Who are we?

Moderator & Panelist

Mary Berk, Ph.D.

Panelist

Joe Jerome, J.D., CIPP

Panelist

Craig Spiezle

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What is "humane technology"? (a working definition)

- *Humane technology respects and fosters the capacities needed to be free beings, including **authentic, freely chosen actions***

- *Humane technology promotes the right to **determine our own fates, participate in the systems that govern us**, and for an individual to pursue happiness within **boundaries** that don't harm the same opportunities for others*

Privacy	Autonomy	Shared Values
(ability to control who you are in a context, ability to grow without oversight, etc.)	(being self-ruled; actions not influenced or controlled by others)	(actively contributing to the shaping of the systems that govern and restrain us)

Then...

The Oracle

Tech addiction is a symptom of mental illness, not just a cause

The past decade has seen a substantial rise in anxiety and depression among adolescents and young adults. A 2019 study in the Journal of ...

Reuters

Cambridge Analytica CEO claims influence on U.S. election, Facebook questioned

Brad Parscale, the 2016 Trump campaign's main digital adviser who dealt ... "The entire company is outraged we were deceived," Facebook said in a ... is conducting a long-term investigation of alleged Russian interference in ...

Mar 20, 2018

AOL Proudly Releases Massive Amounts of Private Data

Michael Arrington

@arrington?lang=en / 6:17 pm PDT • August 6, 2006

The Verge

Do Not Track: an uncertain future for the web's most ambitious privacy initiative

Do Not Track: an uncertain future for the web's most am initiative ... the subject of Do Not Track — an HTTP head advertisers and other ... In short, it's true that killing third

Oct 12, 2012

DNA testing company admits to secretly sharing people's genetic data with FBI

FamilyTreeDNA apologises to users for failing to disclose agreement with investigators

Matthew Haag | Tuesday 5 February 2019 10:35 |

NYPD Engaged in Coverup to Hide Its Ties to a Facial Recognition Firm

Wired

Verizon's 'Perma-Cookie' Is a Privacy-Killing Machine

It's a kind of short-term serial number that advertisers can use to identify tools such as private browsing sessions or "do not track" features.

Oct 27, 2014

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... And now

Google Employees Protest Secret Work on Censored Search Engine for China

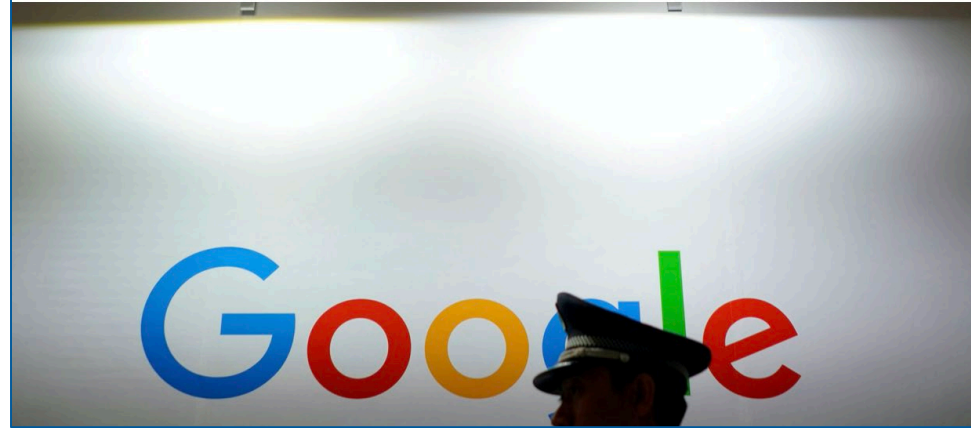## I Used to Work for Google. I Am a Conscientious Objector.

American companies continue to build surveillance tools that are used to violate human rights. Workers who refuse to comply deserve protections.

Susan Fowler and the End of the 'High Performer' Defense

Google Walkout Organizers Say They're Facing Retaliation

Two employees who helped organize a walkout of thousands of workers say they've either been demoted or been told to drop concerns about ethics.

The Great Google Revolt

Some of its employees tried to stop their company from doing work they saw as unethical. It blew up in their faces.

By Noam Scheiber and Kate Conger
Feb. 18, 2020

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Privacy is NOT just about "appropriate control"

- **Privacy challenge**:
  - Everyone wants a piece of you
  - Presumption of consent

- The solution to privacy challenge is <u>not</u> to offer more toggles, options, controls, or dashboards.
  - Individuals are drowning in privacy controls that are hard to find, they do not understand

- Privacy is about having the presumption that your data is a piece of you, and no one has a right to it if it isn't **freely given** via a **conscious choice**. Today's models offer neither.

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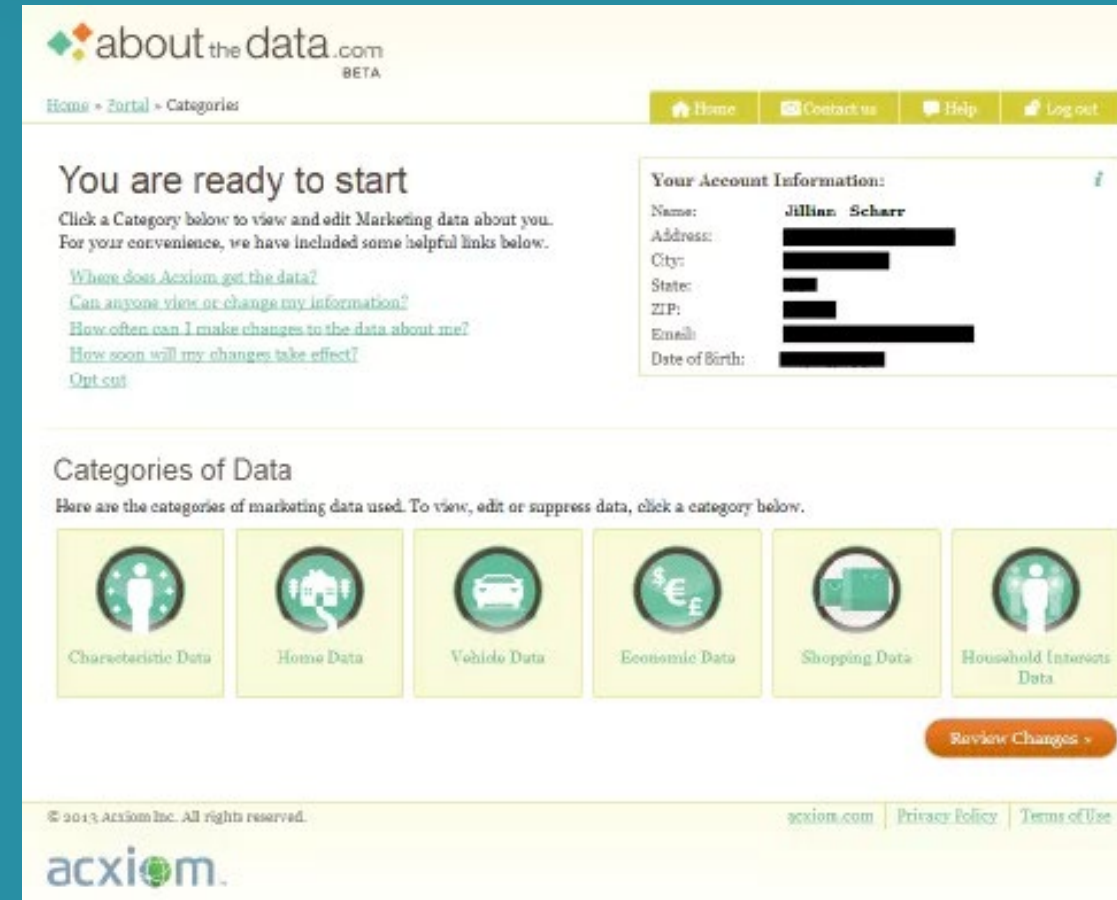
Permissive attitude, vague assurances

- Vague and broadly written privacy policie → "we can do anything we want" attitude

- Limited compliance requirements when you've promised nothing

- No need to think about the consequences if we think we're "allowed" to do it (morality doesn't matter)

- Afraid to promise customers anything because today's line in the sand is tomorrow's opportunity

Signs of an inhumane tech landscape

*"You know, Mary, you just have to **think of the user as the enemy**. They have something we want, and it's our job to get it from them."*

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The "user" is not a commodity

Myth/aspiration: build the best product and the revenue will follow

Reality: trap the human, funnel their actions, and get what you want

- Exploitative design – **using platform power to disadvantage users**
  - Products are designed to deliver results to the company, not free action, choice, and exploration by the human
  - Actions are **extracted** from people, not freely given
    - **Goals**: Time spent, stickiness, controversy → ad revenue, data sales
    - **Methods**: growth hacking, experimentation, algo optimizations w/o limits
  - Eliminates core elements of humanity: the possibility of **authentic action**, free choice, shared contexts

- Business model is about eliciting actions, not providing value
  - Carefully designed funnels obfuscate options (location data, notifications)
    - Pre-checked boxes; choices difficult to exercise or nonexistent; hidden
    - Newsfeed algorithms geared toward "time spent," with end goal of ad revenue
    - "Consent" banners hide information, make choices difficult to find

- Not evil by design: narrowly focused success metrics
  - E.g., corporate goals about growth forget about healthy ecosystem

Concern: we've accepted a world in which a hidden opt out is considered a choice, an interruptive experience is considered acceptable, and our actions are commodities to be acquired

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Questions for the panelists

Challenge

- Forget about compliance, focus on stewardship

- Forget about justifying your actions based on your disclosures and privacy policy, follow your moral compass

- Make genuine privacy practices part of your brand proposition

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Summary – Getting Ahead of the Issues

- Expand Your Horizons – Free Class Intersection of Ethics & AI https://seattleupce.catalog.instructure.com/browse/iett/courses/ai-ethics-for-business

- Find your Switzerland – find a "third-party" without a dog in the fight

- Yesterday's facts may not apply – Recalibrate your POV in light of the evolving regulatory landscape and societal issues.

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Break the Filter Bubble!

- Get **diverse perspectives** and find **external validators**

Introducing the Udacity Artificial Intelligence and Data Industry Advisory Board

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Go with others; Put a person's humanity first

> "If you want to **go fast**, **go alone**. If you want to **go far**, **go together**."
>
> —African Proverb

Strategizing → better outcomes

- Go in **groups**; stand with others and live to fight again
- Understand other perspectives without [necessarily] yielding to them. **Empathy** makes you a partner and not an adversary.
- Sometimes yielding today sets you up for a bigger victory tomorrow

> "Treat the user as an end in herself and not [merely] as a means to your goal.
>
> —Immanuel Kant (paraphrased by Mary)

Your user is a **person**, **not a commodity**. Put their humanity first. Recognize when

- Funnels are extracting "choices"
- Design is obfuscating choice
- A yes/no is not respected

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Revisit our working definition of "humane technology"?

- *Humane technology respects and fosters the capacities needed to be free beings, including **authentic, freely chosen actions***

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Questions & Discussion

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Appendix

Some common deflections in our shared experiences

- You're not seeing the big picture.

- You're too passionate about this cause. (In other scenarios, you'd be praised for having principles)

- We can't cede ground now, and need every advantage we can take, but we can scale back after we've won the space

- You're not being a team player. Get on board with the new paradigm.

- If we don't do this, someone else will (and it's better for the world to have us do it than someone less principled)

Questions

- What's one instance you've seen of a company going out of their way to design responsible, ethical, or humane technology?

- When you've advocated in the past for more responsible or humane technology, what reactions have you received? We'd love to hear about an example of one positive or one negative reaction.

- What common deflections or put-downs have you seen toward people advocating for more humane technology? What are the patterns and tropes that advocates should be aware of?

- What trends make you fear for the future? What trends give you hope for the future? And what can be done NOW to mitigate the fears you have?

- How can one person amplify their impact when advocating for ethical technology? How can they do so in a way that doesn't jeopardize their job, and that has maximum impact?

- What would you change about the [working] definition of "humane technology"?

- What is your audacious challenge to tech companies going forward?

- What are the signs of an inhumane or unethical technology landscape?

- What is your challenge to tech companies of all stripes?

Challenge – Can Historical Data Be Relied On?

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Challenge – Why Ethics Based on Law Can Be Wrong

Challenge – Your Role

With Great Power Comes Great Responsibility

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What is your audacious challenge to tech companies?

- **Mary**:
  - Think how you would treat another person sitting next to you – someone you value and respect – and treat your product's users the same way.
  - Align your goals with those of your users. And where you can't, set out bold lines in the sand for the principles you'll adhere to and the actions you'll never/always take.

- **Craig**:
  - FILL IN

- **Joe**:
  - FILL IN

What are some signs of an inhumane tech landscape?

- Frameworks that hide your choices
  - Hidden settings
  - Aggressive defaults (YouTube autoplay, automatic data sharing)
  - Opt out if you can find us (device fingerprints, adtech)
  - 3 step account deletion, plus a waiting period
  - To get this one little thing, you have to give us access to more (turn on 3P cookies to enable opt out, or share 2 government IDs in order to delete your account)

- Intro (**6 MINUTES**)

- People intros - 2 minutes

- Plan - 1 minute
  - I'll be moderating and participating at moments
  - We'll explore some history, talk about some common issues we've seen in our careers — and in the process, hope to leave you with the ability to recognize common patterns and address them — and we'll challenge you in your personal situations to raise the bar for all of us.
  - This will be a guided conversation that contains a number of conversational prompts, but that panelists (including me) will feel free to share their thoughts in an impromptu format.

- Let's get some audience feedback. (Goal is to get audience engaged early). Raise your hands if the following apply to you. - 3 minutes
  - How many of you have seen your company or industry do something
    - That disadvantages users in favor of company goals (e.g., hiding opt out terms, hiding ability to unsubscribe)
    - That is clearly unethical?
  - How many of you spoke up about it?
  - How many of you were the only person speaking up about it?
  - For how many of you did it hurt your career?
  - ALL RIGHT, so we're all in good company here. Let's get started.

- What we've seen — setting some context (**6 MINUTES**)
  - Here are some things you've probably seen in the news, and some of tech's most challenging moments. As you see these, think about (1) the methods used to wield advantage over someone and (2) the mechanisms involved that undermine the agency of the end user/consumer
  - Each person introduce ONE of our themes. 2 minutes each.

- Questions from the moderator (**23 MINUTES**)
  - (3 questions, 2.5 responses per question, 3 minutes per response) = ~23 minutes
  - **1**: Let's get started on a positive note. What's one instance you've seen of a company going out of their way to design responsible, ethical, or humane technology?
  - **2**: What is <u>one</u> deflections against humane technology that you've seen repeatedly in your career? Please share an example of this in action. In hindsight, what would be your best argument against it, or tactic for mitigating it?
  - **3**: What is one trend that makes you most concerned for the future? Given this trend, what can be done <u>NOW</u> to mitigate the fears you have?

- Your challenge to the audience (**6 MINUTES**)
  - 3 of us - 2 minutes each, 1 slide each.

- Questions from the audience (**REMAINING TIME = 10 MINUTES**)
  - Expecting 2 questions, with 2 of us responding to each question for 2.5 minutes each (or ceding our time two someone else
  - Plus 2 minutes logistical time for selecting questions

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Session outline

- **Introduction (5 minutes)** Moderator to introduce panelists (referencing your bios)
  - Moderator to share rough session plan
  - Moderator to invite engagement from the audience. "Let's get some feedback from the audience. Raise your hand if...." (questions prepared)

- **Context -- common themes we've seen in our careers (6 minutes)** Each panelist to introduce one slide for 2 minutes. Slide to contain a theme they've seen repeatedly. Based on our conversation notes and pulled from v1/v2 draft slides.

- **Questions from the moderator (23 minutes)** These will be drawn from our conversation notes. No surprises, but I'd like to keep it slightly fresh to make for a more authentic conversation. You can guess what they'll be based on v1 of the deck....

- Planning 3 questions, with 2 panelists responding to each question for 3.5 minutes (and making room for a third to pile on if desired). Will have additional questions ready from our conversation notes if needed.

- **Panelist challenge to the audience (6 minutes)** Each panelist gets 2 minutes (and 1 slide if desired) to describe their challenge to the audience. 2 minutes each.

- **Questions from the audience (10 minutes)** Expecting 2 questions, with 2 panelists responding to each question for 2.5 minutes (or to leave it a bit impromptu, giving panelists the option to cede their time to someone else). Which panelists speak can be decided based on the question.