

Editorial: On IJIE

What is IJIE?

IJIE is the journal of the International Center for Information Ethics (ICIE) and one step further in its successful evolving history. The ICIE started in 1999 when a small group of friends and colleagues gave its founder, Rafael Capurro, their approval to build a network of experts in the field of information ethics. Martha Smith and Barbara Rockenbach formed the US connection at Yale University Library (<http://www.library.yale.edu/icie>). ICIE continued to grow as a virtual community receiving strong support for its technical implementation from the Center for Art and Media, Karlsruhe, Germany (<http://www.zkm.de/>). With the help of Thomas Hausmanninger (University of Augsburg, Germany) the regularly held ICIE symposia were started in 2001. The proceedings were published at Fink Verlag Munich as an ICIE series.

As we planned the International ICIE Symposium, taking place in October 4-6, 2004 and sponsored by the Volkswagen Stiftung (<http://www.volkswagenstiftung.de/>), the idea of an international online journal was born. We envisioned the possibility of making the papers of the Symposium broadly and freely available as well as creating a general forum for ongoing exchange of research and expertise in the field. Felix Weil (CEO of <http://www.quibiq.de/>) was an enthusiast of IJIE from the very beginning and offered management support in conjunction with the Center for Art and Media. Being that ICIE is international in scope we felt committed to the idea that contributions could be published multilingual (i.e. in English, German, French, Spanish or Portuguese). Many ICIE members belong to these linguistic groups and thus appreciate to use IJIE as a platform for their local research communities instead of using English as the lingua franca. We hope that the policy of multilingualism of IJIE will be recognized as a unique value-adding contribution of the journal to its field.

Information Ethics

Information ethics as understood in the context of this journal is concerned with ethical questions in the field of the digital production and reproduction of phenomena and processes including the exchange, combination and use of information so produced or reproduced. Maintaining a broad focus on these issues, IJIE is particularly devoted to

ethical questions of all kinds of digital devices whether through their coding methods or their local or global content and the social interactions that produced them, i.e., to what has been called the "infosphere" (L. Floridi).

Scope

IJIE is not primarily a philosophical journal. It is interdisciplinary as the subject itself yet taking the ethical point of view on it. The topics are supposed to be relevant not only to theoreticians but also to practitioners from a diversity of fields such as internet research and practice, media studies, computer science, economics, politics, philosophy, sociology and psychology. Nevertheless, the journal is not devoted to questions of professional ethics in particular. Contributions should rather focus on critical thinking about the conflicts, threats and opportunities in the field of information ethics, the change of norms and values, the creation of power structures, information visions and myths as well as hidden contradictions and intentionalities in information theories and practices. Contributors with different philosophical and scientific backgrounds are welcome provided that they do not pursue an ideological or proselytising agenda and that a standard of excellence in ethical reasoning and scientific methodology is observed. We agreed on setting high standards and keeping them up by a rigorous peer-to-peer reviewing procedure. Thus we are proud on having gained prominent experts in the field as our editorial advisory board. For all details on submitting contributions, the reviewing process and publication conditions see www.ijie.org. IJIE is also designed to be a platform for intercultural exchange. It intends to provide reports about local experiences that may be of interest to other settings or to the global community.

Issues

The information field is a quickly changing field. Today's information societies are characterized by a plurality of paradigms that have their sources in a variety of cultural traditions and technological developments. Ubiquitous computing and nanotechnology may have a profounder social impact in the near future than the internet revolution ten years ago. Who will be the beneficiaries and who the losers? With which criteria will we think about the *liaison* between information technology and biotechnology? Orwell's fear, the fear of surveillance, may become the dominating mood of the information society, particularly after September 11, 2001 and March 11,

2004, instead of trust and information solidarity. The latter would give our planet and its inhabitants not only an opportunity of survival but also an occasion for good life (*eu zen*), which is, indeed, the main concern of ethics from the time of its founder, Aristotle.

Volume 1

Introduction is the theme woven into our first issue: introduction into the subject, the agents and the ambience. In his "Position Paper" Rafael Capurro introduces into the state of the discussion on information ethics in Germany. Following Wittgenstein (where Wittgenstein never would have gone himself), Felix Weil wants to introduce with his contribution the notion of 'use' into ethics – into information ethics in particular. Thomas Hausmanninger asks the question "Controlling the Net: Pragmatic Action or Ethics Needed?" and argues to take the ethical approach to the problems concerned. Thus having introduced ourselves we comply with our standards set for the journal and invite for the international discourse within IJIE: Shifra Baruchson from Israel elaborates on the relationship of "Printed Versus Internet Plagiarism" and proves that information is not equal to information but strongly depends on its media. Tadashi Takenouchi from Tokyo University in Japan familiarizes with Rafael "Capurro's

Hermeneutic Approach to Information Ethics" and finds some interesting interactions with Japanese thought patterns.

Perspectives

The following volume 2 is to be published by August 2004. It will be dedicated completely to the papers submitted to the ICIE Symposium (<http://icie.zkm.de/congress2004>) held 4-6 October 2004 in Karlsruhe on "Localizing the Internet: Ethical Issues in Intercultural Perspective"

We hope that all ICIE members, contributors and readers of this journal will appreciate the IJIE as a tool for their research and/or practice. We will do our best to enhance this platform continuously by providing new features supporting the journal's objectives. Any ideas or suggestions for improvement are highly welcome.

Yours,
Rafael Capurro (Editor in Chief),
Thomas Hausmanninger and Felix Weil

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