CONTESTED MEANINGS OF TRUST AND SECURITY IN THE MAKING OF DIGITAL ETHICS

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ETHICS

"Laws float on a sea of ethics."

Prof. Anita Allen, ICDPPC 2018

"The EAG expressly avoids an instrumental approach to ethics of a kind that would result in an ethical checklist or set of measures that, once accomplished, would essentially exhaust ethical reflection and release its practitioners from further discussion."

EDPS Ethics Advisory Group, 2018

"Ethics is nothing static, it needs to be agile because as a society we are constantly changing."

Sandra Wachter, EDPS #DebatingEthics Podcast

TRUST

Narrative: „The crisis of trust is an obstacle to the advancement of technological innovation.“

- Is the end-goal technological innovation or a trustful society? Which means should serve which end?
- Narrative turned around: **„Towards technological innovation that serves society, builds trust and supports shared values.“**

Where to tackle the problem?

- trust in the functionality of a technology, and
- **trust in persons and organisations that use them**

"Trust builds on shared assumptions about material and immaterial values, about what is important and what is expendable. It stems from shared social practice, shared habits, ways of life, common norms, convictions and attitudes. Trust is based on shared experiences, on a shared past, shared traditions and shared memories."

EDPS Ethics Advisory Group, 2018

SECURITY

- Lat. *securus*, safe; from *sine cura*, without care, **free from worry, concern**
- Various historical notions of security; today often limited to **physical safety**
- **Social contract:** The individual renounces a part of their freedom delegating it to the state who acquires a power in order to guarantee their security. (Thomas Hobbes, John Locke etc.)
- Modern society: shift from prevention to risk management > increased control and surveillance (Giorgio Agamben)
- New notions of **“human security”** and **“social security”**

Pastor outed on Ashley Madison commits suicide

by Laurie Segall @LaurieSegallCNN

September 8, 2015: 7:10 PM ET

Recommend 4

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Security, privacy and trust

- **Pervasive control and technologies contributing to it naturally undermine trust.**

- **Security and privacy are both there to ensure the freedom of the individual**: security as a state of freedom from worry and privacy as a state of freedom from surveillance.

- **“Human beings need their own space, both literally as well as figuratively speaking, in order to realise their capabilities and flourish as human beings.”** (European Group on Ethics in Science and New Technologies, Opinion no. 28, 2015)

Conclusions

- Industry challenges to be framed as societal challenges; industry goals to be aligned with societal goals: strong ethics in those who shape the development and use of new technologies.
- Technology to serve societal values and goals, and not to define and drive them (vs tech determinism).
- Broad and people-centred understandings of security and privacy to help tackle the root causes of the trust crisis we are facing (vs tech solutionism).
- Fundamental ethical questions to be re-prioritised.
- Accountability and democratic oversight to be strengthened.

Thank you!

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„We cannot predict the future. But we can create it."

George Eliot