REFLECTION THREE

"Hackathons as Participatory Design: Iterating Feminist Utopias"

In this paper, the authors present an iteration of a participatory design process to create spaces for re-imagining products, services, systems, and policies to support breastfeeding in the U.S. What began as a hackathon grew into what the authors began to call a "breastfeeding festival," composed of many different co-located sites of participation. These spaces included a hackathon, a policy summit, an art exhibition, a product expo, a "baby village", and a Zine Library, among others. For each of these spaces, the authors describe efforts the authors undertook to make them radically the authors coming to parents and babies, with a particular focus on mothers of color, low-wage workers and LGBTQ+ parents—groups who, historically, have not been centered at hackathons.

it is important to know what is HCI(Human Computer Interaction) and how it works for this participatory design field. Like John M. Carroll, author and a founder of the field of human-computer interaction said: "it no longer makes sense to regard HCI as a specialty of computer science; HCI has grown to be broader, larger and much more diverse than computer science itself. HCI expanded from its initial focus on individual and generic user behavior to include social and organizational computing, accessibility for the elderly, the cognitively and physically impaired, and for all people, and for the widest possible spectrum of human experiences and activities. It expanded from desktop office applications to include games, learning and education, commerce, health and medical applications, emergency planning and response, and systems to support collaboration and community. It expanded from early graphical user interfaces to include myriad interaction techniques and devices, multi-modal interactions, tool support for model-based user interface specification, and a host of emerging ubiquitous, handheld and context-aware interactions."[1]

As many organizers of participatory design projects experience, democratic and liberatory ideals can be difficult to achieve in practice. In order to explain how their second iteration came to be, the authors present an honest assessment of the successes and shortcomings of the first iteration of the project, which manifested as a conventionally-structured hackathon. The authors describe their reflections after the first event and explain how the authors re-oriented the second Make the Breast Pump Not Suck hackathon towards intersectional and participatory design ideals. Through this case study, the authors present a reimagining of the hackathon model that foregrounds equity and inclusion, confronts issues

such as technological solutionism [43], values non-technical knowledges and skills, and utilizes joy and play as key strategies to bring people together and inspire creativity. In addition to the restructuring of the project, the authors also describe efforts that the white members of their project team undertook to understand how their white identities can impede their ability to work across lines of racial difference.

Their work contributes to a growing literature around making hackathons more inclusive, designing participatory processes that center marginalized voices, and incorporating systems- and relationship-based approaches to problem solving. Guided by principles of intersectionality and feminist HCI, the authors provide a tangible example of how HCI researchers, designers, and activists might design and run hackathon-style events in a more inclusive way: how the authors might make space for many ways of knowing and how the authors can be attendant to pothe authorsr dynamics before, during, and after large-scale participatory events.

Work Sited

[1] “Human-Computer Interaction (HCI)” , https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/topics/human-computer-interaction.