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HIST 488

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April 1, 2023

Data Ethics in the History of Urban Crises

The history of urban crises, policing, and the plight of urban Black Americans is defined by social scientific research and literature. This paper relies on the primary analysis of the Moynihan Report, a policy document that employed social scientific research conducted by Daniel Patrick Moynihan, at the request of then-President Lyndon Johnson. Johnson enlisted Moynihan to investigate the origins of socioeconomic disparities across races in the United States as he sought to develop the Great Society. Although he acknowledges important historical context advocates for national action, Moynihan made certain lapses in his analysis of data and social context, leading to oversimplified takeaways. Similarly, I argue that the "War on Crime" undertaken by the government neglected important context and analysis similar to Moynihan. During this intense "War on Crime," the federal government featured discriminatory law enforcement measures that created skewed crime data and its conclusions. Urban crime and penal data surrounding the "War on Crime" are prevalent in Elizabeth Hinton's *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*, which thoroughly examines the history of mass incarceration in the United States. Not only do the Moynihan Report and *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime* contain data analysis, but they also illustrate the historical context and discourse racial inequality, urban planning, and law enforcement in 1960s and 1970s America. Without considering the historical context on these topics, social statistical inference is limited.

Understanding complex phenomena such as racial inequality, urban planning, and policing using data analysis is only possible upon sufficient historical and contextual knowledge.

Before embarking on a literature review of the aforementioned texts, the usage of race in statistical analysis needs to be acknowledged. While there have been many ill-conceived efforts to differentiate biological differences across races, in reality, there is minuscule genetic diversity across races and humans as a species.¹ Furthermore, race is an arbitrary social construct enabled by humans as a means to stratify themselves. This fact is absolutely vital to the analysis presented in this paper. Eugenics and scientific racism fuel narratives and stereotypes that are detrimental to the fabric of society. Paradoxically, race must be considered as a predictor in the social sciences. Even though race truly has no biological merit, it contributes to much of the socioeconomic phenomena in the world. Physical and social environments, and thus the actions that arise from these environments, are consistently permeated by race and continue to shape the human experience. Even though it is a social construct, race impacts every person's life on a daily basis. In a world where massive inequality exists across races, it must be studied to advance social justice and reduce inequality and oppression that plagues society.

From an analytical perspective, inference should not only be initiated by data exploration but must feature robust theory-driven critiques for ethical implications. In these social science practices, I argue that many studies have originated with flawed theories, supported by skewed or incomplete data insights, which lead to problematic conclusions and information. An example of this dynamic is the Moynihan Report. Prior to dissecting the Moynihan Report, the historical context it was published in is significant.

Before his assassination, President John F. Kennedy tailored domestic policy in 1963 around combating poverty. In 1964, then-President Lyndon B. Johnson focused his domestic

¹"Race is a Social Construct." 2017. Center for Health Progress. 1

agenda on urban conditions, especially poverty. In January 1964, Johnson declared his administration would embark on a “War on Poverty” to significantly reduce poverty and increase employment, especially in low-income African American communities. Johnson also supported liberal and progressive legislation for the era as a part of his platform of the Great Society. In July of 1964, Johnson facilitated the passing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which increased legal protections for minority groups such as African Americans. Johnson aimed to continue the civil rights momentum with a famous commencement speech at historically Black Howard University on June 4th, 1965. In this speech, Johnson declares, “Freedom is not enough” and that despite the passing of the Civil Rights Act, further action must be taken to improve the conditions of poor Black Americans.² Also in his speech, Johnson attributed some of the struggles of poor Black Americans to a “breakdown of Negro family structure” stemming from “centuries of oppression and persecution of the Negro man.”³ This mention of dysfunctional family structure as a result of oppression is likely explained by Moynihan’s influence during 1964 and 1965. While the uprisings in Watts, California in the summer of 1965 began to adversely affect mainstream discourse surrounding racial justice, Johnson courageously had brought racial justice and the advancement of Black Americans to the national spotlight as a pressing issue.

When Johnson decided to continue Kennedy’s fight against poverty in 1964, Daniel Patrick Moynihan was tasked with examining the causes of unemployment, poverty, and poor conditions for lower-class Black families in the United States.⁴ Moynihan was the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Policy, Planning, and Research from 1963-1965 for then-President

² Patterson, James T. 2010. *Freedom Is Not Enough: The Moynihan Report and America's Struggle Over Black Family Life--from LBJ to Obama*. N.p.: Basic Books, ix

³ Patterson, x

⁴ Patterson, xii

Lyndon Johnson Completed in March 1965, three months before Johnson delivered his famous speech Howard University, Moynihan's final product was a report entitled *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*. *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action* is commonly referred to as the Moynihan Report and will be referred to as such for the duration of the paper. The Moynihan Report is an analysis of social conditions focused on the plight of Black Americans, with a focus on family structure and dynamics. In the report, Moynihan argues that historical oppression ravaged Black family structure in a "tangle of pathology" that fueled poverty, unemployment, and poor quality of life for many Black Americans.⁵

The Moynihan Report was controversial upon mainstream discussion and involved scholarly criticism. The report allegedly only took a "few weeks" to complete, which was likely due to the urgency that racial, economic, and urban conditions took in the Labor Department.⁶ One of the contributors on the report alongside Moynihan, Paul Barton, reportedly claimed that their work "had been done in an extraordinarily short time. *And no reviewers had been used, and no one else, to my knowledge, had even read the Report.*"⁷ This claim is supported also by the fact that upon completion, one copy of the report was sent straight to Secretary of Labor William Wirtz, while 99 other copies were immediately locked in a safe.⁸ Thus, it is likely that there was little scientific peer review of the Moynihan Report. There were also some internal concerns that some statistics, mainly concerning illegitimate children, were "inexact."⁹ Additionally, it is possible that persistent Black political mobilization led by Martin Luther King Jr. in 1964 facilitated an accelerated timeline for Moynihan to produce the report.¹⁰ While it is difficult to

⁵ Moynihan, Daniel P., and Office of Policy Planning and Research, United States Department of Labor. 1965. "The Negro Family: The Case for National Action." (March), 27

⁶ Patterson, 42

⁷ Patterson, 42

⁸ Patterson, 42

⁹ Patterson, 37

¹⁰ Patterson, 38-39

truly know the exact timeline of the report's revision, these claims suggest that the Moynihan Report was rushed and lacked much of any peer review, which is an essential part of the scientific process. Another potential reason the Moynihan Report was completed so quickly was because of pre-existing literature on Black pathology that Moynihan constructed his argument around.

In W.E.B. Du Bois' 1899 *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study* he highlights that two main features of Black poverty are low wages and not being wealthy enough to marry.¹¹ In 1908, Du Bois' *The Negro American Family* points out that slavery prevented legal marriages, legal families, and legal children and, destroyed the respect of Black women and their bodies.¹² As the dominant scholar on African American studies, Du Bois' claims carried significant weight in the sociological world, and for good reason. However, Du Bois' arguments became more obfuscated in the mid-1900s as other scholars Stanley Elkin, Nathan Glazer, E. Franklin Frazier, and Kenneth Clark endorsed psychological issues stemming from slavery as explaining Black conditions now.¹³ Du Bois' analysis was conducted much earlier and was more accurate about the plight of the Black American compared Elkin, Glazer, Frazier, and Clark. Moynihan received criticism for citing these scholars for their flawed work. For instance, these authors made bold causal claims regarding the impact of slavery on Black psychology and socioeconomic outcomes, which is incredibly hard to analyze as its legacy left unequal effects across Black Americans.¹⁴ Yet, in the mid-1960s, nonwhite rising welfare cases were increasing despite lower unemployment, and this was evidence for Moynihan that something else, like the "tangle of pathology" was contributing to their condition.¹⁵

¹¹ Patterson 26-27

¹² Patterson 27-28

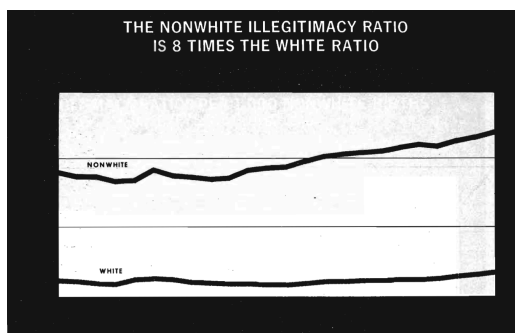
¹³ Patterson 33-35

¹⁴ Patterson, 36-38

¹⁵ Patterson 25-26

While Moynihan's analysis made some key errors, Moynihan did not necessarily have malicious intentions. Moynihan was considered a liberal who was consistently concerned with poverty and the plight of poor Black Americans. In the preface of the report, he acknowledged that in addition to structural oppression, African Americans in the 1960s were still fighting "the racist virus" that plagues America and "three centuries of sometimes unimaginable mistreatment."¹⁶ Although he immediately pivoted to another idea following these claims, this represented a profound realization that African-Americans lived with various forms of trauma and faced daily threats from threatening racists in America. The acknowledgment, yet absence of important context, leads to one of the most glaring deficiencies of the Moynihan Report: the assumption that these conditions created an environment for the true deficiency: the dysfunctional family structure, which was responsible for poverty and unemployment in Black communities.

To support his hypothesis of the crumbling Black family structure, Moynihan featured a gauntlet of data visualizations. Many of these visualizations described the lower rates of Black Americans possessing "traditional" family structures. One of the charts, featured to the left, showed that the rate of births out of wedlock was eight times as high for nonwhite Americans as



for white Americans. This chart was intended to serve as evidence for the argument surrounding dysfunctional family structure, but it supports a controversial narrative of fatherlessness in Black communities. Moynihan makes several arguments supporting the idea of absent

father figures in poor Black families as a significant influence on the psychology of Black Americans. Not only does Moynihan extrapolate all "nonwhite" people to Black Americans, but

¹⁶ Moynihan, ii

Moynihan also does not consider non-traditional family structures. Rates of births out of wedlock and marriage rates are not the only way to measure a father's involvement in their child's life.

A CDC study published in 2013 aimed to explore this nuance by measuring time spent with their children in various situations such as eating meals, taking them to activities, assisting with schoolwork, etc. This CDC study contains a plethora of comparisons across demographics and activities. While Black families traditionally have higher rates of single-parent households, Black fathers outperform Hispanic and White fathers in many metrics in both coresidential and non-coresidential households such as helping children bathe or dress every day, helping with and/or confirm homework completion, taking their children to activities every day, among others.¹⁷ Considering the study examined a large number of situations, there are obviously some other metrics where black fathers performed worse than white fathers. Regardless, there is empirical, current evidence that effective black fatherhood is both present and vibrant, even if they do not live with their children. While living with children has a greatly positive impact on their development, and Moynihan correctly asserts that black fathers are less likely to live with their children, this CDC evidence weakens the validity of Moynihan's argument. Moynihan should have introduced more nuance to his analysis by acknowledging the various forms parenting can take. For instance, he should have included data surrounding time spent with children and offer historical context about why Black marriages are less common, such as theories stated by Du Bois. Additionally, when considering the scope of racial inequality in America, it is unconvincing that out-of-wedlock births, considering the various forms of parenting, is the cause of poverty and poor urban conditions for Black Americans.

¹⁷ Jones, Mosher, and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; National Center for Health Statistics 2013, 6-8

One series of visualizations and analyses that is especially misleading in the Moynihan Report was the discussion about the neighborhood of Harlem, compared to the rest of New York City. Harlem in the 1960s suffered from many systemic barriers for African Americans. The neighborhood was the heart of Black America, yet it was also recognized for its extreme poverty, crime, and poor urban conditions. Moynihan cited the board of directors of Harlem Youth Opportunities Unlimited, spearheaded by the aforementioned Kenneth Clark, who conducted a study that attributed conditions in Harlem to a lower propensity for a traditional family structure.¹⁸ Not only did Moynihan endorse this statement, but he also claimed “what is true of central Harlem, can be said to be true of the Negro American world in general.”¹⁹ This generalization was not possible. Harlem was solely one city with a certain portfolio of conditions. While one could generalize to an entire population given the cultural significance of

Table 18

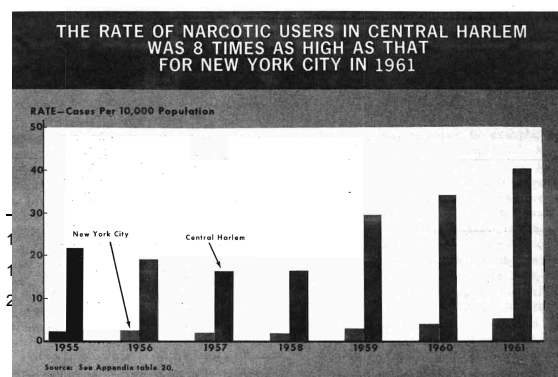
MEDIAN IQ SCORES FOR CENTRAL HARLEM AND NEW YORK CITY PUPILS COMPARED TO NATIONAL NORMS

Grade in School	Central Harlem	New York City	National
Third	90.6	98.6	100.0
Sixth	86.3	99.8	100.0
Eighth	87.7	100.0	100.0

Source: Harlem Youth Opportunities Unlimited, Inc., *Youth in the Ghetto*, Adapted from chart 4, p. 193.

Harlem, this was also incorrect because many of these traits made Harlem so unique. Harlem had many inadequate urban and socioeconomic conditions, but also remarkable culture and history.

Regardless of Harlem’s uniqueness, extrapolating the conditions in one neighborhood to an entire population was inappropriate and misleading. Moynihan featured several graphs comparing social indicators in Harlem compared to New York City and the national average. Table 18 (pictured to the upper left) highlighted that median IQ



scores for third, sixth, and eighth graders in central Harlem were notably lower than scores in New York City and the national average²⁰. In a similar vein, the

chart to the left bluntly stated that the “rate of narcotics users in Central Harlem was 8 times as high as that for New York City in 1961.”²¹ At first glance, one may read these two charts and question if they present any danger. Yet Moynihan described Harlem as a place with large Black population living in poor urban conditions, who were far more likely to use drugs and less likely to be as educated. Considering Moynihan’s claims about Harlem’s applicability to the entire Black American population, these charts could be misinterpreted as Black Americans being more prone to drugs, crime or lower intelligence. This linear path of correlation and extrapolation demonstrates why Moynihan’s generalization of Harlem to the entire African American population was inappropriate, and potentially harmful.

Moreover, Moynihan consistently failed to acknowledge the structural challenges African Americans fought in the 1960s. Large urban areas with large Black populations such as Harlem, Atlanta, Detroit, Newark, etc. battled extremely poor urban conditions for much of the 1960s. On a local level, poor Black populations were often neglected by social services such as garbage collection and other means to enhance the quality of life in poor areas. Instead, local governments often cleared and destroyed ‘slums’ to evict undesirable residents. White racism was also a significant, consistent, and daunting presence that targeted and threatened Black communities and their prosperity. While Moynihan suggested that decades of oppression had led to these poor conditions, it was deficiencies in traditional Black family structure that prevented them from reducing poverty and improving their conditions. As Moynihan continued his argument, his thought process became even clearer. Moynihan argued that negative social indicators such as crime, school dropouts, poverty, etc. in the data suggested that Black Americans must be *causing* their own conditions. Because traditional Black family structures were declining, it is implied that lower-class Black Americans were unable to be uplifted from

²¹ Moynihan, 45

their own demise. The choice of the word “pathology” itself implied that Black Americans were plagued with a disease.²²

Given the framing of many of these visualizations, it appears that Moynihan developed the theory of the inadequate Black family as the main causal mechanism for undesirable conditions and the plight of African-Americans, and *then* curated his data analysis to exclusively support his narrative. This report epitomizes why working from a theory-initiated approach to data analysis is risky when it comes to data ethics. Because Moynihan was already fixated on the family structure and poor urban conditions, he hindered the scope of potential evidence. As mentioned previously structural discrimination and neglect, fueled by white racism, inhibited the mobility of poor Black Americans in the mid-1900s. White racism is often fueled by similar arguments of Black inferiority, yet does not make many appearances in the analysis presented in the Moynihan Report. Statistics tracking the prevalence of hate crimes and white supremacist groups would have almost certainly demonstrated overwhelming instances of white racism. Additionally, incorporating information about how the media portrayed Black Americans during the 1960s, especially after uprisings like in Watts, would have helped capture the rhetoric used by influential American publications. Additionally, Moynihan did not fully acknowledge the progress that had been made by Black Americans. Specifically, Moynihan did not adequately recognize the effort and determination of Black women providing for families as noted in books such as *Diverging Space for Deviants* by Akira Drake Rodriguez.²³ Moynihan also extensively focused on poor Black families, overlooking Black Americans who were resilient in advancing from the lower economic class to the middle class. Lastly, financial figures surrounding public service allocation should have been included as they could have shown uneven allocation across

²² Patterson, 62

²³ Rodriguez, Akira D. 2021. *Diverging Space for Deviants: The Politics of Atlanta's Public Housing*. N.p.: University of Georgia Press.

race and geography, which was seen during the “White Flight” of the mid-late 1900s. These figures could show if there was inadequate public school funding leading to lower test scores, sanitation and public works funding to maintain clean urban conditions, and social services to reduce drug use and crime and increase employment. Moynihan should have critically thought more about *why* the statistics he employs are as they appear so could appreciate the vital context surrounding the data he relies on.

Moynihan and the focus on the family structure of Black Americans indirectly contributed to discriminatory federal public policy including the “War on Crime” and “War on Drugs”. Both programs were based on the argument that increasing law enforcement presence in troubled areas would help eradicate negative behavior from troubled Black communities and improve conditions. Increased law enforcement presence has both positive and negative direct effects, including life-saving responses to serious incidents but also risk racial discrimination, tension, and over-policing. I argue that during the “War on Crime,” federal and local law enforcement agencies supported flawed theories similar to Moynihan’s and made similar lapses in their application and analysis of data.

In Elizabeth Hinton’s *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America*, the use of data is discussed frequently as she examined the implications of the “War on Crime” that was waged by the federal government in the 1960s and 1970s. The “War on Poverty” was an initiative implemented by the United States federal government, led by Lyndon Johnson aimed to combat poverty in America. The “War on Crime” elected to utilize one primary aspect of society to begin this campaign: law enforcement. Increasing the presence of law enforcement in areas with poor urban conditions, they believed, would help reduce the number of criminals and improve the neighborhood’s quality of life. This

strategy became a consensus policy tool after the aforementioned Watts uprising in 1965. This persistent measuring enabled politicians to prove prior, misinformed beliefs about Black Americans, their environments, and crime.

Hinton illustrates how proponents of the "War on Crime" relied heavily on crime statistics, which reflected the obsessive crime measures that politicians initiated. Before this policy change, Hinton underscores that violent crime rates had been declining and non-violent crime rates had remained somewhat steady nationally until the mid-1960s.²⁴ While she notes that crime generally rose in the 1960s, some cities such as New York City experienced three-fold increases in measures such as robbery rates in *a single year*.²⁵ While it is likely that the true robbery rates were higher than before intensive reporting became implemented, a rate that jumps three times as high is suspicious. While the true (unmeasurable) population crime rates were likely somewhere in between pre- and post-intensified reporting, statistics like this aided a narrative that urban areas such as New York City were dissolving into chaos because of rampant crime. In reality, the drastic increase in crime indicators is strongly correlated with the increased law enforcement measures and the increased reporting of crime statistics in areas with poor urban conditions.²⁶ Urban police departments like in 1960s New York City had a political incentive to arrest more people, as influenced by the national and city agendas anti-crime agendas. Additionally, police departments had financial incentives to arrest more people, especially in urban areas because some of their department's funding was determined by the crime rate.²⁷ While correlation does not equate to causation, these crime reporting trends become more sensible when considering the timing of increased crime reporting on a micro level, and the

²⁴ Hinton, 6

²⁵ Hinton, 6

²⁶ Hinton, 6

²⁷ Hinton, 6

dissemination of crime statistics and literature by larger bodies like the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Hinton also argues that the Federal Bureau of Investigation overstated black crime in the 1970s by presenting statistical analysis with serious limitations. As Hinton notes in the footnotes, key crime reports such as the F.B.I.'s Uniform Crime Report relied heavily on urban police departments. Urban demographics and conditions certainly did not accurately represent entire demographic populations, leading to likely biased historical crime statistics. Not only did The Uniform Crime Report, the F.B.I.'s centralized crime report, over-represent urban areas in its calculation, but it also over-emphasized point-of-arrest statistics and did not provide sufficient information about post-arrest outcomes in the 1960s and 1970s.²⁸ Hinton states that while "African Americans had the highest rate of arrest for crimes of murder, robbery, and rape" in the 1970s, they also had "the lowest percentage of arrestees who eventually faced prosecution and trial."²⁹ The F.B.I.'s employment of statistics emphasizes the need for additional context and holistic reporting. If arrest rates are the main statistic that is getting reported to policymakers, the media, and the American public, the whole picture of Black crime is obfuscated. In a sense, this dynamic implies conditional probabilistic thinking because once new information about the low Black prosecution and trial rates is synthesized, the arrest rates become more suspect, supporting the idea of racial profiling and discriminatory policing practices.

Another example of destructive data analysis occurred under the Nixon administration in St. Louis, Missouri. Funded by the federal government, police in St. Louis developed one of the first "predictive policing" policies, which used pre-existing crime data to determine groups or locations that theoretically were more likely to commit crimes. The St. Louis strategy relied on

²⁸ Hinton, ??

²⁹ Hinton, 24

police interviews of St. Louis teenagers, compiled them, and used them to produce aggregate measures of areas of crime based on the interviewee's age, race, gender, and other demographic information.³⁰ The glaring issue with this analysis is that police officers conducting interviews were given the liberty to select the interviewees themselves with little restriction. This led to subjects being often targeted through racial profiling and coercion into providing demographic and other information that would be used as “justification” for over-policing, removal of “questionable” black youth, and the prevalence of black crime.³¹ Thus, selection bias by police led to the distorted and uneven representation of data, which were fed into basic computer algorithms, and regurgitated heavily-Black areas to disproportionately police. While academic fields such as data justice were not as developed in the 1970s, police could have prevented the regurgitation of flawed statistics.

Police crime reporting, F.B.I. data limitations, and the St. Louis discriminatory data-driven policing program also raise questions about how crime reporting should be conducted. As emphasized by recent movements such as Black Lives Matter, police departments and law enforcement are not always nondiscriminatory in their practices, often disproportionately affecting Black Americans. Additionally, law enforcement – both local and federal – have vested interests in the information they report. Hinton acknowledges that since the 1930s, American society still relied on the F.B.I. 's Uniform Crime Rate report, despite its limitations and threats to validity.³² Furthermore, she notes that the limitations of crime reporting have historically served as justification for even more law enforcement and measurement.³³ Despite the criticisms presented above, crime remains an incredibly difficult phenomenon to

³⁰ Hinton, 23

³¹ Hinton, 23

³² Hinton, 6

³³ Hinton, 7

measure. Crime encompasses behaviors of varying danger, and is difficult to condense into a holistic measure. Additionally, when considering segregated geographies, measuring crime can have certain selection and measurement bias. Law enforcement must be situated in areas that need their presence, but as this history proves, over-policing and how they report their data is a complex challenge.

To this effect, Hinton argues that statistical research in the post-war period “laid the groundwork for popular and scholarly discussions about Black Americans as a distinctly dangerous population.”³⁴ “Statistics” that do not encompass the structural and discriminatory American society, like Moynihan and some of 1960s crime reporting, intimated Black Americans are in a fight against a “pathological” predisposition to crime and poverty. Overstating statistics collected in urban areas with large Black populations and poor urban conditions can serve as a “truth” for those who are not familiar with the extenuating circumstances which shape the data. Hinton argues, “The seemingly neutral statistical and sociological ‘truth’ of Black criminality concealed the racist thinking that guided the strategies federal policymakers developed for the War on Crime, first in the 1960s, then through the 1970s and beyond.”³⁵ This sentiment of this statement gains additional merit when viewed in conjunction with the Moynihan Report. Moynihan’s argument that the deficiencies in Black family structures led to crime, drug abuse, and poverty were essentially quantified during the “War on Crime.” In tandem with the Moynihan Report, the data that the “War on Crime” produced flawed inferences about urban conditions and the plight of African-Americans in the 1960s.

In conclusion, this history is vital when exploring the future of data in historical and political applications. As will be outlined extensively, data is an incredibly powerful tool, but it

³⁴ Hinton, 19

³⁵ Hinton, 3

can also be used irresponsibly. Directly critiquing work that does not place enough emphasis on data ethics is paramount for accountability and the standards of future work. Topics based on constructs such as race and class require establishing nondiscriminatory practices in data collection and statistical reporting. These objectives will become even more relevant with the increase in computing power and the development of open-access artificial intelligence. One can learn from the positive aspects of data utilization in the books, but also the shortcomings they present.

On this note, there needs to be considerable emphasis on how major news media reports on and discusses race. To this effect, contextual information and framing are two specific areas that news outlets should devote more attention and airtime too. As technology advances and social media continues to dominate much of the American political discourse, it is imperative to present holistic information. One example of this would be acknowledging the variety in parenting, and incorporating alternatives to reporting family structure in addition to marriage and out-of-wedlock children. As demonstrated in earlier sections, without sufficient context, data interpretation and analysis can be incredibly skewed. Thus, if the media publicly acknowledges some of the limitations and discussions around data, it is likely that society will understand some of the nuances surrounding these topics. Additionally, with further education on contextual and anti-discriminatory histories and practices, the repeating of offensive stereotypes found in television, journalism, film, and radio, will be reduced. Another foundational scientific report, *The Kerner Commission Report*, made similar recommendations in 1967. The Kerner Commission accuses the news media of not communicating “a sense of degradation, misery, and hopelessness of living in the ghetto” to their largely white audiences.³⁶ Furthermore, the report

³⁶Guariglia, Matthew, and Jelani Cobb, eds. 2021. *The Essential Kerner Commission Report*. N.p.: WW Norton, 256

also points how the “absence of Negro faces and activities” on news programs treats Black Americans as is “they were not a part of the audience.”³⁷ Thus, when news media reports to large white audiences about raging Black crime, dangerous ghettos, or widespread black fatherlessness, white audiences will believe this to be the truth of what is “ordinary” of Black Americans. History informs the present to prevent making the mistakes of the past. Hopefully the future of data ethics and scientific reporting on race, urban conditions, and policing can lead to a more just and considerate society.

³⁷ Guariglia, 256

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