

'AI is neither artificial nor intelligent': Kate Crawford's new book 'Atlas of AI' views technology through a social justice prism

[In her book "[Atlas of AI](#)," Kate Crawford brings] us on a global journey, from the mines where the rare earth elements used in computer manufacturing are extracted to the Amazon fulfillment centers where human bodies have been mechanized in the company's relentless pursuit of growth and profit.

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[Crawford:] I wanted to... really understand how artificial intelligence is made in the broadest sense. This means looking at the natural resources that drive it, the energy that it consumes, the hidden labor all along the supply chain, and the vast amounts of data that are extracted from every platform and device that we use every day.

In doing that, I wanted to really open up this understanding of AI as neither artificial nor intelligent. It's the opposite of artificial. It comes from the most material parts of the Earth's crust and from human bodies laboring, and from all of the artifacts that we produce.

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When you start looking at AI systems on that bigger scale, and on that longer time horizon, you shift away from these very narrow accounts of "AI fairness" and "ethics" to saying: these are systems that produce profound and lasting geomorphic changes to our planet, as well as increase the forms of labor inequality that we already have in the world.

[Editor's note: Find [Atlas of AI](#) here.]

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