

Editorial: On IRIE Vol. 27

Technology is ubiquitous: boundaries between the world we live in and the internet become more and more blurred thanks to networked objects. The borders that once separated the sanctity and privacy of our home from our online lives have been dissolved through the advent of the Internet-of-Things (IoT), encompassing even those realms traditionally reserved as secure places for development: childhood and children's toys. Traditional early childhood development, once founded on the safety of interactions within a closed circle of peers and family, has now been augmented with digital realities and externally networked connections. Questions must be posed as to how the introduction of digitally networked toys affects childhood, both negatively and positively, and most certainly in ways not yet fully understood. How might 'robo-toys' affect the experience of childhood and influence early childhood development, and how will they shape new online and off-line expectations?

Early research and application in this area requires a thorough ethical review – a scholarly task that we want to initiate with the following issue – where we will explore the challenges, benefits and pitfalls of networked toys.

For over a decade, the International Review of Information Ethics has led the charge in exploring new frontiers of ethics and technology, such as networked toys. Having covered topics ranging from robotics to religion, IRIE has ventured some of the most thought-provoking conversations of the digital age. These types of conversations are just getting started. The editors are proud to announce that after 15 years of publication under the leadership of IRIE Founders, Editor-in-Chief, Professor Rafael Capurro, alongside Dr. Felix Weil, whose operative management of IRIE has been key to its success, alongside Professor Thomas Hausmanninger, IRIE will re-launch in 2019, hosted by the Kule Institute for Advanced Study (KIAS) at the University of Alberta, Canada. The journal will undergo a new design and will adopt a renewed commitment to its editorial advisory board.

The transfer of the journal will accompany the relaunch of the International Center for Information Ethics, also to be hosted at the University of Alberta under a new administration and website. The editors at IRIE consider it a privilege to have worked closely with Professor Rafael Capurro for the last two decades and wish him the very best for his well-deserved retirement. IRIE looks forward to several forthcoming editions, including a special edition honoring the life and work of Norbert Wiener, an edition on Information Ethics (IE) where a critical examination of the field of IE will address the origins and evolutions of the field, and an edition on Ethics in Artificial Intelligence.

Sincerely yours,

the editors of IRIE