Societal Issues Futurist Database
www.quemot.wordpress.com

Ethics

- The changing definitions of the beginning and end of life as well as life itself
- Controversies over embryo selection
- Future conflict lines: 'Technoprogressives' vs. 'Bioconservatives'?
- Will embryonic stem cell debate remain a controversy?
- The ethics of synthetic biology
- The desperate need for organs for transplant raises controversies
- The creation of human / non-human genetic hybrids causes controversy
- Military robots cause ethical controversies

New Legal Issues

- Rights for robots?
- Scientists, lawyers consider effects of home robots
- When will a cyborg cease to be human?
- What will be the future definition of 'life'?
- Would commercialised tissue engineering for organ production be legal?
- The future of IPR

Politics

- Transhumanism gets interest of Russian Pariament
- 'Posthumanism' gets interest of European Parliament
- Panel calls for global 'asteroid defence agency'

Social cohesion/Culture

- Will HET and neuro-enhancement divide humanity?
- Future conflict lines: Religion vs. atheism?
- Religious fundamentalism or towards tolerance?
- Hindu nationalism and radicalisation on the rise?
- Guidelines for Muslims in outer space set up
- Should life-style factors (e.g. unhealthy eating, smoking etc.) have an impact on medical insurance and certain kinds of medical assistance (e.g. in reproductive medicine)?
- The future of disability in face of advanced prosthetics, regenerative medicine, neurotechnology and HET
- Will ever cheaper PCs bridge the digital divide?
- Will drastic life extension cause disruptive societal effects?

Risk & Security

- The security risk of disseminating genome information (e.g. of viruses)
- The dangers and risks of global information dissemination and accessibility
- DIY community getting sophisticated and taking up biology - harmless, innovative or risky?
- EU funds artificial intelligence plan to monitor public for "abnormal behaviour"
- Bio/nano weapons targeted at specific ethnic groups?
- Do we have a right for privacy in a situation of DIY possibilities and increasingly powerful technological possibilities?
- Growing concerns over risks of science, technology and innovation - reasonable of a threat for progress?
- Will a nuclear-weapon-free world be really possible - and what about chemical, biological and nanotech-based weapons?
- Will we be able to trust future technologies?
- What can you really do with genetic analysis and what are the possibilities of misuse?
- Will we become too dependent on technology?

Health

- Doping goes mainstream…
- Deaths due to smoking on the rise?
- Medical tourism - in the future also because of different legislation for treatments and enhancement?
- Will the aging of society really pose a problem?
- Could/should germ-line therapy be legalised under certain conditions?

Learning & Education

- Scientists and Google create Singularity University to solve big problems and bring future issues onto an academic agenda
- Robots help autistic children
- Patients in vegetative state may be able to learn
- Cheap higher education for everyone?
- Should underachievers be prescribed nootropics?
- Will speech technologies impact language skills and language traditions?
- Robots develop ability of deceptive behaviour
- Emotions - the next frontier for robotics?
- Should knowledge be free?

Impact of S&T

- Will the 'technological singularity' emerge in China?
- Brain-hacking - the next threat?
- The 'singularity' - futurist nonsense or indicator for technology and society getting more and more out of synch?
- Could tissue engineering and 'organ printing' solve problems of organ transplant and organ donation?
- Are people trying to secretly clone a human being?
- The impact of neurotechnology on all dimensions of society (privacy, security, health, communication etc…)
- The social implications of possible designer babies, human genetic engineering and pre-implantation diagnostics