Humane Technology Design

• What are some of your values that are misaligned with software (especially social software)?
  o Goal misalignment:
    ▪ Youtube, etc. optimize time spent on the website
    ▪ Designed to optimize clicks on ads
    ▪ Tries to entice you to buy the most expensive items or other things (e.g. bundles)
  o Honesty:
    ▪ Encourage dishonest behavior e.g. instagram
    ▪ Covert use of data
    ▪ Reviews are often fake
    ▪ Misinformation / propaganda
  o Flexibility
    ▪ Lack of choices because they control the menu
    ▪ Social media re-ranks posts for you
  o Privacy
    ▪ 3rd party use of data or misuse of data by the company itself
  o Fairness
    ▪ Ranking algorithms tend to have the “rich get richer” property

• Edelman believes in the following 3 important factors for designing social systems:
  • 1) Reflection and experimentation: how to choose your values. The following interfere with this:
    o High stakes: need to be able to make mistakes and recover from them
Low agency: need to be able to shape things with one’s own moral and aesthetic values
Disconnection: need to be exposed to the consequences
Distraction and overwork
Lack of faith in reflection: belief that people don’t have values, only habits, tastes and goals

2) Practice spaces:
- Need to understand what features of social spaces make it difficult to relate according to certain values
- Need to understand what features of social spaces make it easier to relate according to certain values

3) Sharing wisdom:
- Wisdom: information about another person’s personal values they’ve come to believe is important for living
- Gets drowned out by:
  - Ideology
  - Pseudoscience
  - By BS that looks like wisdom

Do you agree / disagree with Edelman on these three things?
- Freedom of expression should be a bullet point

What do you disagree with?
- Practical implementation of these ideas
  - The internet is not guaranteed to be a safe space
  - Issues with trustworthiness of parties in a practice space
  - This doesn’t necessarily work in the real world either
  - Could create an echo chamber
- Is it ethical to create an online social system in the first place? Need to set up rules to reflect Edelman’s values but it could become authoritarian
- Blanket approach to every situation. Not that easy in real-life
- Social systems stop working well when they don’t respond to change