

The Difference that makes a Difference 2011

Cybercrime

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The Difference that makes a Difference 2011

- **One issue that hits the headlines:**
- **The Misuse or dubious use of Technology**
 - **Cybercrime embracing fraud, scamming, hacking,, infringement of intellectual property right via for example file sharing, plagiarism**
 - **‘Anti-social activities’ on the margin of legality such as pornography, invasions of privacy, knowledge manipulation including much of PR, dissemination of confidential knowledge such as Wikileaks, knowledge hiding**

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- **Misuse of model based systems such as automatic trading**

- **Note, too, the Knowledge Paradox**

These are problem areas whose study crosses many disciplinary boundaries ranging from ICT studies, sociology, economics, and criminology

- **They are of major concern to practitioners, policy makers, lawyers, management, the public at large and academics, reflected by the headlines they attract**

- **Are they they are the Difference which makes a Difference ?**

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- **Traditional studies of ICT have been dominated by:**
 - **The notion that the technology exists to better humanity via improved productivity – the business school paradigm – and by improving the quality of working and social life – the humanistic paradigm.**
 - **Teaching and Research has been dominated by the values implicit in the first of these with share holder value being the chief criterion for measuring success.**

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- **Real world values and Real World behaviour**
 - **But in the real world there is a wide range of values which do not conform to the values espoused by the traditional political and academic communities.**
 - **And some of our most successful entrepreneurs and innovators do not share the espoused values.**
 - **Take pornography as an example of innovation and successful business models.**
 - **But despite their undoubted success we know little about them. Who is the Steve Job of the pornography enterprise?**
 - **Sometimes their names hit the headlines as when the fraud practiced by Enron was exposed.**
 - **Are these different value systems the Difference that make a Difference**

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- **Mixed Messages**
 - **Outright criminality such as fraud offends all but those engaged in it. Pornography is a gray area**
 - **But where to place Wikileaks? A defender of an open society providing information any citizen is entitled to have or dangerous purveyor of confidential information.**
 - **The use of Malware such as ‘worms’ is rightly condemned. But when the Stufex worm is used to disable the Iranian nuclear programme does it become legitimate?**

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- **The study of the dark side**
 - Research is dominated by reactive studies of the deliberate misuse of technology.
 - They aim to find ways of preventing misuse or if it occurs making corrections. Note banking example
 - But there is very little research which attempts to understand the values and business models of the dark side enterprises.
 - And without that understanding of the difference, the dark side will always run rings around those who value technology for the benefits it can provide for all of us.
 - Such studies have to be interdisciplinary if they are to succeed in throwing light on the dark side.