

Diesel Death Zones in the Amazon Empire: Environmental Justice and Algorithmically Mediated Work

Sonja Solomun, Rachel Bergmann

In a [new paper](#) selected by The 22nd Annual Conference of the Association of Internet Researchers (AoIR), the Centre's Research Director Sonja Solomun and Centre fellow and Researcher at Microsoft Research New England, Rachel Bergmann, outline the intersection of environmental justice and tech platforms.

“The vast networks of warehouses, trucks, highways, airports, railways, and logistics hubs that constitute the infrastructure behind our platform ecosystems have significant environmental consequences for the neighbours and communities that physically surround them”

Research Highlights

- Amazon and other tech companies have been funding large research projects around climate justice and have made commitments to net-zero operations, however, platforms' labour practices and logistics hubs continue a long legacy of environmental racism
- Economic and environmental justice remain separate within the scope of Amazon's practices;
- This research aims to recenter communities left out of the conversation around climate justice, sustainability, technology, and carbon funds;
- The case study explored is the San Bernadino Airport Communities Coalition (SBAC) based in Southern California, whose advocacy is centered around good jobs and healthy communities;
- Amazon, already the largest employer within the area, would enact environmental racism with the construction of the Eastgate Air Cargo Logistics Center, built in predominantly Latino and working-class areas of Riverside and San Bernadino counties. The increased airplane and truck traffic from the hub would worsen the conditions of “diesel death zones”;
- Rights for tech workers and environmental justice are inextricably linked. Further research and understanding of the places where technology is embedded in society, and the importance of centering the environment in tech work and workers in technology and sustainability is needed.

You can read the full paper at the link above and watch the authors' presentation of key findings at the link below.