

Social Aspects of Cognition and Computing Symposium Symposium

Known as social computing, this intersection has far reaching consequences for many fields including AI and philosophy. In order to have a fruitful discussion we intend social computing in a broad sense to explore different levels of social behavior in computational systems, both natural and artificial. We welcome contributions on the following topics (but not exclusively):

I. Social media and discourse modelling. Interactions on social media such as Twitter or comment sections differ from “natural” dialogues in ways which present challenges for theories of discourse, dialogue and argumentation such as RST, SDRT or models influenced by Traum, Cohen & Levesque, Walton & Krabbe and others; as well as philosophical approaches (Brandom, Habermas).

On the one hand, participation in online dialogue is typically fluid; interlocutors can join or leave a conversation without formality, it is problematic to assign distinct roles such as “addressee” or “overhearer” or 2nd vs 3rd person, participants may be unknown to each other and have only sparse models of each others’ backgrounds and beliefs. On the other, there may be direct access to participants’ posting history from which can be extracted a (possibly partial and/or inconsistent) “commitment store” in the sense of Hamblin or Walton & Krabbe.

We welcome contributions which address these issues from a theoretical standpoint, or report on empirical analysis (text mining etc.)

II. Strategies for analyzing the problem of the relationship between language, society and AI:

Searle presented an interesting theory of representation based on the mind’s capacities to represent objects and to the linguistic capacities to extend the representation to social entities. Brandom introduces compelling notion of representation in social terms and explores the differences between human and artificial mind. Interesting ideas come from the relationship between computational social ontology and deontology; deontology, language and freedom or autonomy (Searle, Smith, Habermas, Brandom, McDowell, Swindler, Giovagnoli); social dimensions of autonomy and language learning (Murray et al) and issues related to social robotics (Fong et al.)

III. Social computing and online relationships:

Compared with personal computing, the concept of social computing attempts to capture the online relationships that exist among users, or between users and—for instance—service providers and businesses. Yet this can engender apparent contradictions. For example, one current prerequisite of online social media is that individual users interact via a (more or less formal) platform, which requires participation by these discrete agents and includes (again, more or less) rigidity of structures. Systems and modes of social engagement can be prescriptive, limiting, or can even preclude or deter offline social engagement. Just how social is social media?

IV. The rise of social computing and ethical issues

The rise of social computing has compounded existing ethical issues as well as generating new ones, including (but not limited to): informed consent and willing participation; data sharing and privacy; copyright and ownership of ideas and thoughts; 'right to be forgotten' legislation; manipulation by advertisers, companies and political factions; crowdsourcing and the rise of online political movements; problem of the 'filter-bubble'; safety and identity fraud, etc..