Assignment #03. Hippocratic Oath

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Moral Commitment for Computer Scientist

As a computer scientist, and a software engineer, and an information technician, today, I commit to following statements which will be a guidline for the future of myself and my colleagues.

1. I shall remember that computer science and technology is originated in tragic history of worldwide conflict and violence, and fulfill my duty to realize a sustatainable world by peace and progress.
2. I shall remember that each decision I make as a professional drives huge impact on the current human society, and fulfill my duty to take active steps to resolve inequality, and to get farther away from the desire to put myself before other social values.
3. I shall remember that every human exist between the spectrum of individuals and groups, and fulfill my duty to establish adequate structures that respect both private and public justice.
4. I shall remember that mechnical efficiency is foundation where modern society is built on, and fulfill my duty to bring any means of developing human life and our reality.
5. I shall remember that natural expansion of the knowledge over time demands great effort by scholars, and fulfill my duty to explore new vast areas of the knowledge, and to pass on this marvelous knowledge to posterity.
6. I shall remember that the information network provides the basis for the evolutionary development of human society, and fulfill my duty to provide environment where every human soul can equally exchange information by need.
7. I shall remember that public attention is equally important as academic authenticity, and fulfill my duty to address any problem and issues that our society suffers from to public, encourage people to engage in actual solution.
8. I shall remember that this oath provides core perspectives on ethical standards as a professional, and fulfill my duty to guide my teachers, colleagues, and students to have deep understanding on the moral idea behind the oath.

Explanation

My version of the oath aims people who are about to enter computer science related professions or studies. Because it is the first moral standard that students will encounter, so for each statement, I wrote reason and idea behind the responsibility, and explicitly stating way the person should follow. I mainly refer to the Archimedean Oath, taking similar format and idea.

At first, I mention `As a computer scientist, and a software engineer, and a information technician`, because there are so many professions that are related to computer science. I think those three words generally cover most of CS-related professions. Then the following statement `a professional guidline for the future of myself and my colleagues` means that the oath will work as a minimal standard for professionals. Also mentioning `my colleagues` emphasizes relationship with other professionals of this field.

The 8 statements of the oath is categorized into 3 parts. The first 4 statements social values that computer scientists must recognize. Next 3 statements regards moral values as a academic member of CS society. The last statement is a meta-statement, which encourages people to spread the oath to other people.

The first statement mentions peace and progress, which is very general value that a member of human society can think of. I specifically mentioned `tragic history of worldwide conflict and violence` because early computer science was developed in the World War II period, in a purpose of winning the war. Preventing worldwide violence would be the first objective to any moral person.

The second statement emphasizes that CS related professions can influence modern society significantly. Then it demands people to actively resolve inequality. Although many of discriminatory practice disappeared today, some that are still remaining implies that they require huge efforts.

The third statement requires people to respect individual privacy and public justice. Mentioning `the spectrum of individuals and groups` would be interpreted in different situations. In my situation, I think it would mean to respect privacy of individual. But public justice is also important as individual privacy, so I wanted to mention both in one statement.

The fourth statement is kind of between social ethics and professional ethics. Computer science and engineering is the most important factor in convenient modern life. As a computer engineer, implementing efficient software or system is as important as beautiful theory, so I mentioned it in this statement.

The fifth statement demands people to continuously learn and educate. I mention `demands great effort by scholars` because current CS fields evolve and differentiate very quickly, so

professionals must put best effort to kepp up with the progress. The statement also emphasizes importance of educating descendants, which is mentioned in Karl Popper's analysis on the original oath.

The sixth statement emphasizes important of CS professions in information age. The Internet is one of the most important foundation that modern society relies on. Those who have ability to develop this network should provide eqaul opprtunities for access, similar idea as net neurality.

The seventh statement emphsizes public activity as a professional. For a field of science to maintain and prosper, many non-professionals must be helpful and interested in the field. Also, this statement encourages professionals to help others to participate in computer science field.

The eighth statement is explicitly mentions that the oath is `core perspectives on ethical standards`. Also it encourages people to spread the oath to others.

References

Hippocratic Oath

Hippocratic Oath for Scientists

Maths and tech specialists need Hippocratic oath, says academic

Should there be an Oath for Scientists and Engineers?

Archimedean Oath

Net neutrality