A Short Introduction to Digital Ethics

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HOUSE OF LORDS
Select Committee on Artificial Intelligence
Report of Session 2017–19

AI in the UK: ready, willing and able?
There Are Multiple Industry Initiatives…
Be Afraid, Be Very Afraid

- Robots will take over lots of jobs.
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) develops exponentially. Once it is smarter than we are…
- Power + Bad People = Disaster
- Forget AI; think Artificial Stupidity.
- Experts don't see the obvious.

Naaaahhh, Don't Worry

- …and like in all new eras, other jobs are created.
- Law of diminishing returns kicks in — think "Concorde."
- Of all scenarios, why would robots "turn against us"?
- AI is in its very infancy.
- All experts dismiss the concerns.
- We learn and adapt.
Real Issues, but Little Recognition

Gartner CIO Survey, 2015

59% already faced ethical questions

Informal Gartner Summit surveys, 2015

70% no logical moment or place

Pew Research Center, 2015

7% very confident about government

Pew Research Center, 2015

75% not confident about internet business
Digital ethics comprises the systems of values and moral principles for the conduct of electronic interactions among people, business and things.
Digital Ethics Have Unique Characteristics
The Most Important pieces of advice …

- There are no best practices. Ethics is not prescriptive.
- Instead, ethics are ambiguous.
- Do not create a 10-point checklist. It will lead to a checklist mentality, and missing the point.
- Phrase digital ethics in terms of complex dilemmas.
- Don't create yet another department of "no." Ethics is about how.
4,000 Years of Discussion Didn't Answer the Question of What Is Good and What Is Bad ...
The Business Value of Digital Ethics

- Values
- Differentiation
- Risk
- Compliance
The Senior Life Style system is installed in a senior citizen’s home, and learns about patterns, uploaded in the cloud.

The system gives peace of mind, also to the family members.

“Couldn’t having a Big Brother be something special and very positive?”

“Like with credit cards, we will learn how to deal with security and privacy.”
The GOOD

- Not breaking any rules!
- Less risk for the elderly
- Self-learning technology doesn’t require configuration
- Peace of mind

The BAD

- It may be allowed, but is it accepted?
- Can you afford to figure out security and privacy as you go?
- What about unintended consequences?
- Research into “quantified other” reveals that monitoring creates extra stress for the family.
But Some Stuff Works Better Than Other Stuff
The Universalists Think We Need Some Rules

Still visible today:

- Optimized business processes.
- One version of the truth.
- Requirements analysis.
- Governance as "policymaking"

... but what about the unintended consequences?

Immanuel Kant (1724 to 1804)

"Categorical imperative — intrinsically valid principles, obeyed in all circumstances."
While the Consequentialists Look at the Outcomes

Also visible today:

- People-centric security
- Business moments
- Machine learning
- Governance as "fixing stuff"

… but what about intentions?

Good luck, bad luck

A farmer lost a horse. Bad luck? Not when it returned with a whole herd. The farmer's son fell off the horse. Bad luck? Not when the army arrived to take all the men.
Care Ethics Reconciles the Two: In Principle, How Do We Deal With Unintended Consequences?

Care Ethics, a New Idea From the 1960s

Fits the digital society better:

- There are no principles yet
- … but too important to wait for the consequences.
- Like care ethics, the digital society focuses on connections and relationships.

Carol Gilligan (1936)
How Many Philosophers Does It Take to Change a Light Bulb?
Four Elements Create a Positive Spiral

- **Empathy** without responsibility is empty ("Oh, I am so sorry …").
- **Responsibility** without empathy is mechanistic.
- Taking responsibility only makes sense if you are **competent**.
- You are only allowed to take responsibility if you are **trusted**.
What If the Insurance Company Sees This Picture?

… while I indicated I didn't smoke?

- Cancel the policy?
- Increase premium?
- Wait until I file a claim?

Digital ethics:

- Should you even want to check social media?
- Care ethics: Nudge customers to healthier life styles.
### Who Is Responsible for an Autonomous Car?

**President and CEO Håkan Samuelsson**

- The company will accept full liability whenever one of its cars is in autonomous mode.
- One of the first carmakers in the world to make such a promise.
- The real threat to self-driving cars isn't about technology but regulations.
- Without a clear set of rules, automakers won't be able to conduct credible tests.
Wrapping Up
Embrace Diversity

"Our executive team is made up of a bunch of individuals who all see the world differently. And I think that's a strength, by the way. The pluralism of thought is a definite strength."

CIO

AccountingCo
Create an Awareness and Training Program

- Every month, send around a dilemma. Discuss! What would you do?
- It trains being comfortable with ambiguity, and ethical thinking.

Mikkel Muller, CIO
Loop in Your Business Ethics Board and Officer

"One of the goals of our ethics office is to generate 'mores-prudence.' This term is a variation on the legal term 'jurisprudence,' building knowledge based on ethics cases that emerge in a variety of fields."

Françoise Rost van Tonningen, Head of Ethics Office

The Random Darknet Shopper…and Sandra


http://www.nonhumanrightsproject.org/2015/03/06/update-on-the-sandra-orangutan-case-in-argentina/
Recommended Gartner Research

- Kick-Start the Conversation on Digital Ethics, 2016
- Digital Ethics, or How to Not Mess Up With Technology, 2017
- The CIO’s Guide to Digital Ethics: Leading Your Enterprise in a Digital Society
- Toolkit: Create Your Story for the #DigitalSociety
- The #DigitalSociety Requires a Digital Social Contract

For more information, stop by Gartner Zone.