Society for Philosophy and Technology

SPT newsletter

Volume 34, Number 1 (winter 2010)

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1. President's Column

Dear fellow philosophers of technology,

With the advent of the new year, the recession is now global, and many universities across the world are being hit hard by budget cuts. I hope that your institution is surviving, and that you are able to continue your work as usual. Seen the long lists of conferences, publications and other activities mentioned in this newsletter, I conclude that we are still coping rather well.

There are several news items from the SPT and Techné boards that I would like to highlight:

Preparations are in full swing for SPT 2011 at the University of North Texas. The conference will take place in late May; exact dates are still to be determined. Adam Briggle, David Kaplan and Robert Frodeman are the main organizers.
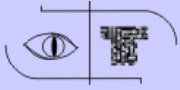
The Forum on Philosophy, Engineering, and Technology (fPET-2010), an SPT-sponsored event, will be organized in Colorado School of Mines 9-10 May, Colorado School of Mines, Golden, Colorado. SPT members are warmly welcomed to this event. More details are to be found in this newsletter.

Techné has found a good new publishing home for its activities, the Philosophy Documentation Centre (PDC). PDC publishes dozens of reputable philosophy journals, including the Journal of Philosophy and Environmental Ethics, and Techné is the latest journal to join this growing family. Together with this move, Diane Michelfelder has joined the journal as associate editor, replacing Pieter Vermaas. Please note that as a result of the move to PDC, some of the open access privileges of the journal had to be given up. Also, some of these articles now incorrectly deliver a message "this article removed at the author's request". The journal is working on removing this message.

I hope you enjoy this newsletter.

My best wishes to all,

Philip Brey
SPT president

2. Techné

Techné: Research in Philosophy & Technology, SPT's journal, is now being published by the Philosophy Documentation Center. Members can log on to view new and past issues of Techné at: http://secure.pdcnet.org/pdc/bvdb.nsf/journal?openform&journal=pdc_techne

Diane Michelfelder will be taking over as Editor of Techné for Pieter Vermaas, who is now Editor-in-chief of a book series on Philosophy of Engineering and Technology. We thank Pieter for his diligent work for Techne over the past three years and know the new book series will be in terrific hands, and we welcome Diane!

Beginning last month, the Philosophy Documentation Center became the official publisher of SPT's journal Techné. Access to PDFs of current and past articles in Techné is now a benefit of membership in SPT; While articles are still openly accessible in HTML format, all the PDFs have been removed from the Virginia Tech website.

3. Conferences, Workshops, and Lectures

Forum on Philosophy, Engineering, and Technology (fPET-2010)
9-10 May, Colorado School of Mines, Golden, Colorado
http://philengtech.org

As fPET-2010 co-organizers, Dave Goldberg, Diane Michelfelder, and Carl Mitcham would like to offer this brief update on how this meeting is taking shape. Many of you know that fPET-2010 was planned to be an intensive one-day event. Now that we have received 66 abstracts, we can guarantee this will be an intensive event indeed and one that will offer an array of opportunities for all those interested in furthering conversations among philosophers and engineers.

Along with these presentations, fPET-2010 will feature two keynote speakers. Our Sunday evening keynote speaker, Steven L. Goldman, the Andrew W. Mellon Distinguished Professor in the Humanities at Lehigh University, will be talking on Beyond Satisficing: Design, Trade Offs and the Rationality of Engineering. Our lunchtime keynote speaker on Monday will be Anu Ramaswani, Professor of Environmental Engineering and Director of the IGERT Program in Sustainable Urban Infrastructure at the University of Colorado at Denver. Professor Ramaswani will be speaking on "Challenges in Sustainability Engineering– Design for Whom,

How and Why? More information on our keynote speakers and abstracts of their talks can be found at http://philengtech/program.

If you are among the SPT members who submitted an abstract to fPET-2010, please know that notification of acceptances will be going out shortly. If you are interested in coming to fPET-2010 but did not submit an abstract, please know this is an open forum and all SPT members are welcome to attend at a reduced registration rate. For details on registration and lodging, please go http://philengtech/registration. We hope to see many of you in Colorado in May for what promises to be a most productive and exciting event!

Dave Goldberg (deg@illinois.edu)
Diane Michelfelder (Michelfelder@macalester.edu)
Carl Mitcham (cmitcham@mines.edu)

Ethics, Energy and the Future:
Technology for a Sustainable Society
June 24th-26th 2010
Delft University of Technology, the Netherlands

Abstract Deadline: March 1, 2010
Short abstracts, 500 to 1000 words

 Keynote Speakers include:

Simon Caney, University of Oxford
Stephen Gardiner, University of Washington
Axel Gosseries, University of Louvain
Jeroen van den Hoven, 3TU Centre for Ethics and Technology
Andrew Light, George Mason University & Center for American Progress
Henry Shue, University of Oxford

Climate change is one of the most urgent problems the world is currently facing. It is commonly agreed that the world's energy consumption lies at the heart of the problem. In order to meet the challenges of a sustainable lifestyle, multidisciplinary decisions with regard to energy provision and energy-consumption need to be made. This conference focuses on the ethical, political and economic issues of such solutions and aims at bringing together researchers from engineering sciences, philosophy and social sciences.
New energy technologies and policies raise various ethical and societal issues. Amongst them are questions relating to the just distribution of burden and benefits, public concerns and acceptance of various energy technologies, the risks and uncertainties associated with

different technical options, and the appropriate criteria for assessing various technologies and policies. These aspects can be divided into four fields of concern.

1) Energy technologies and their ethical issues
2) General ethical issues of sustainability and energy
3) Ethics, energy policy and political philosophy
4) Ethics and economics of climate change and energy technologies

We invite you to contribute a paper in any of these four areas. Abstracts should be between 500 and 1000 words and should be sent to the contact address before February 15th, 2010. A limited number of scholarships to the value of €500 each will be made available to students who present a paper at the conference to help cover travel and accommodation costs; see the website. www.ethicsandtechnology.eu. Sustainability@ethicsandtechnology.eu

Ethics on the laboratory floor; Explorations for a methodology
Date: 1-2 June 2010
Location: University of Twente, Enschede, the Netherlands

These last years there has been a growing interest in the engagement of ethicists in the context of scientific engineering research, with the aim to anticipate the ambiguous impacts that technological innovations have on the quality of human life. In this way ethicists are thought to be able to contribute to the constitution of the technological product, at a stage when it is still malleable.
Several scholars have developed views on how an ethicist in this context should work, but there is not yet a detailed 'method'. With this workshop we want to contribute to the development of such a method. We want to focus especially on the themes of reflection and deliberation, for the enhancement of 'reflection' and the broadening of 'deliberation' is often understood to be the primary aim of the work of an ethicist in the scientific research context. Yet it remains unclear what this involves. Questions are raised such as: what is reflection/deliberation? How should ethicists enhance reflection? What are the consequences of such an enhancement of reflection on the deliberation about research choices? How much should this deliberation be broadened? And what is the specific input of an ethicist in this deliberation?
This workshop aims to act as a platform to discuss and critically engage with these questions. Confirmed invited participants are Bernadette Bensaude-Vincent, Rosalyn Berne, Ulrike Felt, Armin Grunwald, Alfred Nordmann and Arie Rip.

We invite abstracts (500-1000 words) from philosophers and social scientists. Theoretical philosophical papers about deliberation, reflection and moral linguistics are welcome, but also descriptions and analyses of concrete joint deliberation processes on the laboratory floor about ethical issues. Sub-themes are:

- Reflection/deliberation
- Future scenarios
- Ethical language and communication
- The institutional context

For more information about these sub-themes and related questions, please look at the workshop website

http://www.utwente.nl/ceptes/ceptes_activities/deliberation_engineering/

The deadline for submission is March 1, 2010. The authors of selected papers will be notified by email. Abstracts should be sent to: ceptes-workshop@gw.utwente.nl
For further information, please contact one of the organizers:
Simone van der Burg: s.vanderburg@utwente.nl

Ethical Issues of Emerging ICT Applications (ETICA) 2010 Conference
The Future as we see it: Emerging ICTs and resulting ethical issues
Call for papers to the 1st ETICA International Conference at Rovira and Virgili University, Tarragona, Catalonia, Spain on 13 April 2010.

ETICA is a European research project funded under the Science in Society 7th Framework (FP7) programme. It will run from April 2009 to May 2011. The main aim of the project is:

- to explore which technologies are likely to be dominant in the medium term future (10 to 15 years)
- to investigate ethical issues they are likely to raise and
- to then provide recommendations for governance arrangements suitable to address such issues.

As part of the ETICA project, there will be two international conferences. The first one at approximately the half-way point will take place in spring 2010. It will be held in conjunction with the ETHICOMP 2010 conference which takes place on Wednesday 14th April to Friday 16th April 2010. The ETICA conference will be a 1-day event which will take place on Tuesday 13th April 2010, a day before the ETHICOMP conference.
The prospect of new and emerging technologies is an exciting one, not least because of the potential developments and improvements they promise to bring to our lives. Enhanced better health, the allure of new forms of friendships, the fight against crime, the potential for better and more accessible education, an improved environment as a result of new

technologies; all give a sense of excitement and optimism of what might be. However, this sense of what might be often overshadows the need to critically examine the ethical issues that may result. To explore these issues and because ethical issues of emerging technologies are global and cross-cultural, ETICA is inviting position papers from international scholars with an interest in emerging technologies and their ethical relevance to submit position papers of 3500 words.

http://moriarty.tech.dmu.ac.uk:8080/pebble/default/2009/05/28/1243516800000.html

International workshop: 'Cost-Benefit Analysis: Uncertainty, Discounting and the Sustainable Future' April 12-13th, 2010
Eindhoven University of Technology, Traverse Dorgelozaal

Opening Lecture: Simon Caney, University of Oxford

The workshop will take place from midday on the 12th until midday of the 13th. The purpose of the conference is to invite experts in the fields of philosophy, ethics, applied economics, environmental economics and innovation studies. The focus will be on those aspects of uncertainty and the discount rate relevant to these disciplines. Uncertainties are of particular importance in innovation projects, where both costs and benefits are hard to assess. A crucial question is how uncertainty can be taken into account in cost-benefit analysis, even if imperfectly, and what kinds of alternative methodologies exist that may deal more effectively with decision-making in uncertain environments. The workshop also aims to expose and analyse the ethical assumptions at work in the choice of a discount rate. Importantly, while some of the reasons for discounting future benefits and costs are economic, some are ethical. The choice of discount rate is therefore an interdisciplinary issue. Contact and registration: Rosemary Lowry: R.J.Lowry@tue.nl

84th Pacific APA Annual Meeting
March 31 - April 4, 2010, Westin St Francis, San Francisco
APA Committee Session: Neuromaging Techniques and Human Nature
Saturday, April 3, 2010; 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Arranged by the APA Committee on Philosophy and Medicine and the Society for Philosophy and Technology

Chair: Inmaculada de Melo-Martin (Cornell University)
Speakers: Patricia Churchland (University of California–San Diego)
Mark Cohen (University of California–Los Angeles)

Fabrice Jotterand (University of Texas–Southwestern)
Robert Rosenberger (Georgia Institute of Technology)

HUMANITIES AND TECHNOLOGY ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Sponsored by the Department of History and Government
Bowie State University, September 30 to October 2, 2010

Topic: Technology and Development: The Human Benefits and Burdens
The sustainable use of technical and natural resources makes it possible to alleviate world hunger, eliminate illiteracy, deliver basic health care services, and raise living standards worldwide. Yet, we still face significant political, economic, environmental, and social challenges in reaching the United Nations Millennium Development Goals of eliminating extreme poverty in all its forms by 2015. Some of these challenges evoke questions about the use and abuse of technologies with regard to development. What have been the human benefits and burdens of the introduction of new technologies in the past and what are the challenges facing both the developed and developing countries today? Paper submissions may address, but are not limited to, the following themes:

1. The response of the arts to the issue of technology and development
2. Technology, development, and the environment, including land and water use, mining, and the burden of mitigating greenhouse gases
3. New technologies and the impact on workforce development
4. Agricultural revolution, industrial revolution, other issues in the history of technology
5. Country studies of the interface between technology and development
6. Theories of economic development in light of new technologies
7. North versus South: the benefits and burdens of development
8. The politics of access to technology: gender, race, and class
9. Hunger, technology, and development
10. Religion, technology, and development
11. Health care, technology, and development
12. Biotechnology and human nature
13. Net neutrality

Submission Guidelines: Papers should be designed for a twenty-minute presentation. Submit a two-to-three page proposal by April 19, 2010 to Dr. George Sochan, Conference Chairman, Department of History and Government, Bowie State University, via MSWord attachment, to gsochan@bowiestate.edu. Notification of acceptance or rejection of proposals will be sent by email by May 14, 2010.

"Converging Technologies: body, brain, and being"
An international Working Conference
Maribor, Slovenia. Monday and Tuesday May 17th and 18th, 2010.

Futurists see a distinct trend in science and technology: convergence. Several important technologies are merging. The Working Group on Computers and Social Accountability is especially interested in information and communication technologies (ICT). ICT are now converging with others such as bio-technologies; cognitive sciences; and nano-technologies. Different media are also coming together: the creative media; cloud computing; the Internet; mobile telephony; and social networking. The group therefore sees that it is of considerable importance to look into the social aspects of all those technologies that are converging with ICT.

Trends and developments often take longer to occur than are first perceived. Disruptive technologies may emerge with little foresight. Some developments drop out of sight. Our communities and societies also seem to be moving closer together. The planet's globalisation moves inexorably towards actuality. However, some elements of fragmentation and conflict can be difficult to surmount.

The twentieth century saw great social and technological changes. These changes have speeded up within the first decade of the twenty-first century. The year 2010 provides an opportune moment to investigate, assess, and determine our position on convergence. From a socially-aware and ethically-aware standpoint, it is crucial to do several things: to assess where the joining-up of society and technology is bringing humankind; to emphasise where we would like the future to head, what we will prioritise, and how we will take responsibility for these priorities and futures.

The aim of this conference is to ask:
- What are the main trends and developments that highlight the convergence of ICT with other fields, socially, technologically, economically, and politically?
- What are the principal social and ethical threats and challenges of other technologies that are converging with ICT?
- What do different communities and societies have to offer in terms of insights into this convergence?
- How can human beings achieve a level of social accountability in terms of convergence trends in ICT?
- How can we reflect and theorise together?
- How can we act together in ways that are likely to benefit human societies rather than threaten or challenge them when technologies converge with ICT?

4. Recent publications of interest

Kaplan, D. (2009) Readings in the Philosophy of Technology, Second Edition. Rowman & Littlefield

Schummer, J (2009) Nanotechnologie: Spiele mit Grenzen. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp

Van de Poel, Ibo, and David E. Goldberg, eds. 2009. Philosophy and engineering. An emerging agenda. Dordrecht: Springer. Associate editors: Michael Davis, Billy Vaughn Koen, Carl Mitcham and P. Aarne Vesilind.

Tavani, H. (2010) Ethics and Technology: Controversies, Questions, and Strategies for Ethical Computing, third edition. John Wiley and Sons.

Asveld, L. and Roeser, S. (eds.) (2009), The Ethics of Technological Risk, London: Earthscan

Sassower,R. (2009) Postcapitalism: Moving Beyond Ideology in America's Economic Crises. Boulder and London: Paradigm Publishers

Irrgang, B. (2010) Von der technischen Konstruktion zum technologischen Design: Philosophische Versuche zur Theorie der Ingenieurspraxis" (From the technical Construction to technological design: Philosophical investigation to the theory of engineering practice) Reihe: Technikphilosophie

Ihde, D. (2010) Embodies technics, Automatic Press/VIP

Kaiser, M., Kurath, M, Maasen, S, Rehmannn-Sutter, C. eds (2009): Governing Future Technologies: Nanotechnology and the Rise of an Assessment Regime. Dordrecht, NL: Springer.

 Moore, S. (ed 2010) Pragmatic Sustainability: Theoretical and Practical Tools. Routledge

5. Calls for articles/scripts

Springer philosophy and technology series

It is a pleasure announcing that Springer has launched a new book series on philosophy of technology. This book series, called Philosophy of Engineering and Technology, is open for proposals for edited volumes and monographs on all topics and all approaches in our field. The series has a team of editors that represents these different approaches and will consider and review proposals on their own disciplinary and interdisciplinary merits.

The first publications in the series may be expected in 2010, and from then on I hope it will produce a steady flow of publications per year.

Editor in chief:
Pieter E. Vermaas, Delft University of Technology,

Editors:
David E. Goldberg, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Evan Selinger, Rochester Institute of Technology
Ibo van de Poel, Delft University of Technology

For more information you can contact me or one of the other editors.
Pieter Vermaas, p.e.vermaas@tudelft.nl; http://www.springer.com/series/8657

Science Studies: Call for book reviews

Science Studies is an international peer-reviewed journal dedicated to publishing articles on the study of science and technology studies. Published since 1988, Science Studies is read in over 80 countries around the world.

Our journal welcomes submissions of book reviews that fit into the scope of the journal. You might choose a title from our book list (http://www.sciencestudies.fi/books) or make suggestions of your own.

Please consult the author guidelines at our Web Site (www.sciencestudies.fi). For further information, please contact the editor in charge of the book reviews:

Janne Lehenkari
E-mail: janne.lehenkari AT advansis.fi

6. The 3TU.Centre for Ethics and Technology welcomes new PhD programme

The program of the 3TU.Centre for Ethics and Technology is designed to meet the increasing need for responsible innovation in society and a growing demand for graduates in ethics of technology. The aim of the programme is to investigate the ethical issues emerging during the development, use and regulation of technology. Relevant research areas include:

- ethics and politics of emerging technologies,
- philosophy of risk,
- ethics and engineering design,
- environmental ethics,
- technology and the good life,
- technology and responsibility and
- human enhancement.

The PhD programme consists of a first year of education, in coordination with the PSTS Master programme of Twente University, during which selected students will attend classes taught by internationally leading scholars in philosophy and ethics of technology from the 3TU.Centre for Ethics and Technology. The 1st year of programme consists of course work but is also designed to support students in writing a research proposal in a chosen area of investigation, which will be further developed in the following years up to the completion of a PhD dissertation. After the 1st year of education PhD students are also expected to spend three to six months at one of our partner Universities, among which the Uehiro Centre at Oxford University, the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm and the Centre for Applied Philosophy and Public Ethics of ANU in Melbourne and Canberra.

The 3TU.Centre for Ethics and Technology, in cooperation with the Philosophy of Science, Technology and Society (PSTS) Master Programme of the University of Twente, welcomes applications for the PhD Programme in Ethics of Technology. Application deadline for both EU and non-EU candidates is April 30, 2010.
For further clarifications on the 3TU.Centre for Ethics and Technology, the PhD programme and how to apply please contact the Coordinator of the Centre Dr Claudia Basta. You may also download the full text of the vacancy:
http://www.ethicsandtechnology.eu/images/uploads/Vacancies_announcement_3TU.Ethics_PhD_programme_2010.pdf

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7. Membership and Dues

The Society for Philosophy and Technology is an independent international organization that encourages, supports and facilitates philosophically significant considerations of technology. Founded in 1976, the Society is dedicated to the pluralistic exploration of technology, and welcomes a variety of philosophical and other disciplinary approaches in both its conferences and its publications. The Society publishes Techné: Research in Philosophy and Technology (a scholarly journal), the proceedings of its international conferences, and the quarterly SPT Newsletter.

Membership in the Society for Philosophy and Technology is open to individuals whose work is in keeping with the interests of the Society—including those who have an advanced degree (typically but not necessarily in philosophy), those who work in a technical field, and students whose work includes philosophically significant considerations of technology. More information about SPT and its activities is available at the Society for Philosophy and Technology website.

All membership levels include online access to available issues of Techné: Research in Philosophy and Technology

1) Individual - Regular membership
   Online (Single user license) $65.00
2) Student or Independent Scholar
   Online (Single user license) $45.00
3) Members in Developing Nations
   Online (Single user license) $0.00

8. SPT Officers

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