CS 4873-A: Computing, Society & Professionalism

Munmun De Choudhury | Associate Professor | School of Interactive Computing
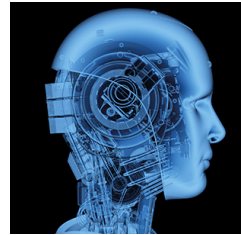
Week 1: Welcome
January 18, 2021

A Little Bit About Myself…

Computational and AI artifacts for social good
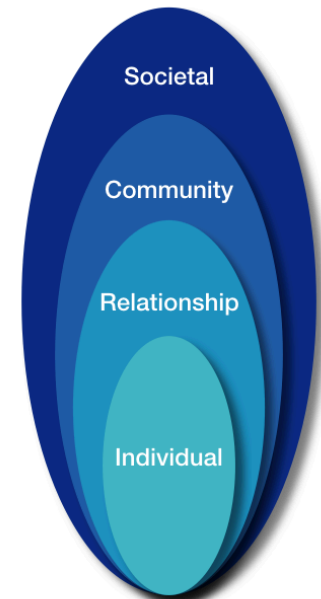Understand and improve wellbeing

Social Dynamics and WellBeing Lab

Social Media + Human/Stakeholder-Centered AI + Interdisiplinary + Theory Centered

Teaching Assistants

↗ Candice Butts (Head TA)

↗ Akhila Ballari

↗ Zhaoran Ma

↗ Parsa Hassanipak
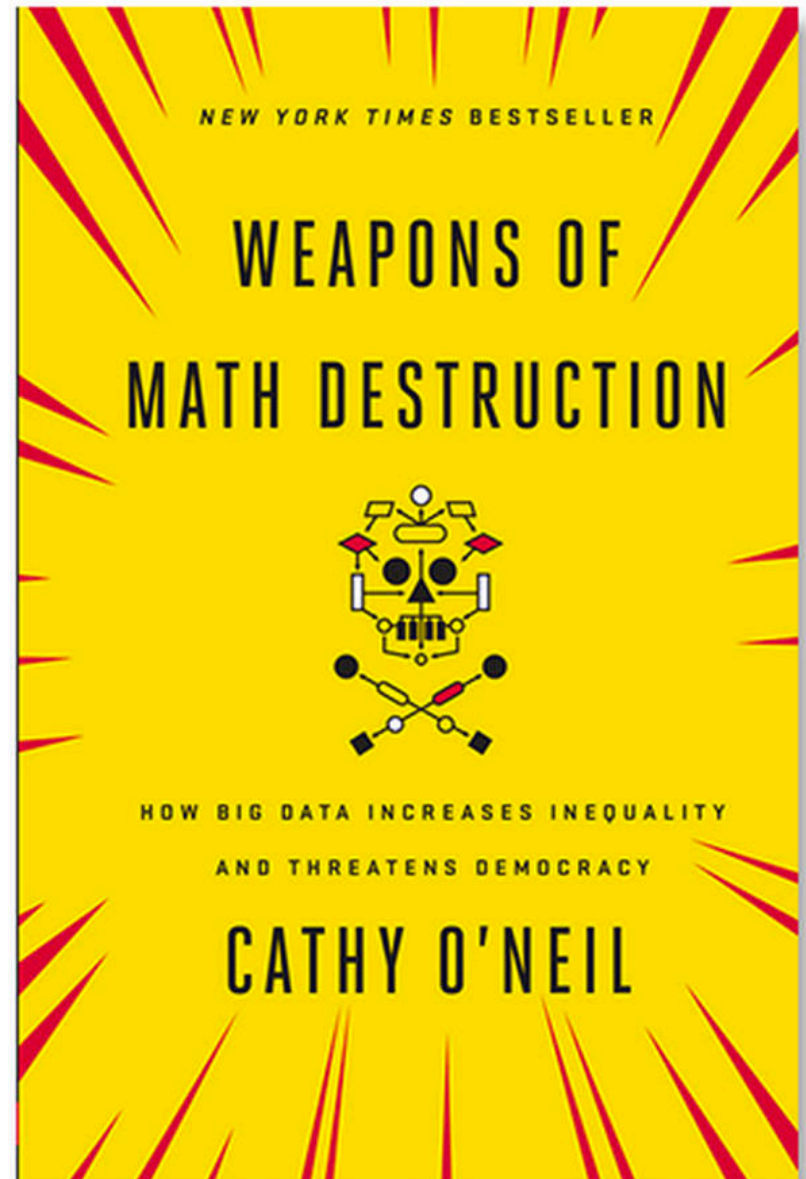
↗ Ashleigh Nyazema

↗ Nilay Mehta

↗ Neeraj Sabapathy

↗ Neha Khandavalli

↗ Freya Wang

↗ Dong Whi Yoo

The story of Sarah Wysocki, a popular and by all accounts successful 5th grade teacher in Washington, D.C., who was fired by an algorithm

Cathy O'Neil is a data scientist and author of the blog mathbabe.org. She earned a Ph.D. in mathematics from Harvard and taught at Barnard College before moving to the private sector, where she worked for the hedge fund D. E. Shaw. She then worked as a data scientist at various start-ups, building models that predict people's purchases and clicks. O'Neil started the Lede Program in Data Journalism at Columbia and is the author of *Doing Data Science*. She is currently a columnist for *Bloomberg View*.

Learning Objectives

↗ *Ethics:* What do "right" and "wrong" mean anyway? We'll learn about several philosophical approaches to ethics including utilitarianism, social contract theory, and virtue ethics. The goal is to be able to address ethical dilemmas with reasoned arguments, grounded in a combination of these ethical theories.

↗ *Professional Ethics:* What special responsibilities do we have as computing professionals? What do the Software Engineering Code of Ethics and ACM Code of Ethics say, and how can we use these in our daily practice?

Learning Objectives

↗ *Computing and Society:* In what ways does computer technology impact society? We'll talk about a host of issues including privacy, intellectual property, freedom of speech, governmental surveillance, AI and automation, algorithmic bias and manipulation.

What will you learn by the end of the course?

Assignments and Grading

↗ Recitation Section Attendance and Participation - 15%

↗ Homeworks – 25%

  ↗ 5 homeworks due between January 29 and April 16

↗ Take-home Midterm - 15% (week of March 8)

↗ Term Paper - 25%

↗ Take-home Final Exam - 20% (Final exam week – week of Apr 26)

Grading Criteria and Logistics

↗ Grades may be curved, due to the large class size

↗ Genuine reasons (e.g., an error in grading) to revise grades of individual deliverables will be considered

  ↗ Reach out and discuss this with your section TA first, who will be in charge of grading all your deliverables

↗ Grade comparisons with peer classmates will not be entertained

↗ End of term requests to increase grade will not be entertained

Required Texts

↗ Ethics for the Information Age*, Seventh Edition or above, by Michael Quinn

↗ Articles listed on the course website
  ↗ accessed through GT library and GT VPN.
  ↗ Accessed online.

* (You may rent an electronic copy rather than buying it.)

Course Format

↗ No in-person lectures

   ↗ Lectures will be pre-recorded

   ↗ Made available on Canvas

↗ Office hours via BlueJeans

   ↗ Wednesday 11am-11:50am ET

↗ Recitation sections via BlueJeans

   ↗ Small synchronous discussion groups of 10 students each

      ↗ Wednesday-Friday

Class Resources

⤢ Course webpage:
http://www.munmund.net/CS4873_Spring2021.html

⤢ Syllabus*:
http://www.munmund.net/CS4873_Spring2021.html

⤢ Piazza for and discussion and announcements
http://piazza.com/gatech/spring2021/cs4873a/home

⤢ Canvas for lecture recordings, assignment, term paper
deliverable, and section discussion material submissions

⤢ * Subject to minor changes. Always check the class
schedule online

Meeting with the instructor and/or TAs

↗ Office hours of the instructor: Wednesdays 11-11:50am

↗ Email your section TA to find out about their office hours

↗ Best way to reach me and the TAs – email
   ↗ Allow 24-48 hours to receive a reply

↗ Questions regarding deliverables asked less than 48 hours to the deadline may not be answered on time
   ↗ Tip: Start early!