Design Justice & Values

CPSC 544

This week (Nov 27) & beyond

This week (W13 Nov 27)

- Wed 11/29: Intellectual Property & NDA workshop
  Guest speaker Meir Deutsch, UBC University-Industry Liaison Office

- Wed-Thu 11/29-30: meet with staff Mentor / Med Fi progress

Next week (W14 Dec 4)

- Mon 12/04 – working class

- Wed 12/06: Medium Fi Prototype Demo Session

- Wed 12/06: Handin: Medium Fidelity Prototype Demo summary

Final deadlines (Dec 8-12)

- Thu 12/08: Revised reading journal deadline

- Sun 12/10: Med-Fi Prototype Report

- Sun 12/10: Participation self-assessment (auto extension to 12/12)

Planning for last class (Dec 6)

Medium-Fidelity In-Class Presentations

- Demo session
  - Simultaneous demoing to a few audience members at a time
  - **Assume 5-minute spiel + questions, repeat multiple times**
  - We supply just tables and whiteboards (no external monitors)
  - Everyone here in person – please try hard

- Further logistic details to follow
  - Trying to devise minimally-chaotic protocol that allows everyone to see all demos, adjusted to class size
  - All members of team should be prepared to demo
  - Will announce on Slack when session details finalized

- Let us know ASAP if you really need anything special

Learning objectives

TODAY

- Consider the role of intersectionality in developing and evaluating technologies

- Consider the role of self and personal bias in your work as a designer (positionality)

- Define design justice and its tenets, alongside the complementary equityXDesign framework

- Use these frameworks to critically examine the process you are taking in your own projects, and imagine other possibilities

Land
acknowledgement

A typical Design Process

- **pre** design: understand the problem

- **early** design: explore design space

- **mid** design: develop the chosen approach

- **late** design: integrate and start to deploy

- **throughout**:   evaluate and prototype

Intersectionality

But:

Race, class and gender are "interlocking systems: they do not only operate 'on their own,' but are often experienced together, by individuals who exist at their intersection" (*Intersectionality*, para 1).

- Crenshaw, 1989, as cited in Costanza-Chock

Costanza-Chock, S. (2018). Design justice: Towards an intersectional feminist framework for design theory and practice. *Proceedings of the Design Research Society*.

Intersectional, Black feminist lens

- "...helps us see that we are simultaneously members of multiple groups, both dominant and subordinate"
  - *The matrix of domination*

- Shows that "people experience and resist oppression on three levels:" personal, community, social institutions

- "emphasizes the value of situated knowledge over universalist knowledge"

Costanza-Chock, S. (2018). Design justice: Towards an intersectional feminist framework for design theory and practice. *Proceedings of the Design Research Society*.

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What is design justice?

Design justice is a field of theory and practice that is concerned with how the design of objects and systems influences the distribution of **risks, harms, and benefits among various groups of people**.

Design justice focuses on **the ways that design reproduces, is reproduced by, and/or challenges the matrix of domination** (in many cases: white supremacy, heteropatriarchy, capitalism, and settler colonialism).

Design justice is also a growing social movement that aims to ensure a **more equitable distribution of design's benefits and burdens;** fair and meaningful participation in design decisions; and recognition of community based design traditions, knowledge, and practices.

- Costanza-Chock, "A tentative definition of design justice"

What questions does design justice prompt us to ask?

Overarching idea: How do we build equity?

- Who gets to do design?

- Who do we design for, or with?

- What values do we encode and reproduce in objects and systems that we design?

- How do we scope and frame design problems?

- Where do we do design, what sites are privileged and what sites are ignored or marginalized, and how do we make design sites accessible to those who will most be impacted?

- Who owns and profits from design, what social relationships are reproduced by design, and and how do we move towards community control of design processes?

- What stories do we tell about how things are designed?
  - Costanza-Chock, "A tentative definition of design justice"

activity

Reflection (small group discussion; 10m)

- Consider one of the other articles assigned for today, which **gave examples of projects trying to generate change**:

  - Hope, A., D'Ignazio, C., Hoy, J., Michelson, R., Roberts, J., Krontiris, K., & Zuckerman, E. (2019, May). Hackathons as participatory design: iterating feminist utopias. In *Proceedings of the 2019 CHI* (pp. 1-14).

  - Maharawal, M. M., & McElroy, E. (2018). The anti-eviction mapping project: Counter mapping and oral history toward bay area housing justice. *Annals of the American Association of Geographers, 108*(2), 380-389.

- How do these authors bring a **"design justice" lens** to their work?

- How do they try to avoid "**technological solutionism**" and involve people most negatively affected by current policies and practices?

Equity X design framework

EQUITY X DESIGN FRAMEWORK

Which requires us to ...

We believe in ...

Design at the margins

Historical Context (See)

Start with your self

Radical Inclusion (Be Seen)

Cede Power

Make the invisible visible

Process as Product (Foresee)

Speak to the future

EQUITY X DESIGN
COLLABORATIVE

Hill, Molitor & Ortiz (2016). *Racism and inequity are products of design. They can be redesigned. Medium.*
Retrieved Nov 17, 2022 from *https://medium.com/@equityXdesign/racism-and-inequity-are-products-of-design-they-can-be-redesigned-12188363cc6a*

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Design Principle #1: **Design at the Margins**

Designing at the margin means that those in privileged positions do not solve for those experiencing oppression;

rather, in true community, **both the privileged and marginalized build collective responsibility and innovative solutions for our most intractable problems.**

"There is nothing wrong with making things that people want. The problem is that **personhood and desire are constrained by capital money affects whose wants appear to matter**. The kids in Startup House may want a pizza delivery drone, but not in the same way low income families want health care, or the elderly men lying in their own faeces on Howard Street want a safe place to sleep.

There is nothing wrong with making things people want. It's just that **too little attention is being paid to the things people need**. The wants and needs of young, healthy, middle-class people with connections and a reasonable amount of spare cash are overrepresented among Start-up City's priorities. For one thing, those are **the problems with solutions that sell**. For another, given a few million dollars and a team of semigeniuses, **those problems are easy to solve**.

Structural social injustice and systemic racism are harder to tackle – and that's where the tech sector has, until recently, thrown up its hands."

> Penny, 2014; as quoted in Costanza-Chock, 2018.

Penny, L. (9 April 2014). "A Tale of Two Cities: how San Francisco's tech boom is widening the gap between rich and poor." The New Statesman. http://www.newstatesman.com/laurie-penny/2014/04/tale-two-cities-how-sanfranciscos-tech-boom-widening-gap-between-rich-and-poor

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Design Principle #2: **Start with your self**

Our identities (race, gender, upbringing, social status, home language, etc.) create our lens for the world and how we make sense of it.

We must raise our awareness of our own identities and **how bias impacts our thoughts, choices, conclusions, and assumptions** to truly co-create with others.

Karon's positionality statement for this class

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Design Principle #3: **Cede power**

We must acknowledge the **power dynamics that allow some votes to count more than others**. Equitable design demands that practices change and evolve — that we **redefine roles, revalue ways of knowing, and reassess the ways we reach decision.**

… the hegemonic view of power as a zero-sum game — more for you must mean less for me. … [but] we believe that **shared power is in the interest of everyone and does not require a growth in the ranks of the powerless.**

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Design Principle #4: **Make the invisible visible**

The relationships between people and problems are often governed by sets of **heuristics — techniques** that allow problems to be solved with speed, agility, and economy.

However, these **preexisting schemas can perpetuate exclusionary assumptions and biased practices, manifesting as implicit bias, power dynamics, and hegemonic practices** that govern relationships with people in our organizations, schools, and governments.

By making them visible, we can assess their impact and create a space for reflection and repair.

I.e.: Check your methods!

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Design Principle #5: **Speak to the future**

Because an equitable reality has never existed, we cannot look to our past to learn how to create an equitable future.

… Discourse 2, the discourse of transformation, is the language that tends to be about uncomfortable, unequal, ineffective, prejudicial conditions and relationships. This discourse creates space for ambiguity, change, and the opportunity to be a part of a purposeful structure.

When we notice how hegemony dominates our conceptual understanding of problems and how they impact others who are different, we have a powerful opportunity to see the end-users' historical selves and how those selves manifests in the present.

activity

Activity: Draft a positionality statement (5m)

As a private exercise (won't ask you to share this)

- Consider this class, and your project

- What about who you are, where you come from, the experiences you've had and what you believe, may impact how you have approached your design work?
    - Think about the different stages: initial user research, seeking broadly for ideas, then developing and testing your design.

- Think also about other professional endeavors, including work that you might not think about as at all "subjective"

- Consider whether this brings up uncomfortable or confusing thoughts, and if so, set aside time later on to regard them (nonjudgmentally) and perhaps discuss in a safe space.

Five minutes is not enough for this exercise first-time through, but it could be a start.

Design Justice Principles

1. Who gets to do design?

2. Who do we design for, or with?

3. What values do we encode and reproduce in objects and systems that we design?

4. How do we scope and frame design problems?

5. Where do we do design, what sites are privileged and what sites are ignored or marginalized, and how do we make design sites accessible to those who will most be impacted?

6. Who owns and profits from design, what social relationships are reproduced by design, and and how do we move towards community control of design processes?

7. What stories do we tell about how things are designed?
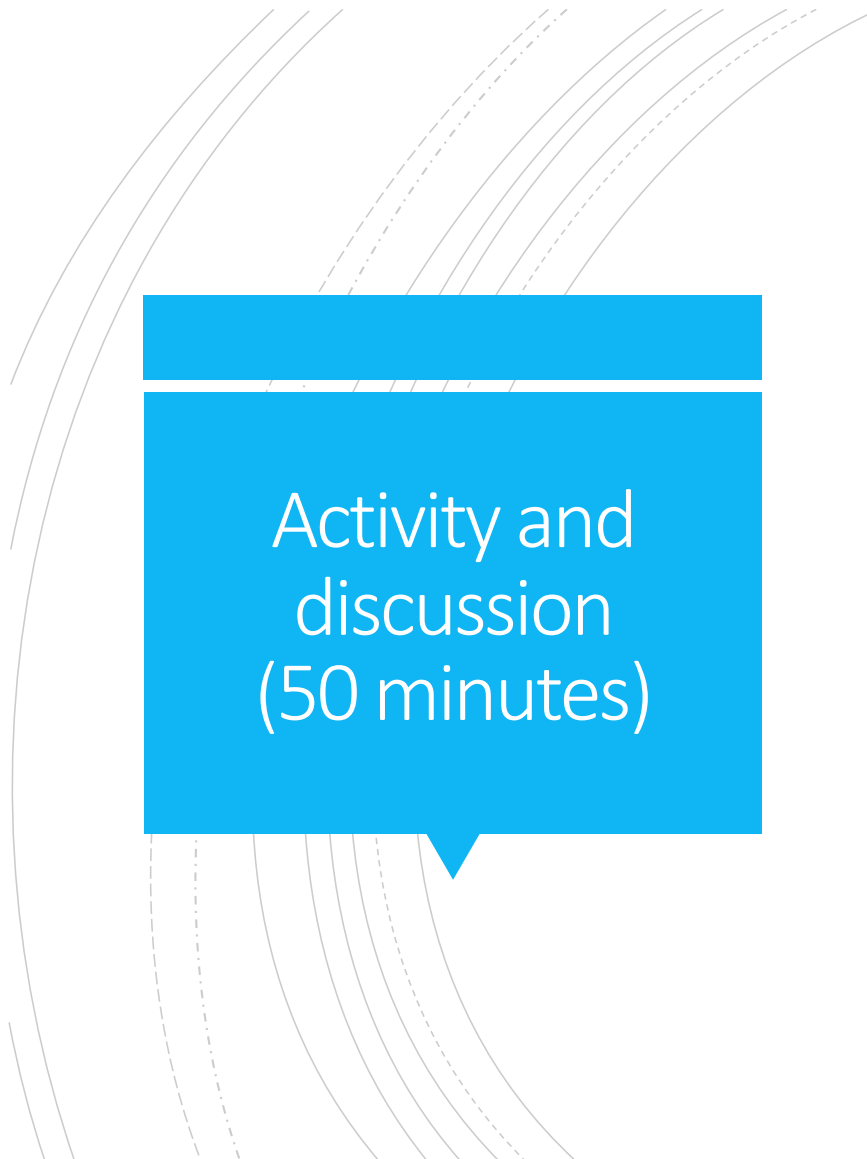
From Costanza-Chock, 2018

activity

EquityXDesign Principles:

1. Design at the margins

2. Start with your self

3. Cede power

4. Make the invisible visible

5. Speak to the future

From Hill, Molitor & Ortiz, 2016

activity

Activity and discussion (50 minutes)

Within your project groups:

- Consider your own design projects that are under development.

- Choose 3-4 of the Design Justice or equityXDesign principles which seem relevant; identify one to start wiith. (5m)

- Discuss how you might reconsider any of your design approaches with regard to this principle.
If you feel you have gotten to the end of one, or get stuck, move on to another. (25 minutes)

- Designate a person from the group to report out on the discussion. (20 minutes)

Additional Resources

Center for Humane Technology Launches New Podcast Series to Uncover Tech's Hidden Threats to Humanity

"Your Undivided Attention" Kicks off with Guest Natasha Schüll on How Casinos and Social Media Play on Human Sensi...

[Center for Humane Technology]

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Jun 10, 2019, 11:00 ET

Technology (CHT), launched a new podcast
Podcasts, Spotify and RSS feed today. "Your
hnologists to design products that benefit

https://www.humanetech.com/podcast

[Center for Humane Technology]

Ledger of Harms

BETA VERSION Updated Apr 5, 2021

Under immense pressure to prioritize engagement and growth, technology platforms have created a race for human attention that's unleashed invisible harms to society. Here are some of the costs that aren't showing up on their balance sheets.

We hope these factoids, each supported by a citation, help to advance your work. Please share with others who might also find them useful.

This ledger is a work in progress -- we welcome your feedback and suggested corrections. This project is made possible by our generous funders.

Making Sense of the World
Misinformation, conspiracy theories, and fake news

Attention and Cognition

https://ledger.humanetech.com/

Welcome to Designing a Humane Future Podcast

Designing a
HUMANE
FUTURE

▶ Designing a Humane Future Podcast Intro
Sarah Tranum

Check out *Designing a Humane Future*, a podcast series that explores some of the most complex challenges we face and examines them through a design and systems thinking lens. We talk with people who are imagining new approaches, creating new collaborations, and building new structures that can usher in a better future.

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https://www.trickleupdesign.com/podcast/designing-a-humane-future