Brief Prompts

Breaking the news
While presenting themselves as neutral conduits platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, etc determine if, when and by whom content is seen, and carefully shape (through their design) the way that content within them is presented. They restrict or control the modes we have as users or consumers to respond to or question this content.

This can lead to effects on the way the news is presented and consumed. Content becomes homogenised, sensationalised, personalised and must be shared. What role does design play in creating these issues? As designers how can we change the way we consume news media to counter or reveal these complications?

https://shiba.computer/essay/on-weaponised-design/

Digital tools for resistance
“Building electronic objects can be an effective form of social argument or political protest” –Garnet Hertz

How can information and interface design processes be used beyond commercial concerns, to produce objects for protest or resistance? Can digital tools be built to resist digital problems, or would this be better served through offline, non-technical processes? Is there something in between, and how can design help us find it?

http://www.disobedientelectronics.com/

Quantify Me
Take a personal journey into your data via freedom of information requests and the GDPR right to access. (How) does the picture generated from this data match up with your own understanding of yourself? How might you use design to help others to do the same?

https://aksioma.org/exploitation.forensics/

Precarious work and technology
What is work under todays condition of increasing automation. Is reskilling the answer? What does it mean to design objects, systems or services that replace human labour with machinic labour? What are our responsibilities as the designers and implementers of these systems?

https://www.furtherfield.org/playbour-work-pleasure-survival/

http://networkcultures.org/entreprecariat/what-is-the-entreprecariat/

Finding the human side of the Internet
Although many software platforms and services present themselves as automatic or automated, there are still many things that people are better (or cheaper) at. Content on Facebook, for example, is monitored and moderated by humans and some voice recognition services have fallen back on human labour. (How) can we design interfaces that make it clear where the work we initiate is taking place? Would this change the way we use digital, networked technologies?

https://www.theverge.com/2019/6/19/18681845/facebook-moderator-interviews-video-trauma-ptsd-cognizant-tampa

What’s lost when you can’t get lost?
Effective product, service and user experience design often relies on clarity and signposting. The user should know where they are at all times, and how to get to where they want. This extends into the physical world through navigation and route finding applications.

What does it mean for our understanding and wider experience of the world to always know where we are? What might be missed out on, and what new opportunities arise? What’s revealed in dead ends and errors, in interfaces, in sofware systems, and in the world?

https://www.ele.uri.edu/faculty/vetter/Other-stuff/The-Machine-Stops.pdf

https://medium.com/@kcimc/how-to-recognize-fake-ai-generated-images-4d1f6f9a2842

Brief Prompts (continued)

‘User-centered’ is obsolete.
“Don’t just design for your users. Design for non-users who will be impacted by your product. Design for the support staff who will hae to clean up the mess users make. Design for communities that your product exists in”

https://mobile.twitter.com/PavelASamsonov/status/1141757634980253696

Planetary Scale Vision
The sentinel satellites of the European Copernicus program provide complete earth observation capabilities. As with Google Earth, this satellite imagery is inherently computational, stitched together from multiple flyovers, often updated gradually as satellites reach different parts of the earth, and offering sight beyond the typically human range through infrared imagery and other sensors. The data and images (as data) produced by Copernicus are freely available.

What might the impacts an opportunities of this planetary scale vision be? What does it mean for privacy or global movement? What might the impacts on our understanding of global-scale issues such as climate change be? How does a top down view differ from one on-the-ground? How can we design for these different perspectives?

https://www.copernicus.eu

CATNAP - Cheapest Available Technology Narrowly Avoiding Prosecution
CATNAP is an acronym used to describe the NHS computer systems and Infrastructure. An institution the scale of the NHS (or UAL!) has immense problems creating fit for purpose systems. It is often the complexity of dealing with numerous and disparate demographics of users in both the analog and digital world. Perform an in depth user research project into system of this nature, mapping people, interfaces, processes and touch points that might offer potential for a design intervention.

https://userresearch.blog.gov.uk/category/casestudies/

Observable and Directable
“What is necessary for automated systems to function as cooperative partners rather than as mysterious and obstinate black boxes? The answer, in part, can be stated simply as -- Cooperating automation is both observable and directable.”

How can we design observable and directable automated systems? Where should the boundary be placed between automation and human control? Who might get access to this control, and who. or what does, or should, the automation serve?

http://csel.eng.ohio-state.edu/productions/analystoverload/aiteamplay.html