

Keynote Talk

Taking on Big Tech: New Paradigms for New Possibilities

Dr. Safiya U. Noble

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Abstract

In her recent best-selling book *Algorithms of Oppression*, Dr. Safiya Noble challenges the idea that “Big Tech” offers an equal playing field for all forms of ideas, identities, and activities. Her work argues that the combination of private interests, along with the monopoly status of a relatively small number of internet companies, leads to a limited understanding of how racism is created, maintained, and disseminated in everyday digital engagements.

Data discrimination is a real social problem, and in this talk, Noble offers a powerful set of data points, examples, and provocations. She asserts we are just at the beginning of creating new paradigms of justice with the tech sector.

Biography

Dr. Safiya Umoja Noble is an Associate Professor at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) in the Department of Information Studies where she serves as the Co-Founder and Co-Director of the UCLA Center for Critical Internet Inquiry (C2i2). She also holds appointments in African American Studies and Gender Studies. She is a Research Associate at the Oxford Internet Institute at the University of Oxford and has been appointed as a Commissioner on the Oxford Commission on AI & Good Governance (OxCAIGG). She is a board member of the Cyber Civil Rights Initiative, serving those vulnerable to online harassment.

Previously, she was a visiting faculty member to the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, and began her academic career as an Assistant Professor in the College of Media and the Institute of Communications Research at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Dr. Noble is the recipient of a Hellman Fellowship and the UCLA Early Career Award. Her academic research focuses on the design of digital media platforms on the internet and their impact on society. Her work is both sociological and interdisciplinary, marking the ways that digital media impacts and intersects with issues of race, gender, culture, and technology. She is regularly quoted for her expertise on issues of algorithmic discrimination and technology bias by national and international press including *The Guardian*, the BBC, CNN International, *USA Today*, *Wired*, *Time*, *Full Frontal with Samantha Bee*, *The New York Times*, and Virginia Public Radio, and a host of local news and podcasts, including *Science Friction*, and *Science Friday* to name a few. Recently, she was named in the “Top 25 Doers, Dreamers, and Drivers of 2019” by *Government Technology* magazine.

Dr. Noble is the co-editor of two edited volumes: *The Intersectional Internet: Race, Sex, Culture and Class Online* and *Emotions, Technology & Design*. She currently serves as an Associate Editor for the *Journal of Critical Library and Information Studies*, and is the co-editor of the Commentary & Criticism section of the *Journal of Feminist Media Studies*. She is a member of several academic journal and advisory boards, and holds a Ph.D. and M.S. in Library & Information Science from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and a B.A. in Sociology from California State University, Fresno where she was recently awarded the Distinguished Alumni Award for 2018.