WHAT THIS IS

Welcome to my CS247B reflection! As you may know, I love doodling and Fractal Gridding, so I thought I'd make a little comic documenting my CS247 reflections. The comic is divided into two parts: personal learning favorites and general lessons.

These grids are some text-heavy ones :) The word count is ~1205 words for reference!

-Ecy King :)

THIS PART

This part of the reflection documents things I enjoyed learning about on a more personal level, including concepts in the class that I particularly enjoyed or skills I picked up that I want to apply to my personal endeavors.

This class was mighty useful to me. I genuinely love psych (and studied it through SymSys), I actually enjoy building and designing apps, and I love visual thinking and visual storytelling in a wide array of domains. I will carry lots of these learnings with me.

DIAGRAMS

One thing I enjoyed learning about was the different systems diagrams. There were connection circles, iceberg models, fishbone diagrams, feedback loops, and stock-flow diagrams, among many others. I'm a very visual person and learning how to visually map complex systems out was really useful. Overall, I'm a huge fan of systems thinking, and I appreciated the tools in our design toolkit we were equipped with that faciliated that. In future, I can see myself using one of these diagrams in notes I take to map connections.

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I also would like to point out how much I appreciated Deb's Guest Lecture. Throughout the class, I got to work on my visual thinking which was GREATLY appreciated. With her lecture, I got to practicing my stick people more, and historically I'd been pretty bad at drawing people. Currently, I'm working on another comic-style resource called Una Kushe. It's about teaching philosophies, and Deb's lessons have been SO HELPFUL in me creating and drawing scenes for that.

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I think another thing that Deb's lecture also solidified was the power of narrative and storytelling. Not only did she bless us with her visual thinking knowledge, but through her lecture she gave several examples of how fun comics (or what we'd call storyboards) truly illustrated user needs and issues in ways that just words cannot. That lecture stuck with me, and reinforced the magic that a narrative, visual perspective can bring to any subject or field, even if its corporate or "real world". Before I was more vaguely aware of that.

BEHAVIOR CHANGE THEORY

As a psych lover, I enjoyed learning about the behavioral theory. The B.J. Fogg model was a pretty useful paradigm, even for everyday life. There was a thing I remember about the best triggers being things you do routinely. Involuntarily, I am on my period monthly. I've been using me finishing my period (happy times) as a trigger for me to start my exercise schedule. It hasn't been 100% effective, but I've been making PROGRESS which is the key thing for me.

BRAND LECTURE + APPLICATIONS

The Brand Lecture and Jobs to Be Done video were really cool examples of "real-world psychology". I thought they gave tremendous insight into how humans are subject to these psychological patterns and trends. On a more philosophical note, one might ask: how does this affect the amount of free will we truly have? That we truly think we have? And it's almost like magic the way brands are able to configure our minds to instantly recognize them from a single color or logo... Marketers or magicians?

INJUNCTIVE VS DESCRIPTIVE NORMS

Another learning that stuck with me was the power of injunctive vs descriptive norms, as emphasized by Amy's guest lecture. I want to use that to experiment with depicting descriptive norms versus injunctive norms in various spaces. How can those affect behavior change in my ACE classroom or visual guides I create, for example? Building on that, I think that behavior change failures are a very useful paradigm. Groups I've been a part of have assumed people will just change for the sake of it. Now I have a tool to further analyze those types of situations.

THE CLASS

I loved the class dynamic. Although I wasn't too fond of the timing of it at first, it was nice spending "lunchtime" with my group. I do wish we could have built off of that class dynamic and had more inter-team collaboration, or set groups outside of our team to discuss ethics with so there is a set of people outside of your group who you get to know on a consistent basis. I think as well, setting a norm in the work-for-feedback channel of peer review being encouraged would have been cool, we had something like that in CS247A and it helped lots with class unity.

Team Alpaca Live Diagrammin'

TEAMWORK & EFFICIENCY

It was fun to see our team-dynamic emerge. We often stood and wrote things down on whiteboards, post-it notes, papers. Even though I've taken CS247s and CS147, the extent to which our team actively diagrammed things was new to me. I enjoyed the synergy that afforded. I also think the classroom layout was super conducive to that! Our team also vibed, working well synchronously in person. We got lots of work done in 2-hour bursts and everyone had a unique role to play. We also supported each other outside of the class :)

THEORIES OF WELL-BEING

Looking it up, our project, alpaca.ai definitely caters to the desire-satisfaction notion of wellbeing. Especially in the final-year, Stanford graduates/co-terms desire to socialize more and alpaca.ai aims to satisfy such desires. In using an app to design for well-being, a potential risk is feeling like everything, even social time, is a commodity or needs an app. This was somewhat addressed in our ethics design fiction. alpaca.ai aims to combat this risk with its quirkiness, but nonetheless, it uses an AI app to facilitate something very human and often organic.

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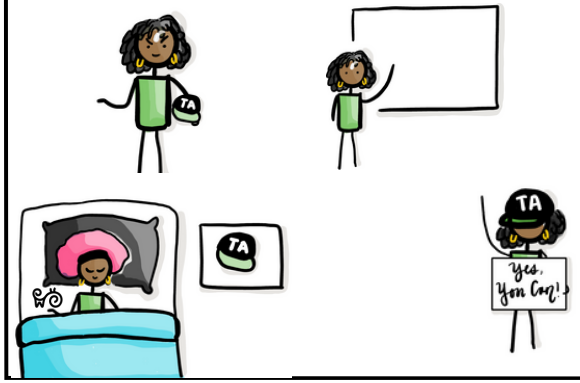
NUDGING AND MANIPULATION

Arthur Clarke's third law says "Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic" . I've been thinking about the framing of tech and magic, and how that can be applied to manipulation. Those musings aside, I think that alpaca.ai is built around the idea of less friction encouraging more interaction and is branded as such. However, I do think that this could fail and have no effect if the perceived cost of you and your friends joining the app is less than the perceived benefit of how much easier it'd be to make plans.

Sketches from a recent project which Deb's workshop helped me to practice:



THANK YOU

There are lots of great takeaways from this course; it is HCI CORE. Thank you for an amazing quarter in CS247B! I enjoyed the class plenty and appreciate all the helpful and thoughtful feedback that was given, and the time and energy poured into improving and understanding our projects as we worked through the quarter. Getting to guest lecture was one of the highlights of my quarter, to be quite honest. Thank you so much for that opportunity as well, I appreciate it beyond words. Hope you have a great day whoever is reading this! You got it!

THANK YOU!