

Preface: Ethics in the Cyber Age and exploring emerging themes and relationships between ethics, governance and emerging technologies

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This special section comprises nine selected papers from the 8th Australasian Institute of Computer Ethics (AiCE) conference, held in Melbourne, 19-20th August 2019. Of the many papers presented the authors of these papers were invited to extend their arguments from the short conference paper to a full-length journal article. They all then underwent at least one round of review through the AJIS system, before being accepted for this special section. The AiCE 2019 Program Committee were invited to be the joint guest editors of this special section.

The AiCE 2019 conference followed on from the highly successful AiCE conference series, with the next one to be held at the end of this year. The conference theme was 'Ethics in the Cyber Age and exploring emerging themes and relationships between ethics, governance and emerging technologies'. There were two keynote speakers at the conference: Katina Michael, Arizona State University, USA presented on 'Professional ethics and technology in the cyber age', and Greg Adamson, University of Melbourne, Australia presented on 'The role of Standards in professional ethics in the IEEE'.

The nine articles in this special section address ethics in the cyber age from interesting perspectives. A historical review by Wigan sets the scene for the whole special section. The topic of 'harms' is explored by Kaluarachchi et al. in relation to cyberbullying, by Warren in regard to fake news, and by Wang in terms of gender. Wang approach uses three lenses, the physical, institutional, and the psychological. Ethical issues are explored in detail by Robinson in terms of virtual influencers, by Wildenaur in terms of shared responsibilities, and by Wahlstrom et al. with a return to privacy, a topic frequently discussed at AiCE events. In this instance it is from the perspective of blockchains. Fernando and Scholl examine value tensions, seeking to reframe the value of data beyond market-based online social norms. Finally, Poulsen et al return to another common topic of AiCE events, namely codes of ethical conduct.

The 9th AiCE conference will be held at the University of South Australia in Adelaide on November 26-27th 2020. The conference theme will be *Computer ethics in the new normal*:

examining the challenges of online life. The call for papers is forthcoming and for those unable to travel, online video presentations will be available.

About the editors

Where one or more of the guest editors were authors to a paper, they were excluded from all editorial decisions about those papers. The four guest editors were Professor Matthew Warren (Conference Chair), Dr Kirsten Wahlstrom, Professor Emeritus Marcus Wigan and Professor Oliver Burmeister. Professor Warren has published eight times in AJIS over the past 17 years (Senarathna, et al, 2018, Senarathna, et al, 2016, Pye and Warren 2006, Pierce, et al 2006, Leitch and Warren 2003, Warren and Hutchinson 2003, Hutchinson and Warren 2002a, Hutchinson and Warren 2002b, Hutchinson and Warren 2001). He has served as a Chair of Information Systems, then was a Professor of Cyber Security at Deakin University, before moving to his current role at RMIT as a Professor of Cyber Security. In her research, Dr Wahlstrom considers the ways in which emerging technologies disrupt social constructs, most recently with a focus on privacy and Brain-Computer Interfaces (Wahlstrom & Fairweather, 2013; Wahlstrom, Fairweather, & Ashman, 2016, 2017; Wahlstrom, Fairweather, Ashman, & Istance, 2013). She serves as the Vice Chair of the Ethics Committee of the Australian Computer Society and she organises the 2020 AiCE conference, to be held at the University of South Australia. Although retired, Prof Wigan remains research active (Clarke & Wigan, 2018; Wigan, 2012, 2014a, 2014b, 2017; Wigan & Clarke, 2013). He is both a current and past member of ACS Ethics Committee and Task Force. Most of Burmeister's research in ethics has to do with moral and social value considerations in codes of conduct (Burmeister, 2017) and health information systems (Bennett et al., 2017; Burmeister, 2016; Burmeister, Islam, Dayhew, & Crichton, 2015; Burmeister & Kreps, 2018; Burmeister et al., 2019; Burmeister, Weckert, & Williamson, 2011; Islam, Miah, Kamal, & Burmeister, 2019; Poulsen & Burmeister, 2019; Sayers, Cleary, Hunt, & Burmeister, 2017; Teipel et al., 2016).

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