

CS102T: The Socio Techno Web

This is designed to be an evolving document. It will not be collected or graded. My hope is that you will continually refer back to this document throughout the semester, making updates, additions, and notes as you feel appropriate!

Recurring Questions

This semester we will read about numerous technologies, systems, and structures, and we will study the many ways that these things are intertwined. We each will inevitably approach the material with our own contexts and beliefs, especially for the technologies and systems that comprise our everyday experiences. To help us organize our discussions, we will often have weekly writing prompts, but there are a few questions that I hope you revisit for every reading.

1. What parties are involved and what are their roles?
2. How and to whom are the parties accountable?
3. Are parties aware of the role that they play?
4. Do parties have a choice in the role that they play?
5. What is the cost?
6. Who pays?
7. Who does the work?
8. Who benefits?
9. Is there potential for misuse?
10. Are any persons or populations particularly vulnerable?

Vocabulary

The "tech world" is riddled with terms and buzzwords. Sometimes this is necessary: we cannot discuss a thing without words to describe it. More often, concepts that we understand are obscured by jargon.

Below is a list of terms. Some of these terms may be new. Others may be familiar. Others may seem familiar, but have meanings that differ from the meanings we ascribe to them. In whatever detail you can manage, please describe your understanding of these terms. This will not be graded or collected; I hope we can refer back to this list and see how our understandings have changed (or remained the same).

- Internet
- World wide web
- Data
- Metadata
- Cache
- Bandwidth
- Latency
- Throughput
- Throttle
- Privacy
- Cloud
- Encryption
- Compression
- Storage
- Memory
- Network
- Threat Model