Creativity, Ethics, User-Generated Content and AI

CHARLOTTE BIRD, Institute for Design Informatics, UK

This abstract offers a brief overview of my research position within AI ethics, human-computer interaction and creativity. I present my research in relation to user-generated content. I also offer a number of questions that my current and future research will seek to answer.

CCS Concepts: • **Human-centered computing** → **Collaborative and social computing**.

Additional Key Words and Phrases: Creativity, AI, User-generated content, ethics

1 INTRODUCTION

Generative AI (gen-AI) tool offers unprecedented capabilities for creating content. Images, text and video are the most popular applications of gen-AI, with models such as StableDiffusion [8] and ChatGPT [6] amassing thousands of users. Innovation does not look set to slow down, with the recent release of impressive text-to-video model, Sora [7]. Understandably, the rapid adoption of new gen-AI tools has precipitated a number of concerns, such as the rise of deepfakes, fake news, copyright infringement and job displacement [2]. However, with adoption of gen-AI technologies only looking to increase, it is essential to foster safe, useful and fruitful human-AI interactions. User-generated content is a prime example of such interaction. UGC — any content made by a user and not a brand — dominates social media sites as other users seek authentic, credible, relevant and relatable content [3]. Gen-AI offers opportunities for users to generate ideas, images, scripts and captions, among countless other applications.

2 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

My research operates across three fields. The central focus of my research is within human-computer interaction. More precisely, I am interested in the role of creativity in computational interactions. Previously, there has been a clear distinction between systems that simulate creativity (e.g The Painting Fool [4, 5]) as opposed to systems that enable creativity (e.g Photoshop). However, this distinction has been blurred significantly by the introduction of powerful gen-AI tools. Creative practitioners can now use these tools to support, enable or even replace a creative process. For example, an artist could now generate elements of an artwork, a composer could generate a new bass line, a filmmaker could generate storyboards. The common thread is that generating content *of any kind* is easier and quicker than ever before.

The second focus of my research is directly related to enabling creativity. Computational creativity is focused on the study of modelling, replicating or simulating creativity using computer systems. The field has an extensive history of developing and evaluating computationally creative systems, insights which can be fruitfully applied to gen-AI systems [1].

My final focus regards AI ethics. My ethics research has thus far mapped the risks and harms of generative text-to-image models, and offered guidelines for future development [2]. I am primarily interested in the practical ethics of users, such as how artists try to foster ethical engagement with AI in their practice.

In a confluence of these threads, my research has turned towards studying the user of AI tools. I have an extended abstract at CHI 2024 detailing the first insights from a research project entitled "Artists and AI". We look towards creators and creative communities and ask how they are using AI. We also consider the audience: how do creative practitioners make content with AI that is designed for different audiences? From art to music to film, this research project is primarily focused on the ways creative practitioners blend AI, ethics and creativity into a practice.

3 GENERATIVE AI AND CONTENT CREATION

User-generated content is an important example of how a variety of users engage with generative models creatively. The questions posed by gen-AI in UGC and gen-AI in creative practice are identical. How do we design for and foster gen-AI interactions that are creatively fruitful? My current project suggests that creative practitioners want more freedom to break and subvert tools to create different content, but what would that mean for communities and users? Gen-AI can also enable faster ideation and execution, but how do we manage an influx of AI generated content on social platforms? How does gen-AI affect content authenticity? What do audiences want from content that gen-AI can enable?

4 CONCLUSION

My research looks directly to users of gen-AI tools to understand the intersections between AI ethics, creativity and gen-AI tools. Each topic is equally rich in insight, however to combine the learnings of a field such as computational creativity with human-computer interaction and AI ethics, offers opportunities to develop new ways of thinking about computational tools.

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