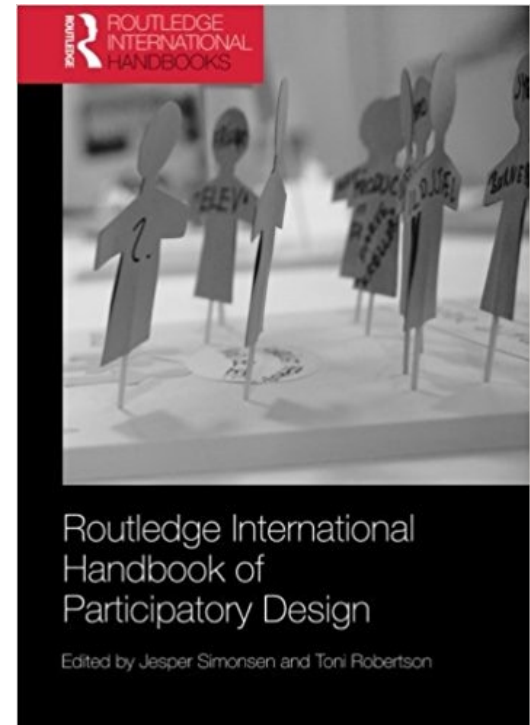**Participatory design and ethics**

IN 5510

Oct 12, 2021

Guri Verne

Topics

- Ethics and PD
- Ethical theories
- Ethics and technology
- Ethical issues of working with users
- Ethics of technology use
- Norwegian law on research ethics

Ina Wagner

Toni Robertson

An ethical motivation is at PD's core

"Participatory design .. has at its core an ethical motivation to support and enhance how people can engage with others in shaping their world, including their workplaces, over time. This ethical motivation is not some optional extra … It is its its essence and structures its definition and ongoing development."

(Robertson and Wagner, 2012, p 65)

Ethics and PD

Working together to shape a better future

- People who do an activity know most of how it is done
  - Respect other people's expertise
  - Respect their rights to represent own activities
- <mark>Develop and use tools</mark> that enable designers, users and stakeholders to learn from each other through understanding priorities and perspectives
- People have a basic right to make decisions about how they do their work and activities
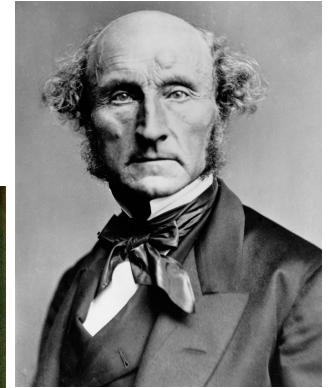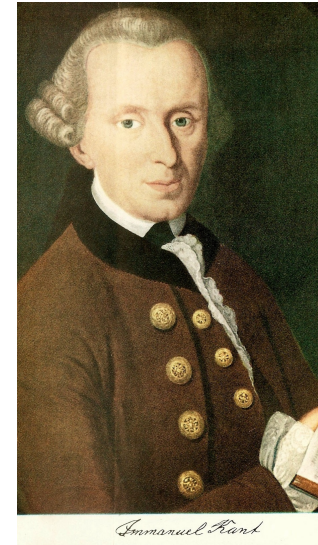 - An emancipatory agenda

Sentralt, men omdiskutert
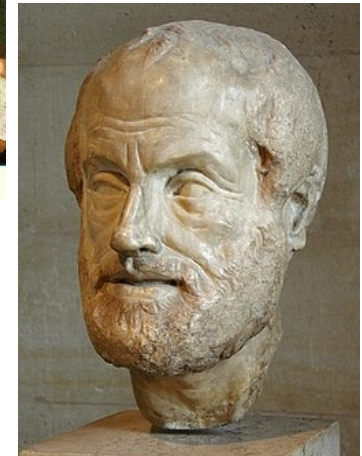
Ethical theories

- Moral philosophies
    - How to live a good life?
    - What is a good life?
- Right or wrong acts?
    - its consequences (J. S. Mill)
    - duty (I. Kant)
- Phronesis as a virtue of ethical life (Aristotle)
- Dialogical relations with others
    - Practical, situated ethics
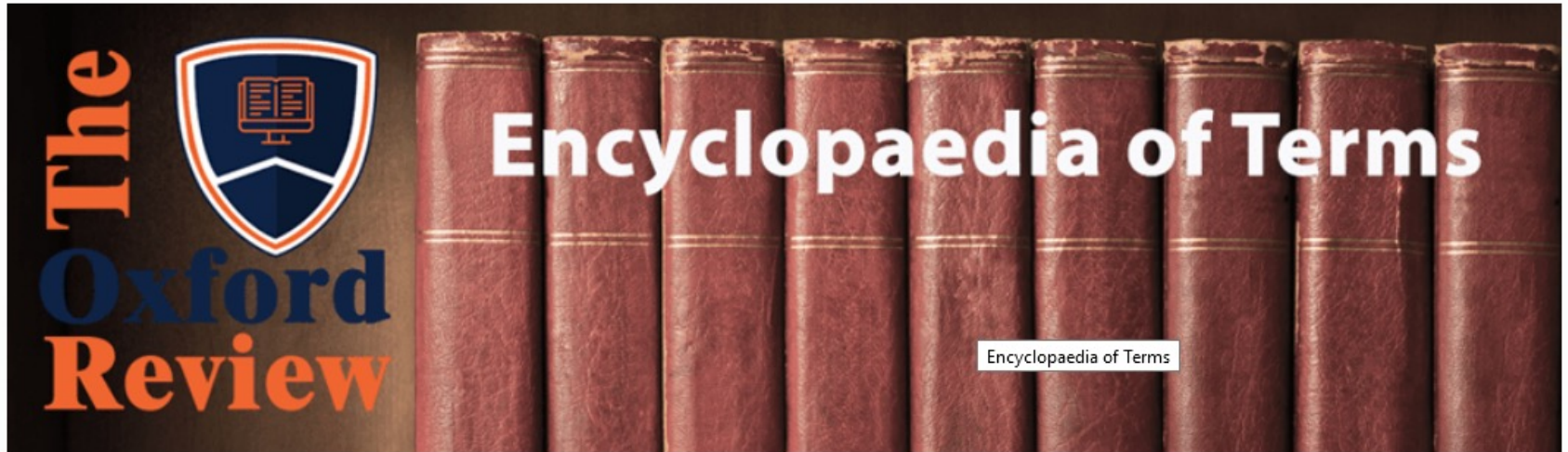
    Phronesis

how to act in particular situations

J. S. Mill

Aristotle

Phronesis: definition and meaning

Encyclopaedia of Terms

What is Phronesis?

Phronesis is a Greek team which means 'practical wisdom' that has been derived from learning and evidence of practical things. Phronesis leads to breakthrough thinking and creativity and enables the individual to discern and make good judgements about what is the right thing to do in a situation.

Back the The Oxford Encyclopaedia of Terms

Looking for research articles? Click here

Talk with your neighbour

- Have you met any ethical issues in your projects? How will you explain them?

Ethics and technology design

Starting point: Massively increased capacities of human action

Technology design and use is shaping the future

- Hans Jonas:
  «The Imperative of Responsibility: In search of an Ethics for the Technological Age»

- Traditional ethics only requires a good understanding of the present situation

A moral basis for choosing between design alternatives

- 'the indefinite future, rather than the contemporary context of the action, constitutes the relevant horizon of responsibility. This requires imperatives of a new sort. If the realm of making has invaded the space of essential action, then morality must invade the realm of making, from which it had formerly stayed aloof ...' (Jonas 1984: 9).

- Finding ways to better predict the effect of new technologies as a way to strengthen and improve our decision making about their design and use

- Accountability of technology design and development to the world it creates.

- Are we responsible for unintended consequences of technology?

Ethical issues of working with users

Who do we engage with in a PD project?

Is giving voice to marginalized people or people who inhabit residual categories a moral obligation of Participatory Designers? (Ina Wagner)

Who can provide "voluntary and unconstrained participation"?

Defining those who have a right to participate

Dual loyalties: Being both critical and constructive

How do we engage with particpants?

Mutual trust is basic.

Informed consent is a formal way.

Address risks and responsibilities of research vs design

Sensitive issues and vulnerable participants

– Protection vs exclusion

How to avoid a purely instrumental process of "eliciting user requirements"?

Negotiating and managing of «practical politics»

How do we represent participants and their work?

Production of representations is critical

- Representations are not innocent

- Not tell the users what their work is

- Representations can silence

- Misrepresentations of work:

You have, you know, 300 cartons of documents and you tear through them and say, I'm going to put Post-Its on the ones we have to turn over to the other side. And then, ideally, you hire chimpanzees to type in From, To, Date. And then, ideally, you then have lawyers go through it again and read each document, with their brain turned on. (Blomberg et al 1996)

Nurses co-representing their own work: humour

Personal, contingent and sensitive to appropriateness

Normalise practises and descriptions –> residual categories

Listening can add to understanding!

Working with vulnerable users

What is vulnerability?

Unclear - being prone to harm or adverse impacts (Wrigley and Dawson, 2016, in Sommervold 2017)

Children under 18 considered vulnerable (Heiberg & Undlien 2013 in Sommervold 2017)

Sommervold (2017) chose methods in respect for the participating sick children/adolescents:

- Plasticized materials for disinfection
- Magnetic boards to be used with one arm
- Starting from "cool" design -> appropriating to their needs
- Turn to ethics of care: "central focus is attending to and meeting needs of people for whom we are responsible"

What can we offer participants?
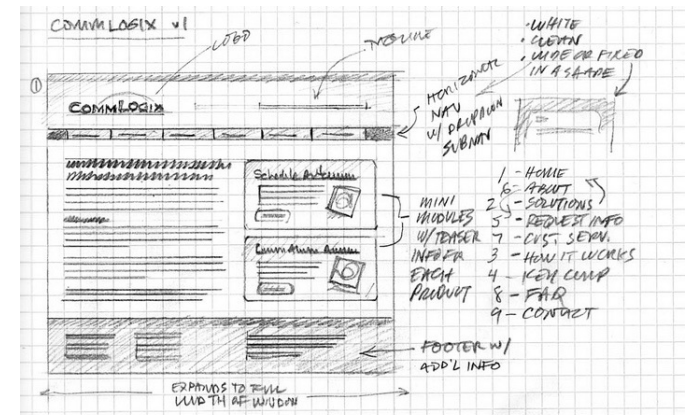
What if no technology is designed for the participants?

- Incomplete design delivered

- No learning from use

- Researchers can harvest findings also from a failed project

- We often receive more than we can give

PD - as responsible and reflective practice - can offer

- Joyful participation

- Making their own representations

- Mutual learning

«Understand the politics of change and where you stand within them» (Blomberg et al 1996)

Following up for a project to grow

12. Oct 2021

Micro-ethical choices

Ethical choices with unknown consequences in the course of events

- Negotiating multiple agendas (parents', teachers')
- Being at risk – balancing professional and personal conduct
- On being Care-ful e.g. in working with children
- Acknowledging Personal Context – gender expressions and body influence participation
- Ethical principles came in conflict with micro-ethics

(Spiel et al., 2013)

Ethical principles versus micro-ethics strategies

Ethical Principles	Strategies in Micro-Ethics
full context of children	navigation of carers priorisation of topics
do no harm	complex risk assessment making judgements
child-led PD	negotiation of needs being responsible
professional conduct	personal relationships commitment to participants embodied research

Table 1: Tensions between ethical principles stemming from virtue ethics and strategies used in micro-ethics

Ethical issues of design in and for use

- Issues that arise in use, strategies for resolving them
- Does the design increase the power-to?
- Challenges - design is completed in use
- Monitoring and surveillance

Questions to guide ongoing ethical reflection

- Do users actually have decision power? If so what kind?
- Does a design method, tool or process recognise and encourage participants' abilities to learn?
- Does a design method, tool or process guide designers and researchers to analyse and develop their interests and attitude towards participants?
- Does a design method, tool or process include participants' evaluations not just of what is being designed but of the design process itself, including the opportunities for and process of participation?
- Does a design method, tool or process deal with a justified loss or change of design focus, for example when participants identify problems that require non–information technology solutions while the process was initiated to design information technology)?

Examples

- Surveillance versus communication (BRIS-project)
- What is «good» for the participant/user?

Søk etter lover, forskrifter, dommer, stortingsvedtak, tariffavtaler m.m.

Logg inn
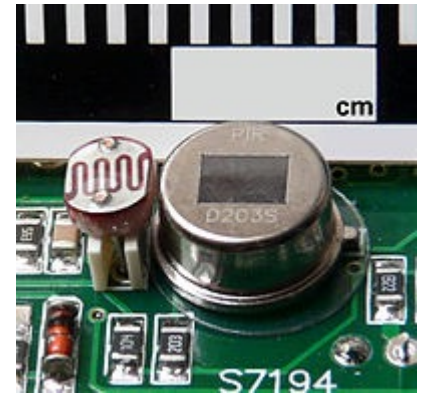
Lov om organisering av forskningsetisk arbeid

Innholdsfortegnelse

Lovens forskrifter

Rettskilder

§ Lover

Stortingsvedtak

⚠ Sentrale forskrifter

Lokale forskrifter

Norsk Lovtidend

EØS-avtalen

Norges traktater

Dommer

Tariffavtaler

Statens personalhåndbok

§ Oversatte lover / Translated Acts

⚠ Oversatte forskrifter / Translated regulations

Oversatte avgjørelser / Translated decisions

→ **Gå til opprinnelig kunngjort versjon**

Lov om organisering av forskningsetisk arbeid (forskningsetikkloven)

Dato	LOV-2017-04-28-23
Departement	Kunnskapsdepartementet
Ikrafttredelse	01.05.2017
Endrer	LOV-2006-06-30-56
Kunngjort	28.04.2017
Korttittel	Forskningsetikkloven

Jf. *tidligere* lov 30 juni 2006 nr. 56.

§ 1. *Formål*

Loven skal bidra til at forskning i offentlig og privat regi skjer i henhold til anerkjente forskningsetiske normer.

§ 2. *Virkeområde*

Loven gjelder forskere og forskning i Norge. På Svalbard og Jan Mayen gjelder loven dersom forskningen drives av forskere ansatt av norsk arbeidsgiver eller dersom en vesentlig del av midlene kommer fra Norge.

Granskingsutvalget kan videre uttale seg om forskning i utlandet dersom forskningen drives av forsker ansatt av norsk arbeidsgiver eller dersom en vesentlig del av midlene kommer fra Norge.

§ 3. *Uavhengighet*

Final words

Participation as a means of resolving conflicts that emerge in technology use – more than merely observing, analysing, monitoring consequences.

References not in the reading list

Heiberg and Undlien, 2013, Genetisk forskning på barn, in: Fossheim, H., Hølen, J., Ingierd, H. (eds), Barn i Forskning: Etiske dimensjoner, Forskningsetiske komiteer.

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Weizenbaum, J. (1976). *Computer Power and Human Reason: From Judgment to Calculation*, W.H. Freeman and Company.

Wrigley and Dawson, 2016, Vulnerability and Marginalized Populations, in: Public Health Ethics: Cases Spanning the Globe, Springer, pp. 203-240.