

“Good” isn’t good enough

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Challenges

There is no universally agreed upon “good”

If the field does not reflect on its assumptions and values, those of dominant groups will dominate.

Incrementalist “good” can lead to long-term harm

A “greedy algorithm” approach can preclude finding broader and more structural paths of reform.

Paths Forward

A political orientation

Computer scientists should consider and articulate the normative commitments behind their work.

Focus on social impacts

Look to the lessons of how to achieve positive social change and of how technology affects society.

Agnostic to means, not ends

Consider alternative reforms and prioritize social impacts, regardless of the role played by algorithms.

Interdisciplinary and porous

Avoid valuing technical insights as superior to other forms of disciplinary and local knowledge.