what are the opportunities that we
as UX professionals
have to get engaged in making those processes better
so we're gonna talk about what's wrong today
we're gonna talk about some observations
some potential ways to make the systems better
and finally we're
gonna
talk a little bit about building the influence that we
need in order to be in that room
and have those conversations
what about things like recommendation engines
things that tell you you know
what this customer might be interested in buying or um
optimizing engagement things like an Instagram does or
or most content organizations
we just wanna keep you in the app for a while
pricing strategies dynamic
personalized pricing strategies
that predict how much you would be willing to pay
for something
altering images it could be a simple
if you're at Home Depot of
being able to show how a particular paint might weather
over time
now we start to get into the newer stuff
generating new copy for marketing purposes
or on site purposes or customer support
AI supported chat bots for example my point is
I bet almost every one of us works for an organization
that is using this technology
at some level now right
it's not just the big guys
it's not just the super cutting edge people
so these are the kinds
of things that we should be ready to be engaged with
and how do those go wrong
how do even those relatively simple
straightforward things go wrong well
for example
if you build an algorithm to predict whether or not
someone who's been charged with a criminal offense will
uh recommit a crime
then the algorithm
based on the way that people have judged others
in the past is going to guess that
you're much more likely to recommit a crime

if you have more uh
melanin in your skin even though in reality
when they've tested that hypothesis
it's really not true
um Tinder got in some trouble recently
because they were exploring personalized
dynamic pricing
to see how much you would be willing to pay
for their app and they charged quite a bit more
to people who are over the age of 30
because apparently we're a lot more desperate
and people who were under 30
and they got slapped with an age discrimination suit
AI
is increasingly being used in order to help companies
sift through the
sometimes thousands of resumes that they get
and identify those that they think would be a good fit
with their existing culture
but what's the problem with that
right past hiring practices No.
1 might have had inherent biases that they're
they're not aware of but
it also means that you're just perpetuating the same
old thing you're not increasing the diversity of output
you're not exploring new people
who could be adding new things to your organization
and finally apparently
if you wanna look more professional
the secret is to look more white
so this is a recent headline um
in which a young Asian woman asked for generative AI
help and this was the suggestion that they gave her
for how to look more professional
so what's going on here at the bottom at
at at the end of the day
it's simply that AI
is a pattern recognition system based on historic data
and any biases or emissions that existed in the past
will not just be perpetuated
but as someone mentioned yesterday
amplified going forward
so how can we keep that from happening
and how vigilant do we actually need to be
I don't work on those kinds of things
I'm not trying to judge who's gonna recommit re offend
right I'm
I'm just maybe I'm a grocery store right
maybe I'm a grocery store
we're known for fresh produce

we just want to use AI to pick new locations
based on what we've done in the past
can anybody suggest this is interactive
can you suggest a potential issue with that store it up
what's that
food deserts anybody heard of urban food deserts right
so if you didn't serve that area in the past
maybe it was explicitly or implicitly redlined
then as Gavin mentioned yesterday
that data is just not in the system
so you're never gonna have it magically predict that
that would be beneficial for you right
what about a home sales website that says hey
we wanna help you you know
estimate the value of your home
based on what other homes in your area have sold for
redlining and and in modern days
like just recently within the last couple of years uh
there was a successful lawsuit by a black family
that said the appraisal on my home is vastly below
what it should be and so
researchers looked into it
and realized that the same home
the same neighborhood characteristics
if you're in a predominantly white neighborhood
compared to one that is 50% black
the appraisal will automatically come in 20% lower
all right now
I don't know the answer to this
because those biases do still exist
I'm not saying this would be evil
I'm saying we should be aware of the fact that
we are perpetuating
a discriminatory way of valuing those things
so how might we do it better
well first
let's talk a little bit about how things work today
a machine learning product
one that let's say
the user interface might not change visibly
depending on how the algorithm changes okay
everything is happening behind the scenes
those teams don't look like
or act like the teams that we typically work on today
the ones where the designers and the data scientists
and the content folks all come together
very frequently
it's basically an engineer and a data scientist
and they get together on a Monday morning and they say
so got any ideas and what we should test this week

something that might move the needle
and they go back and forth
and they generate a few hypotheses
and the data scientist probably
has a couple of things that they've been looking at
and then they say great
let's grab some data let's see
you know pull the last six months worth of data
last year's worth of data
hey maybe we'll pull North America
because that's real clean
and we don't have to do any re jiggering
massaging of the data
and let me just you know
I'm gonna create this change in the weight
in the algorithm
I'm gonna change what we reward in the model
and let's hey DS
why don't you date a scientist DS
why don't you go ahead and come up with a um
evaluation plan
to see how much of a difference we need to have
to be statistically significant
how long it has to run how many people have to be in it
and then let's see whether or not we move the needle
right
well
what's wrong with this system
for one thing as my friend Lisa Dance
who is an AI ethicist likes to ask
who's not in the room when this happens
well for one thing
almost all of us right
we're not in that room
and our customer
in the sense of being actively considered
and represented is not in that room
and the process is a truncated process
one that tends to default to rather tactical ideas
and that are not vetted more broadly
the visioning and the ideation
based on prioritized business and user needs
just kind of goes out the window
because this will be so fast and easy and cheap
and we're just gonna kind of run a bunch of experiments
and then we'll let you know
if any of them look interesting okay
does that sound familiar to anybody here
anybody have a group in their company
that seems to work this way

I kind of
double checked with some of the other speakers
over the last few days
and this is a fairly common scenario
so where might we play
well we'd start by being in the room right
so one of the things
one of the areas where we can add enormous value
is making sure that we're focused on the right goals
and opportunities right
we are grounded in a deep understanding of our users
their needs their obstacles
the things that are still opportunity areas
and that's something that bear in mind
we should be
the most knowledgeable people in the organization
about those things right
so that is value we can bring in
another value that we can bring in
is the ability to help ideation sessions
the ability to lead design sprints
technologies that data
science and engineering are not expert in right
and I guarantee you that afterwards
they feel excited about the new ideas
that hadn't occurred to them
the new insights that they hadn't realized
could potentially be something to explore
about those users but we have to be in there
sharing things
and getting them excited in order to have a role there
alright next
I mentioned the training set
and choosing the set of data
the training set is the sample data
used in the training process of machine learning
deciding which sites
your databases and over what time period
um
we should be using in order to look for patterns right
today
this is very frequently what we would call in research
a convenience sample right
it's what's the cleanest most convenient
readily available data the minimum
the minimum size that data science tells us
we're gonna need to get statistically significant um
results but here's the thing AI depends on data
the data behind the algorithm is at least
if not more important than the algorithm itself

and yet it's an area that in the current process
is not really considered examined
discussed in a robust way
we are the foremost experts
in what it will take to win the minds and hearts
for users we should add value to this process
no one is closer to the user than you are
and also remember that sometimes
just asking the right question is an important
contribution all right
with things that we talked about
I believe we can achieve a mine meld
with our data science and engineering partners
we can anticipate and track potential issues
and we can defend our users
but I can tell that
a couple of you still look kind of scared
you like Catherine I wanna be up there
but I I just
I feel like I'm I feel like I'm alone
all right well
I tell you you're not alone
there are key partners
if you're at a large organization
they might be within your company
if you're at a smaller one
they might be external organizations that you consult
but there are people that specialize in these issues
people that specialize in developing the tools
teaching you the right questions to ask
arming you with the information that you need
to make your case
we've been talking exclusively about AI
for most of my talk
but there's also an area called trust and safety
trust and safety is um
the other kinds of bad experiences that you can have
things like misinformation right now
that could be amplified and spread through AI
but it also is just a problem in and of itself right um
there's an organization called the Integrity Institute
it's a selection process membership
organization
of people who have worked in integrity for uh
the platforms I am a member of that
and so just to give you an idea
one of the decks that what we
we help to inform legislative leaders
and their staff on issues
but we also create playbooks for smaller organizations

to read
and get ideas for how they might prepare for problems
that they don't have internal resources dedicated to
so for example one is DSA around transparency okay
it's helping you understand
the different levels of transparency
that you might provide the pros and cons
and how other companies are handling it
we're also working on a playbook
for preparing for the 2024
election cycle okay
um your
for example discord
all right there are platforms out there that
up until maybe the last year
so didn't think that
they were involved with political discourse
but if you have any kind of community
communications options within your product
there are ways in which you could become involved
in political discourse misinformation bullying
um those kinds of things
so Integrity
Institute is an organization that you can go to
periodically and say hey
do they have any resources along these lines
that is it for me folks
thank you very much and
I'm really looking forward to hearing your questions