

DISCO Network Featured Event

Digital Studies Institute +
DISCO Network Book Talk

Discriminating Data:

Wendy Chun in
Conversation with
Lisa Nakamura

WENDY CHUN

X

LISA
NAKAMURA

Monday,
Dec. 6, 2021

12:00pm to
1:30pm EST

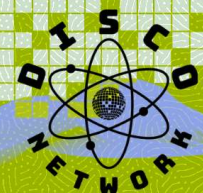
In *Discriminating Data*, Chun reveals how polarization is a goal—not an error—within big data and machine learning. These methods, she argues, encode segregation, eugenics, and identity politics through their default assumptions and conditions.

CART and ASL will
be provided.

[Wendy Hui Kyong Chun](#) is Simon Fraser University's Canada 150 Research Chair in New Media and leads the Digital Democracies Institute.

[Lisa Nakamura](#) is the Gwendolyn Calvert Baker Collegiate Professor of American Culture and Digital Studies and the founding Director of the Digital Studies Institute at the University of Michigan. She is the Lead P.I. for the DISCO Network.

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reveals how polarization is a goal—not an error—within big data and machine learning. These methods, she argues, encode segregation, eugenics, and identity politics through their default assumptions and conditions. Correlation, which grounds big data's predictive potential, stems from twentieth-century eugenic attempts to “breed” a better future. Recommender systems foster angry clusters of sameness through homophily. Users are “trained” to become authentically predictable via a politics and technology of recognition. Machine learning and data analytics thus seek to disrupt the future by making disruption impossible.

[Wendy Hui Kyong Chun](#) is Simon Fraser University's Canada 150 Research Chair in New Media and leads the Digital Democracies Institute. She is the author of several works including *Control and Freedom: Power and Paranoia in the Age of Fiber Optics* (MIT, 2006), *Programmed Visions: Software and Memory* (MIT, 2011), *Updating to Remain the Same: Habitual New Media* (MIT, 2016), *Discriminating Data* (MIT, 2021), and the co-author of *Pattern Discrimination* (University of Minnesota & Meson Press, 2019). She has been Professor and Chair of the Department of Modern Culture and Media at Brown University, where she worked for almost two decades. She has also been a Visiting Scholar at the Annenberg School at the University of Pennsylvania, Member of the Institute for Advanced Study (Princeton), and she has held fellowships from: the Guggenheim, ACLS, American Academy of Berlin, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard.

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Please register for this event in advance!

REGISTER

Digital Studies at the University of Michigan. She is the author of several books on race, gender, and the Internet. She is the founding Director of the Digital Studies Institute at the University of Michigan and the Lead P.I. for the DISCO (Digital Inquiry, Speculation, Collaboration and Optimism) Network.

Accessibility:

We want to make our events accessible to all participants. This online event will have CART and ASL provided. If you anticipate needing accommodations to participate, please contact our administrative assistant Eric (ericcman@umich.edu) or fill out our anonymous [access form](#). Please note that some accommodations must be arranged in advance and we encourage you to contact us as soon as possible.

Receive a 10% discount for *Discriminating Data* by using the code “MIT10” at [Penguin Random House](#).

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