1. Introduction

Cybernetics, developed by Norman Wiener in the 1950s, can be regarded as the foundational discipline for Computer Ethics. (Floridi, 2015, p. 91) His new discipline covered many of the same topics that we would today regard as central to Computer Ethics. These include access to computers for people with disabilities, computer security, professionalism in computing and unemployment due to computing and automation and many more. (Bynum, 2016)

The term we use today, “Computer Ethics”, has its origins with Walter Maner (Maner, 1980; Bynum, 2016)

Today Computer ethics covers a broad range of topics including: security, privacy, copyright as in computer “piracy”, access to computing for the disabled, environmental impact and sustainability of computing system and research ethics etc. Of these, privacy, is currently the most discussed topic in the field. (Stahl *et al.*, 2016, p. 3,28)

Researchers can now use the principles of Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) to manage the ethical considerations of how their research impact on society.(Eden, Jirotka and Stahl, 2013, p. 1)

1. Definition of Ethical Computing

According to the Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy, ethics is “the philosophical study of morality”. (Audi, 1999) Therefor Ethical Computing relates to the study of morality as it relates to Computing. In simple terms, morality can be thought of as the study of what is right and what is wrong.

People have an innate sense of right and wrong. What is right or wrong can differ between nationalities, groups or people. These ideas need to be openly discussed and reasoned about. But there needs to be agreement on what is right and what is wrong. That is why we need ethical theory. (Stahl, 2012, pp. 638–640)

There are a few competing ethical theories used in Computer Ethics.

Firstly, there are Consequentialism, Deontology and Virtue ethics. All of which are Normative ethical theories. In Consequentialism, whether an action is good or bad, i.e. ethical, depends on the consequences of the action. The most prominent consequentialist theory is utilitarianism. Which can be describes as doing the most amount of good to the largest amount of people. Deontology on the other hand hold that the intention of agent doing the action determines whether it is ethical or not. (Stahl *et al.*, 2016, p. 4) Where in virtue ethics it depends on the individual character.(Stahl, Eden and Jirotka, 2013, p. 812)

Another prominent theory is Luciano Floridi’s Information ethics. (Stahl *et al.*, 2014, p. 812)

1. Importance of Ethical Computing

In our society we are constantly inundated with ethical dilemmas in the Information and Communication Technology sector. From issues about privacy and consent (Carter, Laurie and Dixon-Woods, 2015; de Bruin and Floridi, 2017) to copyright (Chiou, Wan and Wan, 2012, p. 108).

James H, Moor defines Computer ethics as “… the analysis of the nature and social impact of computer technology and the corresponding formulation and justification of policies for the ethical use of such technology” (Moor, 1985, p. 266). According to Moor it is policy vacuums that create computer ethics problems.

In Europe, Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) is being used to develop policy in the ICT sector.(Eden, Jirotka and Stahl, 2013, p. 1)

Privacy

Piracy

Equal access

Check (Carter, Laurie and Dixon-Woods, 2015; Floridi and Taddeo, 2016)

Also see (Mittelstadt and Floridi, 2016)

Moor describes that a policy vacuum creates issues in computer ethics.

Policy vacuum is to be filled with the help of RRI(Eden, Jirotka and Stahl, 2013)

RRI (Von Schomberg, 2013)

1. Some guidelines on being ethical within the computing environment
2. Conclusion
3. References

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