

SEMINAR SERIES

Asking Technology: A Step Too Far or Not Far Enough?

ABSTRACT:

Much of HCI research involves asking people questions, either through interviews, surveys, design sessions, evaluation studies, voting, polling and so on. We choose our methods depending on what we want to find out. However, there is also increasing evidence showing how the use of different media and form factors can affect how much people are willing to share, what they say and how honest they are. For example, studies have shown how people reveal more about their habits when filling in an online form compared with a paper-based one; students have been found to rate their instructors less favorably when online; people may divulge more when interacting with bots or robots compared with talking to people. In my talk, I will describe a program of research we have been conducting over the last few years, where we have been investigating how physicality and embodied interaction can be used to good effect, widening participation, encouraging reflection and helping scientists make sense of data. At the same time, we have been using breaching experiments, design fiction and artistic probes to elicit responses and reactions for more edgy and elusive topics. In so doing, we have been subjected to considerable criticism – arguing that we are irresponsible and have gone too far in our methods when using technology. While it is easy to play safe and hide behind IRB walls, I will argue that it is imperative that we take more risks in our research if we want to answer the difficult questions about how technology design affects people's lives.

BIO:

Professor Yvonne Rogers is the director of the Interaction Centre at UCL (UCLIC), and a deputy head of the Computer Science department at UCL. She is the Principal Investigator for the Intel-funded Urban IoT collaborative research Institute (cities.io) at UCL. Her research interests lie at the intersection of physical computing, interaction design and human-computer interaction. Much of her work is situated in the wild - concerned with informing, building and evaluating novel user experiences through creating and assembling a diversity of technologies (e.g. tangibles, internet of things) that augment everyday, learning, community engagement and collaborative work activities. She has been instrumental in promulgating new theories (e.g., external cognition), alternative methodologies (e.g., in the wild studies) and far-reaching research agendas (e.g., "Being Human: HCI in 2020" manifesto), and has pioneered an approach to innovation and ubiquitous learning. She is a co-author of the definitive textbook on Interaction Design and HCI now published in its 4th edition that has sold over 150,000 copies worldwide and has been translated into 6 languages. She is a fellow of the BCS and the ACM CHI Academy.

HOST:

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