

Embedded Ethics:

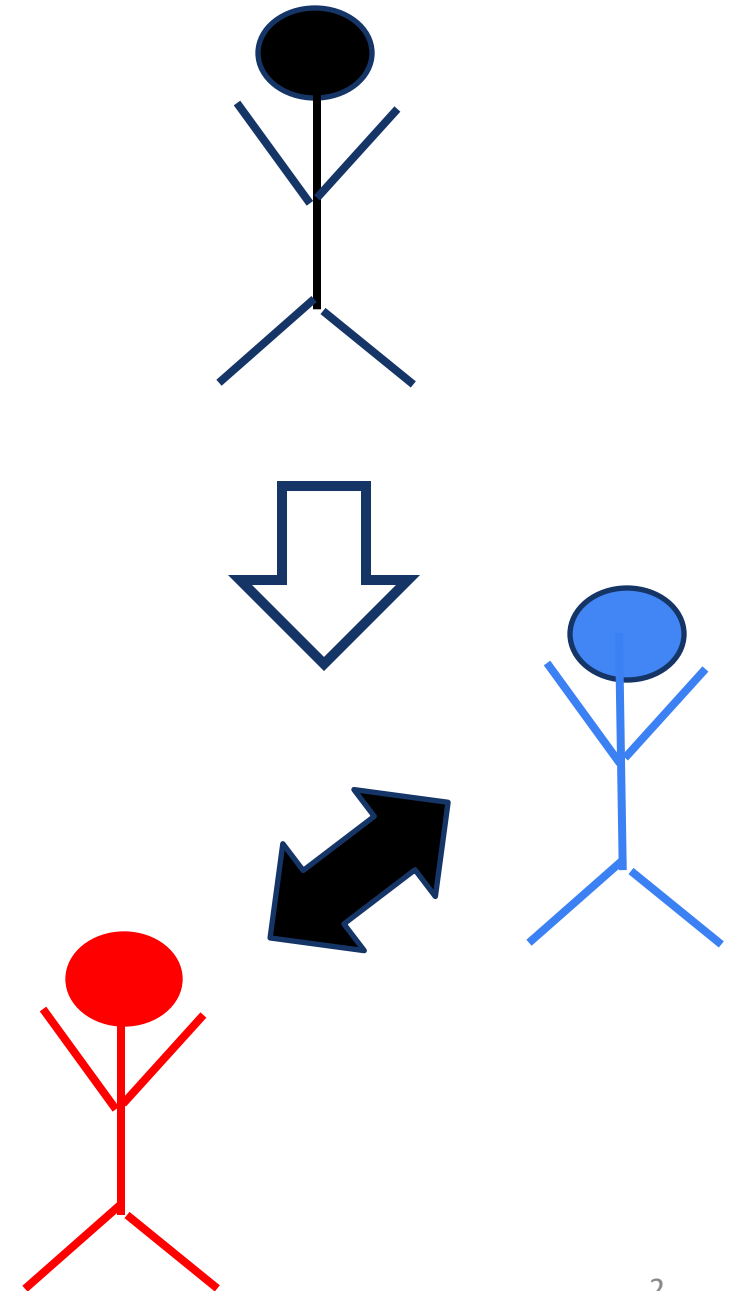
CSC207

Mini-lecture 1:

Harms

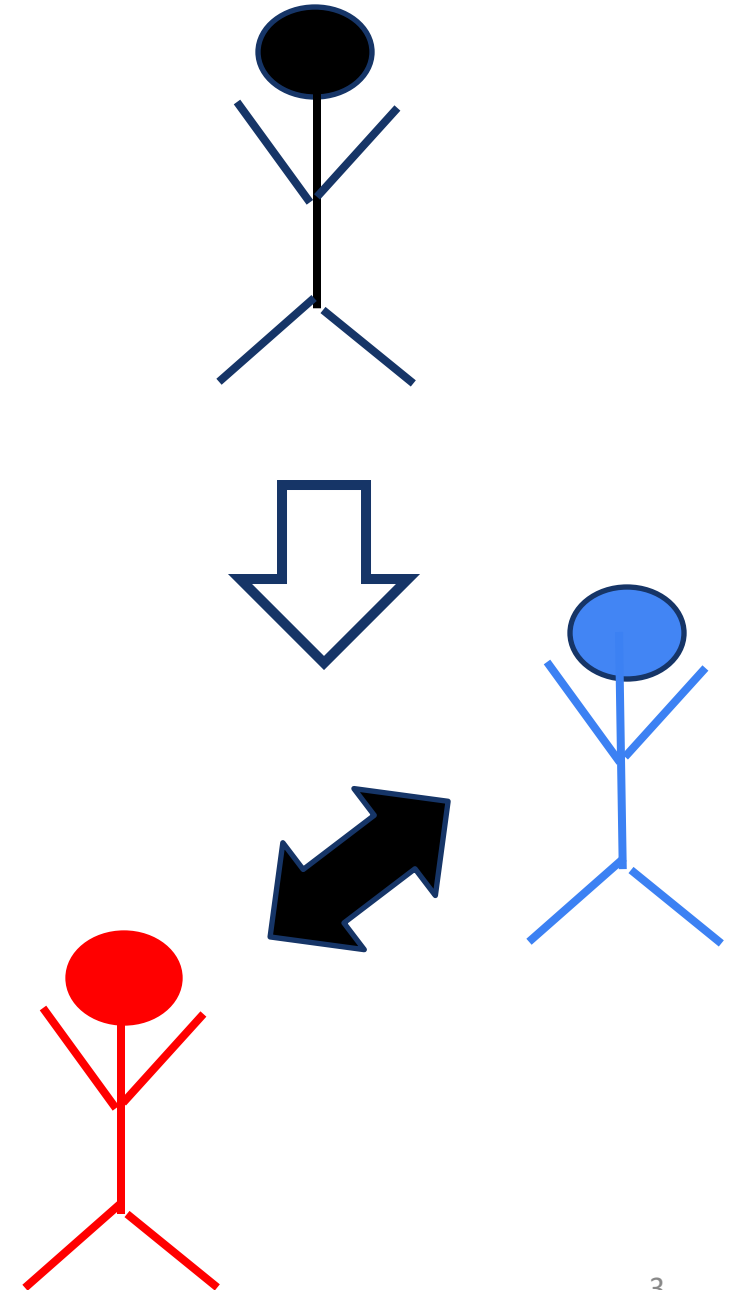
**Relational harms:** harms that come from someone expressing that another person is less than equal

**Material harms:** all other harms (like the harms we identified earlier caused by exclusion from various apps – harms to happiness, health, freedom, social options, etc)



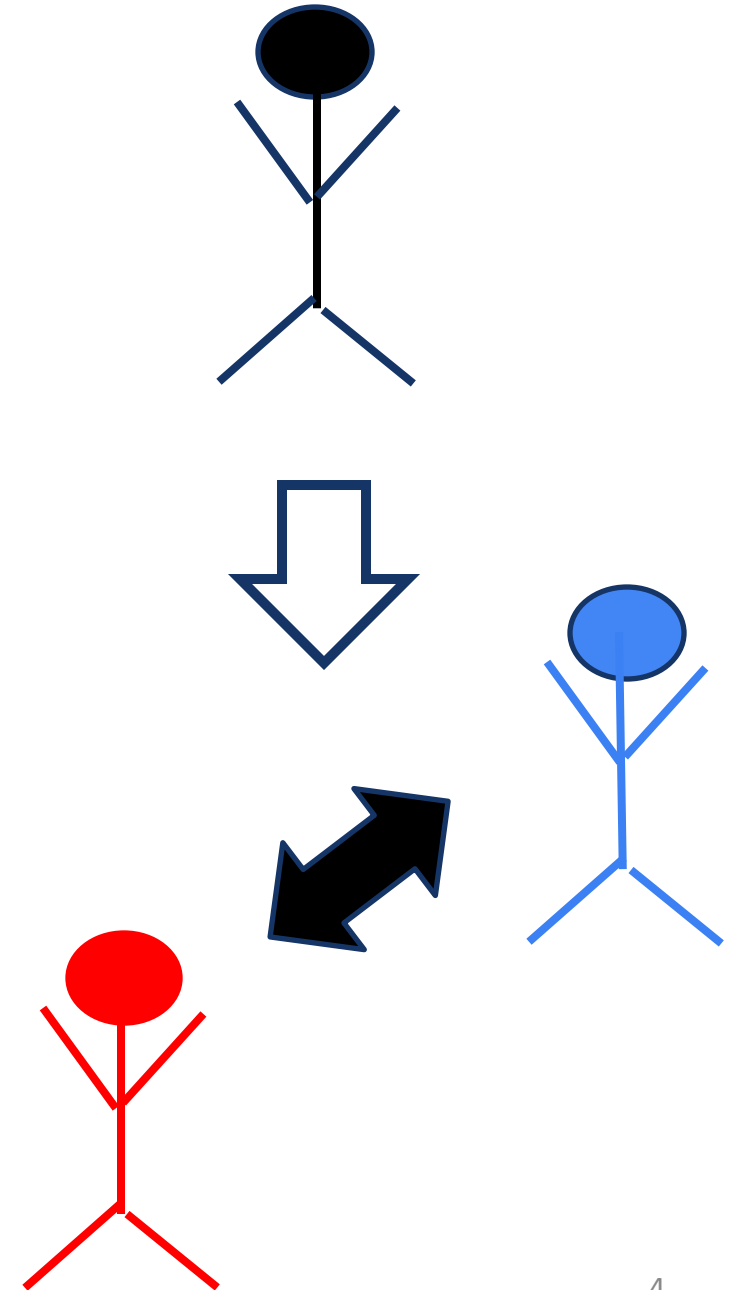
# Why can our design decisions cause relational harms?

- 1) Our design decisions can communicate meaning.
- 2) Some forms of communication (speech acts) do more than convey information – they directly make changes in the world.



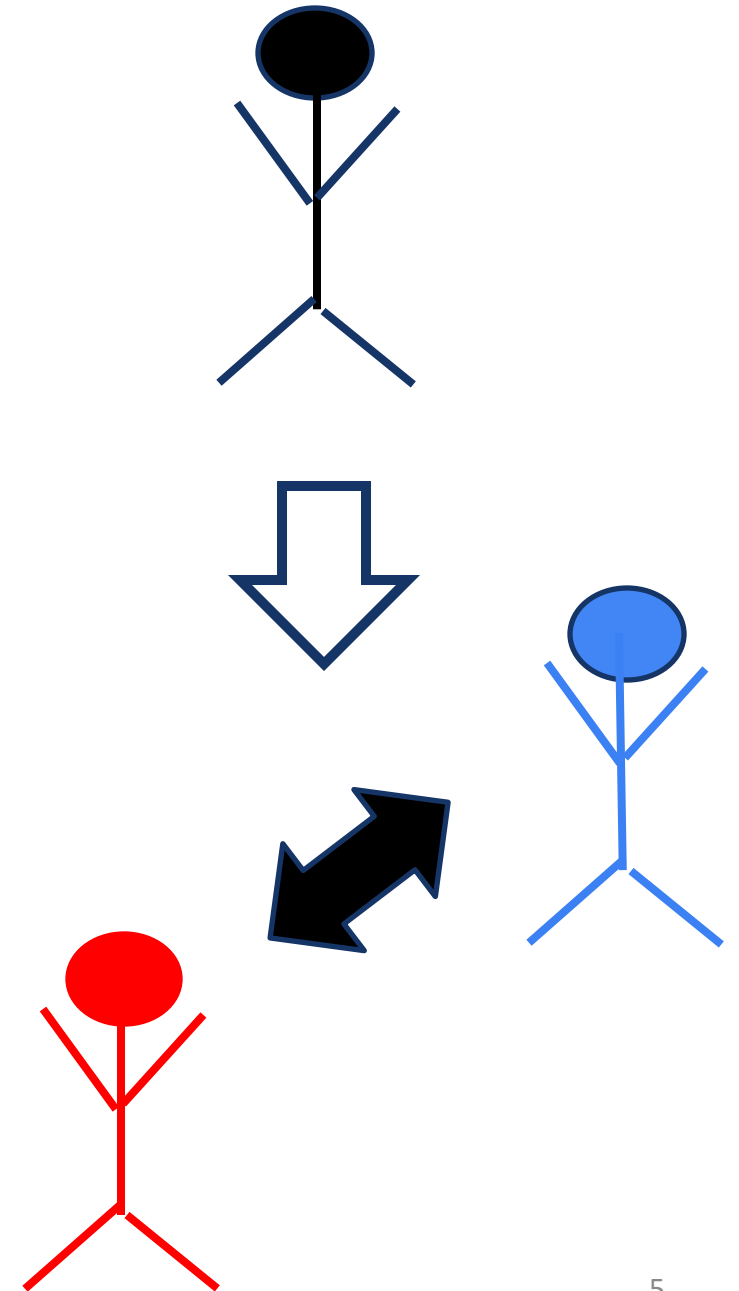
# Why can our design decisions cause relational harms?

Some design decisions express that people are less than equal and demote them in status.



Here are some factors that may contribute to relational harms:

- A) Does the person making the decision have authority?
- B) What is the subject matter of exclusion? Is it closely connected to personal dignity or more trivial?
- C) Who is being excluded? Do they belong to a sensitive group?



## C) Who is being excluded? Do they belong to a sensitive group?

Some groups of people seem to be more vulnerable to relational harm through exclusion because of history, etc.

The relational harm is worst when all and only members of a sensitive group are excluded.

It is less relationally harmful if some but not all members of a sensitive group are excluded.

It is less relationally harmful if some members of a non-sensitive group are simultaneously excluded.

