Empowerment: a strategy to dealing with human values in affective interactive systems

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Empowerment: what?

> Aim: put users in charge of sense-making and definition of emotion
> Consequence: privacy and autonomy protected since users’ are privileged interpreters and constructors of content
Surfaces in interfaces

Design for empowerment?

> Open ‘surfaces’ where users inscribe their own interpretation
> Open ‘surfaces’ that users fill with content
> Make functionality drift with its usage?
Open and familiar

Make those open surfaces familiar to users

How?
> Social practice
> Bodily practice

Example: Affective Diary

Biosensor armband
Mobile phone
Incoming/outgoing SMS
Photos
Bluetooth devices
Characters
Timeline
Scribble
Example: Affective Diary

> Demo

“It was right about there I started to think like this: ohhh, how I am going to make this work, this thing here with buying a present and da, da, da. So right here, there is so MUCH that is represented here: Oh, I am not going to make it this weekend, and not then nor then nor then. And then I just thought: it will sort itself. I’ll just grab something at Kista Galleria.”
Example: Affective Diary
Meaning-making, reflection and change

"[pointing at the first slightly red character] And then I become like this, here I am kind of, I am kind of both happy and sad in some way and something like that. I like him and then it is so sad that we see each other so little. And then I cannot really show it."

Example: Affective Diary
Two open surfaces

> Ambiguous design: the meaning of characters, mobile data, etc. is not given

> Scribblings: connecting mobile data, sensor data, time of day, memories
Example: Affective Diary

Familiar

> Socially: scraps and bits from your social life are entered from your mobile data
> Bodily: scraps and bits from your bodily experiences are entered through the sensor readings – designed as recognisable but abstract characters

Interactional approach

> Affective Diary exemplifies an interactional approach to how emotions are created in context together with others
> Several open surfaces that can be appropriated
> Meaning-making is done by users
> Characters remind them of their bodily encounters with the world
Summary

Privacy: is protected by handing over the power of the tools to the end-users to negotiate what they want to share with one-another - making them create for the delicate balance that social relationships entail

Autonomy: We privilege users to be the ones who interpret and create meaning from the emotional aspects of the system - they may even tinker with and alter the emotional representations over time

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Appropriation: how?

Open surfaces
> Tool-based view
> End-user programming
> Defamiliarisation
> Ambiguous design
> Reflective design