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The Ethics of E-Games

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Editorial: On IRIE Vol. 4

There is not much left to be said in the editors' foreword to this issue on the ethics of e-games as its guest editors, Elizabeth Buchanan and Charles Ess, already completed it with a profound introduction to the subject. Their opening paper provides an excellent overview of the field starting with its theoretical background, moving on to the specific moral questions raised within and finally introducing well informed to the single articles putting them into a systematic context. We therefore would like to confine our foreword mainly to our expression of gratitude to Elizabeth Buchanan and Charles Ess for their outstanding piece of work not merely editing this issue but also contributing to it.

It seems like the subject hit the mark. In fact e-games are among the most dramatically expanding phenomena of ICTs in a world increasingly shaped by computing and networking technologies. They represent some of the most sophisticated utilizations of the potentials of computing and network technologies – and both their stand-alone and online versions implicate a complex array of ethical questions. They include issues of individual and community responsibilities, cross-cultural interactions, etc., alongside central philosophical questions concerning reality and its construction in human experience, human nature and play, and, ultimately, the nature of the good life, both individually and in community. At the same time, however, these compelling philosophical interests have largely been neglected in contemporary scholarship and research.

We hope that the articles collected here not only contribute in helpful and significant ways to what amounts to a new field of (cross-cultural) Computer and Information Ethics - and, further, that these articles may demonstrate especially the practical importance of such research as these articles contribute to serious social and political debates regarding E-games and their ethical dimensions. The reviews of this issue perfectly complement this approach as they critically focus on some well-observed publications on the subject of E-Games published in German as well as in the English language.

Therefore we are confident that the issue in hand will encourage scholars and practitioners from all over the world to provide new intercultural and interdisciplinary perspectives to this exciting and simultaneously important debate on questions and problems of high economic relevance.

Yours,

Rafael Capurro, Thomas Hausmanninger, Karsten Weber and Felix Weil, the Editors