

The Coalitional Lives of Data Pluralism

INTERGENERATIONAL FEMINIST RESISTANCE TO DATA APARTHEID

IN THE MONTHS LEADING UP TO the US Supreme Court's decision to overturn the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision, city streets all across the United States began to be seen pulsing with waves of green. That summer, as the court handed down its decision to dismantle fifty years of legal protection around abortion rights in the United States, feminist and reproductive rights advocates began filling sidewalks and streets with a sea of green, wearing the recognizable green scarves that Latin American feminists had been donning for nearly two decades to call for the right to legal, safe, and free abortions in varied national contexts across the continent. Across cities large and small in the United States, demonstrators marched and chanted with green banners and released green smoke into the air, rechanneling the symbolic acts that had marked Latin American feminist actions from the capital city streets of Buenos Aires and Bogota to the provinces of the high Andes. Now, in the marble hallways of the US Capitol building and on the streets outside, congressional representatives could be seen wearing the same green scarves that had turned Latin American city streets into a new symbol of coalitional feminist futures.

For good reason, US reproductive rights activists were loudly invoking solidarity with movements in Latin America. In the summer of 2022, the US Supreme Court's *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision turned the United States into only one of only three nations in the world (with Poland and Nicaragua) that had heightened restrictions to abortion access in the twenty-first century. In Latin America, however, a feminist tide was pointedly making landmark political gains and was turning the region in the other direction. In December 2020, after a multiyear-long debate, Argentina's senate voted to legalize abortion. Less than a year later, in

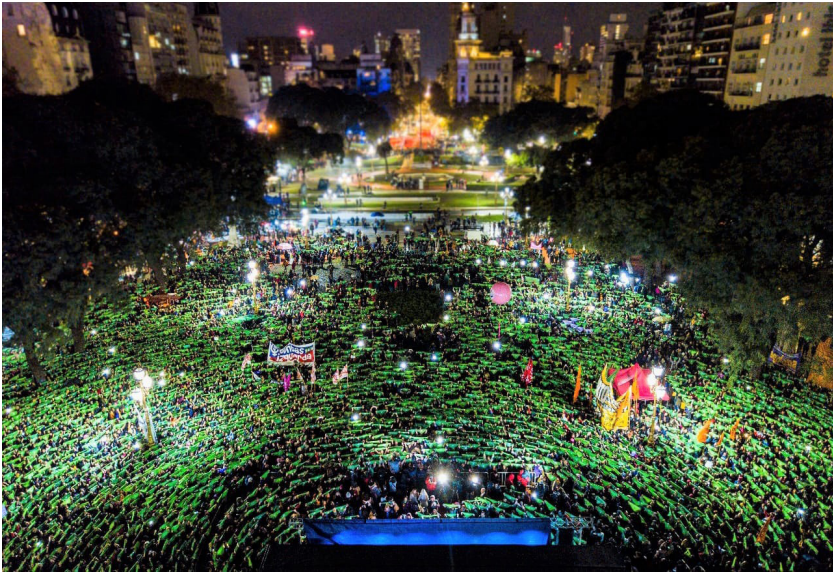


FIGURE 7. Photo of the feminist march in support of abortion rights in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on June 4, 2018, taken by the drone of the *Prensa Obrera*. (By *Prensa Obrera* / <https://youtu.be/Dp3soA2oDLY?si=7P7ftNorm-oCXQYg>)

September 2021, Mexico's Supreme Court voted to decriminalize abortion. And in February 2022, Colombia's constitutional court followed, marking feminist victories in three of the largest nations in Latin America, where Catholic majorities had once made such political futures seem unthinkable. Now, in Colombia, the 2022 court ruling established some of the most expansive legal protections for abortion (second only to Canada) anywhere in the Americas. Feminist organizers in country after country across the region, that is, had begun to use their newly gained momentum and legislative successes to press for a host of added reforms as central to their platform. This included calling for *mandatory* sex education courses in public schools and integrating transgender, queer, and disability rights perspectives into national curricula.

In the United States, news headlines emphasized the symbolic power of protestors' contemporary coordinations around abortion rights that rechanneled the Green Wave in diverse contexts across the regions. Articles made scattered mentions of acts of solidarity with US protestors, where Latin American feminists donned long red robes and white hoods, in visual reference to the dystopian future popularized in the English-language novel-turned-television series *The Handmaid's Tale*, as they stood vigil in front

of US embassies to protest the Supreme Court's decision. But among Latin American feminist networks, discussions remained focused on explicitly more strategic dimensions. Their exchanges made clear that protest had grown into something more than merely a means to channel an outcry of collective defiance, grief, and frustration. For feminist activists and scholars across the continent, protest had become a means to speak back to and challenge the exclusionary knowledge and norms reproduced by dominant institutions—from the state, legal, and religious authorities to corporations and elite universities. Their challenge was not only against the expansive forms of violence associated with the long-standing framing of abortion as “criminal,” but also for the deadly consequences that resulted from the structural marginalization and systemic underrepresentation of feminist standpoints from centers of power. Using the common resource of public space and a diverse assembly of bodies, they called such institutions to account. In site after site across the continent, the transformed streets turned into a symbolic force of refusal that exposed the insufficiency of dominant institutions that presumed to know, speak for, and “recognize” the gendered lives of women, the working poor, and other marginalized populations, and that powerfully animated the strength of feminist alternatives instead.

Moreover, across online forums and social media channels that had brought feminist collectives together across the region, organizers underscored how the recent gains around abortion protections were part of ongoing mobilizations that, for nearly two decades, had drawn together a broad coalition of cross-national, multigenerational feminist activists with diverse social justice actors across the continent. In some national contexts in the region, such coalitions had grown to include hundreds of organizations bridging reproductive rights advocates, anti-gender violence and LGBTQ organizations, unions and labor interests, Indigenous groups, and student organizations to work together as an active, pluralistic coalition (Kulbaczevska-Figat 2021). Such networks worked locally through neighborhood organizations, schools, unions, and other spaces of everyday life to successfully reframe abortion access as an issue that was not just about a bounded set of “women’s” rights in the way that dominant institutions from the state to the church had historically presumed a static, self-contained givenness to the category of “woman” itself. Rather, these networks showed that the issue implicated a range of social justice concerns that related gender inequities with the experience of everyday social violence more broadly. Central to this work was not merely the on-the-ground efforts for building popular coalitions, but intentional

knowledge work. They reframed the violence of criminalized and clandestine abortion as connected to other forms of structural violence around gender—not merely against women as a discrete population, but against diverse marginalized subjects whose own lived experiences evidenced how narrowly the law and liberal constructions of personhood represented and recognized a full spectrum of gendered lives.

This chapter attends to the knowledge work and alternative data practices behind the cultivation of feminist spaces of relating and their building of intentionally expansive coalitions as means to ground a politics of refusal against the long-standing misrecognitions of dominant institutions. Building on chapter 4's observations around nineteenth-century feminist data collaborations, I argue here that such commitments demonstrate not only global feminist imaginaries for a new data pluralism, but also work to actively counter predatory data's extractivist routines (Cifor et al. 2019; Simpson 2017; Tuck and Yang 2014) and threat to vulnerable populations through their growth of dispossessive and segregationist data infrastructures. By attending to the alternative knowledge practices and politics of refusal behind contemporary Latin American feminists' multisited coalition building, I underscore not merely the world-shaping potentials of data engagements driven by global actors other than the large corporate internet firms and Western knowledge institutions that have conventionally been framed—and arguably overnarrated—as the central protagonists behind today's data ecologies. I also explore how Latin American feminists' contemporary data work defies and presses beyond a politics of liberal recognition and inclusion as the paradigm for justice-based reform. They move instead toward what Audra Simpson describes as a politics of refusal, whose “hard-no” around dominant data regimes is grounded in a “deep cognizance of differing social and historical facts” (2017, 9) among marginalized collectives that point to the real need and possibilities of “producing and maintaining alternative structures of thought, politics and traditions away from and in critical relationship to states” and dominant institutions (2017, 2).

Their work thus importantly channels earlier arguments for a decolonial feminist practice as the grounds from which to imagine new forms of justice-centered knowledge work. Such modalities of practice are rooted in what Argentine philosopher María Lugones argued for as a pluralist feminist orientation (Lugones 2003, 2010). Grounded in calls for a “coalitional consciousness” (Sandoval 2000) between global actors in struggle, such pluralist feminist orientations worked to forge new forms of “complex

communication” (Lugones 2006) that could expand and transform conventional modes of relationality between diverse knowledge practitioners (Velez and Tuana 2020). Far from adhering to liberal traditions around pluralism, Latin American feminist orientations around data pluralism channel pluriversal knowledge ethics (Escobar 2018, 2020; Kothari et al. 2019; Morales and Reilly 2023) as commitments to realize what the Zapatistas describe as “a world where many worlds fit” and to counter what Caribbean science studies scholar Sylvia Wynter called the “coloniality of being/power/truth/freedom towards the human” (2003). It fostered a state of being where, as decolonial scholars Ashish Kothari, Ariel Salleh, Arturo Escobar, Federico Demaria, and Alberto Acosta elaborate, “all people’s worlds can co-exist with dignity and peace without subjection to diminishment, exploitation and misery . . . [from] patriarchal attitudes, racism, casteism, and other forms of discrimination” (Kothari et al. 2019, xxviii).

Unabashedly, then, decolonial feminists locate the practice of data pluralism in the space of liminal positionalities and “borderlands” where ideological and cultural “cross pollenizations” (Anzaldúa 1981, 1987) might enable another consciousness for new feminist world building to emerge. Over a generation ago, such orientations aimed to resist and refuse the forms of “single-axis thinking” (Crenshaw 1991) and “intellectual apartheid” (Sandoval 2000) normalized by dominant knowledge institutions—including Western academic organizations and liberal university campuses—that decolonial feminists diagnosed as tacitly reinforcing established social hierarchies. Their perspectives illuminated how dominant institutions diluted oppressed people’s resistance potential by segmenting forms of oppression into discrete, nonintersecting categories (i.e., race, gender, or class in exclusion of other categories) (Gipson, Corry, and Noble 2021). Even as African American feminist scholar Patricia Hill Collins observed that oppressions “cannot be reduced to one fundamental type” and that they instead “work together in producing injustice” (1990, 8), the experiences of feminists of color were continuously reduced by conventional norms of single-axis thinking to one category of oppression in exclusion of others (Combahee River Collective 1981; Moraga and Anzaldúa 1981).

This chapter thus explores how such foreclosures in the potential to forge political solidarities between marginalized populations continue to find resistance from contemporary decolonial feminist work in Latin America. Their critical investments have underscored the evolving means by which dominant knowledge institutions maintain power hierarchies through not

only sustaining a politics of marginalization, but also through a politics of segregation where potential allies and intellectual kin are divided into discrete social categories, subfields, or disciplines, and where such divisions can increasingly be effected through the contemporary application of dispossessive datafication regimes. Decolonial feminists' data pluralism thus underscores the work to generate alternatives to big data's extractive operations that have quietly amplified—and profited from—the division of oppressed populations via proprietary algorithms that segment users into predetermined classification systems. By decolonial feminist accounts, such appropriating operations not only fail to account for the complex, dynamic intersectionality threaded throughout diverse human experiences, but they also reify Western liberal relations of appropriation where competitive individualism and private property ownership operate as the basis for autonomy and freedom, and where property making exists as a device valued for its utility in maintaining and “keeping good order” (Byrd et al. 2018). Thus, as Jodi Byrd, Alyosha Goldstein, Jodi Melamed, and Chandan Reddy put it, appropriation as a voraciously unsated “normative practice” works by projecting property as “always a means to further accumulation, a relentlessly acquisitive relation to land, to being in place, to people, to here and elsewhere” (2018, 4). Big data further entrench hegemonic power relations by naturalizing competitive acquisition between entities as the default condition for growth and existence, and fracturing alternative potentials for “interworld and intra-world communication” (Lugones 2003) between oppressed beings that could be forged outside of Western, colonial knowledge regimes.

By pointing to global feminist imaginaries for a new data pluralism and contemporary experiments in developing coalitional consciousness, I underscore methods to push back against predatory data's instrumentalization and dispossession of human relationships. Decolonial feminists' coalitional work makes explicit—and pointedly refuses—the means by which predatory data preys upon and divides user populations through the dispossessive operations of datafication, as well as the conversion of individual human activity into a series of quantifiable indexes and information-based properties. Critical data scholars have noted that via such processes of datafication, human life can be rendered by Big Tech companies and dominant knowledge institutions into a new form of “raw” material and commodity that invites algorithmic control and manipulation, feeding the growth of predatory data's infrastructures of continuous extractions for profit (Couldry and Mejias 2019a, 2019b). More importantly, decolonial feminists' relational focus demonstrates how it is not

only the manipulation of individual lives on which predatory data's growth depends; rather, they also rely upon the instrumentalization of human relationships and the projected connections (and disconnections) that can be intervened upon and manipulated for continued value extraction. The mapping of such relationships is what allows individuals to be compared and measured against one another, so that distinct forms of "meaningful" action may be exercised over some and withheld over others. Indeed, the automated imposition of predetermined categories and the social relations they imply are what allow complex human lives to become legible (Bowker and Star 2000) to big data and AI systems—even as they reconstitute social hierarchies and amplify social division among populations in the process of such translations. Far from a neutral process, the operations of big data systems today that claim to dataify the human through social filtering, fragmentation, and atomization disproportionately jeopardize marginalized and minoritized populations—rendering the measure of their "difference" as the key metric that stabilizes the status of the majority.

US feminist critical data scholar Anna Lauren Hoffman aptly points to the "discursive violence" embedded within datafication's capacity as assigning different values to human life (Gandy 1993) through logics of quantification and statistical methods (Couldry and Mejias 2019a) and structuring—both socially and technologically—"how various identities and bodies are produced, surfaced, made sense of, seen as legitimate, and ascribed significance" (Hoffman 2021, 3543). Central to predatory data's process of datafying subjects through applications of big data and AI technologies, then, is the work to segment populations under predetermined classification schemes that channel and fix hegemonic notions of difference and thereby effect "ground truths about people and the world" (Stark and Hutson 2022). Predatory data thus rely on the assumption that predetermined descriptive categories and labels drawn from the past can be unproblematically assigned human experiences in the present. Predatory data likewise operate on the assumption that datafied subjects can, in turn, be unproblematically apprehended and accurately contained under such classifications moving into the future (Chun 2021). In the process of creating datafied identities, AI and big data systems not only reify a "reality" to past notions of difference, but also reduce the diverse embodied and lived experiences of individuals into only those components that can be made rapidly legible and meaningful to data-driven systems. Thus, the key to predatory data's processes is the capacity to manipulate not only individual human

identity through assigning predetermined labels, but the capacity to manipulate human *relationships* as well via classificatory groupings that encode “past” social relationships—and automate the reproduction of existing social hierarchies into the “future” of real-world relations.

Of course, the range of modern conceits around the promise of rational observation that ground predatory data’s presumption of the unproblematic reading of subjects as transparent, unitary, and stable entities has long been critiqued by decolonial and science studies scholars alike. The presumed order-making representation of diverse subjects under preestablished classification systems reasserts Western binaries of mind/body, nature/culture, and self/other into the foundation of big data architectures. Such dualisms—what decolonial and feminist scholars observe had globally spread through the imposition of colonial epistemologies—erased varied forms of being and relating that didn’t fit neatly into such binaries, negating their existence through narrow, monolithic understandings of human experience (Mohanty 1984). By legitimizing a hierarchical social order and advancing “unilinear, univocal, unillogical understandings of history” (Sandoval 2000), dualistic frameworks not only marginalized the experience of oppressed classes, but also silenced the diverse forms of agency and critical consciousness that existed outside dominant social and colonial orders. Moreover, as decolonial Indigenous scholar Audra Simpson underscored, such binary modes of reading the empirical world formed the basis of a system of “recognition and misrecognition indebted to deep philosophical histories of seeing and knowing” (2007, 69) that empowered varied acts of past and continuing dispossessions from marginalized peoples. In refusal of such active erasures, contemporary Latin American and decolonial feminists’ on-the-ground organizing works to recognize other means to know and account for the varied experiences of gendered lives that would unsettle the long-standing categorical impositions and misrecognitions of dominant knowledge institutions. Their undertakings to develop an alternative feminist pluralist data practice arguably recognize what Audre Lorde called the vital “interdependence” (1984) among differentially situated gendered lives, where coarticulated logics of resistance defended relations in worlds of “multiple sensing, multiple perceiving, and multiple sociality” (Lugones 2003).

Concerned with developing alternative forms of “objectivity” to resist knowledge practices that spoke with the pretense of universality and the “monologism of the colonizer [that] silenc[es] all contestatory interlocution” (Lugones 2006, 81), decolonial feminists aimed to ground new knowledge

production instead in the process of translating knowledge and expertise held among distinctly positioned actors and potential allies. María Lugones thus stressed that, in contrast to “liberal conversation,” the forms of “complex communication” (2006) that she argued for would thrive not on the presumption of a ready, self-evident transparency of identity, but instead on the recognition of the fundamental opacity and complexity of identity. Complex communication thus draws from the premise that subjects’ identities are never able to be captured simply through a superficial, skin-deep visual scan. Rather, complex communication creates “relational identities, meanings that did not precede the encounter, [and] ways of life that transcend nationalisms, root identities, and other simplifications of our imaginations” (Lugones 2006, 84). It thus functions in liminal sites, at the “edge of hardened structures,” where “transgression of the reigning order is possible” and requires an awareness from engaged actors of one’s own multiplicity and a refusal to attempt to assimilate any engaged identity into preheld, familiar meanings.

This chapter reviews how such forms of polyvalent, intergenerational relationality are channeled through Latin American feminists’ contemporary organizing around gender-based violence and abortion rights and their articulations for an alternative feminist pluralist data practice. Their efforts underscore the growing impacts of data methods developed by grassroots organizers and diversely situated civic researchers to extend research practice beyond large knowledge institutions and corporate engineering labs. In doing so, Latin American feminists demonstrated their commitment to not only engage diverse, pluralistically oriented collectives as central to their justice-based data practices, but also demonstrated how coalition-building figured centrally in the new knowledge futures they imagined. Following a review of Latin American feminists’ contemporary work to open new ways of seeing “expertise” that unsettled traditional knowledge hierarchies and positioned vulnerable populations as agents of data collection themselves, I revisit a history of feminist advocacy for new decolonial knowledge futures. Such imaginings worked toward the cultivation of coalitional consciousness among diversely positioned social justice actors. A generation later, they would become powerfully visible in the distributive data practices that contemporary Latin American feminist networks developed in campaigns around the Green Wave and in the forms of coalition-making that extended from the *Ni Una Menos* (Not One Less) movement. Latin American feminist efforts to decriminalize abortion thus tactically emphasized the common structural nature of varied forms of gender-based violence across the

region and the interconnected experiences of diversely vulnerable populations. Through alternative forms of data work, they would expand their campaigns to successfully press for broadened justice-based reforms in the name of diverse gendered populations and refuse dominant institutions' roles in foreclosing new knowledge futures.

FEMINIST DATA AND THE INTERGENERATIONAL INFORMATICS OF COALITION

The first tweet sent out by Argentinian feminist activists, writers, and academics under the hashtag #NiUnaMenos spread quickly. Following the murder of fourteen-year-old Chiara Paez, who was found buried underneath her boyfriend's house, beaten to death and a few weeks pregnant, the first online signals set off a chain of mass demonstrations within just a few months. By June 2015, in cities across the nation, tens of thousands of marchers from varied socioeconomic backgrounds, political affiliations, and generations flooded city centers to call for an end to gender-based violence. In Buenos Aires, demonstrators marched to the Palace of the Argentine National Congress wearing green scarves, intentionally used to recall the white scarves worn decades earlier in the late 1970s by the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo when they began gathering to protest the disappearances of their daughters and sons under the right-wing military dictatorship that ruled during the country's Dirty War.

Parallel protests were launched by feminists all across the region. In Peru, more than fifty thousand filled the highways marching toward Lima's Palacio de Justicia—in what the national press called the largest demonstration in Peruvian history. In Chile, more than eighty thousand marched in protests in 2016, with subsequent marches shutting down streets in Santiago. In 2017, some nineteen universities were forced to temporarily close after complaints of gender-based harassment from students and faculty. By 2018, this grew to more than twenty-five higher education institutions throughout Chile, and included, for the first time, several high schools where students had organized. From the initial focus on sexual harassment, the protesters started to call for universities to address the exclusion of women and LGBTQ populations in leadership, their missing presence as assigned authors in syllabi, and the thinness of protocols for dealing with accusations of sexual harassment.

Indeed, from the beginning of the recent feminist political resurgence in Latin America, feminist coalition-building—and intersectional approaches to ending not just femicide as a specific form of violence against women, but also a multiplicity of structural violences against women and gendered minorities that enabled a quiet epidemic of harms against them to be normalized—was evident. In the years leading up to the contemporary Green Wave, diverse feminist and social justice reformers organized Ni Una Menos as a movement that forged a broad coalition between previously segmented social campaigns. Beginning as a movement to protest domestic violence and femicide as hate crimes against women and feminized subjects, Ni Una Menos continued to broaden the voices represented within it, growing to encompass participation from grassroots groups, NGOs, and political parties. From the families of victims to seasoned organizers, protestors filled city centers to speak out against the diverse forms of violence faced by gendered populations, whose experiences were differentially shaped by the politics of class, race, age, and dis/ability. Refusing to prioritize a single version of violence against “women” in any narrow construction, Ni Una Menos instead channeled calls to end the varied forms of gender-based violence that impacted the lives of the working poor, LGBTQ, Indigenous, and Black communities and their access to basic resources, a living wage, and indeed, reproductive rights and freedoms. Framing their vision for “intersectional alliances” and the forging of what they termed “new subjectivities” in the *carta organica* (organizational charter) for the Argentinian network, Ni Una Menos organizers stated,

We bet on a polyglot, multilingual, wayward, fugitive force, a federal and international Network, that arises from the network between different groups capable of uniting under basic agreements, but . . . capable too of many separate fights . . . [across] the territorial differences that expand and enrich the heterogeneity of our agendas and demands. . . . We are committed to undoing the fences and crossing the borders in which patriarchal society confine us . . . [to] thinking inside and outside national limits, to build[ing] a feminist perspective on all inequalities . . . [recognizing that] reducing ourselves to the role that gender assigns us is also a form of alienation (NiUnaMenos.org 2017).

Latin American feminists’ intersectional approaches to organizing thus contrasted sharply with contemporary US approaches that have grounded recent pro-choice organizing and arguments in liberal frameworks around individual freedoms and choice, and the privacy of decisions made between

a patient and doctor. Latin American feminists emphasized abortion as an issue of broad social relevance to public health and justice-based interests alike. Stressing how the poor and minoritized populations were most likely to encounter unsafe conditions for abortions, they placed a spotlight on structural conditions where, as one popular demonstration chant put it, “Las ricas abortan, las pobres mueren/The rich abort, the poor die” (Pozzo 2020). Dubbing their national campaign as one for the Right to Legal, Safe and Free Abortion (Campaña por el Derecho al Aborto Legal, Seguro y Gratuito), feminist activists argued that without legal abortion, unsafe, clandestine abortions would continue and would remain one of the leading causes of maternal death around the world.

In Argentina, feminists leveraged data to stress that criminalizing abortion would create differential safety barriers for pregnant people, particularly those living outside of large cities or relying on the public health system. Data circulated by varied civic organizations thus emphasized the socioeconomic and regional biases that quietly exacerbated abortion access in Argentina. The Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (Center for Legal and Social Studies) stressed data that revealed that while middle- and upper-class women are able to access relatively high-quality, sanitary conditions and rarely suffer postabortion complications, “[p]oor women, and in many cases teenagers, are the ones who must expose themselves to precarious facilities and practices.” Feminists cited reports from global reproductive rights research organizations like the Guttmacher Institute that showed some 40 percent of clandestine abortions result in complications that require treatment, with the highest rates of maternal mortality typically caused by illegal abortions in the regions characterized by the highest poverty rates in the country. They likewise circulated data from the World Health Organization estimating that up to 13.2 percent of maternal deaths every year were attributed to unsafe abortions, that 75 percent of abortions performed in Latin America between 2010 and 2014 were unsafe, and that most maternal mortalities could be avoided through sex education, the use of effective contraception, or the provision of safe, legal abortion and proper emergency treatment. By using data to move the discussion away from frames grounded in personal freedoms or questions surrounding the viability of life and providing evidence that it was the poor and working class who died at disproportionately high rates due to clandestine abortions, Latin American feminists drew focus to collective interests around social and economic justice implicated in abortion’s decriminalization. As Latin American feminists argued, the

decriminalization of abortion was essential for the full protection for human rights, which entailed the right to life, health, physical integrity, and dignity, and freedom from cruel, inhuman, discriminatory, and degrading treatment.

Thus, the data tactics adopted by Green Wave organizers to promote new forms of public literacy and visibility around abortion access as a social justice issue echoed the parallel tactics developed to grow *Ni Una Menos* years earlier. *Ni Una Menos*'s cross-national, multigenerational alliance of feminist forces, which included artists, journalists, organizers, and academics among the movement's diverse knowledge agents, creatively leveraged data to make feminicide and related forms of structural, gender-based violence a shared "matter of concern" across the Americas. They circulated reports from recognized global policy sources, including groups like the Feminicide Watch group of the United Nations Studies Association, who demonstrated that while murder may be on the decline globally, feminicide is on the rise, with the estimated number of feminicide victims in 2017—eighty-seven thousand—nearly equal to the eighty-nine thousand people killed worldwide in armed conflicts that year (with the key difference being that the vast majority of feminicide victims were killed by people they knew). They also reminded publics that while the United Nations first recognized feminicide as an international crime in 1976, nearly half a century later there remains little public literacy around the varied forms of feminicide that were outlined then by the UN; these included not only intimate partner-related killings, but also "honor" and dowry-related murders, forced suicide, female infanticide, and targeted killings of women in war.

Alongside such resources, Argentine feminists circulated local and national grassroots activists' own newly formed data resources around feminicide. This included Argentina's first National Index on Sexist Violence (*El Primer Indice Nacional de Violencia Machista*), drawn from the citizen-run "Argentina Counts Sexist Violence" campaign, which circulated an online survey of 186 questions via affiliated *Ni Una Menos* accounts. They also shared resources from other citizen-run projects launched by researcher activists around the world, such as Annita Lucchesi's *Sovereign Bodies*, which included mappings of murdered and missing Indigenous/Native women in Canada and the United States that Lucchesi launched as a student at Alberta University, as well as the *WomenCount* project organized by Dawn Wilcox in Texas, which, since 2017, has crowdsourced the collection of data on feminicides in the United States stretching back to the 1950s.

In the one-hundred-page report that followed Argentina's survey, its coordinators—Ingrid Beck, a feminist journalist credited with being one of the early organizers of Ni Una Menos's 2015 events, and sociologist Martín Romeo—indicated how their efforts built on such works of past feminist data efforts in the country: "One of the central complaints the #NiUnaMenos movement of June 3, 2015 established was the creation of a National Registry of Femicides—a task undertaken until now (and since 2008) only by the civic association, Casa del Encuentro. Days after the [June] protests and as a response to their demand, Argentina's Supreme Court created the National Registry of Femicides, developed by the Women's Office of the Justice System" (Beck and Romeo 2016, 9). About sixty thousand responses were received from women and transgender women from all over the country, with nearly 86 percent of respondents reporting they had never begun or completed a university degree. Beyond the state's compiled data that a femicide occurred every thirty-seven hours in the country, the survey results revealed the heightened normalization of related forms of gender-based violence. Over 97 percent of respondents reported suffering some kind of gender violence, 20 percent reported being raped, while only 5 percent said they reported the attacks to police. The survey's coordinators underscored that the respondents' education, socioeconomic, and gender-identification backgrounds heightened victimization rates, with 25 percent of poor women and 72 percent of transgender women reporting being the victim of rape. Despite the project's broad reception, its coordinators insisted that the project remain necessarily independent from public or private institutions, which they defined as entangled in facets of gender-based violence. As specified on Argentina's Ni Una Menos's website, violence against women and gendered minorities is seen in domestic violence; but it is also seen in the violence of the market, debt, and capitalist property relations, in the violence that results from discriminatory policies against LGBTQ people, mass incarceration, and criminalizing migratory movements, and indeed, in the violence that results from abortion bans and the lack of access to free health care.

Even as media networks celebrated such activist milestones in data collection, Latin American feminist collectives underscored how their work had only started to scratch the surface, and how little, indeed, had begun to be recorded. They echoed critical race and feminist data studies scholars who have stressed the long silence of "missing bodies"—and the extensive stories and voices excised from "official" records and datasets (D'Ignazio and Klein

2019; Onuoha 2018) that come to archive a narrow set of dominant interests as the base from which knowledge gets derived (Trouillot 1995). Consistently, feminist data activists emphasized that the scale of data they collected was less their objective than other commitments around refusing relations of domination and cultivating alternative infrastructures for accountability in knowledge relations. Their efforts thus aimed to empower other pathways for how we come to settle “given knowns” about the real world in its varied gender-based dynamics, particularly in an age increasingly defined by “big data.”

FEMINIST RESISTANCES TO DATA APARTHEID

Over a generation ago, US third world and decolonial feminists were among the first to voice critiques over how dominant forms of knowledge practice separated and divided the intellectual labor of people of color, feminists, and other marginalized peoples. Observing the intellectual and disciplinary divisions maintained by dominant knowledge institutions, they critiqued university systems for maintaining such atomizing architectures that socially segmented relations and prevented minoritized scholars from building resistant practices together. Furthermore, they called for new orientations that could undo the forms of “intellectual apartheid” (Sandoval 2000) that undermined future potentials for multifaceted solidarities. Such new orientations would press beyond the dominant forms of seeing and filtering relations that had been imposed under what María Lugones called “the modern colonial gender system” (Lugones 2010). Under that system, pluralistic notions of sex and gender, like other forms of intimate and everyday relating, were silenced and erased, so that only the “hierarchical and dichotomous” (Lugones 2010) social categories necessary to sustain conditions of colonial rule remained legible. Such erasures not only negated the varied lived experiences of oppressed and subjugated individuals, but they also actively worked, as decolonial feminists argued, to circumvent and prevent the open possibilities for oppressed peoples to collectively interweave new forms of social life, resistant practice, and intimate relating together.

Decades before predatory data became embedded in everyday spaces driven by big data’s social filtering and classification functions, decolonial feminists pushed back on how modern knowledge infrastructures misrecognized, reduced, and invisibilized the plurality of their experiences. Pressing

for more inclusive languages that would recognize the multiplicity of forms by which feminists of color and diversely minoritized populations came to know and experience the world, they worked to develop new frameworks to foster alternative orientations to self and others. Gloria Anzaldúa famously argued for epistemologies rooted in the space of the “borderlands” as a site of “racial, ideological, cultural and biological cross pollenization” (1987, 99) from which a new “alien” consciousness could emerge. Such a consciousness could draw from its mixed, cross-pollinated positionality as a creative and generative space for new knowledge production. Or as Anzaldúa wrote, “La mestiza constantly has to shift out of habitual formations; from convergent thinking, analytical reasoning that tends to use rationality to move toward a single goal (a Western mode), to divergent thinking, characterized by movement away from set patterns and goals . . . [t]he new mestiza copes by developing a tolerance for contradictions, a tolerance for ambiguity. . . . She has a plural personality, she operates in a pluralistic mode . . . [that can] sustain contradictions, [and] turns the ambivalence into something else” (1987, 79). In conjuring a borderland thinking, Anzaldúa drew focus to the “split” consciousness described by decolonial scholars and intellectuals—from W. E. B. Du Bois to Franz Fanon, Audre Lorde, Chela Sandoval, Paula Gunn Allen, and Trinh T. Minh-ha—as productive sites, ideal for diagnosing contemporary political conditions and for challenging the stability of modern orders to enable other futures to emerge.

Over a generation later, decolonial feminists’ imagining of such explicitly pluralistic, coalitional knowledge practice has renewed salience, as predatory data’s algorithmically driven platforms and “predictive” architectures have massified reductive classification schemes. Surveillance studies scholars in particular have underscored how the expansion of big data assemblages has enabled the datafication of subjects to grow, multiplying the creation of decorporealized data doubles (Haggerty and Ericson 2000), whose digitally assigned identity markers and “values” accommodate algorithmic sorting, classification, and prediction. Indeed, as these scholars have pointed out for more than a generation, the datafication of subjects—and now the translation of them into new algorithmically processable selves—is no innocent act (Gandy 1993). As Anna Lauren Hoffman points out, “[T]he disaggregation of people in the form of data is never merely descriptive [but] is always implicated in broader systems of power, norms, and normalization” (Hoffman 2021, 3544).

US critical race and surveillance studies scholar Simone Browne thus underscores the simultaneously discriminatory and self-estranging logics

that underpin datafication under contemporary surveillant assemblages. Writing on the algorithmic capture and reprojection of racialized identities through data systems, she critiques what she calls operations of digital epidermalization. Such processes, she writes, “alienat[e] the subject” by producing an alleged “truth about the racial body and one’s identity (or identities) despite the subject’s claims” (2015, 11), while reifying racially determined boundaries. Algorithmically “inferred” from individuals’ online interactions, datafication’s identity assignments are applied over individuals without regard for subjects’ voluntary identification or sense of personal history. By imposing what he calls an “algorithmic caricature” by various identity classifiers, US critical data studies scholar John Cheney-Lippold describes datafication’s identity assignments as “corrupting” individuals’ own sense of identity by fabricating a convenient (even if false) “univocality that flattens” (2017, 8) the complexity of self-knowledge and lived experience. Cheney-Lippold observes, for instance, how Google’s platform reads his use patterns in ways that classify him as an “older” “woman” in its system. While the purpose is to translate the breadth of human experience into “measurable types,” massively applied datafication systems (such as those used by Google and mainstream social media companies on their users) encode, deploy, and project “traditional” classifiers across their platform. All users are mined for data to enable such platforms to fix (and later target) the identity of their users and define “types” around what platforms determine are meaningful value-making markers—from what it means to be a “man,” “woman,” “gay,” “straight,” “old,” “young,” “African American,” “Hispanic,” “Democrat,” “Republican,” “citizen,” “foreigner,” “criminal,” or “terrorist.” However, it is the lives of already politically marginalized, vulnerable, and oppressed users whose “algorithmic caricatures” place them at highest risk for real-world harm and discrimination. Rather than taking such harms seriously, predatory data’s agents treat such risks as collateral damage that can be tolerated so long as value continues to be extracted and the larger technical system still evolves and thrives.

Even in the face of evident harms to minority users, predatory data willingly continues to scale platform operations in the name of system evolution, irrespective of their indexicality to the “real lives” of subjects in the empirical world. Their primary fidelity is to instrumentalize patterns of behavior that can essentialize identity markers into concrete, measurable—and thus algorithmically manipulable—data records, so that subjects can be rendered processable into what Luke Stark calls the “scalable subject” (2018), or

versions of their digital selves that lend themselves to the system's scalability. While critical data studies scholars have emphasized datafication's impact on individual users' identities and the conversion of individuals into malleable and manipulable "data doubles," a predatory data framework draws added attention to datafication's work to turn the *relationships* that surround and define individuals into artifacts of control and interventions. This is the case whether the relationship pertains to a past or future version of the user to themselves, to the actors they are invisibly and automatically grouped and associated with through datafication, or to the vast spectrum of past, present, and future others whom users already, or might have, defined themselves in relation to. It is not individual users or the integrity of the relationships they define that predatory data prioritizes, however. They are operationalized instead to optimize other dominant interests—whether commercial gain (Stark 2018) or public safety and national security (Amoore 2009). Their work to segregate and sort populations (Gandy 1993) thus creates and entrenches valuations on the human that remain hidden behind proprietary data systems, even as they casually fix projections of "essentialized" types and hegemonic forms of relating that can encode "misrecognition" into the everyday architectures of digital life.

Beyond alienating and fragmenting subjects' sense of self, predatory data's instrumentalization of human relationships stratifies and fragments populations across "given" forms of relating and predetermined social hierarchies. Decolonial feminist critique reminds us that datafication's violence targets not only the integrity of self-knowledge (and the relationship of self to identity), but also the relationships between and among actors, stabilizing divisions grounded in given hierarchies and foreclosing potentials for other forms of relating to emerge. To circumvent the stratifying impacts of predatory data—and the conceit that they can come to accurately "know" or safely prescribe a self to individual users—requires far more than "correcting" datasets or recoding algorithmic solutions to provide "fairer," "anti-discriminatory" forms of assessment. As Anna Lauren Hoffman argues, such attempts to redesign or audit algorithmic systems in the name of "fairness" have to date only replicated one-dimensional, single-axis forms of reading oppression that overfocus on the disadvantages vulnerable populations experience, while leaving unanalyzed the systematic production of privilege (2019). Furthermore, the application of redesigned algorithms in the name of "fairness" and "anti-discrimination" still projects, as she writes, a "'ground truth' of static and pre-given—rather than contingent and constructed—social

categories” (Hoffman 2019, 1). Such categories as functions of proprietary algorithms, she stressed, still disable marginalized populations from exercising critical intervention.

To forge alternatives to big data’s predatory operations, I point to decolonial feminists’ technological interventions to “see from below” and their arguments to foster a “coalitional consciousness” that were theorized over a generation ago as a means to cultivate “dissident forms of globalization” (Sandoval 2000). Framing a contemporary world and living selves already suffused with boundary-defying information technologies, feminist science studies scholar Donna Haraway drew directly, too, from decolonial feminists’ theorizing to develop the “blasphemous” political method of the cyborg (1985). For Haraway, both the cyborg and the forms of oppositional consciousness argued for by Chela Sandoval and US third world feminists offered a timely means to imagine new progressive futures responsive to a world shifting “from an organic, industrial society to a polymorphous, information system” (1985, 80). Such a future could look beyond framings of revolution and change still centered around Western ideals of the rational individual subject. In such a context, decolonial feminists’ rejection of a politics grounded in a search for pure, natural origins and organically reverent, “essential unities” was ideally poised to respond to what Haraway diagnosed as a growing need for mixed and messy coalitions, affinities, and joint kinships that could press for new futures where the world could at last be imagined as moving beyond Western conceptions of “gender” with their foundations in binaristic thinking. Such new kinships, however, would be far from automatic. Rather, as Sandoval underscored, they would require dedication to developing “technologies” and “skills that permit the constant, differential repositioning necessary for perception from ‘subjugated standpoints’” (2000, 175)—or, as she put it, citing Haraway, developing the techniques and technologies committed “to see[ing] from below” (2000, 175). Such skills would insist on new kinds of social exchange that have the power to forge a dissident transnational coalitional consciousness across dispersed global sites and bring forth a new kind of “objectivity” and knowledge practice grounded in the shared translation of knowledges among distinct communities. Indeed, as Lugones argued, “One does not resist the coloniality of gender alone. One resists it from within a way of understanding the world and living in it that is shared. . . . Communities rather than individuals enable the doing; one does with someone else, not in individualist isolation . . . being in relation rather than dichotomously split over and over in hierarchically

and violently ordered fragments. These ways of being, valuing and believing have persisted in the response to the coloniality” (Lugones 2010, 754).

FEMINIST DATA’S DISSIDENT FORMS OF GLOBALIZATION

This chapter has not offered a conventional historical excavation of either Ni Una Menos’s cross-continental movement or Latin American feminists’ decades-long abortion rights struggle. I have not attempted either to provide any comprehensive mapping of the contemporary flourishing of feminist, collaborative data initiatives. Adopting a cross-generational lens to trace decolonial feminists’ commitments to developing new tools and techniques to dismantle the architectures of intellectual apartheid, I have aimed to demonstrate how such work continues through the coalitional knowledge practices of contemporary Latin American feminist networks. Through their coordinated public actions around the Green Wave and Ni Una Menos, Latin American feminists have actively challenged the narrowness of what dominant institutions had represented as given knowledge about the gendered lives of marginalized populations. Through their social campaigns and their creative, coalitional work around data in recent years, they were able to broadly animate and scale out demands for structural transformations that would eventually prompt a wave of legal transformations across the region. As importantly for organizers, their coalitional efforts allowed new demands for alternative forms of refusal and accounting—and interrelating among knowledge practitioners and the represented alike—to flourish.

Their work, however, appears far from finished. In the short time since the legalization of abortion was won in Argentina and set off a cascade of regional legal reforms in late 2020, Green Wave channels have remained as active as ever. Their work since has quickly turned to raising awareness of the limits of legal gains by themselves and highlighting the varied active cases across national contexts where abortion’s criminalization persists. Among them was that of Miranda Ruiz, a young doctor in the small city of Tartagal, Argentina, who was accused by the family of a patient of having performed an abortion without the patient’s consent. Another case involved a thirty-year-old woman and mother of two in Esquina, Argentina, who was known only as “Ana” in online campaigns and was charged with homicide after delivering a stillborn child. Despite the lack of medical evidence supporting the accusations against either woman, both were imprisoned—Ana

for eight months—before charges were eventually dismissed. Feminists note their cases are emblematic of the unevenness of the law’s recognition across the country, where more than fifteen hundred criminal cases were opened against individuals—thirty-six against medical professionals—for abortions and other obstetrics-related events in the first year after the law’s passage.

Such developments have brought networks to respond by adding new research objectives to new works that monitor abortion access across the nation in recent years. In their continued campaign work, feminist organizers have come to stress the centrality of information politics, underscoring how a lack of access to basic information, such as abortion rights and law, where to access safe abortions, and regarding the procedure itself, can enable significant lapses in protections. But they have also opened questions about the limits of the law without larger accompanying structural changes, pointing to reports of the lack of training and information around abortion and its legal protections, as well as the lack of medical professionals willing or able to provide service or answer basic questions regarding abortion, particularly in rural and economically marginalized regions (Mason-Deese 2022). They have also noted indicators such as the lack of basic information even at health care facilities, pointing to recent studies from Project Mirar of the Center for the Study of State and Society, and Ibis Reproductive Health, who launched a new abortion access tracking tool in 2021 and whose data stressed the continued experience of abuse and harassment by women and other feminized subjects in the medical system, underscoring how such experiences were especially high among young, adolescent, Indigenous, poor, and working-class patients (Romero et al. 2021). Beyond pressing for information access alone, feminist anthropologist Liz Mason-Deese notes, “[T]he movement continues to call for improvements to the country’s health care system so that quality abortion care will be truly accessible to all” (Mason-Deese 2022). The National Campaign for the Right to Legal, Safe and Free Abortion’s calls for gender-sensitive training for all health care teams in parallel have demanded increased funding for the public health system, especially in underserved areas, with a focus on women’s health. And while feminists have noted the significance of a new hotline for sexual and reproductive health run by the state’s Ministry of Health—which received nineteen thousand abortion-related inquiries in the eleven months following the passage of the new law—they have also noted abortion-seekers’ continuing reliance on organizations like Socorristas en Red (Lifeguard Network), a feminist and transfeminist network that were sought out to accompany more than fifty-six

hundred patients in abortion and postabortion care in the same time period (Romero et al. 2021).

Outside the health care system, feminist campaigns in recent years have energized initiatives to integrate updated curricula on sexual and nonreproductive rights into public schools' standard sexual education pedagogy. Their work has entailed creating and promoting updated curricula, with a focus on bodily autonomy and knowledge about rights and responsibilities, hosting discussion around the abortion law and how to access safe and legal abortion, as well as trainings of teachers and school staff to facilitate the implementation of curricula to empower students around their rights. Refusing to prioritize a single version of violence against "women" in any narrow sense, Latin American feminists' calls to end the varied forms of gender-based violence were consistently connected back to the lives of the working poor, LGBTQ, Indigenous, Black, and youth communities who were directly implicated. Their work to cultivate new global feminist imaginaries around data pluralism implicated a range of social justice concerns that related gender inequities with the continuity of everyday social violence against disempowered gendered populations more broadly. Moreover, their enacted critique of predatory data's global spread and threat to vulnerable populations, and the concrete global political precedents they have earned through their novel approaches, demonstrate the world-shaping potentials of data engagements driven by global actors other than the large corporate internet firms and Western knowledge institutions who have been overnarrated as the central protagonists behind today's data ecologies. Indeed, in public spaces all across Latin America, feminists continue to declare that another future is possible.

And as the next chapter covers, they have been far from alone in such situated endeavors.