# Society for Philosophy and Technology

# SPT newsletter

## Volume 34, Number 2 (summer 2010)

## Contents

# 1. President's Column

Dear fellow philosophers of technology,

I am happy to inform you about SPT 2011, our 17th International Conference. The conference will take place at the University of North Texas, May 26-29, 2011.  The theme is Technology and Security.  Please see the website at http://spt2011.unt.edu/.  Security is a major preoccupation in today's world, and increasingly, technologies play a central role in it.  Technologies both help us become more secure and introduce new vulnerabilities.  They play a role in areas like computer and information security, environmental and agricultural security, and military and national security.

The conference is co-directed by Adam Briggle and David Kaplan of the department of the department of philosophy and religion studies of the University of North Texas, and will take place in Denton, Texas.  I have had the pleasure of visiting the department and city this spring.  Denton is a wonderful town, with a great classical town square, many shops, bars and restaurants, and many cultural activities, especially music performances all around town.  It still breathes the feeling of small-town America.  For city dwellers, however, the metropolitan areas of Dallas and Fort Worth are within an hour's distance, with their many museums, shops, and Texan cultural heritage sites.

Adam and David are preparing a great conference that has the full support of their department, which is known for its strength in environmental philosophy and philosophy of technology.  I have every confidence that it will be a great success.  I would like to invite you all to weather the recession and come to Texas to present your work at SPT 2011.

I hope you enjoy this newsletter.

My best wishes to all,

Philip Brey
SPT president

## 2. Note from the newsletter editor on the new portal

Dear all,

Currently we are developing a philosophy of technology portal on the SPT website. This portal aims to provide an "as-complete-as-possible" overview with links of the international interdisciplinary areas of research in which the SPT and its members are involved.

*When the portal will be launched (first week of August), it will be incomplete. We hope that SPT members will contact me to add or alter links.*

The establishment of this portal is part of the 3TEP project of the University of Twente, Colorado School of Mines, and the University of North Texas. The 3TEP project is financed by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO).

Hoping for your input,

Warm regards, Katinka Waelbers

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## 3. Conferences, Workshops, and Lectures

**CALL FOR PAPERS  SPT 2011 TECHNOLOGY AND SECURITY**
**17TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE SOCIETY FOR PHILOSOPHY AND TECHNOLOGY**

**May 26-29, 2011, University of North Texas, Denton, TX, USA**
**https://spt2011.unt.edu/ spt2011@unt.edu**
Deadline for abstracts: November 1, 2010

SPT 2011 welcomes high quality papers and panel proposals in all areas of philosophy of technology. Given the focus of this year's conference, papers and panels dealing with technology and security are especially welcomed. We encourage submissions from an interdisciplinary spectrum, including but not limited to philosophers, engineers, natural scientists, historians, social scientists, and those involved in public or private policymaking. SPT 2011 tracks:

1. Security technology 1: Information, surveillance, and cyber security
2. Security technology 2: Environmental and agricultural security
3. Security technology 3: Terrorism, warfare, and emerging military technologies
4. Development and globalization
5. Technology, justice, and the good life
6. Sustainable technologies, energy, and built environments
7. Philosophy of engineering and design
8. Ethics and Technology
9. Philosophy/history of technology
10. Technology, gender, and culture
11. Biomedical technology, health, and enhancement
12. Religion and technology
13. Media and technology
14. Emerging and converging science and technology
15. Technologies of self and consciousness: drugs, exercise, meditation
16. Reflective engineering

Papers will be accepted on the basis of a submitted abstract, which will be refereed. An abstract must be between 500 and 750 words in length (references excluded) and submitted via email (spt2011@unt.edu) as embedded plain text or an attachment in RTF, WORD, or PDF format. It should also contain the name and number of the track to which the abstract is submitted. If an abstract does not seem to fit with any track, simply note that with the submission. All submissions are welcome, and authors should not feel constrained by the tracks. Abstracts must be submitted no later than November 1, 2010. Authors will be informed of the decision of the referees by January 1, 2011. Paper presentations will be 30 minutes, divided into 20 minutes for presentation and 10 minutes for discussion. Panel Proposals. We will also accept proposals for panel discussions, to be submitted to spt2011@unt.edu by November 1, 2010. Panel proposals must be between 500 and 1,000 words in length, include a statement of the general topic, and an overview of the specific questions or issues to be addressed. In addition, the proposal should include a list of the panelists involved, their expertise in this area, and whether they have indicated that they are willing to participate.

**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.

**CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS: "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?

We welcome contributions with different perspectives on the ICT-related foundations of this conference: ethical, ethnographic, legal and regulatory, philosophical, psychological, social, and socio-economic.

Themes include (but are not limited to):
1. Social, ethical and philosophical reflections on ICT, converging technologies and their societal implications (in a wide array of domains such as health, education, mobility, the greying population, energy, security, and globalization).
2. Case studies on social and ethical issues concerning ICT and converging technologies in areas such as health, education, and mobility.
3. Experiences in design, development and use of ICT-related products and services.
4. The role of citizens, clients and customers in defining and adopting new services, treatments and products based on ICT and converging technologies.

Submission information and dates
Extended abstracts (2-4 pages in length) by February 26, 2010
Notification of acceptance: March 8, 2010
Draft full papers (up to 8 pages) for the Pre-Proceedings: April 1, 2010.

Initial abstracts to be submitted to: p.duquenoy[at]mdx.ac.uk

Student papers
We would especially like to attract students to this conference, and would hope to organise a poster session dedicated to student presentations. Please request your masters or PhD students to submit their extended abstracts for posters by the above date.

Paper selection
Contributions will be selected by the conference Programme Committee, based on an extended abstract review. Accepted draft full papers will be made available to all participants in the conference as Pre-Proceedings. Following the conference, authors will have the opportunity to submit their final full papers for publication in the Conference Proceedings (which it is anticipated will be published by the official IFIP publisher). As far as possible, all papers should have a relationship with ICT.

Conference organisers and programme committee
The conference is being organised by the International Federation for Information Processing's (IFIP) working group 9.2 on computers and social accountability. The programme and organising committees are in the main composed of the working group's members. Expansion of the programme committee is ongoing.

Chair:
Penny Duquenoy (Middlesex University, United Kingdom, IFIP WG 9.2 chair)

Co-Chairs:
Kai Kimppa (Turku University, Finland)
Marc van Lieshout (TNO, Netherlands)
Diane Whitehouse (The Castlegate Consultancy, United Kingdom)

Programme Committee:
Gunilla Bradley, KISTA, Sweden (former IFIP WG9.2 Namur Award winner)

Geoff Busby, Independent consultant, United Kingdom
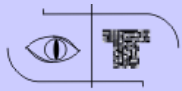Philippe Goujon, FUNDP, Belgium
Vasileios Laopodis, Greek Computer Society, Greece
Véronique Laurent, FTU, Belgium
Bern Martens, Katholieke Hogeschool Leuven, Belgium
Norberto Patrignani, Università Cattolica Milano, Italy
Leif Bloch Rasmussen, Copenhagen Business School, Denmark

Juana Sancho Gil, Universitat de Barcelona, Spain
John Weckert, Australian Institute of Computer Ethics, Australia.

Local organiser:
Franci Pivec [IZUM, Slovenia]

General enquiries to (expect reply within one working week):
Diane Whitehouse: diane.whitehouse[at]thecastlegateconsultancy.com

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## 4. Recent publications of interest

Andrew Feenberg, Between Reason and Experience: Essays in Technology and Modernity, MIT Press 2010

Coenen, C., Gammel, S., Heil, R., Woyke, A. (eds.) (2010) Die Debatte über "Human Enhancement". Historische, philosophische und ethische Aspekte der technologischen Verbesserung des Menschen. Bielefeld: transcript (Science Studies Series)

Michel Puech, Développement durable : un avenir à faire soi-même [Sustainability: a Do-It-Yourself Future] Paris, Le Pommier, 2010.

Wybo Houkes and Pieter E. Vermaas, 2010. Technical Functions: On the Use and Design of Artefacts, Vol. 1 of Philosophy of Engineering and Technology. Dordrecht: Springer.

Erasmus en de vrije val in de techniek: tien visies op denken en doen in een kunstmatige wereld" (In Dutch, English translation "Erasmus and the free fall in technology: ten perspectives on thought and action in an artificial world" to appear in September this year), Bas van Vlijmen (ed.), with contributions of Chris Aalberts, Atze Bosma, Carla Hoekendijk, Pieter Lemmens, Liesbeth Levy, Leo Molenaar, Taco Noorman, Carel Peeters, Roel Pieterman and Corien Prins, Uitgeverij 010, Rotterdam, 2010

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## 5. Report on the Meeting of the Forum for Philosophy, Engineering, and Technology (fPET-2010)

The Forum for Philosophy, Engineering, and Technology (fPET-2010) met on 9-10 May at the Colorado School of Mines in Golden, Colorado for an intensive and intellectually lively meeting at the intersection of philosophy and engineering. Highlights of this meeting, which attracted a number of SPT members and was held in cooperation with SPT and other professional organizations, included 44 papers and two thought-provoking keynote addresses by Stephen Goldman ("Beyond Satisficing: Design, Trade-offs, and the Rationality of Engineering") and Anu Ramaswami (Challenges in Sustainability Engineering—Design for Whom, How, and Why?"). Powerpoints from the keynotes and a number of presentations, as well as the abstract book, can be found at www.philengtech.org.

 Plans for publication of the research presented at fPET 2010 are currently in progress.  The volume from the 2007 Workshop on Philosophy and Engineering (WPE-2007) was just published by Springer (http://www.springer.com/philosophy/epistemology+and+philosophy+of+science/book/978-90-481-2803-7), and Diane Michelfelder, Natasha McCarthy, and David E. Goldberg are working to put together a similar volume or volumes from WPE-2008 (in London), the reflective engineering track at SPT-2009 (at the University of Twente), and fPET-2010. In addition a special issue of Techné on robotics is being edited by John Sullins, based in large part on papers delivered at fPET-2010.

 The Forum on Philosophy, Engineering, and Engineering plans to take a break in 2011, but plans are moving forward for fPET-2012 and a call for proposals will go out shortly seeking a site for that event.  In addition, fPET will "sponsor" a reflective engineering track at SPT-2011 similar to the one held at SPT-2009.

Many thanks go to the members of the fPET-2010 steering committee, the program committee, to Carl Mitcham for his expert hand as chair of local arrangements for fPET-2010, to Jill Savage his assistant, to Xavier Llora, fPET Technology and Web Chair, as well as to all other SPT members who presented papers, chaired sessions, and/or reviewed abstracts and so contributed to the success of this meeting.

David E. Goldberg (deg@illinois.edu)

Diane Michelfelder (Michelfelder@macalester.edu)

## 6. Philosophy & Technology Best Paper Prizes

website: http://www.springer.com/13347
submission: http://www.editorialmanager.com/phte/

Every year, Philosophy & Technology offers up to two prizes, worth 500 each ( 250 in cash and 250 in books published by Springer), awarded to the authors of unpublished research papers that make an outstanding contribution to the field of philosophy and technology broadly conceived. The winning papers are published in Philosophy & Technology. All shortlisted authors are invited to submit their papers for publication in the journal.

The papers are judged in November each year, using the criteria of clarity of presentation, novelty of contents, and potential impact.

All nominations received are assessed by the Editorial Board.

Nominations must be submitted by email to the editorial assistant, Mrs Penny Driscoll (p.j.driscoll2@herts.ac.uk). Each nomination must include the paper (formatted according to the standards of the journal), one letter of support explaining (in no more than 1000 words) how it meets the criteria listed above, and a brief cv of the author(s). Please indicate in the subject of the email: Submission for Philosophy & Technology Best Paper Prize.

Authors are welcome to nominate their own papers.

Submissions for Best Paper Prizes are always welcome. The 1st of November is the closing date for each year competition.

For further information, please contact the editorial assistant, Penny Driscoll (p.j.driscoll2@herts.ac.uk).

## 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

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## 8. SPT Officers

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John Sullins, Sonoma State University

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