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love. The forgotten dimension for just and democratic AI futures

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Abstract Addressing the widespread use of AI-driven decision-making systems in public spheres, in this paper we advocate for the integration of *love* as both a virtue and an affection within the discourse of participatory practices in AI design and development. Based on an analysis of justice, the need to shift the focus to *love* will be highlighted. Furthermore, we introduce two directions *love* could play for AI design: (1) *love* as an epistemological design inquiry to question the conventional knowledge structures in design by integrating embodied and experiential knowledge, and (2) *love* as a political design inquiry to challenge unjust systems in AI. We underscore the necessity for critical inquiry, recognizing both *love's* potential to nurture relationships and its potential for perpetuating inequalities. By proposing *love* as a foundational perspective in AI design and development, we encourage a paradigm shift and challenge exclusionary mechanisms, to cultivate just and democratic AI futures.

Keywords: love theories, feminist epistemology, participatory AI design, justice, democracy

1. Introduction

The use of AI-driven decision-making systems in governments and cities (e.g., system risk indication/SyRI, facial recognition technologies) is popular for its intended efficiency, scalability, consistency, and objectivity. Yet, there are also major concerns related to inequality and injustice when these systems enter the daily lives of people. Furthermore, AI decision-making systems are becoming an integral part of social-technical infrastructures and ecologies, and consequently have profound effects on democracy and society in terms of surveillance, control, and power (Coeckelbergh, 2022). One notorious example in the Netherlands, for instance, is the childcare benefits scandal, where people's fundamental rights—such as the rights to non-discrimination, a fair trial, and equal treatment—were violated through automated algorithmic decision-making systems (Henley, 2021). Another example is the fraud detection algorithm used by the city of Rotterdam, which revealed biases that were baked

into the scoring system of the fraud detection algorithm (Constantaras, 2023). These harmful effects on justice and democratic values create an urgent demand for creating means to discuss, contest, negotiate, and counter AI-driven decision-making systems.

The AI research community has been reporting an increasing number of initiatives to develop participatory design frameworks[1] for the critical engagement of most affected groups, communities, and citizens, such as contestable AI, community-led AI, or participatory design (e.g., Alfrink et al., 2023; Sloane et al., 2020; Queerinai, 2023). These participatory frameworks intend to support and facilitate self-determination and community emancipation. They enable transparency and responsiveness to the needs of those who participate and have often been used as a criticism against the design projects based only on the designer's perspectives. In this paper, we are particularly interested in participatory frameworks that focus on collective and critical explorations of AI, instead of participation as a methodological innovation. However, the inclusion of participatory practices in AI as a methodology for responsible AI design and development has been rightfully receiving critique from scholars such as Birhane et al. (2022), Costanza-Chock (2020), and Sloane et al. (2022), who pointed out the shortcomings in implementing and sustaining equality in participatory practices, such as missing out on contributing to shifting power relations by repeating forms of colonial tactics, misconstruing participation as inclusion, or abusing participation as a form of feigning participation for economic purposes.

Not only the participatory approaches in AI design and development but also the design discipline itself has been questioned for its intrinsic principles and privileges (Mareis et al., 2022). The roots of design in modernism, industrialization, and universalism have been repeatedly critiqued, as they can stimulate inequality, discrimination, and hegemonic power knowledge (Abdulla, 2020; Ansari, 2019; Escobar, 2018). Black and intersectional feminist AI scholars have highlighted the issues of power "(…) that are rooted in historical and current policies and practices that perpetuate oppression" (Erete, 2021, p.56). Other design scholars have pointed to tensions between the different values of democracy and capitalism, some claiming that democracy and capitalism cannot be combined (e.g., DiSalvo, 2022). Finally, there is a growing design research community proposing that the conditions in which design practices are embedded need to be critically explored in relation to their neoliberal exclusionary mechanisms (Elzenbaumer, 2013). According to these critiques, design practices as being able to question the status quo and to design change can at the same time perpetuate and reinforce forms of oppression, normativity, histories of inequality, and discrimination (Mareis et al., 2022).

In this paper, we argue that *love,* as a perspective, could play an important role in enabling just and democratic AI futures. *love*—both a virtue and an affection—can radically nurture, strengthen, and create new relationships with environments, participants, and non-humans.

[1] With participatory design frameworks, this paper refers to AI design and development practices approaching societal integration in the design process of AI and the lifetime of the algorithm.

At the same time, including perspectives on *love* in the analysis of the socio-technical implications of AI can shift the focus to the societal systems that currently "lack *love,*" which influences the way AI design or participatory frameworks are practiced. The aim of this paper is to discuss the potential of *love* as a perspective, one that has been, so far, missing in AI research striving for democracy and justice. By integrating the perspective of *love*, we aim to scrutinize and challenge the entrenched capitalist and hegemonic knowledge structures prevalent in AI design and development practices. We will share reflections on how *love* as a theoretical framework can inform and help establish critical practices in AI, while also acknowledging the challenges of engaging with *love* due to its intrinsic inequality and complexity.

We will first introduce and translate Fraser's (2005) tridimensional approach to justice in the context of participatory practices in AI design and development. Then, we will follow up with Lynch's (2014) critique of Fraser's tridimensional approach to justice, highlighting *Affective Equality*, a concept including *love*, care, and solidarity, as a further domain that needs to be considered when striving for justice and democracy in AI design and development. We will conclude by introducing two directions that *love* could/should play in AI design and development: (1) *love* as an epistemological design inquiry to integrate embodied and experiential knowledge in AI design and development, and (2) *love* as a political design inquiry to question unjust systems in AI, while acknowledging *love's* inherent complexities.

2. Three dimensions of (in)justice in AI

Shifting the focus from AI systems to societal systems helps to understand the sociopolitical aspects of AI design and the challenges of enabling just and democratic design practices. To identify the (un)just aspects of AI design and development practice, we resort to Fraser's (2005) three dimensions of equality and social justice. These include the *economic* dimension of distribution, the *cultural* dimension of recognition, and the *political* dimension of representation. Fraser proposed that justice could only take place when grounded in "parity participation" and that "parity participation" could only be upheld when equality in economic, political, and cultural relations exists (Figure 1). These arguments formed her radical thinking about democracy, in which "justice requires social arrangements that permit all to participate as peers in social life" (Fraser, 2005, p. 5). Fraser claimed justice to be "the master overarching virtue" and that only when justice exists, other virtues (e.g., compassion, courage, and patience) are possible.

From Fraser's understanding of justice, we can infer that democratic approaches in AI are only possible when justice and equality exist in the deep structures of society, meaning in the economic, cultural, and political systems. This tridimensional approach to justice helps to understand how these different dimensions of (in)justice interrelate with each other and set conditions for how people interact or design worlds. In the following section, these three dimensions will be briefly explained and interpreted in relation to current participatory approaches in AI.

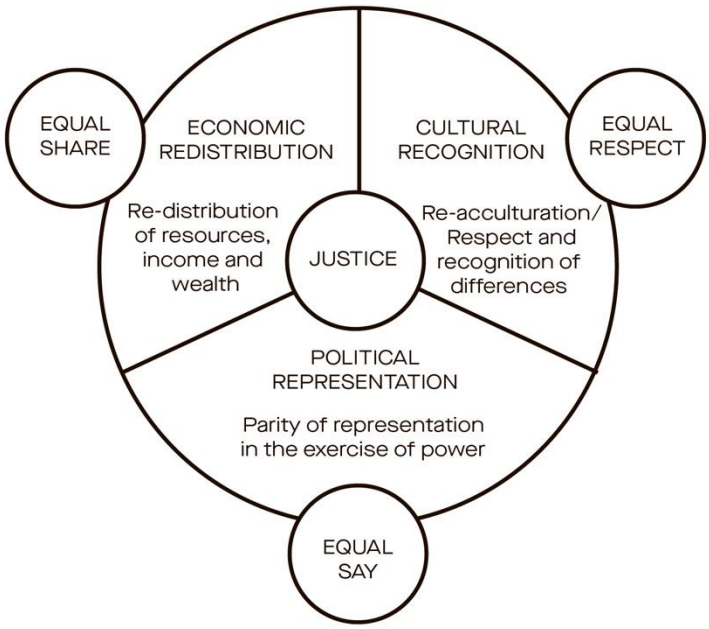

Figure 1 Visual representation of Fraser's tridimensional approach to justice (adapted from Smaal et al., 2020).

2.1 Economical dimension

The economic dimension addresses the unjust distribution or maldistribution of resources, creating economic structures that exploit and disperse, which can hinder people from full participation. When it comes to AI, these forms of economic inequality have been expressed on the level of conflicting values between democracy and capitalism (Broussard, 2018). The industries of AI design and development follow a neoliberal logic of individualization, efficiency, progress, and prioritizing monetary achievements, which clash with democratic ideals such as designing participatory frameworks, features, or mechanisms for self-determination and community emancipation or for contesting and negotiating a system in an equal and just way. As an example, AI systems are often developed and owned by private companies belonging to intellectual property. Surely, intellectual property and protecting the work done by designers, programmers, and others from competitors are important for the company's existence; however, these can also limit the possibility of scrutinizing and contesting AI systems since they leave limited information to base their claims or feedback on (Lyons et al., 2021). Another concern in relation to the economical dimension is that engaging in complex societal questions that are needed for just and democratic AI or allowing for participatory feedback loops needs structures, time, and capacities, which can easily be undermined in work cultures embedded in exclusionary capitalist mechanisms. There is a need to explore alternative economic logic and cultures in participatory AI design and development practices to allow for democracy and justice.

2.2 Cultural dimension

The cultural dimension stands for the institutional misrecognition of cultural values that systematically devalues certain groups of people and their associated characteristics. This disrespect of differences such as belief, gender, language, ability, sexuality, color, age, and ethnicity, creates status inequality. This form of inequality within AI is discussed in relation to biased datasets and the intentional or unintentional exclusion of certain groups in participatory approaches (e.g., Arora, 2016; Buolamwini & Gebru, 2018; Stead & Coulton, 2022). The aforementioned examples of the childcare benefit scandal in the Netherlands and the scoring systems used by Rotterdam are only a few notorious cases where discrimination has been reinforced by AI systems used by governmental or public institutions. Similar cases were also reported regarding the Robodept scheme in Australia (Mao, 2023) for its discriminatory and wrongful debt recovery practices and the benefits fraud case in the UK, where a semi-automated algorithm used by the Department for Work and Pensions falsely detected fraud, mainly of Bulgarian people (Stacey, 2023). There is a growing research community working on improvements for diversifying datasets, but this common idea that discrimination within AI could be fixed if datasets get diversified has been claimed to be a misconception (Sloane et al., 2022). It is not possible to undo or quickly fix centuries of systemic oppression embedded in our societal thinking and institutional structures by adjusting a few datasets. Instead, cultural recognition and re-acculturation need to take place on a societal and political level first and differences need to be respected, valued, and esteemed to allow for a plurality of perspectives in AI design and development.

2.3 Political dimension

The political dimension stands for the parity of representation in the exercise of power and establishes the structures intended for the distribution of resources, cultural recognition, and equal participation. It determines not only who can make claims for redistribution and recognition, but also how such claims are made and decided. Thus, regarding AI practices, the political dimension refers to the inclusion or exclusion of those who are entitled to make claims for justice and democracy. As mentioned already, AI practices advocating for equal participation show that there is a demand for and an attempt for justice- and community-oriented AI design processes. Communities and citizens should not only have a choice but also actively participate in decision-making and the design process and/or have the right to act against a decision that has been made by an AI system. For example, in the cases of the fraud detection systems used in Rotterdam, the person who got claimed for fraud had no sufficient information on how to contest the decision that had been made by the AI-driven decision-making system (Constantaras, 2023). The right to contest was not given priority. Furthermore, it cannot be assumed that everybody shares the same privileges to claim a governmental decision, which would need to be carefully considered in the political dimension. There is a need to follow a more inclusive and just approach to the way how AI design and development is organized and practiced. Costanza-Chock (2020), for instance, advocates for participatory practices that are more about locality than scalability and about building deep relationships and interdependencies, rather than “only” extracting knowledge from

people to improve services or products and make a profit out of it. Capacities and structures need to be made available to carefully consider and acknowledge who is and who is not "sitting at the table" and how to enable equality in political matters.

3. *love*, the forgotten dimension for just and democratic AI

Fraser's tridimensional approach to justice helps to provide an overview of the interdependencies between the different (un)just systems regarding participatory approaches in AI design. However, this approach has also been criticized for not addressing the affective relations contributing to (in)justice. As a response to the neglect of emotions in scientific and political analyses of justice, Lynch (2014) proposed *Affective Equality*—a concept that includes *love*, care, and solidarity—as the fourth dimension to enrich Fraser's approach towards justice (Figure 2).

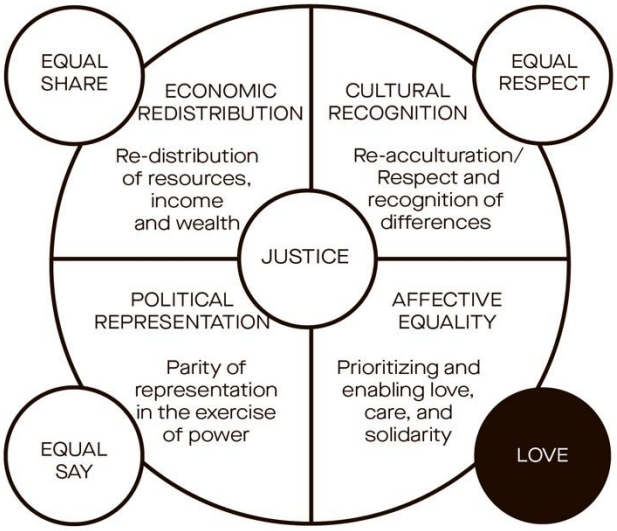

Figure 2 The fourth dimension, Affective Equality, based on Lynch's work, added to Fraser's tridimensional approach to justice highlighting the need for love in relation to the (un)just systems.

Lynch proposed that *love*, care, and solidarity should be recognized as equality issues because of the relationality and interdependencies of people. These qualities are needed not only for human survival but also for flourishing. *love*, care, and solidarity need time, capacity, and energy, which need to be supported on a systemic and structural level. According to Lynch (2014), omitting the affective dimension in the discussion about justice would ignore the fact that human beings are emotionally and morally interconnected, which influences the way humans act and make moral choices. With this, she makes clear that the way we learn to *love*, care, and unite has an impact on how we express *love*, care, and solidarity not only on a private but also on a public level: *"(...) relations of love, care, and solidarity matter not only for what they can produce personally (or what their absence of abuse can do negatively to persons, communities, or societies) but for what they might generate politically in*

terms of heralding different ways of relating beyond separateness, competition, and aggrandizement" (Lynch, 2014, p. 183). She proposes a need to shift the focus away from neoliberal values and prioritize and enable *love*, care, and solidarity to allow for the necessary transformations that are needed for justice in the economic, cultural, and political systems. Following this approach, we understand *love* as a quality and an act that needs to be paid attention to and propose that *love* can contribute to needed value shifts in the economic, cultural, and political systems to allow and sustain just and democratic AI design practice.

love studies have been marginalized for a long time in most disciplines besides art, fiction, and philosophy. This might be because *love* is one of the most vulnerable subjects in human life and because of what people know or think about *love*, such as the understanding of *love* as a romantic relationship between two people. This understanding of *love* has been challenged by intersectional feminists proposing to think about *love* beyond the private spheres and consider it as a political and epistemological framework to reveal and counter dominant systems such as sexism, patriarchy, racism, and capitalism (hooks, 2001; Ferguson & Jónasdóttir 2014; White, 2021). Even though *love* has been discussed in different feminist movements and theories since the 20th century, it was only in the early 1990s that *love* studies were taken more seriously and gained interest in other academic scholarship (Ferguson & Jónasdóttir, 2014), such as the discussion about *love* as for democracy in political theories (Hardt, 2007).

While the AI research community increasingly engages with feminist theories to address inherent power dynamics, the incorporation of *love* as a perspective for democratic and just AI design and development remains unexplored. Despite the prominence of AI Ethics in addressing societal concerns regarding algorithmic systems—encompassing aspects such as fairness, accountability, transparency, explainability, bias, and justice—the notion of *love* has been notably absent. In contrast to AI Ethics, which has been criticized for its reliance on canonical Western philosophy (Birhane et al., 2022), integrating *love* into this discourse offers an opportunity to amplify and emphasize ethical viewpoints from black and queer feminist theories. Furthermore, *love* ethics bears resemblances to care ethics in discussions concerning affection and relationality (De la Bellacasa, 2011; Murphy, 2015). However, *love* stands out due to its attributed transformative role and radical nature in addressing social justice and systemic inequalities. We contend that embracing this activist perspective on *love* can enrich discussions on alternative AI design and development practices. Thus, following hooks' argument (2001) on *love* being a verb and not a noun[2], we maintain that *love* per-

[2] In the paper, *love* is deliberately written in lowercase to underscore the understanding of *love* as a verb, according to hooks (2001). Writing from a European-based white, queer, male, and female perspective, we acknowledge the limitations of our understanding of *love* as discussed in black feminism, owing to the differences in discriminatory experiences. By prominently referencing hooks' conception of *love* in this paper, our intention is not appropriation, but a respectful recognition and gratitude for her insightful work on the subject. We believe that her ideas on *love* have the potential to significantly contribute to disciplines such as AI design and development.

spectives can contribute to other forms of relations beyond neoliberal logic and highlight unjust societal systems that need to be challenged to allow and sustain just and democratic AI practices.

We consider design knowledge and design labor[3] to be interdependent and entangled. How one conceptualizes and understands AI systems (e.g., monopolized and driven by capitalism) and how AI design labor is practiced (e.g., top-down or bottom-up) influence the envisaged possibilities of participation (e.g., whether contesting the decision of an AI system is possible). This highlights the need not only to strive for alternative AI design and development practices but also to understand and challenge the embedded knowledge politics within what is commonly known as AI or AI practice. Since *love* is discussed as a political and epistemological framework within intersectional feminist movements and political theories, this paper proposes two directions for introducing *love* for alternative AI design and critical development practices: (1) *love* as an epistemological design inquiry and (2) *love* as a political design inquiry. This distinction aims to underscore the importance of discussing feminist knowledge politics in the context of AI design and development practices, as well as advocating for alternative and critical AI approaches and practices that scrutinize exclusionary mechanisms embedded in AI systems.

3.1 love as an epistemological design inquiry

Engaging with *love* as a design inquiry allows for an alternative epistemological framing of AI and its practice. For instance, White (2021), an interdisciplinary researcher in environmental studies, views *love* as a means of reimagining spaces, environments, and spatial practices. Making meaning of the world around us through the lens of *love* feeds back into the way we build spaces and worlds. White introduces the concept of "affective resistance," which entails embracing complexities and vulnerabilities as a means of challenging dominant knowledge paradigms, such as the neoliberal emphasis on individualization, efficiency, and progress. White argued that engaging in feelings or vulnerabilities instead of "references" is a way of highlighting histories of oppression. By this, she points to the need to listen to the embodied knowledge of the ones who are most affected by design and asks how design can make space for this. Her approach also aligns with Ferguson and Jónasdóttir's (2014) understanding of *love*: as a material practice, shifting the focus to "embodied experiences of *love*, power, and domination to move towards liberation" (p. 1). Here, *love* can be considered as an epistemological design inquiry to highlight the need to make space for such an engagement.

[3] This paper refers to Selçuk Balamir's (2017) trifold understanding of design, in which design labor (all activities for a design to emerge), design knowledge (the idea for making sense of the design and its activities), and design artifacts (the "designed," the material or immaterial equivalent) are interrelated and embedded in value forms. Shifting the focus away from design to its embedded value forms helps to understand the political economies of design. This aligns well with the argument of the paper, which posits that the democratic and just capabilities of AI design and development are interdependent with the values and exclusionary mechanisms inscribed in societal systems.

Engaging in complexities and vulnerabilities is often undermined by capitalist forces, and understanding *love* as a form of resistance can inform participatory practices striving for democratic and just AI. *love* as an alternative epistemological framing of AI can then help us question how the design of AI is materializing worlds and how this materialization can be done otherwise—a form of "radical dreaming," as White (2021) calls it, that allows for imagining AI and its practices differently. What forms of AI can result from it when we collectively dream?

In the ongoing workshop series "World-Making with *love*!? A Collective and Open Manifesto for Just and Democratic AI Futures," developed as part of this research, *love* is explored as a form of embodied knowledge for re-thinking AI and its practices. A manifesto is collectively written with an instant publishing tool, starting with the questions of what the participants want to experience as *love* and how this wanted experience can help re-think AI and its practice of striving for democracy and justice[4]. This manifesto serves as a tool, creates space for exchanging ideas on democratic and just AI practices beyond neoliberal logic, and facilitates collective imagination of alternatives, drawing from participants' situatedness and the 'personal' for societal and political questions.

Herewith, instead of identifying needs for the other, we propose *love* as an epistemological inquiry for questioning hegemonic knowledge structures and learning from relationalities. It is an inquiry that invites us to understand how we relate with each other and the accompanying power dynamics; to learn how to listen, how to engage, and how to speak and design not for and about but with the other. Thus, *love* as an epistemological design inquiry in AI is an approach to knowledge-making that needs attention, nurturing, and space, representing an engagement and knowledge-making practice that resists neoliberal values. Inspired by White's conceptualization of *love*, the question that needs to be explored for participatory practices in AI is how to make space for such dreaming and learning from relationalities and how this can contribute to alternative practices for just and democratic AI.

3.2 love as a political design inquiry

Another quality of *love* as a design inquiry is the transformative potential of *love*. When one feels loved, *love* can empower, nourish, and provide energy and motivation. Hardt (2007) considered this positive conceptualization of *love* as a necessity to transform society in a way that enables democracy. With the political potential of *love*, Hardt referred to what he calls "a process or a field of training" for constructing a democratic society. He followed a definition of *love* based on Spinoza's understanding of *love* as joy, where joy is understood as a form of power that can increase and nourish engagement in differences (Hardt, 2007).

[4] The questions employed in this workshop draw inspiration from inquiries on care in relation to design posed during the Care-Pod workshops facilitated by the Design Justice Network.

Thus, in his view, *love* has the potential to create a new humanity and change society by emphasizing the radical and transformative potential of *love* as a generative and collective force that enables people to form alliances across differences to realize shared political goals.

While Hardt (2007) claimed this nourishment through *love* toward societal change has great potential, he also pointed to the dangers of *love* when invested radically in the same instead of differences, referring to nationalism. Thus, when engaging with *love* as a form of nourishment and empowerment in AI design and development, these radical tendencies, and the power of *love* in both directions need to be critically considered. Furthermore, Hardt's understanding of *love* as joy as a motor for societal change has been criticized by feminist thinkers for leaving out other emotions that play a crucial role in transformation and resistance, such as pain or frustration (Wilkinson, 2017). As an example, in her critical research on care ethics, Murphy (2015) demonstrates how the political dimension of promoting positive affect and care, as seen in DIY feminist health initiatives in the late 20th century in the US, inadvertently reinforced dominant power structures rather than challenging them. These initiatives sought to provide a liberated approach to healthcare, addressing concerns like cervical cancer and promoting positive attitudes towards reproductive organs, sex, and bodily diversity as a means of countering shame and stigma. While the intention was to subvert patriarchal and profit-driven medical practices, these DIY care initiatives have predominantly been embraced and celebrated as a joyful and positive experience by white feminists, often disregarding other emotions and body-political issues that reflect diverse experiences. This example illustrates the exclusionary dynamics that can arise from understanding *love* solely as joy or cultivating it as a positive feeling to enable transformation for democracy.

It becomes imperative to recognize that *love* encompasses more than just positive feelings. Instead, it calls for a deliberate and conscientious effort to accommodate the diverse range of emotions and affections inherent in *love* and to make space actively and carefully for it when designing democratic and just AI. *love* should not be mistaken for harmony, conformity, or optimism, but seen as a form of inquiry that allows spaces for diverse feelings, enabling change through critical discourses and dissidents (Abdulla, 2021). The focus here is on how *love*, as a political design inquiry, can cultivate differences and disagreements in participatory AI design and development practices for enabling democracy and justice.

4. Discussion

love may not be the first theoretical perspective one might think of when working with AI. This paper is an attempt to start a discussion on how *love* theories can inform and create alternative AI practices, allowing for democratic and just AI. We believe blurring the interdisciplinary borders between AI research and *love* theories can create new perspectives for the ethical, critical, and political discourse in AI design and development. The analysis of the (un)just systems through participatory practices in AI and the four-dimensional approach to justice offer a good basis to begin the discussion on why *love* is a missing perspective for just and democratic AI practices. Furthermore, the analysis provides a first overview of how these unjust systems impact participatory practices in AI and how they are interrelated. The

four-dimensional approach to justice provides a helpful framework to further develop how *love* can transform the economic, cultural, and political systems to allow and sustain just and democratic AI design practices.

This paper introduces two directions for further developing alternative practices aimed at achieving democratic and just AI: *love* as an epistemological and political design inquiry. These two discussed directions present initial ideas on why *love* is valuable for the design of alternative AI practices but are not intended to be fixed concepts nor provide a final overview of the potential of *love*. Instead, these directions emphasize the importance of *love* as a perspective for alternative knowledge-making, challenging traditional AI design paradigms, and highlighting the necessity for designing alternative and critical AI practices that facilitate different perspectives and consider diverse emotions.

Moreover, these initial directions underscore the need to move beyond neoliberal logic in AI design and development to foster democracy and justice. *love*, viewed as a tool for collective imagination, can help explore alternative economic practices that support just and democratic AI futures. Inspired by the Community Economics Collective's (2001) notion that the economy is shaped by our actions, we can explore how radical dreaming can foster a more equitable distribution of resources and authority and challenge hierarchical structures in AI systems. Furthermore, *love* as a political concept offers a framework for establishing an explorative and critical space for the renegotiation of power relations and dominant knowledge forms inscribed in AI practices. Exploring democratic and just AI can become a field of experimentation on its own because democratic practices work towards and commit to designing conditions that are collective and democratic, while at the same time opening space to "... recognizing that such conditions and experiences should be discovered anew through imaginative and collaborative making" (DiSalvo, 2022, p. 5). Designing AI in such an explorative way with a focus on the aforementioned unjust systems makes space for acknowledging the situatedness of the participants and asking critical questions such as who is sitting at the table and who is not.

As we have seen in this paper, *love* as a perspective for AI design and development can also be limiting and should not, paradoxically, as it sounds, be romanticized due to its intrinsic inequalities. The way we learn to *love* depends on the existence of a loving environment (hooks, 2001). This means *love* is not only an important value that needs to be prioritized and nurtured in the political, cultural, and political systems, but also that these systems need to be transformed to make structures and capacities available for engaging in vulnerabilities and complexities. Furthermore, *love* is personal, situated, and abstract and cannot be captured with a single formula due to its affective and experiential dimensions. Thus, engaging with *love* perspectives for critical practices in AI is not an easy task, but still, we believe in *love's* potential for its power to nourish relationships, make space for complexities and vulnerabilities, learn from relationalities and dreams, and enable a form of critical practice that challenges exclusionary mechanisms in the deep societal systems.

The research will be further developed through the following steps: 1. This paper has provided a broad discussion of participatory practices in AI, with a primary focus on the importance of *love*. The next step will entail a shift in focus towards a specific participatory approach, such as contestable AI, to facilitate an analysis of its limitations (based on the previously presented four-dimensional approach to justice) and to illustrate the need for *love* using concrete cases. 2. A typology of *love* qualities will be developed by investigating and researching its current and historical discourses within intersectional feminist theories, feminist materialism, feminist epistemology, and political theories, discussing the knowledge politics and activist and transformative possibilities of *love* for enabling democratic and just AI in forms of discursive and critical-making workshops with designers, programmers, policymakers, artists, citizens, and governmental workers. 3. The potential and limitations of *love* will be reflected and juxtaposed with current attempts at contestable AI within city and governmental contexts. Frictions will be discussed, and alternative AI design and critical development approaches will be further articulated to promote democracy and justice.

Following White's (2021) understanding of *love* as an "affective resistance," this engagement with *love* is a proposal to pause and step away from the current AI hype. Instead, we propose *love* as perspectives to listen, learn, and ask critical questions about what kind of relations, infrastructures, daily lives, and worlds we want to live in and what alternative AI-human-nature relationships we can imagine and create through *love*-inspired collective practices. Looking with *love* at the aforementioned cases of AI-driven decision-making systems that have been used for risk detection and which have caused harm to many people, we propose to urgently ask if such systems are not rather a threat to justice and democracy, if we should use and build such systems at all, and what alternatives are needed to empower communities and citizens.

5. Conclusion

In this paper, we proposed *love* as an important perspective for just and democratic AI design and development practices. We argued for the need for shifting neoliberal values and prioritizing *love* as a virtue and affection for the economic, cultural, and political systems to enable just and democratic AI. Additionally, we discussed the epistemological and political roles that *love* could/should play in the design of and critical engagement with AI. These directions have the potential to question and challenge conventional knowledge structures and exclusionary mechanisms in AI design and development. *love* also comes with its limitations. Being aware that this radical nature can do good but also harm, these dynamics and forms of unequal distributions should not be left unconsidered and critically investigated. Furthermore, a proposal for future steps has been provided to further develop the potential and limitations of *love* as a perspective for democratic and just AI. With this paper, we hope to have started a profound discussion on how *love* can contribute to the critical, ethical, and political discourse in AI.

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