

Architecture is politics:

The power and the perils of systems design

Andreas Orphanides
NCSU Libraries

Design ethics: a thing

Andreas Orphanides
NCSU Libraries

Three lessons / uncomfortable truths

Lesson 1

Lesson 1

System design influences user behavior.

Yeah, and?

Yeah, and?

A door that never opens is called a wall.

Persuasive design

"disciplinary architecture"





"dark patterns"



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"Lowest": £1799

We can use our powers for good.

Interlock

Can you set things up so one action can't be performed until another is completed?

Most modern cash machines don't dispense cash until you remove your card, making it less likely you'll leave it behind



Design
with
Intent







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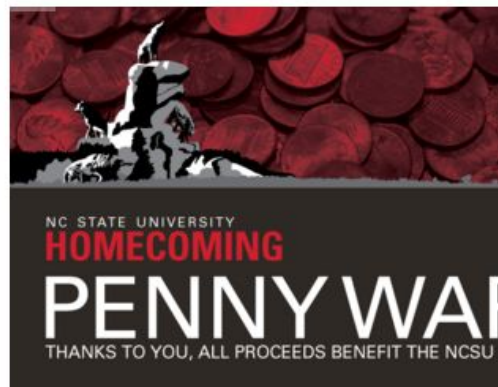
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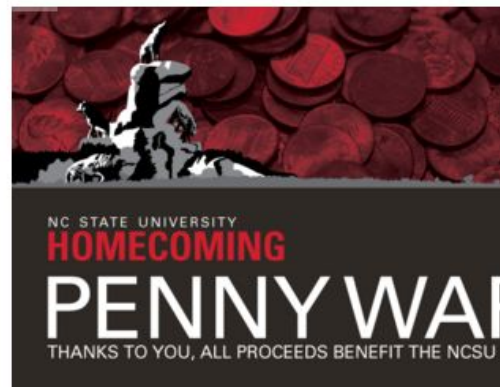
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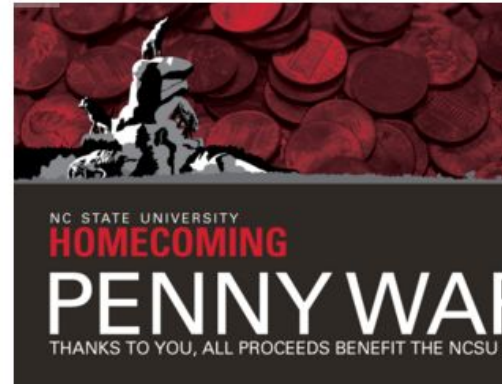
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Uncomfortable truth 1

System design influences user behavior.

(whether you want it to or not)

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Let's get started with some basics.

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Last name

North Carolina State University



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Ethical principles for persuasive design

- Implement constraints and affordances to the user's benefit.
- Design affordances the user will recognize.
- Disguise constraints with care.

Lesson 2

Lesson 2

System design reflects the designer's values and the cultural context.



Architecture is politics:

Your design choices reflect your values.

Upper West Side condo has separate entrances for rich and poor

By KATE BRIQUELET

Last Updated: 12:20 PM, August 18, 2013

Posted: 1:27 AM, August 18, 2013





Application Number _____

SALT LAKE COUNTY, STATE OF UTAH **APPLICATION FOR LICENSE TO MARRY**

SPOUSE 1

1a. First Name	1b. Middle	1c. Last	1d. Maiden (if applicable)
2a. Residence Address	2c. County	2d. State	2e. Zip Code
3a. City	4. Date of Birth	5. Age	6. Social Security Number
7. State of Birth (if not in US, name country)	8. Last Marriage Ended by Death, Divorce, Annulment etc. (specify)	9. Date Ended (month and year)	10. State of Birth (if not in US, name country)
11. Number of This Marriage (specify first, second, etc.)	12. Maiden Name of Mother (first, middle and last)	13. State of Birth (if not in US, name country)	
14. Father's Name (first, middle and last)	15. State of Birth (if not in the US, name country)		

SPOUSE 2

14b. Middle	14c. Last	15d. State	15e. Zip Code
16a. First Name	16c. County	16d. State	16e. Zip Code
17a. Residence Address	17. Date of Birth	18. Age	19. Social Security Number
18a. City	21. Last Marriage Ended by Death, Divorce, Annulment, etc. (specify)	22. Date Ended (month and year)	23. State of Birth (if not in US, name country)
19. State of Birth (if not in US, name country)	24. State of Birth (if not in the US, name country)	25. Maiden Name of Mother (first, middle and last)	
20. Number of This Marriage (specify first, second, etc.)			
21. Father's Name (first, middle and last)			

SIGNATURES

I, _____, do hereby swear that we are unmarried and that we are not related to each other within, but not beyond, the degree of consanguinity generally means first cousins; and that the above information is true, according to our best knowledge.

phone _____

phone _____

28. Planned:
Date of Marriage _____

Place of Marriage City _____

County _____
Title of person performing the marriage _____
Religious _____ or Civil _____

MUST BE COMPLETED BY THE PARENTS OR GUARDIANS OF APPLICANTS UNDER THE AGE OF 18

I, _____, do solemnly swear that I am the father, mother, guardian of the minor that I am the parent who has sole legal custody; In the case of divorced parents:
I am the parent who has physical custody of the minor majority of the time;
I hereby give my consent to this marriage.

Signature _____





Your design choices reflect your values.

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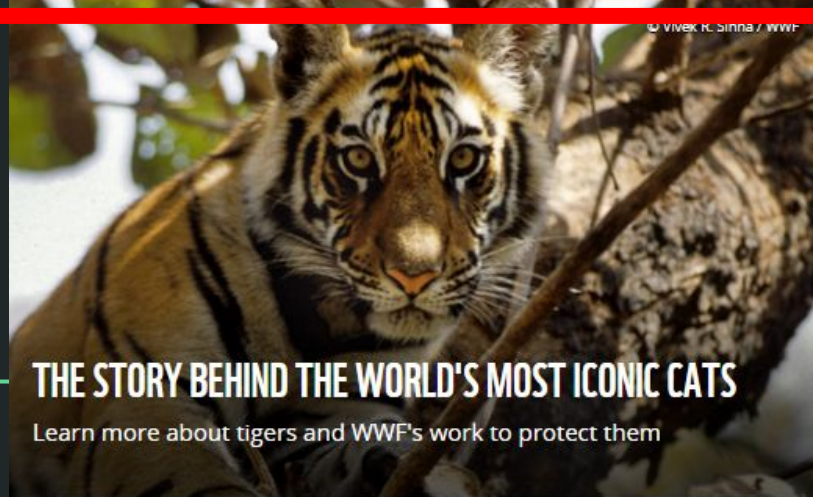
First-ever twins born to habituated gorilla family in the Central African Republic





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Politics is architecture:
Context exerts influence on design.



"The Scunthorpe Problem"

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From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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The user name "ScunthorpeM181" has been blacklisted from creation.

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- For your own security, please choose a password that would be **difficult to guess**. ([Help](#))
- All usernames *will* begin with a capitalized letter, regardless of what you type.
- All underscores *will* be converted to spaces, regardless of what you type.
- For technical reasons, the #, / and \ symbols cannot be used in a username.
- You do not have to provide an e-mail address, but if you forget your password, you will **not** be able to regain access to your account without one.

(Your e-mail address is never given to anyone, with one exception: if you e-mail another user, your the e-mail address is provided to the recipient to enable him or her to reply.)



Uncomfortable truth 2

System design reflects the designer's values and the cultural context.

(whether you want it to or not)

Ethical principles for political design

- Seek out and recognize your biases.
- Diversify your design practices.
- Understand your culture and its mores.

Lesson 3

to review...

Uncomfortable truth 1

System design influences user behavior.

(whether you want it to or not)

Uncomfortable truth 2

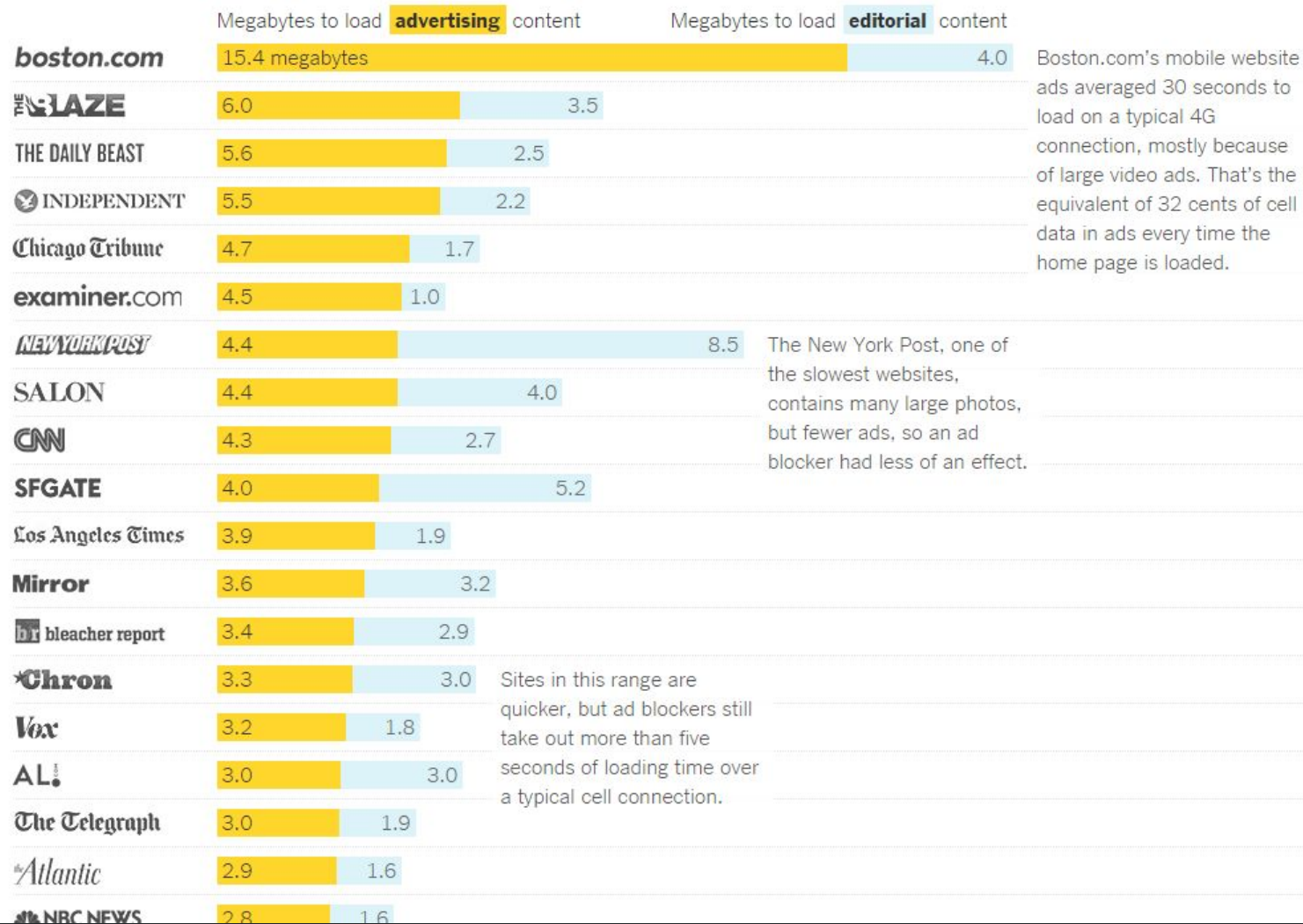
System design reflects the designer's values and the cultural context.

(whether you want it to or not)

Lesson 3

The system's interests will come into conflict with the user's interests.

80/20 rule



Who's Traveling?

* Required information

Important: Traveler names must match your government-issued photo ID exactly.

Name:*

First *	Middle	Last *
رمزي	محمد وليد	ناصر

! Please enter a first and last name using letters only.

Country Code*

Preferred Phone Number*

Phone Number:*

United States of America (1) ⬆

TSA Secure Flight Info

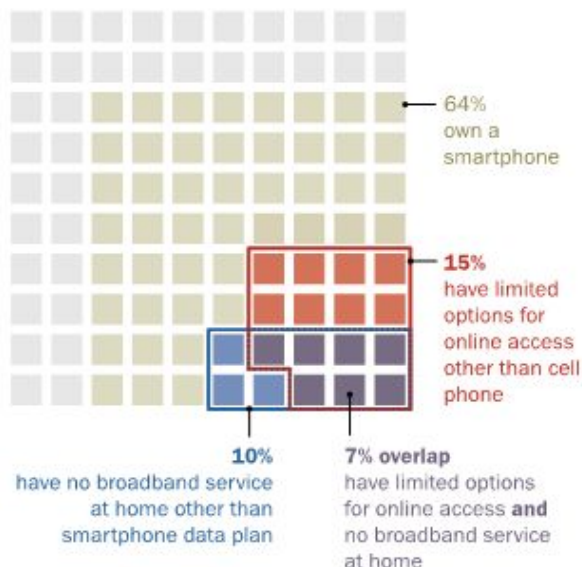
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7% of Americans Rely Heavily on a Smartphone for Online Access

The "Smartphone-Dependent" Population: 7% of Americans Rely Heavily on a Smartphone for Online Access

% of U.S. adults who have a smartphone, but lack other broadband internet service at home, and/or have limited options for going online other than their cell phone

ALL ADULTS



Uncomfortable truth 3

The system's interests will
come into conflict with the
user's interests.

(whether you want them to or not)

Ethical principles for compassionate design

- Recognize and acknowledge your compromises.
- Know your users.
- Design with empathy.



Thanks!

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NCSU Libraries
akorphan@ncsu.edu

Sources

Lesson 1 images

- Angry wall: Nils Norman via [Slate](#)
- Anti-homeless spikes: [GetWestLondon](#)
- AVG: [Dark Patterns](#)
- BA: [Dark Patterns](#)
- "Interlock": [Dan Lockton](#)
- Shark teeth road: [hawaiihighways.com](#)
- Summon spinner: [Serials Solutions](#)
- NCSU Libraries: [North Carolina State University](#)
- Flat website: [Tom's of Maine](#) (h/t [Hoa Loranger](#))
- Flag for sale: [Best Made Co.](#)
- Refworks: [ProQuest](#)

Lesson 2 images

- Overpass: [NYSDOT](#)
- Rich door, poor door: [New York Post](#)
- Marriage certificate: [KSL Broadcasting](#)
- Lamé wheelchair ramp: [Southeastern Ornamental Iron](#)
- Cool wheelchair ramp: [Think Inclusive](#)
- WWF website: [World Wildlife Fund](#)

- Fence: author
- Scunthorpe problem: [Wikimedia](#)
- Metro: [WMATA](#)

Lesson 3 images

- Advertising chart: [New York Times](#)
- "Who's traveling?": [Greg Tarnoff](#)
- Mobile internet chart: [Pew Research](#)
- Chucklings and mother: author

References and inspiration

- [Dark Patterns](#)
- John Gall, [The systems bible](#)
- Mitch Kapor, [Architecture is politics \(and politics is architecture\)](#)
- Dan Lockton, [Design with intent toolkit](#)
- Hoa Loranger, [Beyond blue links: making clickable elements recognizable](#)
- Greg Tarnoff, [Designing with empathy](#)
- Langdon Winner, [Do artifacts have politics?](#)