

TEC 154 2014S, Class 28: Biotechnology (Discussion)

Overview

- Preliminaries.
 - Admin.
 - Extra credit.
 - The exam.
 - The paper.
- Risks: Dread vs. Knowledge.
- Lenses.
- Other issues.

Preliminaries

Admin

- News on classmates.
- Note takers: EG, JV
 - Do you find the "five key points" useful, or should I discontinue this practice?
 - We may wish we had them at exam time.
- Apologies for being behind in grading. College paperwork and the CSC 207 exam took my whole weekend. I had expected to complete the CSC 207 exam on Saturday, but I didn't finish grading until 11 pm on Sunday. (Isn't it nice to know that faculty can be as overworked as students?)
- I've rearranged the schedule a bit to accommodate some faculty requests.
- Wednesday's reading: V. Bush, "As We May Think"
 - Sam is likely to ask meta questions
 - What is "The Atlantic"? Who is the audience?
 - Why did I ask you to read this?
- Friday's reading: Read "The Prize is right" and "Big Prize" in the ebook.
- Fun things, no extra credit
 - Rachel Rose '01 did some of the special effects technology for Noah.
 - Previews suggest that there's yet another movie with the same concerns as Bill Joy this summer.

Extra Credit

- "Pioneer Weekend is a three day event, sponsored by the Wilson Program and Grinnell AppDev, that is being organized to take place this month from April 18th - 20th. The objective of this event is to bring together student innovators from different backgrounds, to work together in teams of 3-6 people and complete a prototype of an idea that they come up with at the event."
<http://www.strikingly.com/pioneerweekend>

- CS extra Thursday at 4:30 here: Software to enhance wellness: The DavisJan team.

The Exam

- I'm happy to take any general questions about the examination.

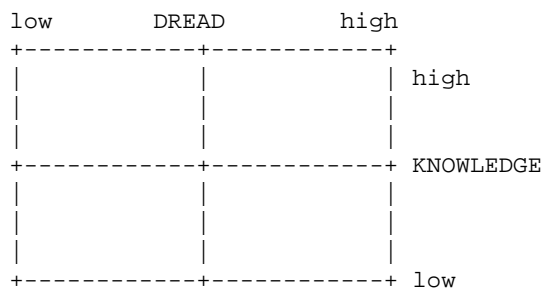
The Paper and Presentation and ...

- We'll go over the handout
- We'll make sure that everyone has a group.

Five Points from JV

1. The Dread vs. Knowledge model is effective at mapping and preparing attitudes towards technologies.
2. Attitudes towards technologies can differ immensely according to what population of people they belong to.
 - a. Monsanto creates GM products that are advantageous to agriculture
 - b. Monsanto drives a lot of small farmers out of business by suing them for "stealing" their crops [Well ... I don't think that there's evidence of that. But big farming does drive smaller farmers out of business.]
3. Question to consider: How does the growth of genetically engineered organisms affect the greater populations' views on technology?
 - a. The relationship between society, technology, and social change
4. Question to consider: How do similar problems manifest themselves in different realms of technology?
 - a. Ex: Joy's view on GM foods. Would he have the same concerns?
 - b. Yes, though GM and AI problems are different.
5. Questions to consider: Do GMs change the politics/values of agriculture? What would you think?

Risks: Dread vs. Knowledge



- Pick about four technologies that Prof. Robertson discussed.
- Pick a few different audiences (e.g., members of your group, American citizens, European politicians, Monsanto employees/VPs, Michael Pollan, ...)
- Plot the technology/group on the chart.
- We'll discuss your placement.

Some placements of genetically engineered crops.

- Claim: American citizens have high dread and low knowledge of GenEng crops. Evidence? Lots of movies about it; sounds that way from people we talk to.
 - Note: "Knowledge" can be interpreted in two ways: Is it what the individual knows, or what the individual believes is known? Sam prefers the later.
- Counter claim: American citizens have middle dread and middle knowledge of genetically engineered crops.
- Counter claim: American senators have low dread and believe we have good knowledge of Roundup ready crops.
 - General US policy principle: If we don't know it's harmful, we believe it's safe.
 - Certainly,

Side notes:

- Monsanto is also part of "big farming", which drives a lot of small farmers out of business (who then may become workers for the Monsanto factory)

Applying the Lenses

What lenses would be fun to consider? We'll choose a few together and then explore them.

- Are there any genetically engineered technologies that Berry would like? Why?
 - And yes, Berry probably got referenced in the papers we were reading.
- How does the growth of genetically engineered organisms (plans and other) affect the greater populations' views on technology.
- What failures would Florm says that Monsanto heroically triumphed over?
- What would Joy say about the ability of genetic eng crops to grow outside of our control?
 - There are concerns about the effects on the human body.
 - AI is a very different problem.
 - But crops are unruly, so there is a similar lack of control.
- What would Pool say the politics of this are?

Copyright (c) 2014 Samuel A. Rebelsky.



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, 543 Howard Street, 5th Floor, San Francisco, California, 94105, USA.