared people whom authoritarian governments had arrested and often tortured or killed. One of the more significant examples of these struggles happened in Argentina. Since the 1970s, civil

society organizations have pushed for comprehensive records of the people detained by the Argentine government. This action came especially from the organizations *Comitê de Defesa dos Direitos Humanos para os países do Cone Sul* (CLAMOR), *Madres de la Plaza de Mayo*, and *Familiares de Desaparecidos y Detenidos por Razones Políticas.* In a 1980 public petition, these groups demanded that the military government "publish the list of the detained-disappeared, where they are and the reason for their detention."[4] Although the country was still under a dictatorship, the document had more than 12,000 signatures, and members of the media counted about 500 people protesting on the day the organizations delivered the document to the military government.[5] This collective action and the political demand for state answers eventually resulted in a state list with 8,961 names of disappeared people.[6] The Argentine state conducted this search during its democratic transition (1983 and 1984) and organized its search based on a list of 7,000 names that the organization CLAMOR, based in Brazil, had previously collected.[7] The final list published by the government, which is utilized to this day, is still considered incomplete and contested by civil society. Organizations like *Madres y Abuelas de la Plaza de Mayo* advocate that there were 30,000 disappeared, and the organization Comunidad Homosexual Argentina (CHA) claims 400[8] LGBTQIA+ people also disappeared and were not in the CONADEP report.[9]

At the same time, with the 8,961 names, the democratic Argentine state, with the strong influence of these movements, was able to work with civil society to start a process for justice for the disappeared people and their families. In this sense, initially, the identification and collection of this missing data began as a collective process for justice in the face of state authoritarianism. This was undertaken with the help and collective memory of the entire Argentine society demanding data on the disappeared people by governmental institutions.[10] If not for the social movements' demand for

4 Ulises Gorini, *La rebelión de las Madres: Historia de las Madres de Plaza de Mayo Tomo I* (1976–1983), (Buenos Aires: EDULPD, 2017).

5 Gorini, *La rebelión de las Madres*.

6 "Part VI. Recommendations and Conclusions," CONADEP, September 1984, http://www.desaparecidos.org/nuncamas/web/english/library/nevagain/nevagain_283.htm

7 Ana Célia Navarro de Andrade and Heloísa de Faria Cruz, *Clamor e Ditaduras no Cone Sul: Documentacao, Memoria e Pesquisa* (Brazil: EDUC, 2021); CLAMOR, "O boletim Clamor," PUC-SP, Accessed March 2, 2023, from http://www.pucsp.br/cedic/clamor.

8 These numbers resulted in a new public claim from different civil society organizations in Argentina: "¡30.400 *presentes!*" This claim is related to the recognized claim from *Madres y Abuelas,* about 30.000 disappeared people.

9 Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo, "Historia | Las Abuelas | Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo," retrieved April 19, 2023, from https://www.abuelas.org.ar/abuelas/historia-9; Redacción Clarín, "Una Duda Historica: No se Sabe Cuantos Son Los Desaparecideos," *Clarín*, May 10, 2003, https://www.clarin.com/ediciones-anteriores/duda-historica-sabe-desaparecidos_0_B1FG1JglCKl.html.; Emmanuel Theumer, Noelia Trujillo, and Marina Quintero, "El Nunca Mas de los 400: Políticas de Articulación del duelo y la Reparación en la Argentina Reciente," *El lugar sin límites*, no. 3 (April 2020): 48–64.

the missing data, information on the disappeared people would never have been available. Consequently, processes of memory for their lives and justice for their families would never have been made.

Cases such as Argentina's are not unique. Other missing data cases related to citizens' political demands on the state include topics such as violence against women,[11] accessibility in the urban environment,[12] data on children with microcephaly resulting from the Zika virus,[13] data that tracks gun violence in the US,[14] as well as projects that point out gaps in environmental data, evictions data tracking, police killings of citizens, and maternal mortality cases, among many others. In all cases, the absence of certain data points indicates a lack of political determination in collecting this data, which results in civil society groups questioning the states' inaction and demanding accountability through data collection and distribution.

Missing Data as Strategic Neglect from the State and Powerful Institutions

Because producing data requires resources — to acquire, maintain, publish and use — missing data can result from resource allocation decisions made by powerful institutions, such as companies, intergovernmental organizations, religious institutions, and especially governments. Therefore, demanding missing data is a civil society strategy to hold the datafied state accountable for what is missing and, crucially, why. In this context, calling attention to missing data, as well as other absences, can be a strategy for unsettling whoever is trying to forget or hide information that could demonstrate the inequalities of our societies.[15]

10 Laura Marina Panizo, "Muerte, Desaparición y Memoria: El Caso de Los Desaparecidos de La Última Dictadura Militar En Argentina," *Historia, Antropología y Fuentes Orales*, no. 42 (2009): 71–84. http://www.jstor.org/stable/25759001.

11 Helena Suárez Val, Sonia Madrigal, Ivonne Ramírez Ramírez, and María Salguero, *"Monitoring, Recording, and Mapping Feminicide — Experiences from Mexico and Uruguay," in Femicide Volume XII Living Victims of Femicide,* eds. Helen Hemblade and Helena Gabriel (Vienna: UNSA, 2019), 67–73.

12 Shiloh Deitz, Amy Lobben, and Arielle Alferez, "Squeaky Wheels: Missing Data, Disability, and Power in the Smart City," *Big Data & Society* 8, no. 2 (July 2020): 20539517211047735, https://doi.org/10.1177/20539517211047735.

13 Debora Diniz, *Zika: Do Sertão nordestino à ameaça global: Do Sertão Nordestino à Ameaça Global* (Brazil: Civilização Brasileira, 2016).

14 Gun Violence Archive. Evidence Based Research — since 2013. *https://www.gunviolencearchive.org/*

15 Debora Dinz, "Lembrar" *in Esperança Feminista (2a edição),* eds. Debora Diniz and Ivone Gebara (Brazil: Rosa dos Tempos, 2022).

As a case in point, we might consider the data regarding people annually killed by the police in Brazil. Each of the 26 Brazilian states collects this data, but they do not make it publicly available. Through a law on information access, an initiative conducted by the media and an organization called *Fórum de Segurança Pública* regularly requests data from the Brazilian states.[16] This initiative then publishes the data. Thanks to the group, it is now possible to compare the number of killings with other countries' data and find evidence at scale for how the Brazilian police force is one of the most lethal in the world.[17]

Yet the clarity offered by such a dataset on police killings in Brazil still cannot account for the full extent of state violence. The Brazilian police also participate in racist violence, among other structural oppressions. In 2021, 11 of the 26 Brazilian states did not collect (or decided not to share) data on the race of the people killed by the police.[18] Based on the existing data from other states, it is possible to determine that 81.5 percent of the victims were Black. While data alone will not solve racialized police violence,[19] the political decision to not collect or not publish this data reflects a desire on the part of the state to maintain a violent order by neglecting "data and statistics about those minoritized bodies who do not hold power."[20] In this sense, neglecting to collect this data is strategic because it allows the state to maintain a public security policy in which killing and torturing Black people is possible without having public scrutiny on the actual scope and scale of these killings.[21]

Beyond the negligence in collecting data, there are illustrative examples of active political choices by governments to produce missing data. This is to say that data that was previously published is unpublished, taken down, disappeared, removed or deleted. For instance, since the COVID-19 pandemic started, the disappearance of data on the number of people with the

16 Clara Velasco, Felipe Grandin, and Alessandro Feitosa Jr., "Número de Pessosas Mortas Pela Polícia Cai e Atinge Menor Patamar Em Quatro Anos; Assassinatos de Policiais Também Têm Queda," *G1*, May 4, 2022, https://g1.globo.com/monitor-da-violencia/noticia/2022/05/04/numero-de-pessoas-mortas-pela-policia-cai-e-atinge-menor-patamar-em-quatro-anos-assassinatos-de-policiais-tambem-tem-queda.html

17 Samiro Bueno and Beatriz Rodrigues, "Letalidade Policial: Uma Resiliente Prática Institucional," in *Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública,* https://forumseguranca.org.br/storage/8_anuario_2014_20150309.pdf

18 Clara Velasco, Alessandro Feitosa Jr., and Felipe Grandin, "11 Estados Não Divulgam Dados Completos de Raça de Mortos Pela Polícia; Números Disponíveis Mostram Que Mais de 80% Das Vítimas São Negras," G1, May 4, 2022, https://g1.globo.com/monitor-da-violencia/noticia/2022/05/04/11-estados-nao-divulgam-dados-completos-de-raca-de-mortos-pela-policia-numeros-disponiveis-mostram-que-mais-de-80percent-das-vitimas-sao-negras.ghtmln.

19 Catherine D'Ignazio and Lauren F. Klein, "Seven Intersectional Feminist Principles for Equitable and Actionable COVID-19 Data," *Big Data & Society* 7, no. 2 (July 2020): 2053951720942544, https://doi.org/10.1177/2053951720942544.

20 D'Ignazio and Klein, *Data Feminism.*

21 Geledés, 'Existe, Por Parte do Estado Brasileiro, Uma Política de Extermínio da População Negra," *Geledés*, April 19, 2023, https://www.geledes.org.br/existe-por-parte-do-estado-brasileiro-uma-politica-de-exterminio-da-populacao-negra/.

virus and the deaths related to it has been denounced in many countries, including Brazil and the US.[22] Furthermore, data from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) during the Trump administration also actively disappeared from its website.[23] The Trump administration deleted pages on climate change, downplayed references to it in different federal reports and policies, and removed access to 20 percent of its website.[24] The fear among scientists and activists that this data disappearance would escalate was the motivation for some archival initiatives to preserve the environmental data from EPA in the US. For instance, the Environmental Data & Governance Initiative archived 200 terabytes of data from government websites between 2016 and 2017.[25] Scientists and advocates asserted that these actions deterred the administration from deleting all federal environmental data, an example of how archival practices can perform activist work.[26]

These examples demonstrate how political demands for missing data, as we propose here, can operate as a theory of change that more information can shed light on social inequalities and injustices, affecting the daily lives of populations. They also exemplify the political content of the missing data concept, such as its relational nature — how interactions and demands between specific groups and powerful institutions are an essential part of the concept, encompassing both data requests and protection from civil society groups. Typically, it is civil society — including NGOs, journalists, activists, scientists, academics, and community-based organizations — that pressures governments to make sure measures are taken to count and publish data responsibly and fairly, often as a method to address racial, gender, and class inequalities, such as in the cases handled above. In themselves, these actions are embedded in the understanding of the unbalanced power relations in our societies and seek to hold the datafied state accountable.

22 Marina Novaes, "Governo Bolsonaro Impõe Apagão de Dados Sobre a COVID-19 no Brasil em Meio à Disparada das Mortes," *El País Brasil,* June 6, 2020, https://brasil.elpais.com/brasil/2020-06-06/governo-bolsonaro-impoe-apagao-de-dados-sobre-a-covid-19-no-brasil-em-meio-a-disparada-das-mortes.html.; Lena H. Sun and Amy Goldstein, "Disappearance of COVID-19 Data from CDC website Spurs Outcry," *Washington Post*, July 16, 2020, https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2020/07/16/coronavirus-hospitalization-data-outcry/.

23 Eric Nost, Gretchen Gehrke, Grace Poudrier, Aaron Lemelin, Marcy Beck, and Sara Wylie, "Visualizing Changes to US Federal Environmental Agency Websites, 2016–2020," *PLOS ONE* 16, no. 2 (February 2021): e0246450, https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0246450.

24 Dino Grandoni and Brady Dennis, "Biden Administration Revives EPA Web page on Climate Change deleted by Trump," *The Washington Post, March 18*, 2021, https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2021/03/18/epa-website-climate/; Nost et al., "Visualizing Changes."

25 Justine Calma, "How Scientists Scrambled to Stop Donald Trump's EPA from Wiping Out Climate Data," *The Verge*, March 8, 2021, https://www.theverge.com/22313763/scientists-climate-change-data-rescue-donald-trump.; "Our Story," Dta Refuge, retrieved April 21, 2023, from https://www.datarefugestories.org/our-story-1.

26 Calma, "How Scientists Scrambled."

Missing Data and Counterdata Production

Once identified as such, missing data can become a focal point for political action, including but not limited to the demand for data production and availability. This is well illustrated by the examples of the US EPA and Brazil's police force. In both cases, research institutes, activists, scientists and/or the media worked to produce data, protect it, and make it available. When these actions are not enough, the identification of missing data can mark the beginning of a longer political process whereby members of civil society take action to produce missing data themselves. This action is often described in terms of counterdata collection. In *Keywords of the Datafied State*, Seyi Olojo defines counterdata as "data that is collected in contestation of a dominant institution or ideology," also being "a means for communities to tell their own stories through the use of data."[27] We echo that definition here, emphasizing how the counterdata collection process is active, intentional, and contextualized, undertaken with political aims and usually in explicit relation to the state or other powerful institutions, which will be called upon to address those public aims.

We can understand what happened in the Argentine case, when CLAMOR gathered data on the disappeared people in order to challenge the state's absence of data, as an example of counterdata production. Another demonstration of counterdata production is found in family-led organizations in Mexico that collect data on the disappeared, primarily led by mothers searching for their children.[28] The Mexican government lacks comprehensive data on disappearances and does not prioritize searching for the disappeared, despite at least 100,000 open cases.[29] In a counterdata action, these organizations conduct independent research, create lists of the

27 Seyi Olojo, "Counterdata" in *Keywords of the Datafied State*, eds. Jenna Burrell, Ranjit Singh, and Patrick Davison (Data & Society Research Institute, 2024).

28 Arely Cruz-Santiago, "Lists, Maps, and Bones: The Untold Journeys of Citizen-Led Forensics in Mexico," *Victims & Offenders* 15, no. 3 (April 2020): 350–69, https://doi.org/10.1080/15564886.2020.1718046.

29 Vanessa Buschschlüter, "Mexico Disappearances Reach Record High of 100,000 Amid Impunity," *BBC News*, May 17, 2022, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-61477704

disappeared, search for clandestine mass graves, and preserve bones to be further analyzed, what Arely Cruz-Santiago defines as a scientific act of care and a political act at the same time.[30]

Counterdata production can also describe what happens in the Americas (and other places around the world) when feminist data activists collect data on the killings of women — including cis and trans women and other feminized bodies — because their governments undercount or do not count these killings at all.[31] To illustrate the strength of these counterdata activists, the Data + Feminism Lab at MIT has mapped more than 180 organizations worldwide that produce counterdata on lethal violence related to gender. Many of these organizations produce their data to contest the state's missing data about gender-based violence. This counterdata (and related actions) pressures the state for additional data availability, financial resources, and/or public policies and political interventions, refusing to allow the government's continued negligence of these issues.

A 2020 report from *Socorristas en Red (feministas que abortamos),* a Argentine organization, exemplifies the impact that counterdata production can have on the state, including laws and policies. Until 2020, voluntary abortion was not legalized in the country, thus there was scarce official data on the reality of abortions. Between 2014 and 2019, this organization supported and interviewed 38,116 women in Argentina, offering them information on the use of medication for abortion.[32] In the report, the organization shared the results of these interviews, presenting an aggregated look at the experiences of women and trans people they help to perform abortions.[33] Through their counterdata production, *Socorristas en Red* produced robust evidence on the reality of abortion in the country, supporting arguments for the ongoing political debate on the legalization of abortion. Together with

30 Cruz-Santiago, "List, Maps, and Bones."

31 D'Ignazio, *Counting Feminicide*; Catherine D'Ignazio, Isadora Cruxên, Helena Suárez Val, Angeles Martine Cuba, Mariel García-Montes, and Silvana Fumega, Harini Suresh, and Wonyoung So, "Feminicide and Counterdata Production: Activist Efforts to Monitor and Challenge Gender-Related Violence," *Patterns* 3, no. 7 (July 2022), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.patter.2022.100530.; Suárez et al., *Monitoring, Recording, and Mapping Feminicide*.

32 Socorristas en Red. "Sistematización de Acompañamientos a Abortar: Realizados En El Año 2019 Por Socorristas En Red (Feministas Que Abortamos)." Argentina: Socorristas en Red, April 2020. https://socorristasenred.org/sistematizacion-2019/.

33 Socorristas en Red, "Sistematización."

other organizations, their direct-action work, service provision, and counterdata production challenged dominant norms in the country, contributing, from concrete experiences, to create changes in the legal framework, in particular the 2020 law in Argentina that legalized abortion.[34]

The abortion case exemplifies the broader political nature of missing data. Neither identifying missing data, nor producing counterdata on its own, are sure means of effecting change. This process also necessarily involves political action. As stated in *Counting Feminicide* concerning organizations that produce counterdata on feminicides: "in none of these cases — absolutely zero — do activists think that more data alone can lead to social change."[35] That is, the process of working toward justice does not end with producing or presenting data in either a quantitative or qualitative way. Counterdata production must be part of a broader strategy of engagement and political mobilization. This broader engagement gives data (or its absence) meaning, including criticisms of particular data collection and measurement practices and claims about cases when data should not be collected at all.

Missing Data as a Protection Strategy

Withholding data and protecting it from the reach of the state — effectively producing missing data — can be a protection strategy for minoritized groups. Inequality of power, especially between the state and society, is an important consideration with respect to missing data and strategies of counterdata production that we describe here. Demanding more data and producing more data for the state or by the state is not a guaranteed solution to social problems and, moreover, producing additional data can sometimes

34 Alba Ruibal and Cora Fernandez Anderson, "Legal Obstacles and Social Change: Strategies of the Abortion Rights Movement in Argentina," *Politics, Groups, and Identities* 8, no. 4 (August 2020): 698–713, https://doi.org/10.1080/21565503.2018.1541418.

35 D'Ignazio, *Counting Feminicide*.

actively generate harm.[36] A large body of work demonstrates how minoritized groups — including Black people, queer people, poor people and/or religious minorities — are actively sought out, over-surveilled, and profiled by the state.[37]

For example, Ruha Benjamin discusses databases on gangs in California. Benjamin explains how, once in the database, this population, which is 87 percent Black and/or Latinx, is subjected to increased surveillance and consequently is exposed to more risks, including police violence.[38] Situations like this happen due to historic patterns of racialized policing, spatial exclusion, and state-sanctioned denial of opportunities to racial minorities. However, the harms associated with being counted as data can sometimes be less overt. This is explained in *Data Feminism* with the concept of the "paradox of exposure."[39] The concept describes how the possible gains that might derive from being counted and represented in datasets require being made visible to the state and powerful institutions, which in turn may be dangerous and even deadly for minoritized groups.[40] For example, having more data on LGBTQIA+ people could "inform decisions made about the allocation of resources, changes in legislation, access to services and protections under the law."[41] However, this data might also draw unwanted attention and invite possible targeting and harm. In addition, much data collected about the lives and experiences of these populations often stigmatizes or pathologizes them, marking them as deviant from the normative majority.[42] This form of harm usually results from data collection being undertaken by researchers outside these communities operating in the mode of what is called "dysfunctional rescuing," meaning, "helping based on an assumption that people in the target group cannot help themselves."[43] In these cases, researchers neglect to build relationships with the people who are subject to these datasets.[44]

36 D'Ignazio and Klein, *Data Feminism*.

37 Ruha Benjamin, *Race After Technology: Abolitionist Tools for the New Jim Code* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2019).; D'Ignazio and Klein, *Data Feminism;* *Virginia Eubanks, Automating Inequality : How High-Tech Tools Profile, Police, and Punish the Poor* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2017); Kevin Guyan, *Queer Data: Using Gender, Sex and Sexuality Data for Action* (London and New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2022); Alexis Henshaw, *Digital Frontiers in Gender and Security: Bringing Critical Perspectives Online* (Bristol: Bristol University Press, 2023).

38 Benjamin, *Race After Technology*.

39 D'Ignazio and Klein, *Data Feminism*, p. 71.

40 Os Keyes, "Counting the Countless: Why Data Science is a Profound Threat for Queer People," *Real Life Mag*, April 8, 2019, https://reallifemag.com/counting-the-countless/.

41 Guyan, *Queer Data*.

42 Ibid.

43 Asha Mehta and Kad Smith, "Conflict Resolution with Power and Privilege in Mind," *CompassPoint Nonprofit Services*, 2018, https://www.compasspoint.org/sites/default/files/documents/MANUAL_ConflictResolution_KS-AM_Sep2018.pdf.

44 D'Ignazio and Klein, *Data Feminism*.

This echoes a critique often heard in Indigenous communities with respect to colonial researchers and motivates efforts toward data sovereignty, as described in the "Indigenous Data Sovereignty" entry by Stephanie Russo Carroll, Marisa Duarte, and Max Liboiron.[45] Indigenous groups may also refuse to engage with the colonial state because they do not see it as a legitimate actor and instead assert Indigenous sovereignty over territory and information. For example, in *Counting Feminicide*, Annita Lucchesi recounts how the federal government sought access to her organization's database of Missing and Murdered Indigenous People. With each request, the organization consulted with families who universally felt that the information should *not* be shared. As Lucchesi says, their data production is about "sovereignty and kinship" and not about recognition, reform or cooperation with the state. Thus, from the perspective of the state, which is making the demand, the data is missing.[46]

This example underscores, once again, how missing data is a relational concept — that is, constituted by a demand for data issued from one group or institution to another. In some cases, demands from civil society to the state for missing data may benefit minoritized communities and neglected issues. In other cases, however, minoritized groups may need to actively produce missing data in order to protect themselves from the purview of the state, especially if those datasets could be weaponized in the context of a more extensive configuration of unequal power.[47]

Final Notes

We understand missing data as one part of a larger political process by which different groups make political demands for data and information

45 Stephanie Russo Carrol, Marisa Duarte, and Max Liboiron, "Indigenous Data Sovereignty," in *Keywords of the Datafied State*, eds. Jenna Burrell, Ranjit Singh, and Patrick Davison (Data & Society, 2024).

46 D'Ignazio, *Counting Feminicide*.

47 Ọnụọha, "Missing Data Sets."

to other groups. Civil society may demand data and information from the state or other powerful institutions about key issues. Likewise, the state may demand data from civil society groups who are actively engaged in counterdata production. Additional political engagement is also part of this process and ranges from the production of counterdata to public pressure on the state to collect, maintain, or publish previously missing data, or a combination of those. The demand to acknowledge and take action on different issues can result in practical, political, and public measures from governments, including enacting legislation and implementing public policies, such as providing reparations for families of people who disappeared, developing state policies on gender-related violence, generating official public datasets on environmental issues, and so on. However, political results are not guaranteed from data collection alone. Furthermore, even the missing data concept and its consequent practices can be mobilized from groups with different ideologies; missing data, as we propose here, is fundamentally connected to social justice. As such, addressing structural inequality is the ultimate requirement if the objective is to comprehensively address the challenges associated with an emancipatory missing data perspective and its political and social consequences.