TRACK 3: TECHLASH IN CONTEXT -- WHAT SHOULD CS DEPARTMENTS AND TECH COMPANIES DO?

Moderator: Vivek Sarkar (Georgia Tech)
Panelists: Lorrie Cranor, Alfred Spector, Moshe Vardi, Nirit Weiss-Blatt,
• Past: tech companies and CS departments were admired as drivers of positive change.

• Now: growing undercurrent of negative associations with tech companies, that is sometimes being transferred to CS departments that interact with industry, despite many positive benefits of those interactions. Unclear how much of this backlash is a matter of perception vs. reality.

• Some technologies provoke this kind of backlash more than others, e.g., AI, data surveillance, social media, ... often due to unintended consequences of the technologies.

• Goal of today’s panel: Place techlash in context, and discuss what actions CS departments and tech companies can take to rebuild a positive image for tech in academia and industry.
OUR PANELISTS

Dr. Lorrie Cranor
* FORE Systems Professor of Computer Science, Engineering, Public Policy, CMU
* Director & Bosch Distinguished Professor, CyLab Security and Privacy Institute
* Former Chief Technologist, US Federal Trade Commission
* Co-founder Wombat Security Technologies
* Fellow of AAAS, ACM, IEEE

Dr. Alfred Spector
* Visiting Scholar, MIT
* Coauthor, “Data Science in Context: Foundations, Challenges, Opportunities”
* Former CTO, Two Sigma
* Former VP at Google and IBM
* Founder, Transarc Corp.
* Fellow of ACM, IEEE
* Member of National Academy of Engineering, American Academy of Arts and Sciences

Dr. Nirit Weiss-Blatt
* Author, "The Techlash and Tech Crisis Communication"
* Former Research Fellow at USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism
* Prior experience in tech public relations, before moving to tech journalism

Dr. Moshe Vardi
* University Professor, Rice University
* Fellow of AAAI, AAAS, AAIA, ACM, AMS, EATCS, IEEE, SIAM
* Member of National Academy of Engineering, National Academy of Science, American Academy of Arts and Science, European Academy of Sciences, the Academia Europaea
DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Place techlash in context: how much of it is perception vs. reality?

2. Can the tech industry and computing research community anticipate potential unintended consequences of their innovations?

3. How can the tech industry and computing research community rebuild trust and a positive image?
PANEL FORMAT

• Introduction
• 3 discussion topics w/ audience Q&A
• Closing statements from panelists
• Wrap-up
TOPIC 1: PLACE TECHLASH IN CONTEXT
-- HOW MUCH OF IT IS PERCEPTION VS. REALITY?
TOPIC 2: CAN THE TECH INDUSTRY AND COMPUTING RESEARCH COMMUNITY ANTICIPATE POTENTIAL UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR INNOVATIONS?
TOPIC 3: HOW CAN THE TECH INDUSTRY AND COMPUTING RESEARCH COMMUNITY REBUILD TRUST AND A POSITIVE IMAGE?
CRA-INDUSTRY WORKFLOW

INTERVIEW → ROUNDTABLE → WORKSHOP → REPORT

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