Ethical Situations in Service Design: An Explorative Study of how Service Designers Handle Ethically Loaded Situations During the Design Process

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Master Thesis

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Abstract

Previous studies have shown that ethically loaded design situations within design currently present themselves as an implicit and non-reflexive activity. Others promote a development of ethical tools which are incorporated within the normal set of methods and tools used during the design process. Within the service design discipline no such research has been identified. In order to shed a light on the ethics within service design this thesis explores the ethical design ecology of service design and gives a first sketch of an ethical baseline for the field. The data collected in the study represents five weeks of shadowing in-house and external service design consultants working in Scandinavia. The data was analyzed by means of the three major normative theories within ethics and the Value-Sensitive Design framework. The analysis tools were applied through a three step process where situations first were identified, then the value-sensitive situations were flagged by means of the VSD-framework. Finally these value-sensitive situations were looked at from an ethical perspective using the three major ethical normative theories, consequentialism, deontology and virtue ethics. The results demonstrate that service designers often approach ethical problems in an implicit and ethically consequentialist way and that when ethical situations are dealt with explicitly they are often of a nature in which the consequences of the proposed design solution easily can be foreseen.
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1 Introduction

Since the introduction of participatory design (PD) in the late 1970s design disciplines such as interaction design, experience design and service design has emerged as strong contributors to the way of looking at how design contributes to society (Gladwell, 2000; Thackara, 2005; Löwgren and Stolterman, 2007; Junginger and Sangiorgi, 2009; Penin and Tonkinwise, 2009). A view and methodology which has been influenced by that of PD (Holmlid, 2009). The new approaches have contributed to a shift in focus for the designer, making it more user-centric, i.e. focusing more on user involvement throughout the design process than before (Salvador and Mateas, 1997; Buxton, 2007; Holmlid, 2009). The user-centric shift has forced the ethical view on the design practice to change as well.

This thesis focuses on situations, which arise during “normal states” of the service design process. By “normal states” the author refers to states, which have no specific ethical backdrop. Previous studies have shown that designers indeed find themselves in ethical and moral situations (van Gorp, 2007; Knight, 2008; Lloyd, 2009) and others have (implicitly) stated that these situations are influential when trying to understand the ethical design ecology in which the designer acts (Steen, 2011; Kirkegaard Rasmussen and Graves Petersen, 2011). Furthermore the ethics research conducted within other disciplines of design has shown that ethical situations are often dealt with implicitly (Lloyd, 2009) and others have called for a more reflexive process when it comes to ethical matters (Steen, 2011) and arguing for an ethical approach which focuses on ethics during the design process and not as a tool for judging whether a design is ethically good or not. A reflexive process here means being more aware of what is happening here-and-now and of one’s own involvement, roles and agency in what is happening, as stated by Steen (2011). Van Gorp (2007) on the other hand focused on different types of ethical situations, normal and radical, and concluded that designers tended to follow rules and regulations a lot more when confronted with a design problem of a normal ethical nature than when confronted with a radical problem. Taking previous research into consideration this thesis supplies a first description, but not finished, of the ethical ecology within service design by means of example situations identified in the collected data.

The ethical design ecology consists of a number of stakeholders, which
range from decisions-makers to the person using the product or service, i.e. not only the designer. It deals with the fact that sometimes it is not up to the designer to decide whether a feature should be embedded in the design or not. Contradicting values from users and time aspects are other situations that affect designers, hence affecting the ethical design ecology as well. Money is another important factor when it comes to the ethical design ecology.

By fully understanding the ethical design ecology and its implications on the day-to-day life of designers it might be possible to embed ethical guidance within the tools and methods used by designers.

It is an important fact that when dealing with ethical and moral dilemmas when designing the designer needs to see things from different perspectives, the ethical perspective being one of them. Designers need to think about the ethical part of doing research, the ethical part of implementing the design, and they have to think about the consequences that the design might bring with it; are you as a designer comfortable with designing somebody out of a job for example? There is a debate in the design ethics community on how to best approach the ethics within design (Steen 2011, Bausch 2008, Knight 2008) and which normative theory to ground it within (d’Anjou, 2011). Consequentialism is a theory present in the design processes, something which sustainability design attests too. However if the consequences are thought of or not is situational, making the understanding of the context important (Lloyd, 2009).

There are a lot of ethical perspectives and approaches that designer can take when designing. One of the most talked about today is that of sustainability. How do designers today adapt themselves to the given situation in order to be able to look at the long term implications that their design might have on both the local and global community. According to Fry (2009) very few do. However this is just one value perspective, of many. There is an imminent danger in only taking one perspective when designing, there needs to be a larger underlying process which fosters and aids the designers throughout the process and helps them to identify key ethical implications. There also needs to be an established framework on which these aids are grounded within. Designing for sustainability, might block the designer and make them forget about other values that might be equally important to the end-user, ranging from human rights to family values. Previous work has shown that by actively taking new
perspectives when designing the design process is enriched (Hult et al., 2006). It is this underlying thought process that this thesis builds on by identifying the current state of how ethical situations are met and dealt with on a daily basis. Something that goes well with what for example Tony Fry (2009) argues for; which is the mentality of not adding something to the way we design but embedding it within the design process and having tools and methods where the designer by using these methods and tools automatically thinks these matters through. In order to do this, an understanding of the current situations needs to be present.

In addition, service design is a design discipline relatively new and a perspective which is composed by a vast range of practitioners from other fields of design, such as; graphic design, interaction design, industrial design and experience design to mention a few (Stickdorn and Schneider, 2010). This vast number of contributors to service design not only gives the field a divergent approach to the design process itself but it also gives an indication that the common ground between practitioners might be a bit skewed, resonating to the ethical ground on which they stand on coming in to the field.

The thesis does not intend to support a normative ethical theory nor does it try to say something about whether the situations and actions presented are morally correct or not, it simply uses the three major normative ethical theories and the Value-Sensitive Design (VSD) framework in order to better understand the situations and actions found during data collection in order to provide a first sketch of the baseline for an ethical design ecology.

1.1 Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of the thesis is to shine a light on the ethical aspects of service design during its “normal states”. This is a first step towards a better comprehension of what kind of ethical situations a service designer might encounter and following this a sketch for a baseline for what can be expected regarding ethics and service design in general could be presented. The work is meant to open doors for further research; finding and defining new research questions to better understand ethical situations in order to better the comprehension of the ethical ecology of service design.
This is done through three research questions presented below.

- How does ethical situations present themselves within the service design discipline given that a theoretical base for analysis has been given.

- What is the nature of the situations? What sort of underlying stance do service designers, regarding ethical choices, take today?

- What opportunities for future research can be found based on the results in the thesis?
2 Theoretical Framework

In this section the theoretical frameworks used in the thesis are presented.

2.1 Ethics

Before giving a brief overview of the three major normative ethical theories used in the analysis a short introduction to the field of ethics is given. The focus on ethics in this study lies on the normative side of ethics, due to this, it is from this perspective the introduction is given. Having read the section the reader should have a basic understanding of ethical terms and theories. In order to prevent any misunderstandings the entire thesis treats the terms ethics and moral as equals even-though differences between the two can be argued for. The ethical theories presented below are just a selected few in order to better explain the different approaches of the theories, other theories do of course exist.

2.1.1 Normative Ethics 101

Julia Driver explores different normative ethical theories in her book Ethics: The Fundamentals (2007). In the book she explores how the different theories answers questions like; what should we do in order to be good? What considerations make our actions right or wrong? and How should we go about deciding how to act in a morally appropriate manner. Before this she explains the differences between moral “oughts” from other types of “oughts”. According to Driver some different normative concepts are associated with prudence others with rationality, and some with aesthetic norms. Moral norms primarily concern interactions with others in ways that have significance to their well-being. So say for instance that we ought to eat five servings of fruit and vegetables a day, this ought is not a moral one. If we fail to do this this we harm ourselves and so this is more a matter of prudence than one of morality. It is this sense of ought that is the essence of the normative ethical theories.

According to Driver the primary goal of moral theories is to provide moral guidance and moral evaluation of moral conduct. On more gen-
eral terms this means that the theory will give an account of right action and try to give an account to what makes it right. However some writers are more concerned with character evaluation, i.e. how moral a person’s character is. There is one important distinction to make here, according to Driver (2007) it is up to normative ethical theories to give an account for what we ought to do or what we ought to be like. This is distinct from trying to give an account for how we actually act, praise or blame certain moral behavior, this is the role of descriptive ethics. Anthropologist will for example give an account for certain beliefs and practices and their motivators in a given society but will not evaluate them, and neither will they (generally) endorse or criticize them, according to Driver (2007).

Driver (2007) also highlights another important distinction; normative ethics is distinct from the law. A couple examples are for instance laws permitting slavery, laws inhibiting women to vote and legal permission for child labor, all laws that allowed some to profit unfairly at the expense of others or they denied an equal voice to all persons. Normative ethics is also distinct from but closely related to each other to what philosophers call “meta-ethics”. Meta-ethical issues are issues about ethics, for example the status of moral claims, their truth-value, whether or not there are such things as moral properties. Driver (2007) exemplifies this by highlighting the moral standpoint of moral relativism which states that there is no such thing as universal moral standpoints, there are no standards of “right” and “wrong” that apply across all times and cultures.

Driver (2007) also gives attention to a couple of important concepts when it comes to ethics, which are described below.

**Obligatory actions**: These are the actions we ought to do, morally. They are not morally optional but are morally required of us.

**Right actions**: There are two types of interpretations to these actions, in a restrictive view this would be synonymous to obligatory and a more general view would be that “right” in this case simply meant “not wrong”.

**Forbidden actions**: These actions are wrong, they are morally forbidden to be performed. Supererogatory actions. These are actions that are good but not obligatory; an example of this would be if someone rushed in to a burning building to save someone’s life, admirable but not obligatory.

**Suberogatory actions**: These are actions that are bad, but not forbidden.
It is a controversial category since some believe that all actions that are bad are always forbidden. However, putative examples of the supererogatory would involve failures to help others when they are not entitled to that help. An example of this would be the failure to help an elderly woman on a bus by giving her your seat and hence giving her a more comfortable ride than forcing her to stand up the entire ride. However, if the rule “first come, first served” is enforced you are not obliged to give up your seat; you may however get some bad stares if you do not.

**Permissible actions:** These are morally acceptable actions. This category includes the obligatory, the right, the supererogatory, the suberogatory as well as morally neutral actions. An example of this would be, under normal circumstances, switching your daily apple for an orange which is a morally neutral action, hence permissible.

### 2.1.2 Consequentialism: Ethical Egoism and Utilitarianism

According to Driver (2007) there are a great number of people who believe that what makes an action good or evil depends on the consequence of that particular action. For instance, the act of murdering someone is wrong because of its consequence, death.

As an ethical egoist you are an agent which holds the view that all action ought to be motivated by self-interest. Unlike psychological egoism which is a theory of human nature which tries to describe what motivates people to act a certain way, ethical egoism is normative. Its main focus lies on trying to describe how people ought to act, and according to ethical egoist we ought to act on self-interest and maximize our own good. Ethical Egoism is a perspective of the consequentialist branch of ethics; another is that of utilitarianism described below. (Driver, 2007)

Unlike the ethical egoists, utilitarian’s consider not only the consequences for one-self but for all sentient creatures. Utilitarian’s also believe that if an action produces no benefit, it should be condemned, from the utilitarian point of view we are to maximize value and promote the action which produces the greatest number of pleasure overall. (Driver, 2007)
2.1.3 Deontology: Kantian Ethics and Intuitionism

Driver (2007) explains that deontologist believe what makes an act morally “right” or “wrong” is the act itself, and not the consequence of that act, i.e. it is a theory which defines “right” independently of the “good”.

According to Kant whether or not a contemplated course of action is morally acceptable depends on the moral law and how well this action follows that law. If one follows the moral law the moral imperative is right, even if the outcome of that action might lead to bad effects. Always telling the truth is such an action. (Driver, 2007)

Intuitionists however approach ethics from a standpoint of “common sense”. They believe that there are principles that can be used to guide and evaluate action, and that these principles are accessible to us by reference to our intuitions about certain cases or dilemmas. This might influence a person to act on moral intuition in certain cases which is framed in a certain way but avoid action in another where the moral dilemma is differently framed. (Driver, 2007)

Deontologists believe that some actions are just plain wrong even if they are for the greater good, an example of this would be to kill one person in order to save ten. However many deontologist are not absolutist and even they can recognize that certain extreme circumstances might warrant killing an innocent person in order to save a large enough number of people. (Driver, 2007)

2.1.4 Virtue Ethics

Virtue Ethics build its theory on the notion that when contemplating moral dilemmas and situations we first consider how we ought to be. We might even consider the virtue by someone we admire, one could for example ask themselves; what would Ghandi do? Virtue ethics does not give us a specific decision procedure to follow but instead it asks us to consider a virtuous person. What differentiates virtue ethics from virtue evaluation within other ethical branches is that in virtue ethics right actions is defined in terms of virtue and not vice versa. (Driver, 2007)
2.2 Design and Ethics: A Walkthrough

In this section a brief overview of similar research as the one presented in this thesis is put forth.

Lloyd (2009) studied engineers and architects during design meetings showing how designers engage, both implicitly and explicitly, with ethical situations. He shows how a designer can by means of social creation construct ‘virtual designs’, as he puts it, in order to test the consequences of a design. One big argument that Lloyd (2009) makes is that ethical situations are often implicitly discussed, as he puts it:

“The generic aspect of design - that it legislates and changes behavior - ensure that ethical issues are never far from the surface, even if the products under discussion aren’t obviously ‘ethical’ products that might, for example, be explicitly to do with safety or sustainability.” (Lloyd, 2009 pp. 167)

Steen (2011) studied ethical situations within participatory design (PD) and proposed that if they are explicitly reflected upon, better ethical choices will be made. Steen (2011) looked at PD situations and used different ethical approaches, ethics-of-the-other, pragmatists’ ethics and virtue ethics, in order to get a better understanding for ethical PD situations. Steen (2011) argues that reflexivity when conducting participatory design is essential in order for the PD practitioner to better handle ethical questions, and he does this by recommending questioning as a means of always reflecting upon what is being done and felt. Steen (2011) also emphasizes that there are vast differences between focusing on the result of a design and using different ethical perspectives during the design process in order to make design decisions. In his paper Steen (2011) argues for the latter of the two.

In addition to having a reflexive approach towards ethical dilemmas during the design process Steen (2011) also concludes that virtue ethics within PD emerges as a means of helping the PD practitioner to reflect on their own practice and hence being able to stimulate virtues that are relevant for PD. Such virtues according to Steen (2011) can for example be curiosity and creativity and happens inside a person and shows itself by how the person thinks, feels makes choices or acts.
The view that Steen (2011) proposes follows the argument presented by Donald Schön in his book the reflective practitioner from 1984, a book where Schön argues for a reflexive design process and its benefits.

In another study conducted by van Gorp (2007) he studied different case studies in engineering design that were either of a normal or radical design nature. In his paper he concluded that when confronted with radical design processes designers followed rules and regulations to a lesser degree than when conducting normal design processes. During the radical processes the designers tended to rely more on internal design team norms when making decisions regarding ethical issues. Van Gorp (2007) defined the two approaches as when being categorized as a normal design nature it meant that the operational principle and normal configuration are known and used, in other words, the designer(s) have knowledge of how a device works, how it does and what it does. In effect the radical design nature is where this knowledge is not known or when being overlooked in order to create something more innovative.

Other papers have also identified the link between design and ethics, see e.g. d’Anjou (2011), Gotterbarn (2002) or Dorst and Royakkers (2006), however these studies concentrate on which ethical theory that is best applicable to the design field, how we should look at the situations and hence evaluate the ethical situations within the design field. Although interesting from an ethical point of view these studies are outside the scope of the thesis due to the fact that different ethical theories are used to better understand the situations and not to evaluate them. The results of this paper might enrich that discussion but it cannot draw anything from it.

### 2.3 Value Sensitive Design

“Value Sensitive Design is a theoretically grounded approach to design of technology that accounts for human values in a principled and comprehensive manner throughout the design process. It employs an integrative and iterative tripartite methodology, consisting of conceptual, empirical and technical investigations.” (Friedman, 2009 pp.69)
2.3.1 What is a Value?

Friedman et al. (2009) describes a value as what a person or group of people regard important in life which is a broader definition than that which refers to the economic worth of an object. In this sense, accepting that people may find many things of importance to their lives, for example their children, their morning coffee, clean air and their education.

The broader term of what a value is has a long history according to Friedman et al. (2009). Ranging all the way back to Plato where the content of value-oriented discourse emphasized for example the good, the end, the right, obligation, virtue, moral judgment, truth and validity. They continue by stating that sometimes ethics has been subsumed within a theory of values, and other times, conversely, with ethical values viewed as just one component of ethics more generally. Therefore values should not be immixed with facts since facts do not logically entail value, hence values cannot only be accounted for by empirical investigation of the external world but depend substantively on the interests and desires of human beings within a cultural milieu.

2.3.2 The Tripartite Methodology

Value Sensitive Design adapts three standpoints from which to investigate important values into the design, this is done iteratively throughout the process and the design is always greater than the sum of its parts. Nonetheless the three standpoints is a good place to start in order to fully comprehend the Value-Sensitive Design approach. It is the inquiries presented in each approach below which has been used during categorization of the data material in this study.

Conceptual Investigations deal with questions like who are the direct and indirect stakeholders affected by the design at hand? How are both classes of stakeholders affected? What values are implicated? How should we engage in trade-offs among competing values in the design, implementation, and use of information systems? Should moral values have greater weight than, or even trump, nonmoral values? (Friedman et al., 2009)
Conceptual investigations also provide working conceptualizations of specific values in order to clarify fundamental issues raised by the project. In addition to this it also provides a basis for comparison between different research teams. Friedman et al. (2009) exemplifies this by drawing on previous work, Friedman et al. (2002), where trust in online system design has been analyzed. Here they first offer a philosophical informed working conceptualization of trust where they propose that people trust when other might cause them harm, believing that they will not harm them even though they could easily do so. Trust also depends on people’s ability to make three types of assessments; the harms they might incur, the goodwill others possess toward them that would keep them from doing them harm and finally if the harms that do occur is situated outside the parameters of the trust relationship. By offering such conceptualizations Friedman et al. (2002) were able to give a clear definition of what they meant by online trust in the project, a benchmark of sorts.

**Empirical Investigations** focus on questions such as: How do stakeholders apprehend individual values in the interactive context? How do they prioritize competing values in design trade-offs? How do they prioritize individual values and usability considerations? It also deals with values on a higher level since values not only affects individuals but also groups and tries to answer questions like how organizations appropriate value considerations in the design process. (Friedman et al., 2009)

In order to better understand the human context in which the technical artifact is situated empirical investigations are used. In addition the empirical investigations are needed in order to evaluate the success of a particular design. These investigations can be applied to any human activity that can be observed, measured or documented. Thus, the entire range of quantitative and qualitative methods used in social science research can be applied during the application of empirical investigations. (Friedman et al., 2009)

**Technical Investigations** focus on the technology itself whilst empirical investigations focuses on individuals, groups or larger social systems that configure, use or are otherwise affected by technology. A given technology can be more suitable for certain activities and more readily support certain values while others might be more difficult to realize: that is, technical investigations focus on how existing technological properties and underlying mechanisms support or hinder human value. However
technical investigations also involve the proactive design of systems to support values identified in the conceptual investigation. (Friedman et al., 2009)

2.3.3 Value Sensitive Design’s constellation of features

According to Friedman et al. (2009) Value-Sensitive Design consists of a constellation of eight specific features which make it unique, they are presented below.

First, it seeks to be proactive and influence the design of technology early and throughout the design process.

Second, it embraces not only the workplace but also education, the home, commerce, online communities and public life.

Third, it applies a unique methodology that employs conceptual, empirical and technical investigations, applied iteratively and integratively.

Fourth, it enlarges the scope of human values beyond those of cooperation and participation and democracy to include all values, especially those with moral import. Value-Sensitive Design also accounts for conventions and personal values.

Fifth, it distinguishes between usability and human values with ethical import.

Sixth, it identifies two classes of stakeholders, direct and indirect.

Seventh, its an interactional theory - values are neither viewed as inscribed into technology nor as simply transmitted by social forces. Rather the interactional position holds that while the features or properties that people design into technologies more readily supports certain values and hinder others, the technology’s actual use depends on the goals of the people interacting with it.

Eight, it builds from the psychological proposition that certain values are universally held, although how such values play out in a particular culture at a particular point in time can vary considerably.
Value-Sensitive Design seeks to work on both an abstract and a concrete level, which level depends on the design problem at hand. Something which is an empirical proposition, based on a large amount of psychological and anthropological data, not a philosophical one. Something which is only claimed for certain values by Friedman et al. (2009) saying that there are clearly some values which are culture-specific.

2.4 Service Design

Service which is rendered without joy helps neither the servant nor the served. But all other pleasures and possessions pale into nothingness before service which is rendered in a spirit of joy.
- Mohandas Gandhi

In order to better understand what Service Design is and how it is applied a definition is given of what constitutes a Service, thereafter a brief overview of design and its historical development is given and from these two an extrapolation into Service Design is made.

2.4.1 Services

In his book “The Wealth of Nations” Adam Smith argues that those who engage in service produce value for the moment but that the economic gain from which a nations wealth can be built comes from produce and refinement of raw material. A view which was not challenged for very long, not until Johnson (1969) asked the question “Are goods and services different?” which lead to the emergence of the service marketing field, see Brown, Fiske & Bitner (1994) for an overview. A lot of research during this period focused on differentiating services from products, what made the two separable? In 1985 Zeithaml et al. made an extensive review of how different publications defined services as different from goods and found four groups of characterization, namely: Intangibility, Inseparability, Heterogeneity and Perishability (IHIP). The four categories can be described as follows: Intangibility refers to the fact that services cannot be touched. Inseparability deals with the fact that the production and use of
a service cannot be separated; it is consumed the moment it is produced. Heterogeneity however deals with the fact that service deliveries cannot be standardized, mainly because of the co-production of the service between service provider and service consumer. Perishability highlights the fact that a service cannot be pre-produced and saved for later use.

This categorization was unchallenged for about 20 years until a number of papers reexamined them, the most influential being; Vargo & Lusch (2004), Lovelock & Gummesson (2004) and Edvardsson et al. (2005). Lovelock found that no characteristic held for all service categories and Edvardsson et al. (2005) found the characteristics to be outdated. They stated that services and goods should not be separated and that the focus on value-creation should lie on the value in use which is best seen from the customers point of view.

In their 2004 paper Vargo & Lusch presented eight foundational premises that held for a dominant logic which focused more on services. Concluding that the service dominant view “...implies that the goal is to customize offerings, to recognize that the consumer is always a co-producer, and to strive to maximize consumer involvement in the customization to better fit his or hers needs” (Vargo & Lusch, 2004, p. 12). The eight foundational premises were later revisited and some even changed after a number of papers highlighted faults in their initial paper were published. In the paper from 2008, Vargo & Lusch meet their critics head on and explained their position adding the amendum that this was not a finished product which they presented but ongoing work which they invited others to contribute to.

The eight original foundational premises presented in Vargo & Lusch 2004 paper were;

1. The application of specialized skills and knowledge is the fundamental unit of exchange.
2. Indirect exchange masks the fundamental unit of exchange.
3. Goods are distribution mechanisms for service provision.
4. Knowledge is the fundamental source of competitive advantage.
5. All economies are service economies.
6. The customer is always a co-producer.

7. The enterprise can only make value propositions.

8. A service-centered view is customer oriented and relational.

These were later changed and Vargo & Lusch added two foundational premises in a paper from 2008, now they read;

1. Service is the fundamental basis of exchange.

2. Indirect exchange masks the fundamental basis of exchange.

3. Goods are a distribution mechanism for service provision.

4. Operant resources are the fundamental source of competitive advantage.

5. All economies are service economies.

6. The customer is always a co-producer of value.

7. The enterprise cannot deliver value, but only offer value propositions.

8. A service-centered view is inherently customer oriented and relational.

9. All social economic actors are resource integrators.

10. Value is always uniquely and phenomenologically determined by the beneficiary.

Vargo & Lusch (2008) concluded in their paper that it might be time for marketing to contribute more directly to the general understanding of value creation and exchange. The value creation and exchange is something that can be understood on a number of different levels, e.g. individuals, organizations, social units and nations. They also conclude by saying that there is still much work to be done when it comes to service-dominant logic but by having generalized what it means a sound foundation on which to build on has been created. Hence the above categories are seen as a work-in-progress by the author and presented as such.
2.4.2 Design

Before the introduction of computers into the world, design and designers was regarded as the prime tool to improve the looks of products. With the introduction of the Bauhaus school of design in Germany in the 1930s a systematic way of working for designers was introduced. The Bauhaus in Germany mainly focused on the development of furniture and housing and acted as a generator for how far one could go with a concept. It meant that new theories could be introduced into the area and by the introduction of different learning environments new schools of thought that focused on design. (Segelström, 2010)

With the introduction of computers new types of design was created, one of which was the field of Human-Computer Interaction (HCI). HCI main focus was as stated by its name, the interaction between humans and computers and mainly how computers could help humans conduct heavy processing work. However this also meant that the interfaces of computers had to be developed and designed, something that lead to the introduction of interaction design which focus is on bettering the flow and understanding of such flow between the interacting players. These players could either be person-to-person but the interaction most interaction designers deal with is that between a gadget and a person or even more so today with the introduction of social media the interaction between person-gadget-gadget-person.

![Figure 1: Figure showing Buchanans breakdown of the design disciplines order as presented in Segelström (2010)](image_url)
Buchanan (2001) defines design, and here he explicitly focuses on systems and artificial environments, by presenting an overview of how the design order is composed. This map was later adapted by Segelström (2010) and changed in a way so that the design disciplines act on each other. This meant that you could not conduct as an industrial designer without having some parts of graphical design in your work, and hence you could not be an interaction designer without having some skills and understanding for graphical and industrial design. At the top was environmental design that had to incorporate skills from all of the above-mentioned disciplines in order to be conducted skillfully.

2.4.3 Service Design

Services have been around for a long time however it was not until the early 1990s that designers started to talk about the design of services in a structured way. It was mainly two schools which pioneered the field, that of Politecnico di Milano in Italy and Köln International School of Design in Germany. At these two schools it was mainly the work of Ezio Manzini and Birgit Mager that focused on the design of services. Early on much of the work relied on the research conducted in service marketing and services were considered as something completely different from that of products, clearly influenced by the IHIP-notion. Segelström (2010)

In late 2010 This is Service Design Thinking was published as a joint product of somewhere around 4000 contributors and edited by Stickdorn & Schneider. The goal of the book was to introduce Service Design and the train of thought that service designers follow, to present methods and research tools used when conducting service design and to exemplify this by means of cases. Even though there is a clear connection between design thinking and service design the two have been separated, some claiming that behind good service design is always design thinking and others stating that some ideas were adopted into the service design field. In the book Design Thinking, Lockwood (2009) presents service design as a subfield and as a means of which design thinking can be adopted. However something that all service designers are adamant about is that service design is a holistic approach. It is also an approach that considers both back-end and front-end stakeholders when it comes to the service delivery. Since a service can be delivered over a number of different
mediums and sometimes even by a number of different actors this view is essential for the holistic approach of service design.

The holistic approach is something which is also highlighted in the methods and visualization techniques used in service design. Ethnography and interviews are two very popular data collecting techniques that many service designers use in order to better understand the service ecology, i.e. the entire setting in which a service has to act. In order to share the vast amount of data collected storyboards, storytelling and personas are often used to maintain and highlight the important findings found in the data. Blueprints and customer journeys are two visualization techniques often used by service designers to make the service more tangible for people not in tuned in the process. Workshops is another way of working for service designers when trying to map out what different stakeholders either think of an existing service or what they would like a future service to be made up by. There are numerous other techniques and tools used by service designers, this is just a selected few.

In short service design is a holistic system view that concentrate on an entire process with the intention of optimizing the flow for both back-end and front-end stakeholders.

2.5 Methodology

In this section the theoretical background to the data collection methods used in the study is presented. It consist of two main parts, one which presents the ethnographic approach when conducting studies of this nature and one which focuses on the actual data collection. The difference between the two will become apparent after having read the section. Finally similar approaches, method wise, are presented.

2.5.1 Anthropology and its ethnographic tool for cultural study

In the early days of anthropology ethnographic studies were often conducted in order to explore foreign cultures. Often a person would go away for a year, living in a society, but maintaining their outside point of view during the entire time and upon returning write down a narrative
explaining the way-of-life of the given society. By doing this the person gained full access to the community and hence understand it in a way one could not when asking people to explain their way-of-life to an outsider. (Agar, 1996)

Patton (2002) sets forth six strengths to direct, personal contact with and observations of a setting. First, the inquirer is better able to understand and capture the context in which the observed interact. Second, by first-hand experience in the setting and the people in the setting the inquirer has the opportunity to be open, discovery oriented and inductive because, by being on site, the inquirer does not have to rely on previous conceptualizations of the given setting. Third, the inquirer, by his or hers novelty, has the opportunity to see things that otherwise would pass by routinely by the people in the setting. Hence the observer might discover things no one else has paid attention to. Fourth, by observing people in the setting the observer might encounter things of a sensitive nature which people would not want to share in an interview, especially to strangers. Fifth, the observations allow the inquirer to move beyond the selective perceptions of others. Sixth, getting close to the people in the setting allows the observer to draw on personal knowledge during the formal interpretation stage of analysis. Reflection and introspection of the data by the inquirer are important parts when trying to understand a setting and the people within that setting.

According to Patton (2002) the first thing you have to decide when doing field research is whether or not you, as an observer, are going to be a participant in the studied setting. Often this role changes over time as well, the observer might start as an onlooker but as time goes by the inquirer might start participating more and more in the setting, or vice versa. This is what Patton (2002, p 267) has to say about how to best decide what level of participation to choose.

“The ideal in evaluation is to design and negotiate that degree of participation that will yield the most meaningful data about the program given the characteristics of the participants, the nature of staff-participant interactions, the sociopolitical context of the program, and the information needs of intended evaluation users.”
Ethnosemanticist Kenneth Pike coined the terms *emic* and *etic* in 1954 to distinguish between different classification systems reported by anthropologist. One was based on the language and categories used by the people in the culture studied, an emic approach, and the other on categories created by anthropologist based on their analysis of important cultural distinctions, an etic approach. The challenge for the inquirer is to combine the participation and observation so that one understands the setting as insider while describing it to and for outsiders. (Patton, 2002)

In design research it was Suchman (1987) who pioneered user-studies when it came to using ethnography as a means of observing how user interacted with a Xerox-machine in order to evaluate the interface. By studying user interaction she was able to understand the different problems that users encountered. Today designers often use ethnography to better understand the design space and the problems that comes with it. Nokia, for example, are one of the leading companies using ethnographers in order to better understand their customers and their needs.

### 2.5.2 Field note taking and data handling

According to Emerson et al. (1995) when in the field collecting data through ethnography jotting down events and situations without any pre-conceived notions is hard but necessary in order to get the most out of your data. They continue the argument by saying that the notes taken should be rewritten and expanded upon by the ethnographer within 24 hours, after that the memory which the ethnographer has of the situation will be too distorted in order to still be valid.

### 2.5.3 Similar work with similar approaches

In previous parts the conclusions and results of design ethics research have been presented, in this part the focus is instead on the method used during the research. In previous studies the focus has been on dialogue in meetings (Lloyd, 2008; Steen, 2011), which have either been attended by the researcher or been recorded and later transcribed. No publication using a shadowing method has been found during literature searches. Publications that focus on proposing a method for better ethical design,
see for example Bausch (2008) and Dorst & Royakkers (2006). The identified ethical situations in previous research hence appear during personal interactions. The VSD-framework is another approach which focus on asking questions and the method itself is often applied through a dialogue between involved stakeholders. Due to the focus of previous studies the conclusion that dialogue plays a major part in ethical research and identifying ethical choices can be drawn. These situations however often focuses on coming to a decision about something, an action which does not only happen in personal interactions between stakeholders in design but also during other parts of the design process.
3 Empirical Approach

In this section the method used while conducting the data gathering is explained. The section is split up into two main fractions, one for the pre-study and one for the main study. After having read this section the reader should be able to comprehend why these methods were used.

3.1 Pre-study

In order to check if the VSD-framework was applicable to the research as an analysis tool a pre-study was conducted. The applicability of the framework was evaluated by searching for traces of the inquiries in each of the perspectives presented in section 2.3.2 The Tripartite Methodology and how well a situation or standpoint could be found in the documentation of the case-studies.

3.1.1 VSD: s applicability onto service design projects

To ensure that VSD was a framework applicable to service design projects, i.e. whether the categories could be found in service design projects a pre-study was conducted. In the pre-study two published service design cases were selected and analyzed by means of VSD. Not to evaluate them according to VSD but to see if the three categories of VSD could be found in the studies.

The case-studies were selected according to a number of pre-stated preferences. They had to be published, they had to be large enough so that an impact of the work was to be expected, they had to be service design projects, they had to be finished, they had to be documented through a number of sources and they had to be accessible in English. The potential projects were dated no later than the end of 2010.

The first project can for instance be found in Qin Han’s publication (Han, 2010) and at Live | Works webpage\(^1\). The project which was called ‘make it happen’ involved Sunderland City Council, Live | Work and Sunderland

\(^1\)http://www.livework.co.uk/our-work/Sunderland-City-Council
Carers’ Centre amongst others. The project began as a response to an initiative that sought to raise the overall prosperity of the region, the city of Sunderland in northeast England. More specifically it was to explore and improve the ‘progression of inactive recipients towards the labour market through tailoring services to match their needs’ (Sunderland City Council, 2008 cited by Han, 2010). In short the project involved about 400 people in the design process and the process constituted two major stages. The first stage built on a methodological foundation for a pilot to be carried out on a larger scale in the second stage. The pilot was conducted over a one-year period. All the gathered knowledge was then redistributed back to the community by working with stakeholder groups and by designing customized solutions with the people who delivered the services.

Since the project involved a city council, a service design consultancy firm, a PHD candidate and other important stakeholders it was considered to be large enough in order to be considered. The project also fulfilled all other preferences and was documented well enough in order for an adequate analysis to be conducted. For more information about the project see Han, 2010.

The second project was conducted in Sweden and was called City Move Interdesign 2009 and in general the aim of the project was to figure out the consequences of moving a city, in this case Gällivare in northern Sweden and how to stop the migration which at the time was considered very high. Project descriptions have been published on numerous of occasions, amongst them Anderman & Frössen (2010) and SVID (2009). This project was also considered to be large enough, have a clear end result and a well-documented process in order to be considered appropriate for evaluation.

In short the project spanned over a one-year period and ended with a large international workshop held in Gällivare, March 22nd - April 4th, 2009. During the period a concept studio, Konceptstudion, was created consisting of six students in order to do a preliminary study for the workshop where 40 attendees with different backgrounds would attend. The result of the workshop is best described by SVID themselves.

\[2\] A full list of publications involving the project can be found at: http://www.svid.se/citymove/
The City Move Icsid Interdesign workshop made two very important contributions in making this happen. The first was to show a vast number of possibilities, which helped people realise that there are far more options than they thought earlier. The other was the strong emphasis on the need for more collaboration between the municipality, LKAB and other parties. The City Move ideas will of course be brought into the process. (SVID)

A case analysis using the categories in the VSD framework was conducted onto the material which documented each project. If the application of VSD was successful it meant that the framework was applicable onto the study.

3.2 Main study

After having assessed the applicability of the VSD-framework as an analysis tool the main study could be performed, the method used in the main study is presented below.

3.2.1 Data collection

Due to the aim of the thesis, to better understand the ethical ecology in which service designers work, an ethnographic approach was selected. The underlying openness of the method, exploring a culture without any presumptions, and the versatility of the method made it an ideal approach for the study. In order to minimalize the validity damage in the study by external factors shadowing was selected. By using a shadowing approach the data collector had the same access as the service designer(s) at the companies without having the expectancy to participate in the work. Throughout the data gathering the collector jotted down notes on the fly later to be transcribed within 24 hours in accordance with Emerson et al. (1995).

The data gathering was conducted over a period of six weeks on two separate companies. In the analysis however only five of these weeks were
used, due to the fact that the involvement of the observer was considered to large. The first sprint stretched over a period of four weeks where a service designer working in-house in a larger company was shadowed. The second sprint stretched over a period of two weeks and here a team of consulting service designers working on a specific project was shadowed. The reason for following both consultants and an in-house service designer was to better the chance of capturing different situations during projects. No observational schema was used during the data gathering; everything relating to the study was instead jotted down so that the open-mind of the data gatherer was kept as intact as possible. Not using a schema meant that no situation was neglected due to preconceived notions and a versatile description as possible of every situation was jotted down and later transcribed.

3.2.2 Analysis stage

The transcribed ethnographic material was analyzed in a number of stages. The first stage involved categorizing every situation by means of the VSD categories, technical, empirical and conceptual. A situation is one or more events in which the service designer is actively doing something which can be interpreted by an outsider, i.e. the person shadowing. If any situation was not easily placed into any category or whether it could be placed into a number of categories the situation was highlighted and placed in an unidentifiable category. This was done as to not push the VSD framework onto the material but to validate its applicability onto the situations. What was sought after both in the pre-study and later in the main study was if any traces of the inquiries mentioned in section 2.3.2 The Tripartite Methodology under the Value Sensitive Design heading could be found in that specific situation. Furthermore in order to avoid bias while analyzing no attention to whether the situations were of an ethical character or not was applied at this stage. In order to highlight if any situations were more frequent than others or if there were situations that were similar across data gathering points a separate categorization of the data material was conducted.

Thereafter whether the situations were of an ethical nature or not was analyzed and drawn from the material. The situations were then bunched together, in total 20 categories were found, into the categories found in
the previous stages of the analysis in order to get a better overview of the material. The categories are presented in the next section. A visualization of the analysis process can be seen in figure 2. For a better understanding of how the different situations were judged to be of an ethical nature or not please see the examples presented in section 4 Analysis. In short, what has been investigated in each situation is the actions conducted by the service designer in each situation, hence a situation is not deemed as being of a specific sort but the actions conducted by the service designer in a situation is, this is applicable to both stage two and three in the analysis. If a situation is mentioned of being of one sort or another in the analysis it is the action within that situations which has deemed it as such.

Figure 2: Figure showing the process which was used during the analysis. At the bottom are all the situations which was found more than thrice in the data. The second stage represents the categories found by the VSD-framework and the top stage represents the situations which were categorized by both the VSD-framework and the ethical normative theories.
4 Analysis

In this section the analysis and results in the study is presented. The collected data has been treated as one and analyzed as such, this to show the unity of the service design field rather than show the differences between consultants and in-house people working as service designers. As mentioned in a previous section only five of the six weeks were used during analysis hence the results are also based on the same five weeks. The ratio between the two places is four to one and all the excerpts presented in the analysis section are translated from swedish.

Before presenting the analysis a short review of the VSD-framework categories and the ethical normative theories is presented in order to freshen-up the readers memory.

Value-Sensitive Design as used in this thesis consists of three categories, the conceptual, the empirical and the technical. The conceptual deals with questions like who are the direct and indirect stakeholders affected by the design at hand? How are both classes of stakeholders affected? What values are implicated? How should we engage in trade-offs among competing values in the design, implementation, and use of information systems? Should moral values have greater weight than, or even trump, non-moral values? (Friedman et al., 2009)

The empirical category focus on questions such as: How do stakeholders apprehend individual values in the interactive context? How do they prioritize competing values in design trade-offs? How do they prioritize individual values and usability considerations? It also deals with values on a higher level since values not only affects individuals but also groups and tries to answer questions like how organizations appropriate value considerations in the design process. (Friedman et al., 2009)

Whilst empirical investigations focuses on individuals, groups or larger social systems that configure, use or are otherwise affected by technology technical investigations focus on the technology itself. A given technology can be more suitable for certain activities and more readily support certain values while others might be more difficult to realize: that is, technical investigations focus on how existing technological properties and underlying mechanisms support or hinder human value. However
technical investigations also involve the proactive design of systems to support values identified in the conceptual investigation. (Friedman et al., 2009)

The ethical normative theories used involve consequential, deontological and virtue ethical. According to Driver (2007) there are a great number of people who believe that what makes an action good or evil depends on the consequence of that particular action. For instance, the act of murdering someone is wrong because of its consequence, death.

Driver (2007) explains that deontologist believe what makes an act morally “right” or “wrong” is the act itself, and not the consequence of that act, i.e. it is a theory which defines “right” independently of the “good”.

Virtue Ethics build its theory on the notion that when contemplating moral dilemmas and situations we first consider how we ought to be. We might even consider the virtue by someone we admire, one could for example ask themselves; what would Ghandi do?

4.1 Results of the pre-study

Before addressing the results and analysis of the main study a short review of the results from the pre-study is needed.

In the first project, which involved the city of Sunderland, the conceptual and empirical categories were the most prominent ones. Traces of them could be seen in the design process, which describes how considerations were made throughout the process, and how different stakeholders were involved. The technical category however could not be found in this particular case study. Han (2010) addresses the focus of the designer in her thesis and writes that major emphasis was placed on interacting with users and extended stakeholders, which attest to why the empirical and conceptual categories were so prominent. For example Han (2010 pp. 117) writes:

The conceptual framework focuses attention on the user involvement, especially at the diagnostic and testing stages. User testing was a key step before the service launch, in order to ensure the design solution met the market needs.
By focusing on and anchoring the design solution with market needs by means of testing is an indicator that the empirical category and hence empirical ethical choices have been made within the project. It also suggests that in order to be able to know what to test some sort of conceptual stance had to be made as well, hence implying that ethical conceptual choices had to be made as well.

In the second project, City Move Interdesign 2009, all of the three VSD categories were found. One publication, SVID (2009), addresses the process, overall goals and presents the results of the final workshop. For instance one group promotes communication in their concept, how to make the population of Gällivare feel safe instead of insecure. Another group wants to build temporary housing, and others suggest ways of achieving a closer connection between the environment and the citizens. That the security of the citizens was considered suggest a conceptual ethical thinking, the pre-study “konceptstudion” also addresses a lot of conceptual questions such as; Why am I proud of the place I live in? and Why do I want to live, work and visit Gällivare and Malmberget? The process itself suggest a strong empirical ethical thinking due to the involvement of citizens and in order to actually move a city the details of technology has to be considered as well.

Overall the results from the two case studies suggest that VSD is a framework that can be adopted as an analysis tool and that the conceptual and empirical categories are the two of the three categories that are the most prominent.

4.2 Situations

Before presenting the analysis made with the VSD framework and the normative ethical theories a categorization of different situations is presented. These categories are situations which occur more than thrice throughout the collected data, thrice because one occurrence would be an occurrence, twice a repeated event and thrice a pattern, in the authors opinion. The categorization has nothing to do with the other parts of the ethical analysis and is there to give a more comprehensive overview of the ethical ecology in this particular study. The situations might overlap

\[3^3\text{The questions are translated from swedish.}\]
and be on different levels of abstraction however since they are only there as a support in the analysis process this can be overlooked.

The categories were:

1. Day-to-day work.
2. Some sort of prioritizing is made.
3. Data representation within the service, how, why and where.
4. Big-brothering situations, where the user gets monitored in one way or another.
5. Detailed thinking versus holistically thinking.
6. User behavioral changes, how one could change the behavior for a user in one way or another.
7. Adding value to the product or service.
10. Personal reflections from the service designers.
11. Studies, how they are planned and conducted.
12. Horizontal situations, where the service designer acts as a bridge between different projects, knowledge wise.
13. The understanding of tasks and situations in the service delivery.
14. Sales and marketing.
15. Sharing of service design knowledge to other parties.
16. Intuitive interfaces versus explanation texts.
17. Using knowledge from other people in the field for ones design.
18. Visions-for-the-future. What do we want and be able to do.
19. Design space, what can and should we do.

20. Maintenance of services and products.

These situations were then used to structure in which of these the VSD-categories applied to and to which of these the normative ethical theories fell into. For an overview of the analysis process please see Figure 2 as presented in the Analysis stage section. Beneath is a compilation and their respective categorization.

Figure 3: Figure showing an overview of the situations that were identified as value-sensitive by the VSD-framework and the distribution between the three categories used in the analysis.

As can be seen in Figure 3, that show an overview of the situations categorized by the VSD-framework, the most predominant situations are those of prioritizing and user-studies for all three categories. One exception can be seen in the technical category where the implementation situations gain momentum and the user-studies suffer a significant drop. This is however to be expected due to the nature of the categories.

Other conclusions that can be drawn from Figure 3 is that the situations that are of a value-sensitive nature are often those identified as empirical,
followed by conceptual and technical. Which is something to be expected due to the highly user-centered approach of service design.

Figure 4: Figure showing an overview of the situations that were identified as ethical by the three normative theories and the distribution between the different approaches.

The table below, figure 4, presents an overview of the number of occurrences for each situation identified as ethical by the ethical normative theories as well as by the VSD-framework. The most notable result here is that in what can be seen as a technical category, the implementation situations (9), identified by VSD has in total dropped significantly while the ones regarding user-studies have not. Something which could be interpreted as; the service designer is not involved in the implementation process to such a degree so that an ethical responsibility cannot be inflicted onto the service designer.

Other conclusions that can be drawn from Figure 4 is that the most prominent ethical viewpoint identified is that of consequentialism, followed by deontological and virtue ethical.

For a complete overview of the analysis table please see appendix A.

In the following sections the results of the potential ethical-situations identified by the VSD-framework and the ethical situations that were
identified by the ethical normative theories are presented separately. Afterwards the merged result of the two is presented. In addition to this a shorter overview of the situations not categorized as ethical is presented. What is important to keep in mind while reading the rest of the result is that the results only addresses one side of the possible analysis, namely the left side of the picture below, i.e. the VSD and intersection in the middle.

Figure 5: Figure showing the how the VSD-framework and the ethical normative theories were used as a complement towards each other. The analysis in this thesis focuses on the left side and the intersection between the two.

4.3 Value-Sensitive Design

There are three categories that have been used in this study that stems from the VSD-framework, conceptual, empirical and technical. All categories have been prominent in the analysis in one form or another which supports the notion of VSD as an iterative approach. In this section the ecology in which the service designers act is explained from the point of view from these three categories. For example these situations show the interchangeability of the conceptual category.

The service designer summarizes what needs to be done, constantly refers back to what the client wants. The service designer wants to collect all the data that they have and offer the
same visualization for all their clients while the project manager wants the visualization to be customized according to every user's needs which starts a discussion of pros and cons of the two approaches. (Place 1, 110321)

The service designer also wants them to ask their customers, when they get the time, why they do as they do today, if it’s possible to change anything in their customized solutions. In this situation the service designer and another superior have a bit of a disagreement since the service designer wants to ask their customers why they do as they do and then come up with a better solution for them and the superior wants to create a solution first hand and ask if their customers want that solution or if they need to change anything in it in order for them to want it. (Place 1, 110406)

They start to discuss the cornerstones of accessibility\textsuperscript{4}; that they would like to manage and find two parameters which probably make up the core. One of them walks up to the whiteboard and starts to talk about the difference between showing that something is accessible is one thing and that accessibility through governed laws is another. At the moment the solution is illogical since everyone providing the service has a different view on which definition to follow. Another service designer adds that at the moment the user has to check each alternative in order to get a complete view of which alternative it can choose from. They start to discuss back and forth how to solve the problem with accessibility, how a solution could look like, at the moment on a very abstract level. One service designer states that he/she does not believe in just adding a more advanced search field with additional search criteria’s but instead should focus on a more dynamic search which adapts to the situation in which the user is currently in. (Place 2, 110504)

\textsuperscript{4}Translated from the Swedish word “tillgänglighet” which could either mean availability or accessibility in this situation.
As the excerpts show, the discussion often focuses on sharing user-knowledge, deciding on what they need to know more about whilst sorting and prioritizing the knowledge that they have. The conceptual category can be recognized in multiple stages over the process which supports the iterative approach of the VSD-framework for this category.

The empirical category is also a category which is dominant in the work that service designers do. A lot of the day-to-day work for a service designer consists of planning and conducting user-studies and user-interactions.

Afterwards they start planning the first internal observations and workshops, they also start discussing who would be a good person to shadow, they mention people by name and position in the company and what sort of knowledge they think each person might contribute. It is decided that they should start internally in order to get a basic comprehension of the work process and later move on to their collaboration partner and see how the process enfolds there. The alternative would be to run both interactions parallel to each other but due to time constraints and because the service designer believes more in the first set-up that is the one they decide upon. (Place 1, 110406)

When this is done the service designer starts using the whiteboard to draw a timeline of the things the interviewee do during a normal day of work. The service designer starts by placing a start position and another dot on the timeline in order to get the conversation going. The service designer uses short phrases and other domain specific lingo in order to get a better connection with the interviewee. The whiteboard is during the interview used as a shared record of what is being said and discussed, this allows the interviewee to fill in potential things that the service designer missed to write down. It also acts as a trigger which allows the interviewee to come up with new things which he/she did not think of before, something which happens occasionally during the interview. Together they also use the whiteboard to draw sketches of working areas and discuss work-flows and how the layout of the room affects that
workflow. On occasion a will to draw on the whiteboard by the interviewee could be observed but the interviewee hinders oneself although the service designer does not. The service designer questions some things that the interviewee says during the interview, as later explained to me, this was done in order to get more honest answers from the interviewee, which resulted in a more detailed explanation of how things are done for the rest of the interview. (Place 1, 110323)

Something which is supported by the service designers in this study which on numerous occasions reflected themselves on what the core of their job is.

The service designer explains to me that even if you put up goals to where you would like to be in the future it is my (the service designer) job to figure out how to get there in the best possible way. It has taken some time to figure out what’s regarded as good-enough and when to put a bit of effort into your sketches and design proposals. In the beginning the service designer tried to make everything as perfect as possible but when the workload went up it was a necessity to figure out when good-enough thinking could be applied, something which has a lot to do with the person procuring the job, how he or she likes it. In the beginning a lot of effort was spent on explaining the service design way of working and thinking but as time went on it has gotten easier and nowadays people adopt the service designer’s way of thinking much easier. (Place 1, 110321)

They are now discussing the competitiveness between the different service providers and how that affects them but quite quickly refers to that it is not up to the consulting firm to tell the procurer exactly how to best implement their solution. They are there to give a proposal on a solution of what users want, not to deliver the exact implementation of that solution. (Place 2, 110504)

A view which is not only one of the service designer but one which also can be found by the stakeholders whom are procuring the job.
The others tell the service designer that this is exactly what they want, they want the service designer there as a sort of authenticator that the other company works in a similar manner as they do so that they know that a mutual system would be beneficial to them. /…/ They want the service designer to look at the needs present today but they also want the service designer to look more long term so that they know which way to go in the future. In response the service designer asks them questions about their expectations on what will be found. (Place 1, 110406)

The technical category is a category which is not as present as the others, one explanation could be that the service designers do not consider themselves as technical problem solvers, their job ends at which medium the service should be delivered through, as illustrated below.

The service designer asks them to leave all the technical discussions for later since he/she feels that he/she can’t contribute to that conversation /…/ (Place 1, 110321)

They are now discussing the competitiveness between the different service providers and how that affects them but quite quickly refers to that it is not up to the consulting firm to tell the procurer exactly how to best implement their solution. They are there to give a proposal on a solution of what users want, not to deliver the exact implementation of that solution. (Place 2, 110504)

During lunch the service designer tells me that it is a common practice from the service designer to let the technicians and engineers deal with the technical solutions to different problems since it keeps them more active and proactive in their work. It is important that they don’t just start implementing the back-end for a service but that they think through different solutions beforehand, the service designer believes that this benefits them in their work. (Place 1, 110418)
The view that the technical solutions are up to other people than the service designer is something that is supported by the co-workers, as they are unwilling to discuss the detailed technicality of a service while discussing services.

Heading to another service which is under development where the service designer has the intention of checking which functions are available for a user in a user-interface when handling data within the software. The person in charge of the software demonstrates for the service designer how the user-interface looks today, what you can and can’t do and what you as a user would like to do. The service designer asks questions about different approaches for solving user interactions, the other person shows a couple of workarounds which you as a user can do in order to be able to access and do certain things within the program. One thing, which is really bad at the moment according to the other person, is that everything takes a lot of time to be executed. The service designer asks questions about possible new functions from a user-centered perspective and what type of situations they might end up in if so and how possible problems could be diverted. A discussion about who should see what in the user-interface and to what extent the user should be able to decide what should be shown and not. During this discussion a situation that they have not thought of before comes to light and they immediately start discussion how that problem could be solved. After some discussion the person in charge of the development does not want to discuss technical solutions and we leave. (Place 1, 110401)

While the service designer explains to the other people in the room what is intended with the different user-stories the service designer also sketches the user-interfaces on the whiteboard so that the others can see how they build on each other. The service designer tells the programmers that it is their job to tell the other people in the room whether the design can be implemented or not from a technical perspective and that what is presented here is only how the process is supposed to work. They start talking about what sort of possibilities they
have in the short and long term and what sort of functionality that would be nice to have in the software. (Place 1, 110418)

The technical category however do show up from time-to-time and when it does it is often as a way for the service designer to understand the design space in which they act, as to what they can and cannot do because of the technological limitations.

The service designer mentions once again how important it is with visualizations of the data in the software, the engineers responds that the data needs to be there before they can visualize it. A discussion about how much data they can provide their customers with and how often they can update the data, what demands this puts on the system as a whole. The revert into calculating how much data that needs to be sent and how much time it would take depending on the connection. (Place 1, 110321)

They move on to the next order on the curriculum and the service designer shows the new html5 standard which is starting to be supported by all major web-browsers. The service designer emphasizes how important it is that all future development uses html5 in order for them to be on the front edge and hence that the current software needs to be translated into an html5 standard. (Place 1, 110325)

There is also a tendency for the three categories to be intertwined with each other during discussions and meetings that the service designer attends along with people from other departments or from the contractor. Something which can be seen in the extract below where they jump from a conceptual view on who the intended target group is and who bears responsibility to the user-flow.

The meeting we are attending is purely about web-design. The editor wants to know who’s responsible for writing all the material on the page and who is responsible for updating and
editing the information on the page, who is the intended target group and what needs do they have. The service designer shares his/hers view on how the page should look like and that if possible it would be a great benefit for the user if some sort of breadcrumbs could be used to visualize for the user where in the process they. The service designer says that it is important to explicitly show an overview of the entire process and where one is in that process to the user. (Place 1, 110401)

The interchangeability is something which can be explained by the diversity in backgrounds of the people attending the meeting and the fact that they look after their own interest. A reoccurring situation is however that the back-end people often come in later in the discussion changing the priority of the service requirements, something which has a direct effect on what is developed and not. This highlights an interesting development in the design process for the service designer and the contractor where the interest of the user is highly rated in the early stages of the process but the actual prioritizing of the functions of the service is decided by the back-end.

When this is done the service designer turns the attention to the down-graded user-experience cases and tells that person that the down prioritizing of them does not feel good. The other person brings up the prioritizing list on the computer and explains how they thought when doing the final list, however the other person still agrees with the service designer that the down prioritizing of the user-cases isn’t good, but there isn’t enough time to do them all. And the rest were considered more important at the moment. The other person is attending a meeting later that day to get a final decision on the prioritizing list and says that the matter will be brought up. So that they know what they are down prioritizing and concludes by saying that it is a shame that these sort of things happens because everything is so damn important. (Place 1, 110325)

The importance of the user cases is something which can be seen in the quote below where a person from the marketing department later asks the
service designer what happened to the user cases because those features were the ones he could show their customers and impress them with.

Around 12:50 another person from marketing asks the service designer about a matter which that person thought would be resolved by now in one of their services. The service designer then has to tell the marketer that because of the down prioritizing of the user-experience cases the problems will not be sorted out during this sprint. The marketer says that it’s a shame because it is his/hers belief that they would solve a lot of problems which has occurred during demos. The service designer agrees but also says that it is out of hers/his hands. They start discussing different solutions to the experienced problems, what could be done on a code level but conclude that it is not up to them to code the actual software. (Place 1, 110328)

Two other important factors which affect the magnitude of the influence the service designer can have are time and money available for the contractors. Something which the service designers work against on a daily basis and figuring out what is good enough for a certain situation is as important as the final result itself.

The service designer starts the meeting by checking how free she/he can be with the design, what sort of changes are expected and which changes they intend to implement in the service and the other person says that he/she is free to leave any suggestions she/he feels likes. The service designer says that the first thing that should be done is having a consistent graphical profile throughout the service but after a little bit of discussion with the other person it is apparent that these sort of changes will not be possible because the service is co-owned by a group of companies, and they might not be happy if the graphical profile of one company is the only one showing. The budget is not large enough for these sort of changes either, they are only looking for small quick changes at the moment. (Place 1, 110406)
The service designer explains to me that sometimes it is easier to go directly to the developing team in order to get things the way she/he wants than to certain managers in order to get an okay that the changes can be implemented. Instead you bring it up with the project manager and then you go directly to the person responsible for that specific change and you tell them what you want. Quick and easy and saves a lot of time and money. However the service designer stressed how important it is to know when you can do this and not, there are situations where this sort of behavior isn’t appreciated. (Place 1, 110323)

The service designer says that in this case a good-enough solution would be preferable, just so the software does not look like crap. When the service designer does not understand something in the code they are looking at she/he sketches his/hers understanding of it quickly on the whiteboard so that the other person could either confirm or correct the service designers understanding of it. (Place 1, 110404)

As can be seen in Figure 3 in a previous section the empirical category is the most prominent of the three categories and the technical the least. Emphasizing the fact that in most cases the service designer has an area in which to operate and the job for the service designer is to figure out how to operate within those boundaries. The above section has explained the ecology the service designer find themselves in during their daily work from the point of view of the three categories of the VSD-framework.

### 4.4 Normative Ethics

During categorization of the data, the situations identified represented all of the three major normative ethical theories, the consequentialist, the deontological and the virtue ethics approach. Not considering the result of the analysis made from the VSD-framework the predominant normative ethical theory in the data was that of the consequentialist with 107 situations categorized. For the deontological approach 52 situations were indexed and 14 for virtue ethics. The results and situations in this section are based on situations that have been identified as value-sensitive in the
previous analysis stage. A consequentialist example is when in a meeting with an employee about a system where the service designer asks the employee about the working-tasks of the users, if they would be glad or not to lose a task.

The service designer draws a parallel to another project where she/he has been involved with where they were supposed to do changes in the process where the users did not like the changes since it meant that they would loose a working task, and hence their jobs were at risk. The service designer asks if this might be a similar case, the other person however believes that in this case the users would have the opposite reaction since their time is limited as it is and this solution would free some of that time. (Place 1, 110406)

In this situation the service designer has a very prominent consequentialist way of thinking since he/she focuses on the outcome a certain feature will have on the end-user. Their situation after having removed a working-task and their current working-environment is considered. This situation could have been categorized as a potentially ethical situation but was not due to the fact that this situation helped them come to the decision that changes of the type discussed were seen as beneficial for all parties.

Another example of this can be seen in a situation where a change in functions might force a person to change his/her way of working. Here the service designer takes another approach accepting the effect it might have on the given person since this person might not be with the company in a couple of years due to retirement.

During a discussion about which functions they should focus on developing for a new service the situation of what if only one person wants a specific function arises. Then it would not be worth the cost developing that specific function. Especially if that person is soon set to retire, then that function wouldn’t be used by any person after that, however they need to research if this is true or not before coming to a decision on the matter. (Place 1, 110418)
These two situations exemplifies the causal thinking of the impact an
design decision might have and how the service designer trusts that the
empirical data collected will testify to which path to follow.

The deontological situations often arises from collected user-data, here
the user-data often sets which rules and boundaries in which the service
designer can act which later affects what can and cannot be done from
the technical point of view. The actions and behavior of the user and the
software decides which design decision is made.

The team discusses what kind of equipment and software their
clients are using and how they must adapt their solution to
meet their clients way of working, which means that they have
some sort of limit to what they can and cannot do. From a
user perspective it is very important that it does not feel like
the service is struggling performance wise. The engineers ask
if they can force their clients to use specific software and if
the steering group would support them in that decision, the
project manager answers that it will be brought up during the
next meeting. (Place 1, 110321)

The users do not however always have the last word, in other situations
the designer makes decisions based on what is best for the company,
which means upgrading the user experience part of a service. The im-
portance of this is however not always shared by the rest which leads to
priority downgrading of such work. So even if the intentions of the de-
signer are good those intentions might not always lead to action, at least
not immediately.

The service designer looks over a couple of the listed user sto-
ries and how they have been prioritized. While doing this
the service designer asks questions about the prioritizing and
makes own suggestions on how the prioritizing should be
changed to better fit the marketing needs. The service de-
signer also notices that the user stories which only involve
the experience of the service has been downgraded to such an
extent that they are now lying in a bunch on the table to be
dealt with by the programmers if they have some time over.
Later the service designer tells me that this is not the first time that this sort of thing happens and that it is really frustrating. (Place 1, 110323)

The deontological approach can also be seen in how the service designer chooses to set up his/hers user-studies. By allowing the subject to partake in the interview, allowing it to be more of a workshop, the subject sets the rules and norms of the meeting. This is something which is intentional from the service designers’ point-of-view, always having different plans depending on the personality of the subject.

When this is done the service designer starts using the whiteboard to draw a timeline of the things the interviewee do during a normal day of work. The service designer starts by placing a start position and another dot on the timeline in order to get the conversation going. The service designer uses short phrases and other domain specific lingo in order to get a better connection with the interviewee. The whiteboard is during the interview used as a shared record of what is being said and discussed, this allows the interviewee to fill in potential things that the service designer missed to write down. It also acts as a trigger which allows the interviewee to come up with new things which he/she did not think of before, something which happens occasionally during the interview. Together they also use the whiteboard to draw sketches of working areas and discuss work-flows and how the layout of the room affects that workflow. On occasion a will to draw on the whiteboard by the interviewee could be observed but the interviewee hinders oneself although the service designer does not. The service designer questions some things that the interviewee says during the interview, as later explained to me, this was done in order to get more honest answers from the interviewee, which resulted in a more detailed explanation of how things are done for the rest of the interview. (Place 1, 110323)

When the interview was over I asked the service designer if he/she often used the whiteboard for shared documentation during interviews, and the answer was that this depends a lot
on who is going to be interviewed. Sometimes the approach works well since the person does not have a problem with contributing and maybe even drawing own sketches on the whiteboard, with others it does not. However the service designer reflects that if you can achieve some sort of co-creation during interviews the results are often better than if you do not, since you get much more data out of those situations. Just by achieving a simple bond like that. (Place 1, 110323)

Other times the deontological approach arises in the interplay between the front-end and back-end in the service provided. In this situation the service designer wants to block easy access to the sign-up page in order to ease the back-end staff into their working-task and allow them to keep up with their other working duties.

Virtue ethics is a theory which is not as prominent as the other categories; it does however come into play when the service designer contemplates on different design choices from a user-centric view and when conducting user categorization, i.e. when creating personas.

In the excerpt below the service designer imagines how a color-blind user would react to a certain color-pallet, the other person responds by saying that given the age-group of their users the look of the color-pallet has never been something that they have reacted upon.

There is an export function in the first system and now both of them are looking over the data that this function produces and tries to come up with ways that this data could be better visualized. They turn their attention towards an interval that uses color-coding as a means of presentation. The service designer refers to another person at the company and says that this person would have a hard time interpreting the interval since this person is color-blind. The other person then shows how you can change the colors in the interval, which according to him is quite primitive way of doing it and a younger user might react to it but due to the relative high age and computer knowledge that the current users have they have not reacted on it. (Place 1, 110406)
In this situation both parties imagines the viewpoints of their users and contributes to the discussion in such a manner.

Virtue ethics can also be seen in the service designers’ intention when discussing different options where service designers have the tendency of wanting to speak from the perspective of the user and their goals and needs, if the information to do this has not yet been obtained the service designer wants to research that particular bit of information.

A new function is being discussed and they are now talking through different situations that might arise and what solutions they must create to problems which might occur in those situations. They are talking about what functions a user might want, here the service designer says that they are taking the discussion one step to far and tells the others that they do not have to complicate things with those sorts of thoughts at the moment. If they notice that the subject needs to be discussed they can do so later. (Place 1, 110418)

Then one of us asks the question of how the choice is made today, what values do you base your choices on today. It would have been interesting to pin-point what different choices are based upon, at the moment you can only choose based on specific criteria’s. (Place 2, 110502)

4.5 Identified Situations

In this section the VSD-categorization, the categorization of the normative ethical theories and the identified situations are combined in order to better comprehend the ethical situations that the service designer is confronted with.

Identified situations are situations that are identified as value-sensitive by both the VSD-framework and by the ethical normative theories. In a following section situations that was identified as potentially value-sensitive by the VSD-framework but not by the ethical normative theories are put into focus. Below are two specific situation categories, prioritizing and
research situations, put into focus since they were the most prominent ones.

4.5.1 Consequential, deontological and virtue ethical conceptual situations

The situations that have been categorized as both conceptual and consequential that regard prioritizing are often situations concerning user behavior or user needs. The service designer discusses what the user might want or need or what they are going to research or not. What could be important to know about the users’ behavior and what effects could that have on the design, does anything stand in the way of designing the things the user wants or needs. A discrepancy can be noticed here as well, when the service designer and a superior did not see eye-to-eye on how to best approach a user. The superior wanted to give the user a couple of design choices to select from while the service designer wanted to let the user tell the service designer which choices they wanted to choose from. This particular situation did not leave the conceptual stage during the observation period however it gives a hint about the difference in design choices later to be made by the two standpoints.

It is very seldom that the service designer takes a deontological approach when discussing on a conceptual level, however when it does happen the service designer does not take the user in regard but refers to established design rules (principles) and the service provider.

Two prioritizing situations have been categorized as conceptual and virtue ethical in the data. In one of the situations the service designer is trying to take the role of a user without enough knowledge about the user, hence reverting quite quickly from that approach. In the other the same thing is done but now the service designer has knowledge about different user-groups which allows the service designer to continue with the prioritizing from a user-perspective. One explanation for the lack of situations might be found in the situations found, if the service designer has not yet gotten to the stage where he or she can step into the shoes of the user they cannot use that knowledge for discussion. If knowledge about the user has however been obtained then the service designer can talk about design solutions on a conceptual level.
The other category which stood out as one of the most prominent in the data was that regarding user-interactions and user-research, how it was planned and conducted. The types of situations that have been categorized as consequential and conceptual often regard what the service designer should find out more about in order to decide if the concept discussed is a valid one or not. What they should be concentrating on in the next user-interaction in order to get a better end-result.

When it comes to the deontological and conceptual category of the same situation one situation was found. In that situation the service designer reflected on who to listen to when it comes to studied subjects. The service designer puts it as it is not always that the one who screams the loudest is the one who actually needs a certain feature or function the most and as a service designer you have to be very careful when drawing you conclusions and really think about the end-result and what you need to get there. This would imply that when designing you should not put your entire trust to what the users are saying to you, you need to verify your results and findings in some way.

No conceptual virtue ethics situations were found in the data regarding situations that had anything to do with user-studies. The reason for this could simply be because in that context and at that stage in the design process it is not meaningful for the service designer to think along those paths. This may be because not enough knowledge is yet known about the user, another explanation could be that simply because the service designer has yet to come to that stage in the process and hence does not even consider the option of thinking along those lines.

### 4.5.2 Consequential, deontological and virtue ethical empirical situations

In empirical situations concerning prioritizing from a consequential standpoint the user is often the object in focus. Here the service designer tries to or plan for how to best approach the research problem and get a sense for how to get some sort of prioritizing out of the user. The user experience is a major factor here, concerning features and functions provided in the service, since the end result is what will affect the user experience.

Empirical situations that are categorized as deontological are often situa-
tions where the service designer tries to find generalizations in order to fasten up the empirical work, mainly user interactions. It could either be during or when planning the interactions. The reason for this is to create service pieces which can be used in a multitude of ways and not only for that specific project. Situations where the service designer is only looking for good-enough solutions to design problems also end-up in this category. In these types of situations the service designer tends to focus on how functions and processes need to be designed and not so much about the final product/service.

When it comes to prioritizing situations of an empirical and virtue ethics nature three situations were identified and in all of them the service designer either for themselves or in a discussion with others debated different functions and features from a user-perspective while planning or conducting user-interactions. The reason for the lack of situations in this category might be due to that in this part of the process the service designer is more focused on trying to map user behavior and user needs and how to best approach that task than to step into the shoes of the user.

A lot of the situations regarding planning and execution of user-interactions which have been categorized as consequential and empirical are very goal-oriented. Often the service designer starts at the end and plans his/her way back. This can be done because the service medium of delivery is set and what the service should render is pretty much set as well which makes the task for the service designer to figure out how to best design the parts and work-flow.

When reviewing the research category from a deontological and empirical approach the situations are more about specific question in the research and how to best solve those situations. It might be questions regarding who to include in the study or whether interviews or ethnography should be applied. The discussion is on an operational level and thus puts emphasis on research ethics and its applications, questions such as through which channels to recruit people from and how to conduct the study so that everyone gets a say if multiple users are interviewed at once.

Virtue ethics in empirical situations regarding research displays itself as intentions rather than actual actions. In the two situations identified in this category the service designer tries or has the intention of placing oneself in the shoes of the user in order to figure out the best way to
solve a problem. This illustrates itself as wanting to create personas for different user groups and then trying to use these as starting points for discussion with other people about different design solutions.

4.5.3 Consequential, deontological and virtue ethical technical situations

The only prioritizing situation involving the technical category from a consequential perspective is when the service designer tells co-workers that future developments needs to be done according to new standards that have been released on the market otherwise users will feel as they are falling behind as service providers. Otherwise these types of situations are scarce in light of the other categories. One explanation for this is the unwillingness of the service designer to be a part of the implementation discussions which is purely about technical solutions.

The one prioritizing situation during the observational period that was categorized as technical by the VSD-framework and as deontological was a discussion what software their customers are using since that will affect the code-structure and the functions in the software. They wanted to avoid a delay while loading certain features. The reason for the lack of situations in this category could partly be the same as in the other categories, the service designer tries to avoid technical discussions and when it is time for programmers to their work a lot of the prioritizing about user-needs has already been made.

No technical and virtue ethics category regarding prioritizing situations have been found. This might be the result of numerous of things, some of which might be that when discussing technical solutions you tend to discuss hardware and software functions and not the user, what they want has already been set at this stage. Another factor is one already mentioned, the service designer does not want to be involved in that type of discussion, and they feel that those problems are up to programmers and other people to handle.

The other prominent type of situation regarding planning and execution of user-interactions no situations were found which could be categorized as technical and conceptual nor empirical, probably because of previously mentioned reasons.
4.6 Potentially ethical situations

In the data there are situations that were categorized as conceptual, empirical or technical by the VSD-framework but not as ethical by the normative ethical theories. Why that is could be explained by a multitude of reasons, causal or not. One is that the situations are potentially of an ethical nature but since no action has yet been performed it cannot be classified as ethical or not, another that they simply are not of an ethical nature and has been categorized as a false positive. In order for a category to be deemed as of a consequentialist, deontological or virtue ethical art certain criteria’s need to be met. For instance, in order for something to be categorized as consequential it would have to be an action where the result could be seen or visualized and hence yield an active decision about it. If different potential outcomes are presented but no decision is made about the design no such claim can be made. For deontology it is a similar matter, only here the focus lies on decisions made in the process which only considers if that decision is right there and then and the consequences of the decision is not thought of. Virtue ethics displays itself a bit differently than the other two since the designer has to actively make a decision to look upon a certain situation through the eyes of an user and then make a decision based on that whether to go along with a design decision or not. The above section basically means that in order for a situation to be categorized by both the VSD-framework and the ethical normative theories they have to lead to decisions.

In addition this section also presents situations that help the work progress along are also presented, more often or not these situations are of a technical nature where the discussion revolves around technical solutions in order to support the work on different levels. Situations identified as value-sensitive but are out of the hands of the service designer is also presented. Below a couple of examples are shown to illustrate the different possibilities.

One of the consultants says that all they really need is a nice spread of people for the focus groups and that they talk to one target group that they know uses the service on a regular basis a bit more in-depth. They concluded that what it feels like that the procurer has to do at the moment is to clarify to the public what their objectives are and through which mediums they
can be found. At the moment the public knows some of the mediums, but not all, which makes them see the service from a specific view. Which might not be a correct one. Step two in the process would then be to improve some of the touchpoints and specify what each touchpoint is for. (Place 2, 110502)

The situation consists of two VSD categories, the first part is empirical and the latter is conceptual. Both parts are potentially of an ethical nature but have yet to become one, in the first part the service designer is considering which people would be important to talk to during user-interactions and in the second the service designer reflects on what the focus of the project should be. The situation is potentially ethical because such things will affect the final design suggestion and decisions will be taken from whatever is concluded later on, however since the situation still is hypothetical, what should be done, the situation has as of yet not become ethical.

They conclude that they would like a specific team to start taking responsibility for the process and that the team then would act as beta testers for the service and find potential errors and create a checklist for different action alternatives. They would create a list of routines and regulations so that they later can pass on the workload onto another department so that their workload stays the same. The others agree but the boss points out that the first step in the process would be to ensure that everything is dealt with correctly, and that is why the that specific team is involved from the start since they know the whole process by heart. (Place 1, 110401)

The situation above is conceptual and here the group is discussing how to best implement a back-end process for one of their new services. They are weighing options against each other and are close to getting to the point on how to best go about the task. As the previous situation this too is of a potentially ethical nature since the result of what they agree upon will affect back-end processes and the user directly, however nothing has yet been agreed upon hence the situation is still potentially ethical and not definite.
A bug is found which they don’t exactly know how to handle, at the moment they have solved the problem by implementing a temporary solution however if a better solution is needed they will need some time to figure out how that solution will look and how they will implement it. After a bit of discussion within the team they decide that for the moment the temporary solution is enough but that they should start working on a more permanent fix. Everything, which does not involve this fix is downgraded until the matter is resolved since the service goes live in just a couple of days. After the discussion the service designer checks the functionality of the temporary and more permanent solution, how they are supposed to work and how they are supposed to be experienced. (Place 1, 110408)

A problem is diverted by implementing a solution that is temporary in order to buy time to fix a bug in the system. That is something which does happen when programming, what is important in this situation is how the service designer reacts to the news. Immediately after hearing that a temporary fix is being implemented the service designer asks about the functionality of the temporary fix and the intended functionality of the permanent one. As in the other situations the conversation is still at a stage where intentions are discussed on a more abstract level, which is why they have been categorized by the VSD-framework, however not caught by the normative ethical theories since nothing is concrete as of yet. An action which has not yet been performed cannot be evaluated; however the potential actions can be discussed from an ethical perspective.

It is harder to define a situation as non-ethical than as potentially ethical since the non-ethical situation is definite. The situations which can be explained as non-ethical are situations where the current state is explained or sought after. In these situations design decisions have already been taken and are already affecting the user, which makes these situations a sort of benchmark for future design decisions.

When this is done the service designer starts using the whiteboard to draw a timeline of the things the interviewee do during a normal day of work. The service designer starts by placing a start position and another dot on the timeline in order
to get the conversation going. The service designer uses short phrases and other domain specific lingo in order to get a better connection with the interviewee. The whiteboard is during the interview used as a shared record of what is being said and discussed, this allows the interviewee to fill in potential things that the service designer missed to write down. It also acts as a trigger which allows the interviewee to come up with new things which he/she did not think of before, something which happens occasionally during the interview. Together they also use the whiteboard to draw sketches of working areas and discuss work-flows and how the layout of the room affects that workflow. On occasion a will to draw on the whiteboard by the interviewee could be observed but the interviewee hinders oneself although the service designer does not. The service designer questions some things that the interviewee says during the interview, as later explained to me, this was done in order to get more honest answers from the interviewee, which resulted in a more detailed explanation of how things are done for the rest of the interview. (Place 1, 110323)

You can view this situation from two different ethical perspectives, one is how the service designer conducts oneself during the interview and the other is the type of information that the service designer strives to get from the interview. The latter of the two is the one discussed in this section. The service designer is looking for the current state of the process, how things are done today and what the interviewee thinks could be improved in that process. The resulting information that the service designer gets from the interview is not of an ethical nature, as explained above it only describes the current state from which latter design decisions will be made.

Another person says that at the moment the users of the service sees it as consisting of many separate parts, fragmented, they do not see it as a whole service which creates confusion. You almost never actively intend to use the service but find it through other sources and then start to use it. (Place 2, 110504)

Above the current state is discussed by the service designers, how the users interact with and view the service, yet again a non-ethical situation
since what they are discussing is the current state and not future design possibilities.

In contrast to the situations where the service designer describes the current state there are situations where the service designers set aside design possibilities because of restrictions either by policies, laws or something else. These situations can be viewed from an ethical perspective since changes are discussed to the current state however the service designer does not have the right to make the changes, hence the ethical import does not fall on them. The following quote from the data is an example of this.

There is a glitch between the secrecy law and how much info you can store about a user. There is a more general glitch in the information that spans over a multitude of channels that are not connected which they can do nothing about. It is a matter that concerns someone much higher up than them. (Place 2, 110503)

There are examples when designers have been subject to policy changes, however these processes are often very long and take a lot of effort, hence catching any of these during the limited time of this study are very slim. Intentions could be spotted throughout the data, as above, but they are too few and do not include enough substance for a fair analysis.

There are also situations which have been categorized by the VSD-framework but not by ethical framework which has the aim to help the current or future design process along. Creating opportunities for design solutions. They are not of an ethical nature since they aim to create opportunities and discuss possible implementations, however future decisions will be affected by the decisions made. Below is an example where a high ranking person in the meeting asks what sort of back-end structure needs to be there in order to meet future design implementations that they know they will have to make.

Now the programmers start presenting the improvements that they have implemented in the software and the people get impressed. One of the supervisors asks which technical prereq-
uisites are needed in order for them to be able to implement another solution in the future. (Place 1, 110321)

The situation where a temporary fix is sought after is another example where something technical is done in order to help the entire process along even if the solution is not optimal.

4.7 The uncategorized situations

In the data there are categories that the VSD-framework did not categorize and hence neither did the ethical normative theories due to the analysis process, see Figure 2 in section Analysis stage. These situations have been labeled the uncategorized situations. Since the situations have not been categorized they are considered not to be of an ethical nature, however this does not imply that their offspring later might be used in a situation that can be classified as ethical. An example of this might be needed for a better comprehension.

When collecting user data and trying to understand processes the service designer often interviews people or has workshops in order to get a better understanding for the design space. Often during data collection the user is asked to either tell a story of how things are done or make some sort of prioritizing on the subject discussed. The prioritizing might be of what functions he or she uses the most in a specific software or it might be what working-tasks she or he considers to be the most important. Hence these situations are labeled as prioritizing situations, process understanding or some other situation of the 20 presented previously. However they cannot be considered to be of an ethical nature by the VSD-framework since it is not up to the service designer to make any choices in this situation. The service designers’ job is to facilitate and make sure that the user gets to have their say. Later the service designer can use the collected data in order to present and use a base to ground decisions within however this is done afterwards, and in addition all the decisions on how to best conduct the data collection have been taken before execution. Other situations considering data representations and the uncategorized situations often regard situations where there is an interaction between the service designer and a programmer implementing the design solution. In these
uncategorized situations it is often the case that the programmer briefs
the service designer and checks that everything been implemented as it
was meant to.

Other types of situations that have not been categorized by the VSD-
framework often involve sketching. This process is an important one
when considering different design solutions however the decisions made
when sketching is hard to define with the method chosen. The method
only allows the observer to ask the designer after the sketching is done
and hence a decision has been made, to be able to say something about
the process itself would require a think-aloud protocol which is outside
the range of this thesis.

Other uncategorized situations involve day-to-day routines, chatter in the
corridors, catching up on the progress being made in different projects
and such. Basically things that needs to be done in order for the service
designer do be able to do ones job. For an entire overview of uncatego-
rized situations please see Figure 6 below.

Figure 6: Figure showing the number of occurrences for each identified
situation which was not categorized by the VSD framework and hence
not the by ethical normative theories.
5 Discussion

In this section the results of the study will be discussed, how the chosen method affected the results and what impact it might have on future research. In addition a discussion regarding what effects the chosen method of analysis had on the results and drawn conclusions will be put forth. First however the results are discussed in accordance with their relationship towards similar research conducted regarding ethics and design.

Lloyd (2009) found that designers engage, both implicitly and explicitly, with ethical situations something that is apparent in the results section in the thesis as well. He studied engineers and architects during meetings whilst this study looked at service designers during their day-to-day work. This research hence adds to the knowledge about ethics in design and not only about ethics within service design since similar ways of approaching ethical situations within design between the two data-sets, an implicit approach, have been found between the two. Furthermore Steen (2011) argues for a reflexive design process when it comes to ethical questions. That reflexivity can be found in some excerpts in the collected data which shows that service design is a field which does work with reflexivity during the process however maybe not as much and formalized as intended by Steen (2011). He also argues for an ethical approach which focuses on ethics during the design process and not as a means of saying whether a design is ethically good or not. By combining the views of Fry (2009), Friedman (1996) and Steen (2011), i.e. implementing reflexive ethical thinking within already existing methods and tools used, or if needed developing new ones, within service design and having a structured framework to map the ethical thinking towards, the explicit ethical thinking which Lloyd (2009) refers to might be more apparent throughout not only the service design process but the design process in large. However the focus of the research in this thesis is still the service design field and its way of working hence the larger discussion about the ethical design approach will be left untouched in this thesis.

Van Gorps (2007) work puts the results in this thesis in another perspective, his conclusion was that when designers are put in-front of a design problem with an normal ethical nature they are much more likely to follow rules and regulations than when confronted with a radical ethical design problem. This is an interesting point of view if you consider the
goal of the thesis, finding out how service designers work with ethical situations during their day-to-day work. The results put forth here should according to van Gorp (2007) hence be accurate since none of the projects which occurred during data-collection were of a radical ethical nature. A baseline based on the data here could therefore be seen as a good starting point. In addition to this the results which is put forth in this thesis is not only based on situations where dialogue has been studied but also includes other types of situations and reflections from the service designer making it more grounded within the field than studies which have concentrated on one specific activity or type of interaction.

In the results all of the ethical normative theories were found to some extent. That the consequentialist approach was the most prominent one might not come as a surprise since design often is goal oriented. The procurer and/or service designer want to achieve something and hence think about the consequences of their choices. That this happens more often on a conceptual level than on an empirical or technical level is not surprising due to the activities performed within the situations. More often than not the activities are planning activities of different sorts, while drawing up plans for the future the service designer and his/hers colleagues think about the consequences of their choices.

The decisions made in this stage of the process will have an enormous effect on the design since it is in this stage that the design approach is decided upon. However it is not always up to the service designer alone to make decisions, in both settings the choices are made in compliance with different stakeholders. Something which has an interesting result on the ethical choices made at this level, here the service designer can only infer and remind the stakeholders of the views of the users or that their view needs to be understood before deciding on something. In these situations the service designer acts as a sort of guardian for the views and standpoints of the users. In some cases others join the service designers’ user-centric view and the choices are made from the data coming from the user-interactions in others they are not.

The conceptual consequentialist stage plays an integral part in the interplay of the empirical situations where the service designer decides and conducts user-interactions. It is upon these decisions that the study is based. During the empirical stage the service designer is more in control since he or she acts as an expert on how to best approach the design
problem and how to get relevant user insights. The data suggests that during this stage the different stakeholders involved are more tentative and shows more adherence toward the service designer, which has the effect that the service designer is more in control. Hence having more influence on the ethical outcome during this stage.

As can be seen in the table compilation, see appendix A, the empirical category is the largest one of them all. This is not something that should come as a surprise to anyone due to the highly user-centric approach of service design. A lot of what a service designer does on a daily basis revolves around user interactions from different perspectives. In the results section the two situational categories of prioritizing and user interaction, conduct and planning, was taken a closer look at. Here a lot of the work consists of acquiring knowledge about what the user wants or needs, finding the most appropriate users to interview, and prioritizing user needs. In latter stages the service designer acts as an advocate for the user, speaking for them throughout the rest of the design project. It is also during this stage that the ethical situations arise back-to-back to each other, touching on areas such as research ethics, graphical design ethics, information ethics, areas already established within the field of ethics.

However it is not only the user who gets his or her say during this phase. As reflected upon by one of the service designers partaking in the study, we as designers have to stand for our designs. Part of the design work is to create, to come up with better solutions for service deliveries and in that process there is an element of creativity. It is in this gap between what the user wants and the creative process of the service designer that interesting ethical situations arise. VSD is a framework that tries to help a designer find which solutions that have a value-sensitivity attached to them and what those values are; however this approach needs an explicit stance from the designer. The way the service designers, whom partook in the study, managed this was through (implicit) bursts of consequentialist and virtue ethical thinking. The situations categorized as such acted as a sort of tester of ideas and user needs, what was realistic and what was not. The situations categorized as deontological however was used as as a tool for speeding up the process, what can we skip and which people do we need to talk to. The deontological situations never involved reflections such as what assumptions do we take when recruiting people from social media sites or when letting one user make all the major
decisions, at least not in this data. Another factor which plays a role in what is being designed and not is the other stakeholders involved in the project, i.e. the programmers/engineers, the marketers, the strategists and so on. There was one situation where the user-experience cases in a development process got downgraded and was meant to be developed later on in the process, something which did not fall well with neither the service designer nor a person from marketing whose job it was to sell the service. The service designer wanted the functions because it would add that little extra to the service and the marketer wanted it because those were the functions that could be demoed to the customer. In the end they got the functions into that sprint in the development process however maybe not because of the reasons they argued for in the beginning. This situation represents an ethical choice that a service designer could face, does one care about the use of the service or the back end structure of the service. Often this choice is not up to the service designer alone as illustrated above and in the results section, it is however up to the service designer to decide which of the choices he or she would like to represent.

User interactions and user feedback on services can only be made if there is something to show, however you only have something to show if the back-end is somewhat in place, i.e. the argument here is that if the user is to be in control of what is being delivered from an ethical perspective one has to be able to respond to something. The different standpoints can also be seen in the situation regarding user interaction where the service designer argued for going out and asking users what they needed and creating concept from the gathered data and the person from higher management whom wanted to create concepts and then go out to the user and ask what he or she preferred. In order to truly look after the rights of the user and consumer one would prefer the view of the service designer in this situation. One argument against this is the very popular phrase “the user does not always know what it wants or needs”, uttered in a sarcastic tone which represent the fact that users might say they want a lot of functions however when presented with them either do not like them or simply never use them. The response to this argument is best illustrated in the data where in one situation the service designer reflects on user interactions. The point being represented is that you should not always listen to the user who screams the loudest about certain things when designing; you have to verify it across multiple users and chan-

\[\text{Translated from a popular Swedish saying.}\]
nels. This is an interesting reflection from an ethical perspective since it touches on two different standpoints in normative ethics, what is best for the group or what is best for the individual. One could say that the situation resembles the well-known example of the lifeboat and rescuing one person so that everybody sinks or letting that one person drown so that the rest survives, without the death part of course. In this case the service designer clearly has the latter of the two. An addendum to this which has to be made is that this only applies to this context, this particular situation and to the persons involved, and cannot be extrapolated to the rest of the service design community as of yet. However it does illustrate an interesting viewpoint that could be further investigated in the future.

A rather interesting result is the lack of virtue ethical thinking in the data. Service design is user centric and has a lot of user interaction and the connection between design solution and user problems are strongly connected hence it is surprising that service designers seldom take the actual view of the user. Which in itself is not proof for service designers working from a deontological viewpoint however it is a prerequisite for being able to do so. One argument against this is that service designers take a holistic view and hence do not think about specific users when making design decisions however this argument falls short since visualization methods such as personas and customer journeys are used. The persona for example is often used as a guidance tool rather than an actual tool for looking at design problems throughout the data. Another explanation for the lack of virtue ethical situations could be found in the backgrounds of the service designers. In the book this is service design thinking (Schneider & Stickdorn, 2010) a number of different professions are mentioned which currently work with service design and since trained service designer are just entering the job-market coherence is yet to be found among the professionals. The fact that the lack of virtue ethical thinking is missing might be as simple as that the professionals in the field at this moment have not been trained to take the user centric view all the way through, since the fields they have been trained in are more goal oriented in their design process. One might argue that the method used in the study could not find these types of situations however this too can be dismissed due to the fact that situations have been found and that the method allowed reflections from the service designer during data collection, hence creating the opportunities for it to show if present. The empirical standpoint of the service designer should allow one to gather enough data in order
to take a virtue ethical view of the design problem.

In the data the situations identified are predominantly ethical and potentially ethical. This could be concluded to mean one of two things; either, as previous research have shown e.g. d’Anjou (2011), Gotterbarn (2002) or Dorst and Royakkers (2006), the service design field is just as the other design disciplines a highly ethical one or it could mean that since the research followed a process and never looked at the end result potentially everything could be regarded as of an ethical nature. The two don’t necessarily cancel each other out, however they do not follow the logical rules of if A then B either. Another explanation could be that the framework and ethical normative theories are so broad that it should regard everything as ethical since at least one of them should catch something within any given situation due to the different perspectives they represent. Whether this is true or not is not of that great importance since the aim of the thesis is to highlight any ethical situation in order to be able to create a baseline, rather than a weakness it should be considered a strength that so many ethical situations were identified.

When it comes to the number of situations identified by the VSD framework as conceptual, empirical and technical a rather significant lack of technical situations can be seen vis-á-vis the conceptual and empirical ones. The view that the service designers have and the people they work with on what they are there for could explain this drop. Neither of them sees the service designer as having the mandate to implement the solutions they come up with; that is something for the engineers/programmers. It is also the intention of the service designer to let them figure out certain solutions to problems on their own when it comes to specific design decisions. However it could also be stated that since these types of situations have arisen in the data that the service designer does not leave the implementing situations all together but rather has a supporting role in the technical situations and steps in when it is considered necessary or appropriate, by that specific service designer.

Due to this view of not wanting to be a part of the implementation stage of the design process, when it comes to technical situations, the appropriateness of including it in the analysis can be discussed. However since the VSD-framework did categorize a couple of technical situations which were of an ethical nature and since it is still is an important perspective to take it is the belief of the author that the category should not be ex-
cluded in future research of the same sorts. It could rather be used as a category which highlights situations from another perspective than those of conceptual and empirical which finds situations; the technical category rather excludes situations which is just as important as including them. If one would compare the different ethical ecologies of the different design discipline this could also be the category that differentiates one from another which makes it ever so important. The technical category is for instance the only category that does not have the prioritizing, data representation and user-studies as top three when sorting them on occurrences within the category. Instead situations regarding implementation of the service ends up as number two and situations regarding user-studies get downgraded can be seen first in sixth place. Which attests to that it is important to include this category in future research as well because it gives a new perspective from which you can look upon the data.

What Lloyd (2009) found was that a lot of the situations regarding ethics were implicit, which is something that the data from this research supports as well. The only situations where the service designers partaking in the study explicitly questioned the values in what they were doing was when their design either risked of improving an existing process so much that someone could be let go or when certain data was not represented correctly to the user, in the end resulting in that the user made decisions believing that the data represents something in point A but instead the data came from point B but had been changed so that it looked as it came from point A. During these types of situations the service designer(s) involved took a firm standpoint on how they felt about the situation, it could either be that they were fine with designing someone out of a job or that they were not, and the same thing with the data representation situation. Which standpoint they took is not of importance in this thesis, only that they (explicitly) took one. It in one situation they could be completely fine with designing someone out of a job since it would improve the overall service experience by that much but in another situation they were not since it would not.

The results presented in the analysis emerged as a result of the choice of using the VSD-framework to first categorize situations as conceptual, empirical or technical and from that analyze the identified situations from an ethical perspective. The alternative would be to do the opposite, first deem the situations as ethical or not and then see which VSD-category
they fit into from a value-perspective. Since the VSD-framework deals with value-sensitive situations and hence can be considered as a wider approach to catch situations of a value-sensitive nature it was considered that the taken approach met the goals of the study the best. The VSD approach is also one which is often used in other disciplines of design hence it was considered to be of a better fit. It would however be equally interesting to go about the analysis from the other perspective, but due to bias the author of the thesis cannot conduct that analysis. As presented in the result section regarding the uncategorized situations they were often situations where no ethical burden could be placed on the designer in that particular situation, however the number of unidentified situations could still be seen as alarming, if you only look at the numbers. They might imply that it would be hard for the service designer to explicitly reflect on the ethical backdrop of the choices being made during the design process however if you do look at the situations it can easily be concluded that this is not the case since the situations often do not involve a decision making process which involve the service designer. The decisions that could be seen as of an ethical nature have to be made either before or afterwards by the service designer. As one of the participating service designers in general put it; when I do user research I often have an A, B, C and on some occasions even a D plan in order to be able to handle all situations which might occur.

In general it can be concluded that the results presented in this study are very much alike the ones presented in previous studies conducted in other disciplines of design. Service designers often handle ethical situations implicitly, the ethical aspects are ever so present during the design process and more often than not they are handled by means of a goal-oriented approach. The user-centered approach of the field does however present the ethical design field with a new and interesting problem; how are the values of the masses looked after within the process. What can be seen in the results presented here is that to some extent they are, but it could be better. In the next section future research opportunities are presented.

Since VSD has been used as an analysis tool in this study it is appropriate to discuss its applicability as such from a reflective perspective. Friedman (1996) states that VSD as a framework is an iterative approach for doing value-sensitive design, an explicitly taken approach. Which means that
in order for a designer to say that they have worked with VSD as a tool during the design process they would have had to explicitly taken that standpoint in the beginning of the project, something which the service designers part-taking in this study have not, hence their approach cannot be called value-sensitive in accordance with VSD. The approach of VSD is also to find out which values constitutes each design situation and then research them from a standpoint from each of the three categories used in this study. In this study however these categories have represented themselves a bit different, since the design process studied does not follow a VSD-approach. Instead each of the categories has been sought after in the service designers’ day-to-day work and used as a means for categorizing the data as either value-sensitive or not.

In the pre-study the applicability of VSD was evaluated on two case studies. The result of the pre-study was that VSD played a satisfactory part in the analysis and could be used as an analysis tool for categorizing data. The pros of VSD was considered its iterative approach, that it had a front-end and a back-end view of the stakeholders involved and that the approach itself had a clear structure for how to be used in the design process. Making it easier when categorizing the data.

As can be seen in the results section and as previously discussed the technical category present an interesting approach in service design. However it should also be stated that the way it was used in this study was not in its purest form as intended by Friedman (1996). The category is meant to identify and research which technical tool or solution suits the design problem the best. In this study however this was not possible to do since a process was studied and not a finished product. This was due to the fact that in this study the projects involved in the study already had mediums which through they were delivered and if not it was the viewpoint of the service designers that it was not up to them to define the medium at that stage in the design process. Instead the technical category came to represent a much more detailed view, even down to the programming code of the services. Which means that the technical category could be called a meta-technical category, dealing with the representation of the data rather than the medium that it is was represented through.

On a personal note one could say that the VSD-framework worked well as an analytical tool for identifying value-sensitive situations. It structured and helped the process along and every category could be found
in the data, to a more or lesser degree. In future studies it would be recommendable to use VSD to categorize and highlight value-sensitive situations as done in this study due to its structured and clear way of application, if value-sensitive situations are sought for.

As for closing remarks it should be said that this research does not intend to lay burden on a single person, the service designer, or on the team working with service design, all stakeholders included. It intends to see how the system in full can handle and work with ethical and value-sensitive design decisions throughout the process, one step in that process is to find out what situations the service designer finds themselves in during a “normal” day of work and in the future how the tools of service design facilitate ethical thinking. It is never up to one single person but to the system as a whole to do the best job possible, from all perspectives.
6 Future research

In the discussion chapter of this thesis a couple of interesting opportunities were mentioned, in this part a couple more are presented and the ones already in the discussion part are expanded upon. Since the goal of this thesis is to look at ethical situations within service design in order to have a starting point for creating an ethical baseline one of the most important effects that it can have is where to go next with the research. This thesis gives a sketch of what is already there, in the future it is time to draw those lines in with ink and further in the future fill it with colors.

There are two alternatives for the very next research step. Either one could do an extensive interview study with service designers all over the world about the results presented in this thesis. Do they agree, if so, why, if not, why. The second could be to duplicate the study in an environment or project which is of a much more radical ethical nature, as described by van Gorp (2007) in order to in part validate his results but also in order to be able to compare the two studies with each other and see if the service designers act the same. The validity of that study would not be kept intact since time has passed and most likely the same service designers partaking in this study would not partake in the second but the results yielded from the two would still put the ethical service design ecology in an interesting perspective. Studies from different parts of the world and with different kinds of services would also be interesting to evaluate with the same tools used as in this thesis. In doing so cultural and service specific and service mutual ethical situations could be found and identified.

When enough data has been collected a proposal for an ethical service design way of working could be put forth and tested, one which in a perfect world would be implemented within the process. The opportunities for future research within this field is vast, partly due to the lack of it as of today but also because of its great importance for the field in large to explicitly discuss ethical questions and how to deal with them.
7 Conclusions

This thesis have presented an ethnographic study researching the ethical service design ecology and shown that there a numerous ethical situations in normal day-to-day work within the service design field. It has given a first outline for a baseline for understanding this ecology and it has given other researchers and practitioners something to expand upon during further investigation into the field.

The results show that service designers today often deal with ethical situations in an implicit and consequentialist way. However when values are discussed explicitly more often than not the short term goals are highlighted for each situation, the long term goals are harder to identify and hence harder to explicitly talk about for the service designers. The results in this study follows the results presented by other researchers within the design ethics field.
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## Appendix A

**Figure 7:** Figure showing a compilation of all the categorized situations.

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