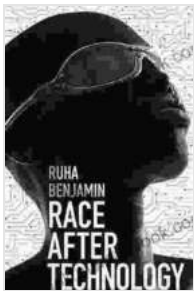


# Abolitionist Tools for the New Jim Code: Dismantling Racialized Technology

The rise of digital technologies has brought forth unprecedented possibilities for connection, access to information, and economic empowerment. However, these technologies have also been weaponized to perpetuate and reinforce systemic racism in society. The "New Jim Code," a term coined by legal scholars Ruha Benjamin and Sarah Brayne, refers to the use of racially biased algorithms, data surveillance, and predictive policing to create digital barriers that disadvantage marginalized communities.



## Race After Technology: Abolitionist Tools for the New Jim Code by Ruha Benjamin

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

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Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
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## Racially Biased Algorithms

One of the most insidious forms of the New Jim Code is racially biased algorithms. These algorithms, which are often used in hiring, lending, and

criminal justice systems, can perpetuate existing racial biases and further marginalize already vulnerable populations. For example, a study by ProPublica found that a widely used algorithm for predicting recidivism was twice as likely to mislabel Black defendants as being at high risk of committing future crimes compared to white defendants. This resulted in harsher sentences for Black individuals and contributed to the mass incarceration crisis.

## **Data Surveillance and Digital Redlining**

Data surveillance is another powerful tool that can be used to create digital barriers for marginalized communities. By collecting and analyzing data on individuals' online activity, companies and governments can create profiles that are used to make decisions about everything from housing to employment. However, this data can be biased and incomplete, leading to discrimination against individuals based on their race, gender, or other protected characteristics.

For example, a recent investigation by the Center for Investigative Reporting found that Facebook allows advertisers to target people based on their race, religion, and other sensitive information. This practice, known as "digital redlining," can limit the opportunities available to marginalized communities and perpetuate existing inequalities.

## **Predictive Policing**

Predictive policing algorithms are used by law enforcement agencies to identify individuals who are at high risk of committing crimes. However, these algorithms have been found to be racially biased, leading to increased surveillance and policing in communities of color. For example, a

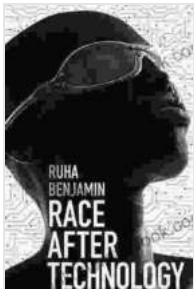
study by the University of Chicago found that a predictive policing algorithm used in Chicago was more likely to flag Black people for investigation than white people, even though Black people were less likely to commit crimes. This bias resulted in increased arrests and imprisonment of Black individuals.

## **Abolitionist Tools**

In the face of the New Jim Code, it is essential to develop abolitionist tools that can dismantle these digital barriers and promote racial equity. These tools include:

1. **Algorithmic Audits:** Algorithmic audits involve examining algorithms for bias and discrimination. By identifying and addressing these biases, we can ensure that algorithms are used fairly and equitably.
2. **Data Privacy and Protection:** Strong data privacy laws are essential to protect individuals from unfair surveillance and discrimination. These laws should give individuals control over their personal data and prohibit companies from using it to discriminate.
3. **Community-Based Data Collection:** Community-based data collection initiatives can provide more accurate and comprehensive data on marginalized communities. By collecting data from within these communities, we can address the biases and limitations of traditional data collection methods.
4. **Algorithmic Justice Advocacy:** Algorithmic justice advocacy organizations work to challenge the use of biased algorithms and promote algorithmic fairness. These organizations provide legal support, research, and education to ensure that algorithms are used to promote justice and equity.

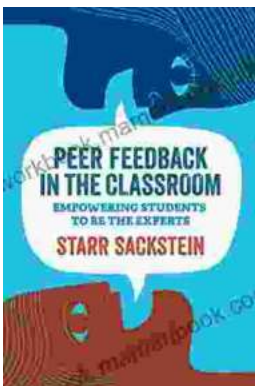
The New Jim Code is a serious threat to racial equity in the digital age. However, by developing and implementing abolitionist tools, we can dismantle these digital barriers and create a more just and equitable society. These tools empower marginalized communities, challenge biased algorithms, and promote data privacy and protection. By working together, we can create a future where technology is used as a force for good and not for oppression.



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