

IACAP Newsletter

September 2008
Volume 3 Issue 1

[International Association for Computing And Philosophy](#)

Editors: Ron Barnette, Luciano Floridi

Executive Committee

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Welcome to *IACAP* electronic *Newsletter for the International Association for Computing and Philosophy* (www.ia-cap.org).

In this issue of *IACAP Newsletter*:

- President's Message
- Members' publications, projects and news
- Upcoming conferences and calls for presentation, announcements
- E-CAP 2008 Report
- NA-CAP 2008 Report
- Membership Fee Invoice

Please send all relevant announcements that you wish to have included in future issues of *IACAP Newsletter* to Ron Barnette, at rbarnett@valdosta.edu. Note that we reserve the right to edit all materials received. Back issues of the *IACAP Newsletter* are available at the IACAP Website: www.ia-cap.org

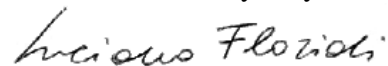
President's Message

Dear Members,

this has been a very fruitful academic year for our Association and its members. In recent years, the IACAP has moved from one successful meeting to another, expanding the scope of its topics of interest and attracting an increasing number of excellent philosophers, scholars and scientists. In this Newsletter, you will find the reports from E-CAP 2008 and NA-CAP 2008. To our three established regions (Asian-Pacific, European and North American CAP) we are now in the process of adding a fourth region, Latin American CAP. The first LA-CAP meeting is planned for 2009 in Mexico, while LA-CAP 2010 will take place in Brazil. Colleagues in India and Japan are planning and will host AP-CAP 2008 and AP-CAP 2009 respectively. E-CAP 2009 will be in Spain. As you may recall from the previous Newsletter, E-CAP 2008 saw the completion of Susan Stuart's term, as Director. She is now fully replaced by Phil Brey. On behalf of the whole Association, let me renew to Susan our sense of gratitude for her commitment and efforts, and all our best wishes to Phil for his new role. As for NA-CAP, the next meetings will be hosted by Indiana University again (NA-CAP 2009) and then Carnegie Mellon (NA-CAP 2010). Other news include an ongoing plan to expand the Executive Committee by adding a new role, that of Executive Director. Given the growth and success of our Association, the new ED will be responsible for administering the regular operations of the Association in close consultation with the President, and for ensuring that regional conferences are regularly planned and held according to the standards of the Association. Finally, a new agreement to transform the [*Society for Machines and Mentality*](#) (SFMM) into an IACAP Special Interest Group (SIG) is being discussed. If successful, the new SIG will bring a reinforced connection with the American Philosophical Association (SFMM organises regular meeting at APA conferences), with *Minds and Machines* (the journal officially associated to SFMM), a larger membership and, above all, an increase in research and scholarship opportunities. Of course, there remain many things to improve and implement. Among them, it would be crucial to see a wider participation of young researchers to our meetings and activities. We are considering ways of reinforcing the presence of graduates and postdocs within the Association, and I would welcome suggestions. We are also still under-represented in Africa, and I shall be delighted to hear from any member interested in collaborating on the project of organising A-CAP. Financially, the Association is doing well, but we are simplifying the membership system in order to ensure that there is only one date when all dues will be collected. We are also considering the best way of managing our Awards. During NA-CAP 2008, we have welcomed our first [Goldberg Award](#): Chih-Chun Chen, of University College London, delivered a paper entitled "A Process Interpretation of Agent-Based Simulation and Its Epistemological Implications". I would like to remind everybody that applications for the Goldberg and the [Covey Award](#) are most welcome.

Let me close here this message by thanking all members for their efforts in furthering the Associations' activities. Please, if you have suggestions on how to improve the services offered, or any project you may wish to develop through IACP, do get in touch.

I wish everybody a fruitful and pleasant new academic year.


Luciano Floridi

Members' Publications, Projects and News

From Johnny Hartz Søraker
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Lessons learnt from E-CAP

I have had the pleasure of attending the last four European Computing and Philosophy (E-CAP) conferences, and to be the local organizer for ECAP'06 (Trondheim, Norway) and ECAP'07 (Twente, Netherlands). On this basis, I have been asked to write up some of the lessons learnt for the possible benefit of future local organizers. In what follows, I will try to outline some of the things that, in my opinion, have made E-CAP one of the most inspiring and collegial conferences around. This will be a mix of things gone wrong and things that have worked well; of trivial and more substantial matters – drawn from both personal experiences and discussions with other participants. Please note that none of these comments are meant as criticism and I hope they will be read as nothing but constructive suggestions.

The 'local organizer'

First of all, the role of the 'local organizer' is to make sure that the practical stuff works and to relieve the conference *chairs* from having to deal with all the nitty gritty details. As such, one of the first steps in organizing the conference is to involve a local organizer as soon as possible. Preferably, this should be someone who is flexible enough to go that extra mile and work those extra nights *when* things go wrong (that's *when*, not *if*). Consequently, a PhD or MA student might be a good choice. I have been lucky enough to work with some extremely helpful and friendly conference chairs (Philip Brey, Charles Ess and May Thorseth) and CAP committee members, and what I've learnt is that the more responsibility and autonomy given to the local organizer, the better. That said, keeping the chair(s) and steering committee informed during the planning process is, of course, important to ensure that potential problems can be spotted in time. Closely related, I recommend keeping the local organization staff fairly small, with a clear delegation of responsibilities, in order to avoid miscommunication and redundancies.

Conference themes and structure

One aspect of ECAP that has not always worked as well as it could is the thematic structure. Some of the research tracks overlap to such a degree that it becomes nearly random who presents where, and some tracks rarely get any submissions at all. As such, I suggest an overhaul of the session structure for the upcoming ECAPs. In particular, "Global Information Infrastructures", "Information and Computing Ethics" and "Ethical and Political Dimensions of ICTs in Globalization" could arguably be merged into one track. Likewise, we have often seen considerable overlap between "Ontology", "Philosophy of Information and Information Technology" and "Philosophy of Computer Science", for natural reasons. These tracks could benefit from being re-structured and/or better explained in the call for papers. There's also some overlap between "Computer-based Learning and Teaching Strategies..." and "New Models of Logic Software". Finally, the "Biological Information, Artificial Life, Biocomputation" track has

seen very few submissions, and could benefit from a more clear profile and better marketing outside the traditional CAP communities.

Closely related, some track chairs have expressed disappointment in that they have not been sufficiently involved in the planning and naming of the tracks, nor in the referee process itself. I strongly suggest that the referee tracks are involved to a higher degree than what may have been the case and made responsible for the referee process. This includes, among other things, the assignment of referees, suggesting the order of presentations and organize special journal issues for their tracks (but see also ‘publication policy’ below).

All of these considerations should ideally be made as early as possible. Since ECAP traditionally takes place in June and June is typically the busiest conference month, an early version of the CFP – outlining the dates and deadlines — should be disseminated about 9 months in advance. As has been done on occasion, I think it’s wise to mention explicitly in the call for papers that E-CAP encourages *presentations* rather than mere paper reading – one of the many things I like about ECAP.

Different kinds of participants and budget matters

I have always enjoyed the collegial and non-hierarchical atmosphere at ECAP but, of course, some are more equal than others. The registration fee system has varied a lot from ECAP to ECAP and will necessarily reflect the local conditions and resources available. If possible, it seems fair that the program committee and the international IA-CAP administration do not have to pay (the full) registration fee, given the amount of work they do on a voluntary basis. In ’07, we were lucky enough to have the opportunity to offer free registration to MA and PhD students, which worked well as an incentive. Ideally, participants with limited funds available, for a variety of reasons, should be given the opportunity to request a fee waiver. At any rate, the most important thing is to announce the fees and conditions as clearly as possible; it is always cumbersome to reimburse those who have paid when they did not have to.

As for invited keynote speakers, I think it’s a nice tradition to invite mainly European scholars for the E-CAP. Moreover, although well-known scholars might draw a bigger crowd, scholars who have not gotten the attention they deserve might be just as interesting – and might be more likely to invest time and energy into their keynote presentations. Note that there has only been *one* female keynote speaker at ECAP so far, so I strongly urge future organizers to invite female keynotes. Traditionally, no honorarium has been given to the keynote speakers, but all their expenses are covered.

I have experienced that some people will try to get an invitation letter to the conference that can be used to obtain a visa. Many of these requests will be legitimate, but some of them will be fraud as well. Thus, do not send invitation letters without making sure to check the nature of the request carefully.

Spatiotemporal considerations

It seems like end of June has worked pretty well for ECAP, but it should be noted that most Swedes would strongly prefer ECAP not to coincide with their Midsummer’s eve, which is celebrated from the eve of the Friday between June 19 – 25 and is arguably their most important holiday of the year. Other than that, the timing of ECAP has traditionally been from Thursday morning to Saturday afternoon. This has worked well, given that the starting time should take regional commute conditions into consideration, and the end on Saturday should be adjusted according to the departure of major international flights that day. Furthermore, a draft program

that indicates start and end times should be made available as soon as possible to allow for early flight/hotel booking. Such a draft is also helpful for the research track chairs to point out any scheduling conflicts. If possible, especially when local hotels are likely to become fully booked, reserve blocks of rooms for conference participants. If the hotels are hesitant to reserve rooms, they can set a reservation deadline which is then communicated to the potential participants.

ECAP presentations have ranged from 20 to 40 minutes, and I think there is a consensus that 20 minutes (i.e. 15 for presentation and 5 for discussion) is too short. I would suggest 30 minutes, but another possibility could be to have participants choose themselves whether they want a 20 or 40 minute presentation (I think this was done in '05).

ECAP has traditionally employed three parallel tracks – four on occasions – and I strongly recommend that three is the absolute maximum. If a research track spans several sessions, they should take place in the same conference room. Try not to schedule very similar tracks/talks in parallel. It is often a good idea to plan ahead in the event of cancellations, so that a cancelled talk can be removed from the end of the day, rather than create a void in the middle of the day. If feasible, it is always nice not to schedule those who are likely to suffer from jet lag at the end of the day. It is also commonplace that participants switch between presentations in the middle of sessions, which entails that the session rooms should be close to each other, that the individual presenters should not go beyond their allotted time – and that the doors should be well oiled. There should also be decent breaks between sessions to catch up with any delays.

Food for thought

One of the things I have learnt the hard way is that people have very differing notions of what counts as lunch, coffee breaks and dinners. On this basis, although a buffet dinner is not always the fanciest option, I still think it is the best option given the many different preferences regarding food these days. I think the same goes for lunch. If other options are chosen, make sure to ask for dietary requirements in the registration form to ensure that there aren't any mix-ups. Other than that, CAP participants appear to be coffee/tea addicts, and I have personally witnessed the despair that follows when there is a break without coffee served. Many people also have to pay attention to blood sugar level and the like, so careful consideration should be given to the timing of lunch and, if possible, to serve snacks and/or fruit in some of the regular breaks.

Publication policy

One of the few recurring complaints I have heard about ECAP is that the publication policy is sketchy at best. There have been a number of successful books and journal issues resulting from ECAP, but not consistently. One concern is that some participants do not get their expenses reimbursed by their university unless there is, at least, a conference proceeding resulting from it. At the same time, what I have found so refreshing and inspiring about ECAP is that most participants present work-in-progress, an aspect that could be lost if we start doing conference proceedings in advance. Anyway, I think this issue should be given more consideration, and whatever policy that is ultimately arrived at should be communicated clearly in the call for papers. At any rate, a bare minimum is to provide a booklet with all the abstracts on the first day of the conference. This means that it must be made explicit in the call for papers that all submissions should include both a short abstract and an extended abstract.

Technical matters

A conference venue without wireless Internet has become unthinkable to many, so this should be a priority. Other than that, there should of course be a laptop and projector in each conference room – both should be up and running by the time the session starts. It should also be made relatively easy for presenters to plug their own laptop into the projector, given the many formats and platforms. Consider the need for microphones in large auditoriums, which also entails that someone needs to pass the microphone around during the discussion. Although this is mostly the responsibility of session chairs, presentations should be placed on the presentation laptop and tested in the break before the session, in order to avoid having to deal with the inevitable occurrences of Murphy's Law mid-session.

We have had good experiences using the openconf conference management system (www.openconf.org) to handle the submission procedure. Other than that, the conference web site should include the call for papers, a list of research tracks with a short description of each, contact details for the track chairs, a list of 'important dates', some information on the venue and local transport/accommodation and, eventually, the conference program and registration procedure. IA-CAP has used Paypal for its membership fees, which is a good option if the host university does not provide options for on-line payment. Finally IA-CAP can offer the CAP conference organizers dedicated space and resources on the ia-cap.org server. Simply contact yours truly, who is also the IA-CAP webmaster, if this is of interest.

Finally, the ECAP has always been a tolerant and collegial event, a place for experienced researchers and odd balls, for everyone who finds themselves at the intersection of computing and philosophy. I hope and believe that ECAP will continue this tradition and wish all the future organizers best of luck in making this happen.

From Colin Allen
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InPhO Project

The Indiana Philosophy Ontology (InPhO) project is pleased to announce the beta release of the interface to its taxonomy of philosophical ideas at <http://inpho.cogs.indiana.edu/taxonomy/>. Through this interface you can browse related philosophical ideas, follow links to relevant Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy articles about ideas and thinkers, and click links for taxonomy-guided searches in SEP, Noesis, Google, and Google Scholar. You are also invited to sign up for an InPhO account at <http://inpho.cogs.indiana.edu/dev/register.php> and help populate the ontology by providing feedback on the software-generated results. Comments about the usefulness of the taxonomy browser are welcome by email to inpho@indiana.edu. Technical papers describing the methods used to generate and populate the taxonomy are linked to the InPhO home page.

From Charles Ess
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Digital Media Ethics

As some may know, I've been working on a textbook titled *Digital Media Ethics*, with Foreword by Luciano Floridi. I'm happy to say that the volume is now scheduled to be published by Polity Press in late February, 2009.

Here's the blurb:

“This is the first textbook on the central ethical issues of digital media, ranging from computers and games to the Internet and mobile phones. It is also the first book of its kind to consider these issues from a global perspective, introducing ethical theories from multiple cultures. It further utilizes examples from around the world, such as the publication of ‘the Mohammed Cartoons’; diverse understandings what ‘privacy’ means in Facebook or MySpace; why pirating CDs and DVDs may be justified in developing countries; and culturally-variable perspectives on sexuality and what counts as ‘pornography.’ Readers and students thus acquire a global perspective on the central ethical issues of digital media, including privacy, copyright, pornography and violence, and the ethics of cross-cultural communication online.

The book is designed for use across disciplines media and communication studies, computer science and informatics, as well as philosophy. It is up-to-date, accessible and student- and classroom-friendly: each topic and theory is interwoven throughout the volume with detailed sets of questions that foster careful reflection, writing, and discussion into these issues and their possible resolutions. Each chapter further includes additional resources and suggestions for further research and writing.” There will also be a website affiliated with the text where faculty and students will be able to contribute examples, additional exercises, etc. and I'm also looking forward to 2.0, with expanded material on mobile phones (working on that now). Two things:

1) I'm happy to share a pre-publication version of the book (with the usual caveats re. no copying, citation, or distribution without permission) with colleagues who may be interested in having a look at the text - ideally, with a view towards "road-testing" one or two of the chapters and its exercises in their own teaching. If you would like to see this version of the book, please let me know offlist and I'll happily send the PDF your way.

2) I've also been asked by the publisher to develop a list of colleagues who might be interested in adopting the book in their teaching. Again, if anyone on this list is interested in reviewing the pre-publication version with this possibility in mind, I'd be happy to send the PDF along. Of

course, if you can think of anyone else who might be interested in reviewing and possibly adopting the text, please let me know.

Many thanks in advance,

Charles Ess

From Terry Bynum
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20th Anniversary of RCCS

1) Terry Bynum and the Philosophy Department at Southern Connecticut State University recently celebrated the 20th anniversary of the creation of Terry's Research Center on Computing & Society. Terry launched RCCS in the 1987-88 academic year with planning for the National Conference on Computing and Values (NCCV), funded by two grants from the National Science Foundation. NCCV was a huge project that was three years in the making. It occurred in August 1991 and was immediately recognized as a watershed event in Computer Ethics. It had 400 attendees from 32 US states and 7 other countries. Since that time, Terry and RCCS have co-planned and co-directed ten international Computer Ethics conferences (the ETHICOMP series), published model curriculum materials (monographs, videos, CDs and a web site), published a major Computer Ethics textbook (with Blackwell) and (with Jim Moor) two influential anthologies (*Digital Phoenix* and *CyberPhilosophy*) with *Metaphilosophy* and contributed to two United Nations summits in Paris. In 2007-2008, RCCS hosted three PhD dissertation scholars from China, Poland and the UK writing their dissertations with supervision by the RCCS staff. The web site for Terry's Research Center is at this URL: www.southernct.edu/organizations/rccs or www.computerethics.org

The 20th anniversary celebration in March/April 2008 included a major Computer Ethics address by Simon Rogerson, Director of the Centre for Computing and Social Responsibility (DeMontfort University, UK), to the Southern Connecticut State University community, as well as a day-long roundtable discussion on "Machine Ethics and New Kinds of Moral Agents". The Roundtable included the following scholars (in alphabetic order): Thomas Blake (DeMontfort University, UK), Terry Bynum (Southern Connecticut State University), Krystyna Gorniak (Southern Connecticut State University), Fran Grodzinsky (Sacred Heart University), Kenneth Himma (Seattle Pacific University), James Moor (Dartmouth), Christina Spiesel (Yale), Herman Tavani (Rivier College), Richard Volkman (Southern Connecticut State University), Wendell Wallach (Yale).

2) Terry Bynum's Computer Ethics course at Southern Connecticut State University is a "national model course" of the SENCER Project (Science Education for New Civic Engagements

and Responsibilities) funded by the National Science Foundation. As a model course, an extended description of it is available on-line on the SENCER website at this URL:
www.sencer.net/Resources/pdfs/Models_Print_Web_2006/Computer_Ethics_Model.pdf

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Book Review:

Philosophy of Computing and Information - 5 Questions

Philosophy of Computing and Information (PCI) or in short Philosophy of Information (PI) is a contemporary interdisciplinary and tool-driven philosophical discipline. Just as the advocator and the founder of the discipline professor Luciano Floridi has given it, it is on the one hand this “relatively new field is concerned with the critical investigation of the conceptual nature and basic principles of information, including the dynamics (especially computation), utilization (especially in ethically sensitive contexts) and sciences.” And on the other PCI or PI “seeks to elaborate and apply informational-theoretic and computational methodologies to classic philosophical problems.”

The present book *Philosophy of Computing and Information 5 Questions* is one of the books in the 5 Questions Series published by Automatic Press and the second book Luciano Floridi edited under the title of Philosophy of Computing and Information. And the first was the *Blackwell Guide to the Philosophy of Computing and Information* in 2004 (translated into Chinese under my auspices and to be published in China). In the *Guide*, Luciano Floridi showed us a rich resource for an important, emerging field within philosophy. There is no other book that assembles and explains systematically so much information about the diverse aspects of philosophy of computing and information. It is believed that the *Guide* will serve both as an authoritative introduction to the field for students and as a standard reference for professionals for years to come. The *Guide* provides the main themes, problems, arguments and theories constituting the innovative field of the philosophy of computing and information. Written by an international group of leading experts, the 26 newly commissioned chapters present a complete, systematic, and critical introduction to a wide range of topics. The *Guide* offers students a first foundation for understanding the philosophy of computing and information. It will also engage those general readers who are curious about the new computational and informational turn in philosophy, and researchers interested in broadening their experience. With this experience, Luciano Floridi ventured further to undertake the present volume with five same questions as follows to the famous scholars in the world of various fields:

1. What were you initially drawn to computational and/or informational issues?

2. What example(s) from your work (or the work of others) best illustrates the fruitful use of a computational and/or informational approach for foundational researches and/or applications?
3. What is the proper role of computer science and/or information science in relation to other disciplines?
4. What do you consider the most neglected topics and/or contributions in late 20th computation and/or information?
5. What are the most important open problems concerning computation and/or information and what are the prospects for progress?

The contributors were invited to write a series of specific answers or use the questions as starting points for longer essays. The authors have taken full advantage of this freedom, and this explains the very different lengths and styles of the contributions. Now let's see the scholars he proposed his questions to:

1. Margaret A. Boden, the Research Professor of Cognitive Science and the founder of the Centre for Cognitive Science in the University of Sussex, UK,
2. Valentino Braitenberg, Director Emeritus, Max Planck Institute for Biological Cybernetics and Institute of Medical Psychology, University of Tuebingen, Germany, a prestigious German neuro-scientist and cyberneticist;
3. Brian Cantwell-Smith, Dean of the Faculty of Information Studies, University of Toronto, Canada, known for his seven volumes' *Age of Significance*;
4. Gregory Chaitin, IBM Research Division, Yorktown Heights, USA, discoverer of Algorithmic Information Theory;
5. Daniel C. Dennett, Co-Director and Professor, Center for Cognitive Studies, Tufts University, USA, famous philosopher on evolutionary biology and cognitive science;
6. Keith Devlin, Executive Director and Senior Researcher, Center for the Study of Language and Information, Stanford University, USA, famous mathematician and writer;
7. Fred Dretske, Senior Research Scholar, Department of Philosophy, Duke University, USA, famous philosopher on epistemology and mind;
8. Hubert L. Dreyfus, Professor of Philosophy, University of California, Berkeley, USA, known philosopher on phenomenology, existentialism and philosophical implications of AI ;
9. Luciano Floridi, Professor of Philosophy, Research Chair in Philosophy of Information, University of Hertfordshire, Fellow, St Cross College, University of Oxford, UK, Italy's most influential thinker on philosophy of technology and ethics.;
10. Tony Hoare, Principal Researcher, Microsoft Research Ltd., Cambridge, UK, Computer Scientist, the Winner of 1980's ACM Turing Award;
11. John McCarthy, Professor Emeritus of Computer Science, Stanford University, USA, The Father of Artificial Intelligence;
12. John R. Searle, Department of Philosophy, University of California, Berkeley, USA, famous philosopher of language and mind;
13. Aaron Sloman, Honorary Professor of Artificial Intelligence and Cognitive Science, School of Computer Science, The University of Birmingham, UK, a philosopher and researcher on artificial intelligence and cognitive science;
14. Patrick Suppes, Lucie Stern Professor of Philosophy, Emeritus, Stanford University, USA, and American philosopher who has made significant contributions to philosophy of science;

15. Johan van Benthem, Professor of Logic and its Applications, University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands, Professor of Philosophy, Stanford University, USA, known logician and was awarded the Spinozapremie in 1996;
16. Terry Winograd, Professor of Computer Science, Stanford University, USA, known within the philosophy of mind and artificial intelligence fields for his work on natural language;
17. Stephen Wolfram, Founder and CEO, Wolfram Research Inc., USA, a known British physicist, mathematician and businessman.

From the above list of scholars (10 Americans, 4 British, 1 German, 1 Canadian and 1 Netherlander), it can be seen that the editor has elaborated himself to some of the most influential thinkers in the field, more senior colleagues from whom he has learnt much. It would be enough to check their bibliographies to appreciate how deeply and widely the new computational and informational paradigm has influenced our way of thinking and doing philosophy. It is obvious that the editor wants concentrate the views and experience of some of the far-sighting pioneers and most influential thinkers in such a fundamental area of our intellectual development. In the so-called “information society” or “Information Age”, both computing and information, as well as their philosophy play a most important role in sciences, technologies and concepts. Advances in computer and information science, their techniques and methods, have initiated the formation of, and the solution to, central problems in endless context. Their profound influence on our daily lives is well captured by the view that ours is a global, transnational “information society”. Computational and information-theoretic insights and technologies have sharpened, radicalized and extended how we conceptualize and deal with reality and our lives. In short, computer and information sciences have continued to serve as a pivot in the current development of human history.

In my opinion, the birth of PCI means a new paradigm in philosophy emerges in the very beginning of the twenty-first century. PCI is a new discipline of philosophical inquiry with the appearance of cyberspace and the coming of cyberage. Information and computer science (ICS) and information and communication technology (ICT) have already shown their tremendous impacts on our society. Since 1990s, the international community of philosophy made deep reflections in front of the great challenge of the information revolution, and put forward ‘computational turn’ It is commonly said that Leslie Burkholder coined the phrase ‘computational turn’ in 1992 and some ten years later in 2002, Luciano Floridi put forward ‘information turn’ in his inaugural paper “What is the Philosophy of Information” and in 2004 he wrote another paper entitled “Open Problems of the Philosophy of Information”. Information as a concept of ‘retroactive prefiguration’ in philosophy is that it is recognized as a fundamental notion not only in the natural sciences and technologies but also in the humanities and social sciences. It is especially essential in understanding physical computation, communication, and human cognition. There happened several ‘turns’ in Western philosophy, e.g., from being to knowledge initiated by Kant and to meaning in the last century, now information comes into the range at the very beginning of the new century. Philosophy of information with its emphasis on the ‘information turn’ is taken as an orientative rather than a cognitive philosophy. Orientative philosophy probes into the present open problems instead of commit oneself into the theoretical investigations of the dead philosophers irrelevant to our present world. Methodologically, computer provides such a powerful tool for the philosophy and thus this new philosophy is called ‘tool-driven’ rather than the so-called ‘concept-driven’ in physics. Just as physicist Freeman Dyson put it for he called Internet as one of the tools of scientific revolution. And Michael Heim

even went farther saying the cyberspace formed by the computer network is nothing but a metaphysical laboratory, a tool for examining our sense of reality. Actually, computing even goes beyond this just as Terry Bynum and James Moor put it: “Computing provides philosophy with such a set of simple, but incredibly fertile notions – new and evolving *subject matter*, *methods*, and *models* for the philosophical inquiry. Computing brings new opportunities and challenges to traditional philosophical activities ... Computing is changing the way philosophers understand foundational concepts in philosophy, such as mind, consciousness, experience, reasoning, knowledge, truth, ethics and creativity. This trend in philosophical inquiry that incorporates computing in terms of a subject matter, a method, or a model has been gaining momentum steadily.” Traditionally, the paradigm shift in philosophy with the rise of PCI means a transfer of large tradition in Western philosophy. Western philosophy can be categorized into three large traditions at large, i.e., Platonic, Kantian and Leibniz-Russellean traditions, or classic, modern and formal traditions. PCI can be subsumed into the Leibniz-Russellean tradition for in the very beginning of IA-CAP’s history, it reads, “the convergence of computing and philosophy has a lineage going back to Leibniz, his ‘calculus’ and ‘adding machines’.” It is obvious Leibniz is regarded as a key figure in forming the new philosophy. In my opinion, Leibniz opened up a new type of inquiry in the philosophy some three hundred years ago for his work on traditional logic. This is only among one aspect of the scientists has noticed. Actually, scientists, especially those majoring in Artificial Intelligence (AI) had already taken over Hobbes’ claim that reasoning was calculating. Descartes’ mental representation, Leibniz’s idea of a ‘universal characteristic’ ... a set of primitives in which all knowledge could be expressed, Kant’s claim that concepts were rules, Frege’s formalization of such rules, and Russell’s postulation of logical atoms as the building blocks of reality, etc. In short, they were hard at work turning rationalist philosophy into a research program. The present volume gave us an in-depth survey of the results of the past half century or more. With its vivid illustration of writing and experience of the famous scholars we have had a panoramic view of the Philosophy of Computing and Information.

From Mary Ange Cooksey
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Last year I was honored with several prestigious awards at the national, state and university level. I have been working tirelessly on a variety of service-learning projects over the past three years (one of which is a computer ethics outreach to middle school and high school students), and last year the service-learning center I created was recognized nationally; The Baxter Center was named to President Bush' Honor Roll for Community Service - and we were named with distinction. In recognition of my scholarship and research in the area of computer ethics and service-learning (I have published several articles and I am the process of completing an edited book), I was awarded the Brian Hiltunen Award for the Scholarship of Engagement by Indiana Campus Compact. On my campus, I was honored with the Distinguished Faculty Service Award

last spring. Two months ago I was promoted to Senior Lecturer, and again, I share all of this with you because many of my recent accomplishments can be tethered back to the years of interacting with the exceptionally talented group of intellectuals known as ICAP. You are all the BEST! Thank you.

Martin Frické mfricke@u.arizona.edu

wrote to inform readers that his website for instructional logic software is up and running at <http://SoftOption.Us>

He has included available software and notes for propositional and predicate logic, for trees, for modal logic, for game-theoretic semantics, for lambda calculus, etc. and most of it can easily be configured to accompany any logic text.

From Luciano Floridi

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Coordinator of the IEG, University of Oxford

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The past academic year has brought several changes. I was offered the newly established [Research Chair in Philosophy of Information](#) by the University of Hertfordshire in the UK, and so I resigned from the logic chair which I held at the Università degli Studi di Bari, in Italy. I was also elected Gauss Professor by the [Göttingen Academy of Sciences](#) for the academic year 2008-09. Every year, the Göttingen Academy of Sciences (Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen) elects a Gauss Professor ([Gauß-Professur der Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen](#)) to honour the memory of the great scientist. The Professorship is usually awarded to "important scientists in one of Gauss' fields of interest", namely astronomy, mathematics or physics. Recipients have included Nobel laureates and famous mathematicians. It is a great honour to be the first philosopher ever to be elected. The Laudatio awarded the Gauss Professorship in recognition of my work on the [philosophy of information](#).

Upcoming Conferences and Calls for Presentation, Announcements

AP-CAP 2008: Fourth Asia-Pacific Computing and Philosophy Conference

<http://ia-cap.org/ap-cap08/>

Deadline for submission of abstracts (no more than 1,000 words) is September 15, 2008

From the CFP:

The Fourth Asia-Pacific Computing and Philosophy Conference (AP-CAP 2008) will be held at the National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS) , Indian Institute of Science Campus, Bangalore, India, during December 5-7, 2008. This is the first time this conference is being held in India. It is jointly organised by Centre for Philosophy, NIAS, and the Association for Logic in India (ALI).

AP-CAP 2008 is part of the series of conferences organised by IACAP. The conferences have been in held in various regions of the world. As of now there are three major regions where these conferences are held, namely in North America (NA-CAP), Europe (ECAP) and Asia-Pacific.

IACAP has been instrumental in establishing a vibrant community of scholars around the world who explore the areas of philosophy and computation. The Mission of this organization is as follows: "IACAP exists to promote scholarly dialogue on all aspects of the computational/informational turn and the use of computers in the service of philosophy." This association is basically engaged in organising conferences around the world on themes related to computation and philosophy. This has the effect of not only creating a corpus of written work related to the themes of philosophy and computation but also succeeds in creating an effective international network of scholars who are interested in these areas. The President of this association is Luciano Floridi, University of Hertfordshire and University of Oxford, UK.

Scope

As with the other CAP conferences, AP-CAP 2008 will also deal with all aspects of the "computational turn" that is occurring through the interaction of the disciplines of philosophy and computing. However, there are also some specific themes which would be the focus of this meet. The themes are:

- Contemporary issues in philosophy of information and computation
- Computation, algorithm and mathematics
- Computation and algorithms in Indian mathematics and linguistics
- Indian logic and its relationship with computation/computer science

- Culture and information technologies

This conference will be an interdisciplinary meet with representation from the disciplines of philosophy, computer science, logic, mathematics and social sciences.

Submission of abstracts

Authors are invited to send an extended abstract of not more than 1,000 words. Files in .DOC, .RTF, .TXT, or .PDF formats are acceptable. The deadline for submission is September 15, 2008. Authors will be notified of the committee's decision before September 30, 2008. Abstracts should be sent to cfpnias@gmail.com.

Registration

There are no registration fees for the conference. However, those interested in attending have to formally register by sending an email to cfpnias@gmail.com. Subject to availability of funds, a few travel grants (for travel within India) will be available.

Contact

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NA-CAP@IU 2009: Networks and Their Philosophical Implications (<http://ia-cap.org/na-cap09/>)

June 14th-16th at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana

Preliminary CFP

Deadline: February 1st 2009 (firm)

In recent years, across several different academic disciplines, including biology, computer science, cognitive science, informatics, philosophy and psychology, a shift in the study of complex systems is readily visible. This shift away from a focus on the individual components of a system to the interrelations between them has provided the groundwork for what might broadly be called a "network" perspective, as it has become increasingly clear that simple components

can produce astoundingly complex and varied behavior when they work in consort. Evidence for this observation is seen everywhere from biological neural networks, stigmergic systems, and animal behavior to networked computing, social networking, and dynamic systems. This conference will explore the philosophical implications of this network perspective as it applies to the broader scope of topics studied by our association.

To this end, we are interested in receiving submissions that explore themes in the intersection of philosophy and computing insofar as they involve, for instance:

- * Academic/Scientific Citation Networks
- * Artificial Neural (Connectionist) Networks
- * Biological Neural Networks
- * The Internet / World-Wide Web
- * Multi-Agent Reasoning and Decision-Making
- * Networked Computing
- * Networked Robotics / Swarm Intelligence
- * Semantic Networks
- * Social Networking
- * Stigmergic Systems
- * Ubiquitous Computing

Individual submissions might address a range of subtopics, including the ethical and political implications of social networking, theoretical analyses of networked computing, the implications of artificial or biological neural networks for issues in the philosophy of mind, how community and technology enable networked thinking, reasoning and decision-making, etc. We also welcome submissions not directly on the conference theme, though first preference will go to those that fit within the broad parameters outlined here.

We welcome submissions for papers, panels and demonstrations of computing and philosophy applications. Papers and demonstrations will be allotted 40 minutes, including time for commentary and questions (25 minutes for presentation, 5 for commentary and 10 for Q&A). 120-minute slots are available for panels and can be divided as the panelists see fit.

For papers, please limit submission length to 3,000 words, keeping in mind that the IACAP discourages participants from reading their papers to the audience. (Many presenters prepare slides using PowerPoint or some other software package. However, these need not be submitted with your original paper.) Include also a 250-word abstract.

The IACAP discourages "show-and-tell" demonstrations, but welcomes submissions that show a new and interesting application of computers to philosophy. Submissions in this category should consist of a 1,500-word abstract outlining what is innovative about the application and the questions pertinent to philosophy that your demonstration will raise.

For panels, please submit a 1,000-word summary of the panel as a whole, along with 300 to 500-word abstracts for each of its various components.

The conference will be accepting electronic submissions appropriately prepared for blind review on or before February 1st, 2009. Additional details will be posted to the conference website at <http://ia-cap.org/na-cap09/> before early December and mailed to the IACAP-announce mailing list. (See <http://ia-cap.org/maillinglist.php> to join.)

This conference is one of several regional conferences associated with the International Association for Computing and Philosophy. To learn more about the IACAP, including its other conferences and membership details, visit the organization's website at <http://ia-cap.org>.

Tony Beavers
2009 NACAP Program Chair

Anthony F. Beavers, Ph.D.
Professor of Philosophy /
Director of Cognitive Science
The University of Evansville
<http://faculty.evansville.edu/tb2/>

LA-CAP 2009: New Horizons

Juan Manuel Duran
National University of Cordoba
Argentina

Dear all,

We are proud to announce a new regional forum affiliate to IACAP. After an extended discussion on its name, we have come up with “Latin America Computer and Philosophy” (from now on LA-CAP), trying to symbolize a specific region where its big philosophical community is doing a wonderful work, and is willing to give a enormous contribution in the growth of the “computational turn”.

LA-CAP is part of the effort of many people interested in bringing into Latin America universities many important areas of research in philosophy and computing. Sometimes is quite difficult to be part of NA-CAP, E-CAP or AP-CAP, either as members or as participants. Many reasons are in play: traveling, time, etc. but perhaps it is mostly because distance (both, physical and psychological) becomes a huge obstacle that prevents anyone to work side by side with this important community of thinkers. Hopefully many scholars will have the opportunity to share his/her work to this growing community near his/her university. Of course, there has been always the possibility to share our own experience and work with others in meeting such as NA-CAP, E-CAP and AP_CAP. However, this initiative has the honorary work of bringing IACAP into Latin America universities, into the classrooms where hundreds of students are working hard to go a step forward his teachers. We all members of IACAP expect to reach this goal.

For the first of our meeting, it has been chosen one of the finest and most important universities in Latin America: The National University of Mexico (UNAM). I am probably not

the most suitable person to present any comment on the long and important trajectory of this University. Nevertheless, its reputation as technological and cultural centre is many times worth the decision of choosing it as the opening university. However, and following the democratic disposal of IACAP, we will be celebrating LA-CAP conferences in diverse countries in the region.

As with the other CAP conferences, LA-CAP will also deal with all aspects of the "computational turn" that is occurring through the interaction of the disciplines of philosophy and computing. Papers dealing with 'cultural' aspects of computing and philosophy would be specially emphasized, though papers in other areas will of course be welcome. In this respect, we would like to keep a scope as wide as possible within the common ground of Computing and Philosophy. We invite papers that address all topics related to computing and philosophy, including cross- and interdisciplinary work that explores the computational turn in new ways.

Fortunately we are almost ready to begin the first LA-CAP to be celebrated in Mexico City, Mexico, from 17 to 19 of June 2009. Of course, none of this could have been possible without the invaluable support of our president Luciano Floridi, who helps us setting everything up in order to have a meeting of international level. We would also thanks to Anthony Beavers, who guide us in very important details. Finally, I would specially thank to the inestimable assistance of Johnny Soraker helping me working with the web-page.

We hope that you will consider submitting an abstract/paper for the LA-CAP 2009 Conference. Please see the (first) Call for Papers for LA-CAP 2009, in www.ia-cap.org/la-cap09 for details about the submission process. All the information about this meeting will be in our webpage.

E-CAP 2009: Computing Thinking and/or Action

Prof. Dr. Jordi Vallverdú

Program Chair – ECAP09

Philosophy Dept.

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Jordi.vallverdu@uab.cat

www.vallverdu.cat

As Program Chair of the ECAP09 is for me a pleasure to communicate you that next July 2nd to 4th 2009 will be held in the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (Catalonia, Spain) the 7th International European Conference on Computing and Philosophy (ECAP). E-CAP is the European conference on Computing and Philosophy, the European affiliate of the International Association for Computing and Philosophy ([IACAP](http://www.ia-cap.org)).

This a new opportunity to meet in a common space for all those researchers interested in the crossroads between philosophy, computer sciences, robotics, logics, infoethics, AI, synthetic emotions, history of science, ambient intelligence or gender studies, among other related fields. As is indicated by IACAP, we'll encourage scholarly dialogue on all aspects of the computational/informational turn and the use of computers in the service of philosophy.

The main aim of this new ECAP congress is to provide the possibility for European researchers, as well as for all worldwide interested researchers, the possibility of a three intensive days for sharing recent and new ideas about the intersections among researchers who work on computer sciences.

This will be also the opportunity to present to the ECAP09 attendants the recently founded LACAP section, which collects all the latin-american researchers on the field. We are very proud of this new community inside IACAP organization.

The main sections covered on the congress will be:

- Ethics: infoethics, robot ethics.
- Models & Simulations.
- e-Science.
- Cognition.
- Gender & History Studies.
- IT.
- Philosophy of Information.
- Science Education and Computer Environments.
- Electronic Art.
- Biocomputing sciences.
- Epistemology.
- Philosophy of Computer Sciences.
- Robotics, AI & Ambient Intelligence.
- Logic & computer sciences.
- Society & computer sciences.

The Scientific Committee:

Philip Brey (University of Twente)
Bernd Cartsen-Stahl (De Montfort University)
David Casacuberta (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona)
Ammon Eden (University of Essex)
Luciano Floridi (Oxford University)
Ruth Hagenhuber (Universität Paderborn)
Thomas Roth-Berghofer (Kaisernlautern Universität)
Raymond Turner (University of Essex)
Yorick Wilks (Oxford University)

The congress will receive the organization support of TECNOCOG (UAB), SETE (UAB) and Epson Foundation-BCN.

Next weeks will appear all the official information at the official website of the congress. Meanwhile, contact with me for further details: jordi.vallverdu@uab.cat.

IMPORTANT DATES

- February 23rd, 2009: Abstracts submission deadline.

- March 16th, 2009: Notification of acceptance.
- April 24th, 2009: Start of wiki-debates.
- May 11th, 2009: Early registration deadline.
- July 2nd- 4th, 2009: Conference.

See you in Barcelona!

**Philosophy's Relevance in Information Science,
October 3rd-4th, Heinz Nixdorf-Institute, University Paderborn, Germany**
www.uni-paderborn.de/pris08

The aim of this Symposium is to reinforce philosophy's relevance for the technical and scientific development. While various philosophers have predicted philosophy would become a part of science and dissolve itself; the goal of this Symposium is to give arguments on philosophy's importance in the computational scientific field of research. The conference is structured by several keynotes on key issues in the interdisciplinary research. As main speakers Luciano Floridi, Barry Smith and Klaus Mainzer could be won.

Ontology: Prof. Dr. Barry Smith,

Prof. Dr. Barry Smith is Julian Park Distinguished Professor of Philosophy at the State University of New York at Buffalo (USA) and former Director of the Institute for Formal Ontology and Medical Information Science in Saarbrücken, Germany.
<http://ontology.buffalo.edu/smith/>

Philosophy of Information: Prof. Dr. Luciano Floridi,

Fellow at St. Cross College, University of Oxford and Professor in Philosophy of Information at the University of Hertfordshire, as well as President of the IACAP. Floridi is elected Gauss Professor at the Göttingen Academy of Sciences, in the academic year 2008-09. <http://www.philosophyofinformation.net>

Complexity and System Theory: Prof. Dr. Klaus Mainzer,

President of the German Society of Complex Systems and Nonlinear Dynamics and Professor for philosophy of science and director of the Carl von Linde Akademie at the Technical University Munich. <http://www.cvl-a.tum.de/mainzer1.html>

Info-Computationalism: Prof. Dr. Dr. Gordana Dodig-Crnkovic,
she served as General Chair and organizer of International Computing and Philosophy
Conference E-CAP 2005. <http://www.idt.mdh.se/~gdc>

Action Theory in Knowledge Representation: Prof. Dr. Peter Janich,
chair for systematic philosophy at the Philipps University of Marburg. His research
focuses on the foundation of information in pragmatics and argued in numerous
articles in favour of culturalistic versus naturalistic concepts of information.
http://www.uni-marburg.de/fb03/philosophie/institut/emeritierte_professoren

Theory of Science: Prof. Dr. Francis C. Dane,
holds the James V. Finkbeiner Endowed Chair in Ethics at the Saginaw Valley State
University. <http://www.svsu.edu/abs/about-us/endowe-chair.html>

The Keynotes will be completed by outstanding specialists from Information and Computation Research, who come from industrial and academic fields. Researchers from SAP (Karlsruhe, Germany), Microsoft (Redmond USA), Daimler Benz AG (Stuttgart), Technical University of Munich, and other outstanding universities will present their view on Philosophy's Relevance from a computational point of view.

Although computer science has realised the importance of philosophical basic reflections in certain fields like ontology, actions and science theory, Philosophy often represents only a peripheral area of computational research. Thus a contribution is expected for the better positioning of the philosophical basic research in computer science.

In order to clarify the relevance of the philosophical basic research for the information research, since 2006 at the University of Paderborn Ruth Hagengruber built up the teaching and research sphere "Philosophy and Information Science / Philosophie & Informatik". Her research efforts in this field started in 2001. Since then various meetings, workshops, interdisciplinary seminars and guest scientist invitations took place in this framework. For more information, see:
www.uni-paderborn.de/philosophie-und-informatik/

To open the Conference for younger Graduates, a call for papers took place. The Schedule of the Conference will be online at the beginning of September. All talks and papers will be published. The Conference is associated to IA-CAP and the German Society of Philosophy DGPhil. As the member of the conference participants is limited at about 120, early registration is recommended.

For any questions, do not hesitate to contact: Ruth Hagengruber, Universität Paderborn, Germany ruth.hagengruber@uni-paderborn.de

***News from the International Society for Ethics and Information Technology
(INSEIT)***

**Elizabeth Buchanan, Co-Director, INSEIT
Director, Center for Information Policy Research
School of Information Studies
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee**

It is certainly an exciting time in the field of ethics and information, and INSEIT is pleased to share an update of its events and activities with its colleagues in IACAP.

This year, Professor Herman Tavani was elected as INSEIT President, following the term of Professor James Moor. New Board members Luciano Floridi and Kenneth Himma joined Frances Grodzinsky, Keith Miller, and Philip Brey.

One of the first initiatives the Society announced was the INSEIT Fellows Program, and in July, the first cohort of INSEIT Fellows and Mentors was selected. The Fellows Program was designed to facilitate collaboration and collegiality among information and computer ethics scholars (broadly defined), and increase interest in INSEIT and further its mission to promote scholarship in the field of information and computer ethics. The Fellows are mentored by senior, established scholars and both Fellows and Mentors receive a stipend and work towards scholarly publication. Four Fellows and three Mentors were chosen:

- Anthony Hoffmann, MLIS Candidate, Research Assistant, Center for Information Policy Research, School of Information Studies, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, School of Information Studies, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
- Erin Hvizdak, MLIS Candidate, Research Assistant, Center for Information Policy Research, School of Information Studies, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
- Mariarosaria Taddeo, PhD Student, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Padua (Italy), Junior Research Associate - Information Ethics Group (IEG), University of Oxford
- Antonino Vaccaro, Post Doctoral Research Fellow, Department of Engineering and Public Policy, Carnegie Mellon University

Tony will be working with *Keith Miller*, exploring the emerging dichotomy of hypercontextualization/decontextualization in online experiences and their relationship to privacy. Erin will be mentored by *Philip Brey*, and investigate such questions as what technological measures could be put in place to better facilitate informed consent in Internet research? Are information technology students taught the role that their designs play in human subjects research? To what extent are information technology programs teaching value-sensitive design? Mariarosaria engages questions of e-trust with *Luciano Floridi*, and will explore the definitions of e-trust, the role that e-trust might have in the informative and epistemic processes

of distributed systems, and the relation between the occurrence of e-trust and the emergence of ethical behaviours in a given system. Nino will also study under *Luciano Floridi*, and address issues in net neutrality: What is the ethical nature of Internet neutrality? Should Internet neutrality be endorsed when considering its ethical implications? What ethical framework should be endorsed for regulating Internet traffic?

In addition, INSEIT will be giving the first *INSEIT/Joseph Weizenbaum Award* in Information and Computer Ethics at the 2009 CEPE Conference in Corfu, Greece. This award is intended to honor individuals who have made life-long contributions to the field of information and computer ethics.

The CEPE conference series is recognized as one of the premier international events on computer and information ethics attended by delegates from all over the world. Conferences are held about every 24 months, alternating between Europe and the United States. CEPE 2009 is the eighth conference in the series.

CEPE Deadline for abstracts: 10 November 2008

Papers: CEPE2009 welcomes high quality paper and panel proposals in all areas of computer/IT ethics. This includes, but is not limited to, ethical issues relating to:

- Online communities, the virtual and the “real”
- Privacy, data protection, RFID, surveillance, CCTV, spam, phishing, and spyware
- Global computing and intercultural information ethics
- Information access, search engines, and the digital divide
- Democracy and the internet; computing technology and natural disasters
- Virtuality, simulation and reproduction
- Computing, identity and difference: gender, ethnicity, race, religion
- Open source; virtual ownership; intellectual property & copyright
- Emerging technologies, such as nanotechnology, supercomputing, Internet2, robotics, biomedicine, bioinformatics and bioengineering
- New military, security and law enforcement applications of IT
- New developments in artificial intelligence, artificial agents, embedded systems and artificial life.

We particularly welcome papers from applied ethics fields other than computer ethics that focus on any of the above areas, as well as papers from computer science professionals who combine their state-of-the-art knowledge of IT with ethical analysis.

In addition to CEPE, INSEIT’s newsletters regularly include calls for papers and conference announcements. Many of these should be of interest to IACAP members as well.

The Use of Implants in Ethical Surveillance Infrastructures: Towards a Transdisciplinary Ontology

Center for Interdisciplinary Research

Bielefeld University

September 3-5, 2008

Organized by: Michael Nagenborg, Kirstie Ball, Torin Monaham, David Murakami Wood, Karsten Weber.

This workshop will debate the ethical and surveillance-related consequences of the material implantation of human beings. The objective of the workshop is to define and map an inclusive and transdisciplinary ontology of implants as they are used currently, and in near and distant futures. Our focus will be on implants with biological-sensing and data-generating capabilities, as opposed to more traditional implants such as joint replacements or physiological augmentations.

More Info at: <http://www.iethik.de/implants/>

Call for Papers

Cultural Issues and Software Quality

Software Quality Journal Special Issue

With software development an increasingly globally integrated activity involving a complex chain of cooperating partners it is clear that culture can play an important role in determining the efficiency of the process and the efficacy of the software produced. SQJ wishes to address this important area in the form of a Special Issue. Topics of particular interest on "Cultural issues and Software Quality" include but are not limited to:

- Impact of cultural diverse project teams
- Cultural Software Quality perspectives
- Culturally-sensitive Software development models and methods
- Cultural Theory and Software Quality
- Life Cycle Issues and cultural difference
- Innovative quality culturally varying practices in software engineering
- Measuring culture in software development
- Empirical Case Studies highlighting cultural issues or ramifications

Submitted papers will be rigorously refereed. Papers should be submitted to the special issue through Editorial Manager <http://sqjo.edmgr.com> selecting the article type "Special Issue: Cultural Issues" on or before May 2, 2009.

Submission of a manuscript to the Software Quality Journal is a representation that the manuscript:

- (a) has not been previously published,
- (b) is not currently under consideration for publication elsewhere, and
- (c) will not be submitted elsewhere until a decision is made regarding its suitability for publication in Software Quality Journal.

Submission is also the representation that the work has been approved for open publication if performed under an official sponsorship requiring such an approval.

Conference Announcement

Network Ethics: The New Challenge in Business, ICT, and Education.

Catholic University of Lisbon

June 23-25, 2009

The Center for Ethics Business and Economics (CEBE) of the Catholic University of Lisbon - FCEE, Carnegie Mellon University, and the University of Northern Iowa are joining efforts to organize the 2009 conference "Network Ethics: The New Challenge in Business, ICT and Education." This is the second in a series of biennial conferences on ethical issues of technology in business, education, and society. More detailed information can be found at the conference's website: www.fcee.lisboa.ucp.pt/network

Call for Papers

SPT 2009: Converging Technologies, Changing Societies

16th International Conference of the Society for Philosophy and Technology
University of Twente
Enschede, The Netherlands
July 8-10

Deadline for abstracts: January 5, 2009 / Conference e-mail: spt2009@gw.utwente.nl

SPT 2009 welcomes high quality papers and panel proposals in all areas of philosophy of technology. Given the focus of this year's conference, papers dealing with converging technologies and their social and cultural impact are especially welcomed. SPT 2009 will include 14 tracks:

1. Converging technologies and human enhancement
2. Converging technologies and engineering sciences
3. Converging technologies and risks
4. Converging technologies: general issues
5. Ethics of emerging technologies
6. Philosophy and ethics of biomedical and nanotechnology
7. Philosophy and ethics of information technology
8. Environmental philosophy and sustainable technology
9. Philosophy of engineering and design
10. Robots, cyborgs and artificial life
11. Technology and moral responsibility
12. Technology, culture and globalisation
13. The good life and technology
14. Philosophy of technology: general and assorted issues

Papers will be accepted on the basis of a submitted abstract, which will be refereed. An abstract must be between 500 and 750 words in length (references excluded) and submitted via email as embedded plain text or an attachment in RTF or WORD (no docx) or PDF format. It should also contain the name and number of the track to which the abstract is submitted. Abstracts must be submitted no later than January 5, 2009. Authors will be informed of the decision of the referees by March 2, 2009.

Panel Proposals: We will also accept proposals for panel discussions, also to be submitted by January 5, 2009. Panel proposals must include a statement of the general topic and an overview of the specific questions or issues to be addressed. In addition, the proposal should include a list

of the panelists involved, their expertise in this area, and whether they have indicated that they are willing to participate.

The SPT conference series is recognized as the premier international event in philosophy of technology, with delegates from all over the world. Conferences are held every 2 years, alternating between Europe and the United States. SPT 2009 is the 16th conference in the series.

Organizing Committee: Phillip Brey and Peter-Paul Verbeek, University of Twente, Directors Katinka Waelbers, University of Twente, Coordination.

Please look out for our second call for papers, early September 2008. It will list keynote speakers, the programme committee, track chairs, and brief track descriptions. Or keep checking the conference website (currently in progress) at <http://www.utwente.nl/ceptes/spt2009/>

We look forward to our future collaborations as our respective associations continue to make a difference to scholarship and society at large! For more information on INSEIT, see <http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SOIS/cipr/inseit.html>

Computing, Philosophy and the AISB

Mark Bishop, Goldsmiths University of London

m.bishop@gold.ac.uk

The AISB - the UK's oldest society for the study of Artificial Intelligence (and the Simulation of Behaviour) - has recently initiated several new programmes aimed at exploring the interface between AI, Cognitive Science and Philosophy.

At this year's annual AISB convention – held at the University of Aberdeen – Professor Luciano Floridi was invited to present a plenary address entitled “Understanding the information turn: the fourth revolution” and the convention subsequently hosted its first specialist symposium on ‘Computing and Philosophy’. This day long event featured addresses by Yorrick Wilks; Paul Schweizer; Harry Halpin; Frank Guerin; Stephen Cowley; Cate Dowd; Yasemin Erden; Hugo Gravato Marques; Ganascia Jean-Gabriel and Murdoch Gabbay and covered a variety of topics from ‘What would a Wittgensteinian computational linguistics be like?’, ‘Cognition without content’ through ‘Substitution for Fraenkel-Mostowski foundations’..

Added to this, to coincide with the annual Loebner Prize this year to be held at the University of Reading (UK) on the 12th October, the AISB has also elected to sponsor a small one day invited-speaker symposium to present an alternative, formal, academic critique of issues surrounding the Turing Test (TT).

The day will commence with a selection of speakers offering a context and outlining a special perspective on the TT. These presentations are to be backed by four more focused talks addressing specific issues related to the Turing Test (e.g. definitional; adequacy; tests in other modalities; technical/computational issues). As added relevance, the event is scheduled to be

held in parallel with the Loebner Prize also at the University of Reading. And as Kevin Warwick (Professor of Cybernetics at the University of Reading) recently hinted, "hosting the Loebner Prize is a great opportunity for the University of Reading. The competition is all about whether a machine can now pass the Turing Test, a significant milestone in Artificial Intelligence. I believe machines are getting extremely close - it would be tremendously exciting if such a world first occurred in the UK, in Reading University in 2008. This is a real possibility."

AISB 2008 SYMPOSIUM ON THE TURING TEST

Sunday 12th October, 2008

Palmer Building, University of Reading, Whiteknights, UK.

Sponsored by the AISB, University of Reading and KYBERNETES

09:50 WELCOME (Dr. Mark Bishop, Goldsmiths)

SESSION 1: CHAIR: Prof. Kevin Warwick (Reading)

10:00 Baroness Susan Greenfield (Oxford)

11:00 **ANNOUNCEMENT ON THE TURING TEST & COFFEE**

SESSION 2: CHAIR: Prof. John Barnden (Birmingham)

11:20 Prof. Selmer Bringsjord (Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, USA)

12:10 Dr. Michael Wheeler (Stirling)

13:00 BREAK FOR LUNCH

SESSION 3: CHAIR: Dr. Mark Bishop (Goldsmiths)

14:00 Dr. Andrew Hodges (Oxford)

14:50 Prof. Luciano Floridi (Herts/Oxford)

15:40 **LOEBNER ANNOUNCEMENT & COFFEE**

SESSION 4: CHAIR: Ms. Huma Shah (Reading)

16:00 Prof. Maggie Boden (Sussex)

16:50 Prof. Owen Holland (Essex)

17:40 PANEL DISCUSSION (ALL): Is there a canonical Turing Test?

18:00 CLOSE (approx. timing)

Assuming Kevin's suspicions are well grounded, this first AISB symposium on the Turing Test promises to be a truly groundbreaking event and we anticipate considerable media attention around the 11am announcement. Nonetheless if you are interested in attending the event in person, the AISB still has a few places available; these can be reserved by sending your name+address and a cheque made payable to 'AISB' for either: £25 (public); £20 (member AISB) or £10 (full-time student/unemployed/OAP) to: *Dr. J. M. Bishop, Dept. Computing, Goldsmiths, New Cross, London, SE14 6NW.*

Further, to encourage interaction between the two societies, the organisers are pleased to announce that for this one-off event, members of IACAP will also be eligible to reserve a place at the symposium for £20.

European Information Architecture Summit

Luca Rosati

University for Foreigners of Perugia - Italy <http://lucarosati.it>

I'm glad to announce the next 4th European Information Architecture Summit that will be held in Amsterdam on September 26-27, 2008, see: <http://www.euroia.org/>.

Information Architecture (IA) is an emerging field born by the contamination of new and old disciplines: information science, ergonomics, human-computer interaction - on one side, and librarianship, language and cognitive sciences - on the other one (see: <http://www.euroia.org/Info%20Architecture.aspx>).

IA is a multidisciplinary field for its own vocation, and I see some important links with the Philosophy of computing and information.

So I like to suggest this event as an input for a possible cooperation and exchange between those two communities.

THE ETHICS OF PRESENCE AND SOCIAL PRESENCE TECHNOLOGIES Padua - Human Technology Lab - October 16, 2008

The EU-funded PASION project -part of the FET - Presence initiative - is organizing a workshop to discuss the ethical implications of Presence and Social Presence Technologies. The workshop, coordinated by the Human Technology Lab, University of Padua, is part of Presence 2008 (<http://www.presence2008.org>) which will take place from October 16 to October 18, at the same venue.

The motivation for the workshop is the rapidly increasing interest in the ethical implications of ICT - Information and Communication Technology - and in the triangular relationship between technology, ethics and law. Within this framework, presence technologies pose specific issues. For instance, the tools we use to create a sense of presence and convey presence information can provide other users with details we would prefer to remain private (e.g. information about our social network); they can be used as tools for occult persuasion, data mining or overt abuse; the information they transmit can have negative impacts on our psychological well-being; the data they collect can be used for surveillance and control; technologies that create an effective sense of "being there" could alienate users from reality dulling their normal moral responses; technologies which seek or need to create a sense of presence and which fail to do so could be equally harmful. These risks lead to a series of theoretical and practical questions. Do actions

believed to be merely “virtual” have real psychological effects and real ethical implications, e.g. uninhibited actions against virtual agents? In what applications do we need to create a sense of presence - and where could such a sense be positively harmful? If presence technologies blur the "traditional" boundaries between the virtual and the real, what ethical and philosophical theories should we apply to the identification of problems and the search for solutions? What are the respective roles of legislation, evolving social norms and technical fixes?

The workshop will provide an opportunity to analyze these issues with the help of experts, basing the discussion on concrete “cases” that have arisen in Presence research or during the deployment of Presence technologies. Researchers and practitioners wishing to submit cases for discussion during the workshop are invited to submit an extended abstract of about 1000 words, describing a specific case and the way in which it addressed. Preference will be given to papers describing novel issues and/or novel solutions. Abstracts should be mailed to ethicspresence@gmail.com with “submission to ethics workshop” in the subject field. All abstracts should include the author's full contact information. Selected authors will be invited to submit a full paper for publication in a special issue of Psychology Journal.

Register here: <http://www.presence2008.org/>

For additional information email the organizers at ethicspresence@gmail.com

APA Newsletter on Philosophy and Computers Vol. 08, No.1

From the Editor: Peter Boltuc

From the Chair: Michael Byron

Papers on Robot Consciousness:

Featured Article: Stanley P. Franklin; Bernard J. Baars; Uma Ramamurthy "A Phenomenally Conscious Robot?"

Gilbert Harman "More on Explaining a Gap"

Bernard J. Baars; Stanley P. Franklin; Uma Ramamurthy "*Quod Erat Demonstrandum*"

Antonio Chella "Perception Loop and Machine Consciousness"

Michael Wheeler "The Fourth Way: A Commentary on Halpin's 'Philosophical Engineering'"

Discussion Articles on Floridi:

Terrell W. Bynum "Toward a Metaphysical Foundation for Information Ethics"

John Barker "Too Much Information: Questioning Information Ethics"

Edward H. Spence "Understanding L. Floridi's Metaphysical Theory of Information Ethics"

Discussion Articles on Baker:

Amie L. Thomasson "Artifacts and Mind-Independence"

Beth Preston "The Shrinkage Factor"

Peter Kroes; Pieter E. Vermaas "Interesting Differences Between Artifacts and Natural Objects"

Book review:

Ordinary Objects Amie Thomasson (reviewed by Huaping Lu-Adler)

Papers on online education:

H. E. Baber “Access to Information: The Virtuous and Vicious Circle of Publishing”

Vincent C. Müller “What a course on philosophy of computing is not”

Gordana Dodig-Crnkovic “Computing and Philosophy Global Course: What can we hope for...”

Notes:

Constantinos Athanasopoulos “York Conference”

Second Call: The Ontological Status of Web-Based Objects

ECAP 2008 Report by the Regional Director

Susan A. J. Stuart

Regional Director E-CAP (2002-2008)

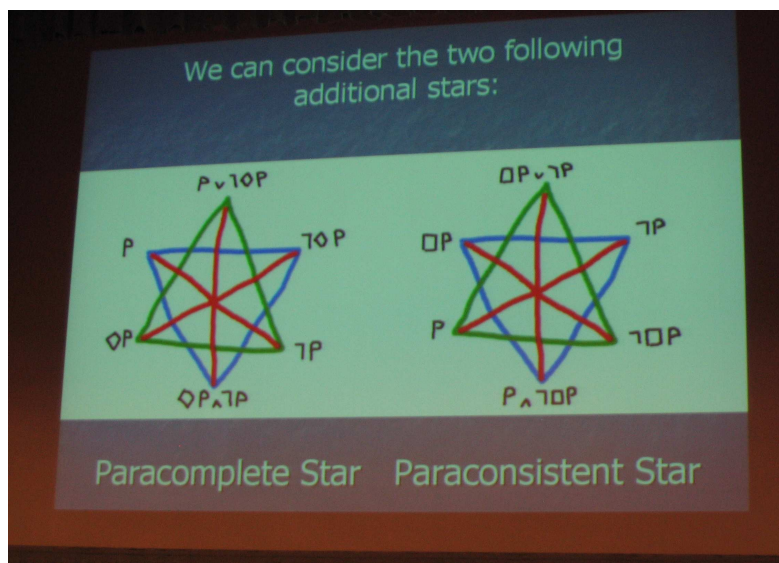
The sixth European Computing and Philosophy conference (ECAP08 16-18 June) was held on the Campus of the University for Science and Technology, Montpellier, France, under the auspices of Le Laboratoire d'Informatique, de Robotique et de Microélectronique de Montpellier (LIRMM). The Conference Chair was Jean Sallantin, and the local organisation was carried out by, the wonderfully calm and cheerful, Martine Hornby, with lots of very able assistance from Elisabeth Gréverie, Michel Liquière, and Céline Berger, and technical support came from Antoine Seilles and Christopher Dartnell. In addition there was an international Programme Committee who assisted in the consideration of conference submissions and the final selection of the many excellent papers with which we engaged over the three days.

Apart from our international keynote speakers – Cecile Crutzen, Igor Aleksander, and Jean-Yves Beziau – we had almost seventy participants from across the globe. The range of topics and tracks was very wide, covering everything from Phenomenology, Cultural Diversity and Technoscience Studies, Ontology, Philosophy of Computer Science, Consciousness and Cognition, Information and Computing Ethics, Computer-based Learning, Philosophy of Information and Information Technology, and the ever-invaluable Intersections.

After a general welcome to Montpellier, to the ECAP08 conference, and some brief introductory remarks we had the first of three keynote lectures: "Extensions of the Square of Opposition and their Applications" presented by Jean-Yves Beziau. His examination of this basic logical framework and how it can be extended to a Blanché hexagon and the many more complex multi-dimensional objects that take into consideration paraconsistent negation, provided a splendid way of easing us in to thinking about the possibilities Jean-Yves was suggesting and the array of stimulating ideas to come.

After a brief coffee break we embarked on the first of three parallel sessions, one on Computational Formalisms and Phenomenology, one on Cultural Diversity and Technoscience Studies, and the third on Ethical and Political Dimensions of computing and technology. Since I had to chair the session on Computational Formalisms and Phenomenology I was unable to attend the other sessions, which means that, once again, I can only provide a flavour of the conference experience from my – necessarily limited – point of view. However, having presented this caveat I can say that I did listen to others talking in the coffee breaks, over lunch and in the evening, and they certainly seemed to be having the same kind of animated debates and fun as we were in the sessions which I chaired.

So, in the first of the parallel sessions I had the great pleasure to hear Eric Martin speaking about the formal phenomenology that he and fellow authors, Dominique Luzeaux and Jean Sallantin, deem necessary for the creation of an intelligent machine. Even now, some time after the conference, I would like to know more about what these authors mean by a formalism for phenomenology; from my own position the suggestion seems a contradiction in terms. The next paper was a very energetic and punchy paper from Darren Abramson on Computational Functionalism, Phenomenology, and Externalism. In a rather intriguing presentation Abramson proposed a theory of externalism for phenomenological content in which phenomenological states involve relations to objects outside the occurrent physical states. He has a wonderful rapid delivery but ultimately I was unhappy with his conclusion that a computational view of the mind is a necessary underpinning for his conclusion, and certainly not content with his claim that computationalism implies phenomenology, though I could be pushed to admit that phenomenology implies a necessary but not sufficient computationalism. The final paper of this session was from Philippe Lemoisson and had the captivating title of "Sharing knowledge in the 3W paradigm; how do we erect theories above the swamp of our brains?". The 'swamps' referred to were those presented in neuronal graphs, and the key to theory-building is the reference process that enables us to form stable theories above the swamps. From here, and with both validity and objectivity conditions incorporated, Lemoisson set out to present to us an associative memory model for how referents acquire symbolic names in the subjective world of the human mind.



After a coffee break we were back but now in my own track, Consciousness and Cognition, to listen to a very lively presentation by Carson Reynolds on the manipulation of perception. Enactivism is clearly at the heart of Reynolds' work on Haptic Radar which allow a blindfolded agent to sense objects around them through sensations on their skin. In this case the underlying

physiological objects in the somatic system are the physical corollaries to perception. A great deal of spirited debate followed Reynolds' presentation and set the pattern for the rest of the afternoon's discussions. Now working at the University of Tokyo, Reynold's haptic head-band has appeared on Japanese television and caused quite a stir. I also believe, though I might be mistaken, that he will be instrumental in the organisation of the 2009 Asian-Pacific CAP.

The next presentation in this session was by Daniel Parrochia and dealt, from a historical perspective, with what it means to be conscious of something and whether or not a computer could be conscious of in such a way. Parrochia's conclusion, that consciousness is still very much a mystery and his critique of current attempts to produce consciousness in machines, created quite a stir and the discussion became even more passionate than before. In the absence of our third speaker, the spirited debate was able to continue until the end of the session. I think I can assure you that a good time was had by all.

Without doubt it was a super first afternoon that presented us with great hope for the excellent papers to follow on Tuesday and Wednesday, and we were not disappointed when Tuesday's proceedings opened with Igor Aleksander's keynote presentation on "Phenomenology in Models of Consciousness". Aleksander took as his foundation the phenomenology of Husserl in his claim that any phenomenological system, even a virtual machine, must have a point of view on the world, that is, a sense of self in an out-there world (what Aleksander describes as "a depictive system"), and, in an appeal to the set of five axioms he has presented in previous work he offered an antidote to the usual logical formalisms of computational systems. Discussion was, as it always is when I've heard Aleksander speak, lively and engaging, and, as it always does when you're having a good time at conferences, ran over into the coffee break. So, after a brief respite we found ourselves back for papers from Joel Quinqueton on "Reading Acts: learning to be read" and Pascal Dugénie on "Ubiquitous Collaborative Spaces: a step towards collective intelligence". Certainly Quinqueton's work and his emphasis on dynamic textual annotation has great relevance to the development of Web 2.0, and Dugénie's to online collaborative working environments like Wiki-Debate which featured prominently during, before and after the conference. But more of this later.

There were two further presentations in the Consciousness and Cognition session before lunch, one from Omar Rosas on "Representations and the Ecology of Virtual Perception and Virtual Action", and the other from Pierre Wodey on the generation of an algorithm to express trust in artificial agents. Rosas's work concentrates on the possibility of a representational analysis of perception, cognition and action within the ecological framework presented by Gibson (1979/1986) and developed, in the virtual environment sense of "being there" or telepresence, in the work of Flach & Holden 1998, Sheridan 2001, and Mantovani & Riva 2001. Along with Godfrey-Smith (1998) and Sterelny (2003) Rosas is presenting an alternative to the epistemic and informational transparency of the - currently fashionable - direct perception thesis. I have to say that my own sympathies lie with direct perception but then I am at the University of Glasgow, once home to Thomas Reid and his commonsense realism and, though it isn't a blind loyalty, I am loyal nonetheless!

Wodey's presentation was equally, perhaps even more, adventurous than Rosas's, for he presented to us a group of agents, possessing a modelling function, an affective function, and a

doubt function, who can lie to one another and know that the other agents are possibly lying, and from this he is attempting to generate an algorithm that will lead these agents into a state in which they know they can have absolute trust in another agent. A great deal of the discussion in Wodey's session was on whether absolute trust is a feasible goal, and though he himself acknowledges that it is "unsolvable in reality", he does conclude with wonderful optimism that if we succeed in the generation of such an algorithm, many "problems of our world would be solved". This is a conclusion with which no sane person could disagree.

After lunch we began the afternoon with a characteristically vivacious presentation, "From meaningful information to representations, enaction and cognition", by Christophe Menant. Menant certainly feels his work passionately and he can carry his audience along with his discourse even when they may disagree heartily with the content. Pierre Livet followed with an account of work he is carrying out jointly with Laure Rivory on the dynamics of emotions in argumentative debates. As you can imagine a great deal of the post-presentation discussion centred around the nature and temporal character of emotion. And the session was brought to an end with a very dynamic presentation by Jean-Gabriel Ganascia; the only person I know who can challenge Christophe Menant for vigour and zest in presentation. Ganascia's paper "The Soul Machine Quarrel" examined the Aristotelian and Cartesian souls and what was the beast-machine quarrel in relation to what is now the possibility of creating a conscious machine. It is always lovely to be near at hand when Ganascia presents for the soul of at least this man cannot be in doubt: it is expressed in his delight for his subject and it is a joy to behold.

Wednesday morning's keynote was presented by Cecile Crutzen speaking about Ambient Intelligence in Daily Life. Her talk was both provocative and engaging and, in a very Heideggerian manner, she got the audience reflecting on how technology becomes invisible when it ceases to be present to hand and we have begin to take its presence for granted. She urged us to reconsider our relationship with technology by suggesting that, while we should feel the comfort of being permanently cared for, we should also feel the pain of giving away our intimacy and privacy. She presented a forceful case for how, although ambient intelligence is presented as promoting our well-being, we now trust less and fear more, and she urged us to try to hold on to the transformative critical space between us and the casual acceptance of technology. It was a super talk and just right for waking everyone up on the third morning.

The rest of my morning was taken up with preparing for Arash Moussavi's presentation. Arash had been unable to enter France from Iran and was communicating with us using an interface - AGORA - set up and facilitated by Stefano Cerri. I had agreed to read Arash's paper, "A Computational Approach to Conceptual Adaptation in Technoscience Studies", to the audience and needed some time to prepare. My sense of the event is that it went well and gave Arash a voice at the conference he would not otherwise have had, but the broadband width did not make it possible for Arash to engage in real time with the audience and the sense of achievement and communication was, I am sure, accompanied by some frustration on Arash's part.

After a splendid lunch we moved to the final session and in Consciousness and Cognition we had Huma Shah on "Can a Machine Tell a Joke?", Jordi Vallverdú on "Modelling Synthetic

Emotions: TPR 2.0", and Bertil Rolf on the creation of "Validation critical thinking software" that can support reasoning procedures that are close to the accuracy of ideal methods in real life situations.

A lively debate about whether the machine was acting intentionally ensued when Shah claimed that a machine could make us laugh and that this could be deemed telling a joke. It's certainly true that children's utterances can sometimes make us laugh even when the child's intention is not to tell a joke, and perhaps it's just the same with a system like Jabberywacky which replies without thought or intention. The big difference is that the child perceives the feedback and maybe does the same again, but this time intentionally. Gradually the child adapts and understands what is funny and what is not. It's only when they move past the meaningless unintentional utterance that we might begin to think that the child or the artificial system is actually telling a joke.

Vallverdú and his colleague Casacuberta's work on emotions is developed in a computer simulation called "The Panic Room", which, of course, carries from the outset, an emotive force for the audience, and his phrase "synthetic emotions" might also be deemed to present one of those lovely ambiguities - are they synthetic, that is, artificial, simulations of emotions or the synthesis of real emotions - were it not that he reminds us that this is a model. However, using an almost classical case of positive and negative information (reinforcement), Vallverdú and Casacuberta are attempting to create the first steps towards an evolutionary machine, one that is able to learn from and interact with the world. It's fascinating and innovative work, and I look forward to updates of future work on this project.

So, let me make some general remarks. This particular ECAP conference stood out for me in a number of ways. Jean Sallantin and his team went to enormous effort to make ECAP08 a very memorable experience for all of us, and Jean's main concern is with debate and the results that can be gained from a process of prolonged energetic debate. So, it is to his work with Wiki-Debate that I will turn first.

Jean is a man with great energy, imagination, and a desire for dialogue. His vision with Wiki-Debate was that it be incorporated throughout the preparation of the conference as well as during and after the conference. It was to be introduced to the Track Chairs when they first were sent the paper submissions for the conference so that they could begin the debate by writing their comments in a space that was publicly available to other referees. It was then to be used for dialogue with other referees and also when contacting the authors with decisions for some initial dialogue between the referees and authors. After negotiation about the status of the paper and acceptance the dialogue would open up to a very public dialogue between the conference attendees in the run up to the conference, and would continue during the conference, and then afterwards in a the post-session debate. The final stage in the dialogue would be the preparation of a publication coming from the series of formative discussions.

I find myself less convinced about the need for the final stage, but all of the other stages offer an ideal set of circumstances that must certainly be worth trying to achieve. Wiki-Debate offers the

possibility of a greatly enhanced dialogue by the time the paper reaches the conference presentation session, and brings the author nearer to having a publishable piece of work by the time they leave the conference. It is also an excellent forum for postgraduate students – and their supervisors – to try out ideas and receive constructive criticism at a pace where adjustment and response to a challenge is less urgent and anxious and more thoughtful and considered. But most notably Wiki-Debate, if used in this way, will establish a community of scholars who are committed to getting the most out of working and striving together to make face-to-face meetings really do some work.

At the moment, however, the Wiki tool remains an ideal. We are all overly committed already in our normal working environment and the Wiki-Debate system was developed a little too late for easy implementation on this occasion. It was also only available in any robust and usable fashion on a PC, which is no good for me or, I imagine, a good many other participants. So, it remains an ideal, but one that we should hang on to and not be ready to relinquish.

There were two other aspects of this conference that stood out for me. Perhaps it was down to the French *égalité*, but whatever it was I was extremely pleased that we had a female keynote speaker. To my shame it is only the first time this has happened in our six years of running conferences in Europe, and I am immensely grateful to Cecile Crutzen for agreeing at such short notice, and for doing such a magnificent job. I hope with all my heart that ECAP will make it standard policy that at least one of the three keynotes for each conference will be a woman, after all, women are more and more visible across all disciplines and such a lot of great work and perspective is being overlooked if we don't make it a policy. It might also go some way to addressing the current gender imbalance at the conferences, for if other women see a female keynote, they might be more likely to attend.

Finally, I was impressed by the spontaneous way in which Jean and his colleague Stefano Cerri worked with Arash Mousavi to find a way in which Arash could be included in the conference. I know it meant a great deal to Arash and his supervisor, Justine Johnstone, at the University of Sussex. Arash is a postgraduate student who has experienced a number of setbacks to his career, all of them political and none of them of his own making. In making it possible for him to participate, Jean and Stefano managed to reduce his feeling of exclusion and isolation and, very positively, made him feel part of an international community of scholars. I am very pleased to have done my little bit to participate in this process.

Now with some sadness I have to say that this has been my last conference as European Director, but I am very happy and proud to be able to hand over to Philip Brey from the University of Twente, who I know will do an excellent job in taking the ECAP conferences and community into the next six years.

For now I can tell you that next year's ECAP conference will take place in Barcelona at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona with Jordi Vallverdú as the local organiser. Jordi has already been working hard on plans for next year, and I have great faith in him and know it will be another magnificent event.

NACAP 2008 Report by the Program Chair

Tony Beavers
NACAP 2008 Program Chair

The 2008 North American meeting of the IACAP was held at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana, this past July 10th through the 12th. The theme for the conference was “The Limits of Computation”, construed broadly to include not only formal issues in computational theory, but also anything addressing what we can and cannot do with computers. The keynote speakers were Paul Thagard (University of Waterloo) and Ronald Arkin (Georgia Tech). Each speaker addressed an aspect of the conference theme, and thereby set the tone for the rest of the conference. Thagard asked the question “Can Computers Understand Causality?”, and Arkin addressed “Ethics and Lethality in Autonomous Robots”. Each of the keynote lectures was followed by a special session pertinent in some way to each keynote address. Arkin’s keynote was followed by a special panel session planned by Michael Anderson (University of Hartford). That panel discussion, titled “Is Ethics Computable?”, addressed various aspects of the newly emerging area of robot or “machine” ethics and was attended by people who are at the forefront of research in this area. Thagard’s keynote was followed by a special session sponsored by the National Science Foundation and planned by Selmer Bringsjord and Konstantine Arkoudas, both of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, on “Automatic Programming and Human Creativity”.

The conference began on Thursday afternoon with a brief review of the IACAP over the past seven years by Tony Beavers (University of Evansville) couched in the form of an introduction to IACAP President Luciano Floridi (University of Hertfordshire and University of Oxford), who delivered a lecture, “The Fourth Revolution”, immediately thereafter. This talk was followed by a special “IU Showcase Session” planned by conference host Colin Allen (Indiana University), which consisted of presentations from Indiana University faculty on research pertinent to philosophy and computers. Just over sixty people registered for the conference, but the audience for Floridi’s talk and the following showcase session numbered over one hundred.

In addition to the two keynote lectures, the Presidential Address and the IU Showcase Session, there was one other plenary session, slotted for the presentation of the Goldberg Award, which is sponsored by the Department of Philosophy at Carnegie Mellon University and given annually for outstanding graduate work in philosophy and computing. The award was presented by Mara Harrell (Carnegie Mellon University) to Chih-Chun Chen (University College London) for her project, “A Process Interpretation of Agent-Based Simulation and Its Epistemological Implications”. The remainder of the conference was dedicated to concurrent sessions on various aspects of the conference theme. Learning from last year’s conference that NACAP cannot support three parallel sessions, this year we opted for two. While some sessions were larger than others, no presenter was left with an audience of under a dozen people.

The complete details of the conference program are available on the conference website at <http://ia-cap.org/na-cap08/program.htm> and, thus, do not warrant additional rehearsal here. I will let this suffice, therefore, as a thematic summary of the conference and turn to issues of mechanics and logistics.

The conference by all accounts was successful. The quality of presentations was very good. There were no significant equipment failures, just the usual glitches in connecting computers to projectors, etc. Unlike last year, there were no problems delivering meals and snacks or in dealing with accommodations. Before addressing why the conference was successful, there were two points of concern sent in response to my post-conference evaluation request. One was that wireless Internet connections were not working in the Willkie Dormitory, where many conferees were staying. They were “iffy” elsewhere on campus, in particular on Saturday morning in the Indiana Memorial Union (IMU), where the conference was held. This did not disturb presentations during the conference, but it did leave some conferees frustrated while checking their email, planning their talks, etc. Indiana University’s technology support people were quick to respond to the problems in the IMU.

The second matter concerned late registration after the first morning of the conference. Registration materials for late arrivals were available in the back of the main conference room, but no sign made it clear where they were. Thus, one conferee and possibly one or two others went without conference materials.

I will be serving as program chair again for next year’s conference, which will be held again at Indiana University, and I will respond to both concerns. If wireless is indeed unavailable in the Willkie Dormitory, at least we will be able to let conferees know this in advance. Clearing up the issue with late registration is easy enough. Indeed, it was mere oversight that there was a problem in the first place.

Both of these concerns, while legitimate, did not eclipse the fact that the conference came off quite well, indeed, uneventfully, where conference logistics were concerned, though it was quite lively where philosophical discussion came into play. Lest it appear that I am getting a bit keen on myself here, I will address the success of this conference in the context of what I regard as last year’s conference problems, which seem all the more definite in contrast with this year. Since I served as program chair last year too, the most I can claim is that I can learn from my mistakes, especially with the helpful guidance of others.

To start, we have learned that people serving more than one year as program chair do much better with practice. It is a big job, involving months of planning, and it requires a developed sense of timing and a willingness not to wait for others on important decisions in a pinch. Thus, it is not a job for the timid and uncertain. To take advantage of this lesson, we have added the position of “assistant program chair” to the line up. The chief job of the assistant is to learn how to plan a conference so that in the subsequent year, he or she can serve as program chair while training another assistant to take over the following year. To inaugurate this training regimen, Mara Harrell will serve next year as assistant program chair in preparation for her tenure as program chair of the 2010 NACAP conference.

This lesson underscores the essential fact that successful conferences cannot be planned at the last minute; they require lots of lead time. IACAP Executive Committee Members have been saying this for years. But building in lead time takes early planning that is often eclipsed by more pressing deadlines on other projects. With the appointment of Mara Harrell as program chair for 2010, we now have a full two years of lead time for that conference, which will (tentatively) be held at Carnegie Mellon University. With the right planning and ambition, NACAP is now set to work a full two years in advance from here on out.

Why does this matter? The answer is easily seen in contrast to last year’s conference. Planning for NACAP 2007, held at Loyola University, started very late. I was not appointed program chair until October. (For 2008, that appointment came very early in September, and for

2009, it came in almost a year in advance. For 2010, once again, it is two years in advance.) To go back to 2007, working hard to develop a theme, find keynotes, etc., all last minute, meant that the CFP went out on December 24th with a March 1st deadline. With almost no submissions on March 1st, the deadline was extended to March 15th and then, if memory serves, extended again to March 22nd or so.

Prior to this past year, NACAP conferences were planned by appointing a program committee made up of members to oversee the various areas covered by our conferences: artificial intelligence, computer ethics, electronic resources, etc. As late as April 30th of 2007, some of the area chairs had not reported on their submissions, and a conference program did not appear until mid-May. Given that academics make their summer plans well in advance, this was simply too late. To make matters more difficult, the discussion about accommodations and registration did not begin until after the program was in place, and registration for the conference was not available until after June 1st.

The situation was very different this year. The first CFP for the 2008 conference went out on October 20th, a full two months before the 2007 CFP. The first CFP stipulated a February 1st deadline, but the second and subsequent versions said March 1st. After the deadline was firmly in place, there were no additional extensions, putting us three weeks ahead of last year. Acceptance and rejection notices went out on April 28th, and a full program was available online immediately. Registration was set up and ready to go immediately as well and was announced by email and on the website on May 2nd, well ahead of last year.

Working ahead meant that there were no ‘panic moments’ in the planning of this conference, no scurrying around at the last minute to change things or attend to details that were left due to lack of time. But three other important factors were important to this year’s success, the first of which was that the IACAP hired Indiana University’s Conference Services to handle the local arrangements. (A special thanks goes to Judy Warner, who administers that office, for doing an incredible job with the logistics). IU handled all of the local arrangements, including hotel and room reservations, all of the finances and the budget, registration (both online and at the conference), preparing the name tags, copying the conference book, and so on. Hiring out the local arrangements did not only mean that the logistics were well-managed. In outsourcing that task, the conference organizers were free to work on the academic side of the conference. This was facilitated further by the simple fact that we were in the right place. Indiana University is a leading school in philosophy and computing. It was a big help too that the conference host, Colin Allen, is himself a person at the forefront of the area. Being in the right place meant that we had ample support from the venue, not only in terms of dollars, but more importantly in terms of academic support. Many of Dr. Allen’s Indiana University colleagues submitted papers through our formal review process and were on the program. (None of them, by the way, got a free pass; invitations to IU faculty were limited to the IU Showcase Session. All other IU submissions went through our peer-review process).

This brings me to the third important difference from last year involved in making the conference a success. Really, this breaks down into two components: requiring full-paper submission, instead of just abstracts, and instituting a system of true peer-review by members of the IACAP.

It is impossible to judge the merits of a philosophical treatment on the basis of an abstract, which lays out promises but no argument. So much of what matters in what we do comes down to the fine details of the argument. But a second reason for full-papers is that conferees were well-prepared coming into the conference. More importantly, however, having

full-papers allowed us to step up the rigor of the conference and to get others involved. Respecting the latter, having full papers in advance meant that we could have commentators on the program. Anyone involved in conference planning these days knows that, because universities will pay conference travel for presenters and not so much for mere attendees, it is commonplace for the modern conference audience to be made mostly out of presenters. The fact that we could involve more people in the conference, without splitting into too many concurrent sessions, helped to boost our numbers.

The staff of volunteer reviewers was made up of twenty IACAP members, each of whom reviewed between three and five papers, and all submissions were reviewed by at least two members. When all was said and done, we had a shorter program than last year, in terms of the number of sessions, but longer in terms of the number on the program; the program was also marked by greater academic rigor. Additionally, the general body of conferees seemed to have a better understanding of their place in the conference; commentators were also well prepared. The sense overall was that everyone knew what they were doing here. This sense was additionally facilitated by early distribution of the conference book by email to conferees a week in advance of the actual conference.

The problem with a successful event like this is that it sets a high bar for subsequent events. I'm glad to see this, even though I am the one who will largely be under the gun to have to pass it next year. I intend to do so, with the help of many others, of course, and to set an even higher bar for Mara Harrell and the 2010 conference. The future success of the IACAP needs this, especially at this time. In this light, I wish to make some closing comments about my vision of what an IACAP conference needs to be, knowing full-well that it is not equally-shared by everyone, but hoping that it fits within the broader aspirations of the IACAP membership.

The roots of our organization go back into the mid-1980's, when personal computers were first hitting the market. These computers attracted a small group of philosophers and computer scientists, who discovered all sorts of philosophical relevance here, not only regarding computers as tools, but regarding far-reaching implications in metaphysics, epistemology and other areas of philosophy. They began to meet annually to catch up on the preliminary insights of this newly emerging research area. Significant exploration happened at these early CAP conferences, but these events were largely informal, as was appropriate, indeed necessary, for the state of the discipline at that time.

In the intervening years, the situation has changed dramatically. The rapid introduction of the PC into society and the sudden (public) appearance of the Internet in the 1990's have rearranged the theoretical landscape and added an urgency to what we do. Topics wrestled with at early CAP conferences are now regularly treated in many disciplines. It is not an overstatement to say that even whole research areas, like Informatics and perhaps Cognitive Science, have emerged in the wake of these changes. Today, the independent computer researcher must pursue his work in the context of a wide interdisciplinary corpus of published literature and large-scale computer projects.

Respect for our founders (and our research!) means that we approach the discipline that they formed with all of the rigor belonging to any other area in the study of philosophy. It means, too, that we set high standards, not so that our work *appears* relevant to others, but to ensure that it *is* so. As individuals, many of us are already doing this; and our conferences need to demonstrate this in the concrete. By raising the bar, we can hope to increase our standing in the broader profession and to attract a growing number of established scholars in computing and philosophy into our membership.

I hope that CAP conferences remain small and friendly, as they have always been. But I hope, too, that they also adopt the formality and rigor of other academic organizations, and that we move more and more toward professionally managed conferences with the highest academic standards. By taking ourselves seriously in this regard, others will take us seriously as well. This, at least, was the background context for the planning of this past year's conference. For the moment, it seems to have paid off. We have some ways to go, but NACAP 2008 was a good step at a critical time for the IACAP. Others may disagree, and I welcome any comments to the contrary. However, as program chair it is my duty to submit this report as I have it here, and I do so, respectfully, to the Executive Committee and the membership of the IACAP.

Membership Fee Invoice

Invoice for IACAP Membership

IACAP Membership Dues

Name and Surname: _____

Academic affiliation (if any): _____

Mailing Address: _____

E-Mail: _____

Membership Options (check one):

- students = \$ 10
- ordinary members = \$ 30
- supporting members = at least \$ 50.

Please note that

- anyone (students included) interested in IACAP-related topics, teaching activities and research areas can apply for ordinary or supporting membership;
- only part-time and fulltime undergraduate and graduate students can pay the student fees;
- supporting members differ from ordinary members only insofar as their contribution will be listed on the website.

Ordinary and supporting members (but not members paying student fees) will enjoy the following advantages:

- they can vote for, and be elected to IACAP offices;
 - they get a 10% discount at all CAP conferences, by showing proof of their regular membership (copy of invoice, printed email etc.) when they register;
 - they can be nominated for the Covey Award.
-

Methods of payment

All payments must be in US funds.

At a CAP conference

members can pay their dues together with their CAP conference fees and receive a 10% discount in the conference fee.

By PayPal

please visit the website <http://www.ia-cap.org/membership.php>

By Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT)

please contact Charles Ess at cmess@drury.edu
or tel. (+1)417-873-7230 for necessary account information.

By check

Checks should be made payable to: IACAP / Drury University
and mailed to: Charles Ess
Interdisciplinary Studies Center
Drury University
900 N. Benton Ave.
Springfield, Missouri 65802 USA

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