

EACL 2017

**Ethics in Natural Language Processing**

**Proceedings of the First ACL Workshop**

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Heidelberg Institute for  
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# Bloomberg LP

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## Introduction

Welcome to the first ACL Workshop on Ethics in Natural Language Processing! We are pleased to have participants from a variety of backgrounds and perspectives: social science, computational linguistics, and philosophy; academia, industry, and government.

The workshop consists of invited talks, contributed discussion papers, posters, demos, and a panel discussion. Invited speakers include **Graeme Hirst**, a Professor in NLP at the University of Toronto, who works on lexical semantics, pragmatics, and text classification, with applications to intelligent text understanding for disabled users; **Quirine Eijkman**, a Senior Researcher at Leiden University, who leads work on security governance, the sociology of law, and human right; **Jason Baldridge**, a co-founder and Chief Scientist of People Pattern, who specializes in computational models of discourse as well as the interaction between machine learning and human bias; and **Joanna Bryson**, a Reader in artificial intelligence and natural intelligence at the University of Bath, who works on action selection, systems AI, transparency of AI, political polarization, income inequality, and ethics in AI.

We received paper submissions that span a wide range of topics, addressing issues related to overgeneralization, dual use, privacy protection, bias in NLP models, underrepresentation, fairness, and more. Their authors share insights about the intersection of NLP and ethics in academic work, industrial work, and clinical work. Common themes include the role of tasks, datasets, annotations, training populations, and modelling. We selected 4 papers for oral presentation, 8 for poster presentation, and one for demo presentation, and have paired each oral presentation with a discussant outside of the authors' areas of expertise to help contextualize the work in a broader perspective. All papers additionally provide the basis for panel and participant discussion.

We hope this workshop will help to define and raise awareness of ethical considerations in NLP throughout the community, and will kickstart a recurring theme to consider in future NLP conferences. We would like to thank all authors, speakers, panelists, and discussants for their thoughtful contributions. We are also grateful for our sponsors (Bloomberg, Google, and HITS), who have helped making the workshop in this form possible.

The Organizers

Margaret, Dirk, Shannon, Emily, Hanna, Michael



**Organizers:**

Dirk Hovy, University of Copenhagen (Denmark)  
Shannon Spruit, Delft University of Technology (Netherlands)  
Margaret Mitchell, Google Research & Machine Intelligence (USA)  
Emily M. Bender, University of Washington (USA)  
Michael Strube, Heidelberg Institute for Theoretical Studies (Germany)  
Hanna Wallach, Microsoft Research, UMass Amherst (USA)

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**Invited Speakers:**

Graeme Hirst, University of Toronto (Canada)  
Quirine Eijkman, Leiden University (Netherlands)  
Jason Baldridge, People Pattern (USA)  
Joanna Bryson, University of Bath (UK)



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# Workshop Program

**Tuesday, 4 April, 2017**

**9:30–11:00 Morning Session I - Invited Talks**

9:30–9:40 *Welcome, Overview*  
Dirk, Margaret, Shannon, Michael

9:40–10:15 *Invited Talk*  
Graeme Hirst

10:15–10:50 *Invited Talk*  
Joanna Bryson

**11:00–11:30 Coffee Break**

**11:30–13:00 Morning Session II - Data and Design, Invited Talk**

11:30–11:45 *A Quantitative Study of Data in the NLP community*  
Margot Mieskes

11:45–12:00 *Ethical by Design: Ethics Best Practices for Natural Language Processing*  
Jochen L. Leidner and Vassilis Plachouras

12:00–12:25 *Paper Discussion*  
Authors and Discussant

12:25–13:00 *Invited Talk*  
Quirine Eijkman

**Tuesday, 4 April, 2017 (continued)**

**13:00–14:30 Lunch Break**

**14:30–16:00 Afternoon Session I - Gender, Invited Talk**

14:30–15:05 *Invited Talk*  
Jason Baldrige

15:05–15:20 *These are not the Stereotypes You are Looking For: Bias and Fairness in Authorial Gender Attribution*  
Corina Koolen and Andreas van Cranenburgh

15:20–15:35 *Gender as a Variable in Natural-Language Processing: Ethical Considerations*  
Brian Larson

15:35–16:00 *Paper Discussion*  
Authors and Discussant

**16:00–17:00 Afternoon Session II - Coffee and Posters**

16:00–17:00 *Building Better Open-Source Tools to Support Fairness in Automated Scoring*  
Nitin Madhani, Anastassia Loukina, Alina von Davier, Jill Burstein and Aoife Cahill

16:00–17:00 *Gender and Dialect Bias in YouTube's Automatic Captions*  
Rachael Tatman

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Tyler Schnoebelen

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Adrian Benton, Glen Coppersmith and Mark Dredze

16:00–17:00 *Say the Right Thing Right: Ethics Issues in Natural Language Generation Systems*  
Charese Smiley, Frank Schilder, Vassilis Plachouras and Jochen L. Leidner

**17:00–18:00 Evening Session - Panel**

17:10–17:45 *Panel Discussion*  
Panelists

17:45–18:00 *Concluding Remarks*  
Dirk, Margaret, Shannon, Michael

