**Essay Question I.**

**New technologies have always produced unintended consequences. One result of this would be how UX designers and engineers face a number of new ethical challenges today with the rise of technology regarding our interaction with it and dependence on it.**

**What is the primary job of a UX designer? Discuss the principle ethical quandaries faced by UX designers. What is persuasive design? Discuss the ways you feel this positively and/or negatively affect user behavior.**

Although the definition can vary, the fundamental focus of a UX designer is on overall user satisfaction with a product. UX designers continuously look for ways to improve how the product experience feels to the user. Improvements such as making the product faster, easier or more entertaining are all user friendly. UX designer is the user’s advocate within the product and it makes sure that each component of the product is in its most logical, easily accessible place. Any multi-step process within the product is to be streamlined and intuitive for the user.

UX designers face a big problem when it comes to ethics. Some feel that they can only address an ethics problem after the product is released to the public. The consumer first has to interact with the product before the problem can be identified. UX designers should put the user’s needs before anything. However, the business side becomes involved and that’s where the question of intent lies. Sometimes these designers will create a product that’s more business friendly than user friendly. This leads to a fine line between what is beneficial to consumers, and what is a complete disregard of the consumers privacy. UX designers will use cookies in order to obtain information that better serves the user or the company. It can most definitely benefit the user and help them find their wants much quicker. However, this same information that is being obtained can also be used against you in the hiring process of a job. Another ethical problem UX designers face is through persuasive design. Persuasive design is an area of design practice that focuses on influencing human behavior through a product’s or service’s characteristics. Based on psychological and social theories, persuasive design is often used in e-commerce, organizational management, and public health. So what persuasive design does in order to influence this behavior is ads placement. These ads serve just like billboards and tv commercials did in the past. They influence the users actions. They can even be used to manipulate the thoughts and actions of othersl This is an ethical problem because if we, as users, are bombarded with the same ads over and over again, we are going to react to it. Most of the times it warrants an unnecessary reaction. This can be both positive and negative.

“As I see ethics in design, they start first with figuring out what your own values are as a person and how that translates to yourself as a professional. Then you see how those align to your company or product. And this translation between your personal/professional values and that of your companies is where the fuzzy area of design ethics begins.” In my opinion, UX designers should be carefully screened. One’s values and morals should be considered when creating a UX design. Money should never be the reason why ethics become sacrificed. If you sacrifice ethics for monetary gain, you’re serving as a detriment to not only the user’s life, but life itself as a whole.

**Essay Question II.**

**The rise of digital technology has had a massive impact in the international creative community. Small digital video cameras and editing software have made it easier than ever for aspiring filmmakers to make a movie. Inexpensive recording software has done the same for musicians. Digital photography now rivals the traditional chemical process for resolution, while image manipulation is simpler and more sophisticated than ever before. Ultimately, the Internet provides a worldwide platform for artists of all stripes to share his/her work.**

**What are some of the core characteristics of the digital world? Discuss how these and new tech developments have impacted the arts and creative culture. What are some specific developments that have impacted artists? In what ways are they unrewarding, and in what ways are they beneficial?**

The rise of digital technology has generated content easily accessible to our fingertips within seconds.  Some of the core characteristics of the digital world include saturation, sensation, creativity, high speed and impact.

With the digital world creating content easier to obtain and distribute, it has caused major change to the arts and creative culture positively and negatively.  These new technology developments have made it possible for artists to rapidly produce and deliver their work to the mass, reshaping the process of the respective industries simultaneously.  Due to how fast we exchange information, the value in the creation decreases. The saturation in the field that causes creative destruction in culture contributes to the distinction between professional and amateur becoming more and more difficult to distinguish.  These new tech developments come at a cost and the professional artists have to compete with the saturators whom create a similar product in their respective industry. This eventually causes value to decrease tremendously. It forces all artists to adapt or get left behind.  The rise of digital technology is making it easier for content to be created. To be creative and innovative is rare nowadays due to how easy it is to create something digitally. The music industry has changed immensely throughout the years, causing a shift in the balance of power.  As of late in the music industry, talent is not needed to create a product due to the new advancements in digital technology creating music. This impacts the arts in an unrewarding way because human creativity is no longer needed or required to make music. Another negative impact in the music industry is physical records not being sold as much as before causing record labels revenue to decrease. Which leads to record labels offering smaller budgets to their recording artists, the staff is smaller, causing artists to have less support in development. Or the record label adapts to the new age. They now take a social media personality with a big following and turn them into a rap artist. Bhad Bhabie and Cardi B are prime examples. The positive side to this is the money that the new act is making. Both for themselves and the record label. The negative side is the content and creativity is diminished of substance.  Furthermore, for artists with digital technology there are still other revenue streams other than making records such as merchandising and endorsements through marketing with top brands.  This is where is gets tricky between the artist and the record label companies. The new age deals require new artists to give the company a percentage of their other revenue streams. This is turn causes a negative impact on the relationship between an artist and the record label companies. The world has become a global village. “There was a time when people would live and die without even seeing a single foreigner. Today, it is possible to interact with people living halfway across the world on a daily basis.” This global village comes at such a sacrifice to everything that comes before social media. Even though the communication and access to information is limitless, the substance in various cultures combine to make one big grey blob.

**Essay Question III.**

**Human enhancement technology converges nanotechnology, biotechnology, information technology and cognitive science to improve human performance, attempting to temporarily or permanently overcome the current limitations of the human body through natural or artificial means.**

**Discuss some specific developments in human enhancement technology. Do you have trouble with the idea of these technologies making us stronger, faster, better? Do these advancements come at any cost? Such as privacy issues or a question of morals? What are your thoughts on the premise of these technologies making us (humans) more connected to technology? What technological innovation do you think we need most and why?**

Human enhancement technologies introduce new incredible possibilities.  These new technologies are equipped towards advancement and restoring physical and psychological abilities for us humans.  While using this technology is an individual choice, it has an impact on society when it comes to ethics.  These developments are intended to upgrade a physical or cognitive ability with the only purpose is improving performance.  Ethical concerns come into play when it involves how humans use these enhancements to conduct their lives and the effects it has on cultural norms.

For example, the rise of infertility is increasing today creating the use of In vitro fertilization (IVF) more common in society.  Another human enhancement technology coming to the rise is the use of surrogacy, which is when an embryo is created via IVF and implanted into a gestational carrier to create human life.  The embryo is created using the intended mother’s egg and intended father’s sperm.  Although this arrangement appears to be positive for all people involved, many can argue the moral standpoint of IVF and surrogacy is that it violates the “traditional” ways of family formation.  Another argument is that motherhood is fundamentally moral in the sense that it helps infertile women to have a family which is the purpose of life.  Human enhancement technology becomes dreadful when it is used to alter the physicality of oneself in order to remain relevant.  Due to the saturation of pop culture, humans have succumbed themselves to the pressure of body alterations with the use of human enhancement surgeries. An example of this would be cosmetic surgery.  With these procedures, confidence, self-worth and integrity are thrown out the window. The perception of the “ideal” body image for women today is influenced by media with celebrities like the Kardashians and rapper Cardi B. Human enhancement technologies were used in achievement of the optimal physical state, small waists with voluptuous features.  These human enhancements can indeed turn fatal due to the excessive amounts of alterations done and new developments made to help people achieve these unrealistic body images promoted by the media. For years humans have been trying to improve their physical and mental abilities.  Human enhancements technologies that can help people with their sight, hearting and mobilities are great revolutions.  When it comes to ongoing efforts to support people with disabilities, heal the sick and overall improve human performance, I am all for it. “So let us educate our children by teaching them as much as we can about technology. We need to go beyond basic skills to raise the first generation of native digital users. People who, unlike most of the rest of us, know where and how their technology is made.” This quote to me is the most important thing we need to know as humans. It is our responsibility that morals don’t become extinct. Our cultures need to be preserved. In this way, we can lead a generation of new leaders. Our biggest nightmare is seeing everyone in the world become a follower without guidance.

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Final Exam

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