

STV *newsletter*

Centre for Society, Technology and Values

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CSTV Announces

New Undergraduate Research Assistantship

CSTV is launching a novel student award in the Spring 1992 term. The Beynon Research Assistantship, which has a cash value of \$600, will be awarded to a UW engineering undergraduate.

Its purpose is to increase engineering students' awareness of the relationship between engineering and humanitarian values. In discussing why the Beynon Endowment is supporting this new endeavour, Dr. W. Douglas Beynon explained, "Engineering and engineers affect people and we want to see more conscious effort to make things better. It is important that engineering students and engineers develop a vision which goes beyond technical innovation and capabilities."

CSTV Director Dr. Norman R. Ball sees the award as an exciting new opportunity that ideally suits the Centre's mandate. "Historically speaking, much engineering has developed to solve problems and help people make their lives better. For example, consider both the potential, and the achievements, of engineering as a means of improving the lives of the handicapped. Yet probably very few engineering students see this."

Dr. Ball is very pleased with the partnership and explained that "it has the potential to reinforce what we are trying to do in STV courses. I hope ideas from Beynon Research Assistantships will help us become better teachers and our students better and more humane engineers."

Dr. Beynon is a UW Engineering Alumnus and President of Waterloo Engineering Software. On behalf of the Beynon family, he worked with CSTV to create the Beynon Research Assistantship. The Beynon family, Dr. Beynon and Dr. Ball all want the Assistantship to reward and reinforce the idea that engineering students should give priority to human and social values in their professional work. They are looking for action pointing the way to the future.

The new award, funded jointly by the Beynon Endowment and CSTV, is directed towards students who want to pursue an idea or issue pertaining to the interplay between engineering and society.

Applicants will be asked to submit a typed one-page proposed action plan. One student will be selected for the assistantship in the upcoming spring academic term. The student will be expected to devote five hours a week to implementing the action plan.

There is a tradition of undergraduate research assistantships in the Engineering Faculty but this one is different. It is not based on marks; it is not designed to help professors with their research. It is based solely on student ideas. As Dr. Beynon said, "We want students to think about these issues and how to start making an impact. What we are really talking about is empowerment."

Funding for the assistantship has been approved for the next six terms.

It honours William John Beynon (1911-88), a chemical engineer who spent most of his career with Imperial Oil and was plant manager of Imperial's Sarnia refinery for many years. He is remembered for both his humane management style within the company and his leadership in applying his skills to humanitarian efforts in developing one of the first Rotary Children's Centres in Ontario and in Board activities with St. Joseph's Hospital and the Sarnia General Hospital.

For more information on the Beynon Research Assistantship, contact the Centre for Society, Technology and Values at (519) 885-1211, ext. 6215. Fax (519) 746-4791. Application forms are available from the CSTV office in Davis Centre, room 2608.

STV 100: Large Enrolment, Two Sections

Student registrations in the Winter 1992 edition of STV 100 are up considerably from the previous running of the course last spring. More than 150 are registered, and two sections are being offered. Close to half the students are in Engineering with the majority of the remainder from *Environmental Studies, Mathematics and Science*. Two cross-registered students from Wilfrid Laurier University are also taking the course.

Instructors for the two sections are Dr. DARYL PULLMAN and Dr. JIM MACLACHLAN. Assistance is provided by undergraduate students Sarah Arulanandam and Calvin Lantz as well as ITRC manager Doug Powell and former CSTV staff member Steve Jones. MacLachlan taught a *previous STV/Liberal Science course on communications, technology and society*.

First scheduled five years ago, and still the most popular course on the Centre's roster, STV 100 is the initial step for students wanting the full STV Option. The Option is a mixture of STV "core" and "theme package" courses. Since 1987, almost 700 students have taken STV 100, with 24 currently completing the Option.

"We are delighted that word of STV is spreading," says CSTV Director NORMAN BALL. "We think our courses are valuable for all UW students."

For more information on STV 100 and other STV courses, contact Kathy Sharpe at ext. 6215.

Centre Publishes Course Workbook

The Centre has published a course workbook for STV 100. The 85-page publication is having a trial run in the Winter 1992 iterations of the course. Intended for use "before, during and after class," the Workbook parallels the traditional order and treatment of STV 100 topics. It starts with definitions, continues with a variety of topics such as the relationship of technology to work, the media and contemporary medicine, and finishes with a "perspectives on the future" section.

Follow-up questions, generous white space for note-making and Victorian illustrations to introduce each of the eleven sections, are among the Workbook's features. The publication, edited and designed by Steve Jones and produced by Kathy Sharpe, is based on materials collected and refined over several years, plus a lecture manuscript provided by STV instructor Dr. Daryl Pullman.

The Centre was assisted in this project by a grant from the Teaching Resources and Continuing Education office (TRACE). The Workbook will be evaluated by students and faculty at the end of term. Copies are available in the CSTV office for only \$12.00, GST included -- call ext. 6215.

New and Familiar Faces on the Winter '92 Teaching Team

SARAH ARULANANDAM, a third year Mechanical Engineering student and a valuable member of the STV team last year, will assist Dr. Daryl Pullman in Section 01 of STV 100 this Winter. Also assisting Pullman is CALVIN LANTZ, a UW Philosophy student taking the STV Option. He expects to complete his undergraduate degree in the Spring.

DOUG POWELL, site manager for UW's Information Technology Research Centre, is a teaching assistant for Dr. Jim MacLachlan. New to the STV teaching team, Powell has a background in biochemistry, with a specialization in molecular biology and genetics. He is also a freelance science writer who appears in the *Globe and Mail* and *Science*.

STEVE JONES, a former CSTV staff member, is assisting in STV 100 as well as working on special projects for CSTV Director Norman Ball.

Centre Publishes New Brochure

Want to know more about STV courses? Or about the STV Option? The Centre's new brochure outlines the rationale and contents of STV core and theme package courses. The core courses now comprise STV 100 and 400. Also available are STV 200 (Group Projects), 201 A-Z (*Special Topics*) and STV 401 A-Z (*Advanced Topics*). Theme package courses are selected from a wide variety of approved offerings given by various UW departments.

All UW undergraduate advisors have received copies. For additional copies -- or for other STV materials such as syllabi and reading lists -- call Kathy Sharpe at ext. 6215.

Two New Courses on the Centre's Roster

Design and Society (STV 202) will be offered for the first time in Fall '92. Taught by CSTV Director Norman Ball, the course will examine the development of historical and contemporary design to identify key factors and variables and the impact of changing them. Design is seen as a means of understanding the mutual interaction between technology and society. The course will be offered in an evening slot and there is no prerequisite required.

Ball will be teaching a second new course, *Engineering, Technology and Canadian Society* (STV 402) in the Winter '93 term. Through an appreciation of the roles of engineering and technology in defining and expressing Canada, the course will introduce and examine some of the principles, patterns, factors, choices and consequences of the mutual interaction between technology, engineering and society. Also offered in the evening, this course is intended for third- and fourth-year students.

Hagey Lecturer Promotes CSTV

Dr. Abbyann Lynch, Director of Bioethics at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children, gave CSTV a plug when she visited campus several months ago.

After surveying some of the social and ethical issues in her wide-ranging Hagey lecture, "Biotechnology and Bioethics: Collaboration or Combat," she urged universities and schools to educate students about both the technology and the social concerns it raises. She noted that UW has a special responsibility in this regard because of expertise available through the Centre.

In an address attended by 300 people, Lynch spoke of the desirability of a "combative collaboration" between biotechnology and bioethics, since the two fields "complement and enrich" each other. She surveyed the social implications of agri-genetic plant alterations, artificial vanilla flavour (a development that could seriously affect the economy of Madagascar), human reproductive cell alteration, and "pharm" animals (hybrids such as the British goat-sheep and the Harvard mouse).

While on campus, Lynch also participated in a CSTV roundtable discussion on the practice of bioethics at the Hospital for Sick Children. She was formerly the director of the Westminster Institute for Ethics and Human Values in London, Ontario.

Wiegand Award Nomination Deadline Approaches

The third Wiegand Award for Canadian Excellence is scheduled to be presented this fall. The deadline for this year's nominations is 31 MAY 1992.

The Award aims to recognize outstanding contributions to humanizing science, technology or engineering by Canadians or permanent residents of Canada. Previous recipients are Dr. David Suzuki (1990) and Dr. Ursula Franklin (1989).

This year's Award Committee consists of Jeffery Wiegand of the Wiegand Foundation, CSTV's director, NORMAN BALL and Advisory Board members RUSSEL LEGGE (Religious Studies) and BARRY WILLS (Systems Design Engineering.) *The Committee would like to emphasize that it is interested in nomination of people in all stages of career development and from all walks of life.*

The recipient will receive a cash award of \$2,500 at the University of Waterloo with travel costs paid for by the Wiegand Foundation.

For further information or to obtain nomination forms, please contact the Centre at ext. 6215.

A Good Book is Hard to Find:

A review of *Science, Technology and Society* by Robert E. McGinn

"Wordy." "Hard to read." "Boring."

The 'nays' have it. Students in the fall '91 offering of STV 200 found McGinn's book boring and hard to read. A few said they found themselves reading the same passages three or four times because their minds were constantly wandering away from the text. One student even skipped several chapters to avoid dealing with McGinn's writing style.

However, not all opinions were negative. Some found that McGinn's attempt to survey the entire science, technology and society (STS) field contained interesting concepts and related some great anecdotes. This didn't keep others from perceiving the book as a bit dogmatic and biased at times, though.

Overall, it would be difficult to recommend McGinn's *Science, Technology and Society* as an introductory text for students of the field. It fails to capture the reader's interest, or to hold it for more than a few pages at a time. Of the book's 275 pages of text, the first 230 are spent defining and classifying STS terms. The last 70-odd pages, where McGinn begins to discuss modern society's influence on science and technology are marginally more interesting.

For the most part, the book reads like an STS encyclopedia. But if viewed as an encyclopedia, rather than as an introductory text, McGinn's book has some merit. Having muddled through the initial reading, the student now has a useful reference work which addresses a wide range of STS issues. The book may well serve the student later as a starting point in research.

However, if the book's purpose is to excite a student's interest, to promote society, technology and values studies, to draw students into the wonderfully challenging and complex world of social and technological dynamics, then it fails.

Perhaps had I not been looking for an introductory text, but instead had been prepared for an encyclopedia, I would have found McGinn's *Society, Technology and Society* more to my liking. Unfortunately, this does not make the book any more pleasurable to read.

The 'nays' still have it.

Todd Ruthman
4B Systems Design Engineering

Calendar of Events

March 6, 7, 1992

1st Annual Meeting
Association for Practical and Professional Ethics
Indiana University
Indianapolis, Indiana

Topics under discussion: ethics in academe, business, medicine, computer science, the environment, international development and engineering. Keynote address by Michael Walzer, author of *Just and Unjust Wars* and *Spheres of Justice*.

Registration fee: \$135.00 US for tenured faculty
\$100.00 US for untenured faculty
Information: (812) 855-0261

March 19, 1992

Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide: Ethical, Legal and Social Perspectives
Parkwood Hospital Auditorium
London, Ontario

Discussion and debate about current moral, legal and social issues related to the end of life. These issues will be addressed by speakers representing a variety of disciplines and perspective.

Registration fee: \$35.00 (\$45.00 after March 1)
Information: Westminster Institute for Ethics and Values
(519) 673-0046

April 23, 24, 1992

Access '92
Access and Privacy in the Global Environment
Ottawa Congress Centre
Ottawa, Ontario

A comparative training session and conference on access laws.

Registration fee: \$401.25
Information: (416) 593-7352
FAX (416) 593-0249

May 25, 26, 1992

5th Annual Instructional Show & Tell
University of Guelph
Guelph, Ontario

Sharing effective teaching strategies and innovations via presentations and poster viewing.

Registration fee: \$60.00 Canadian
Information: (519) 824-4120, ext. 3106
FAX: (519) 767-1251

June 11-13, 1992

International Conference
Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers
Society for the Social Implications of Technology
Ryerson Polytechnical Institute
Toronto, Ontario

Conference themes : Computers and interactive media as transdisciplinary knowledge tools and methods; Tools for cultural transdisciplinary knowledge.

Registration fee: \$150.00 Canadian
Information: (416) 694-8385

June 12, 1992

Ethics in Geriatrics: Clinical, Community and Research Issues
Baycrest Centre for Geriatric Care
North York, Ontario

The one-day conference will explore ethical challenges and concerns from the perspectives of a variety of healthcare professionals dealing with the rapidly growing elderly population. Presentations from four internationally known authorities in the areas of philosophy, law, medicine and medical health will be held.

Registration fee: \$135.00
\$60.00 (students)
Information: (416) 789-5131, ext. 2365

June 15 - 26, 1992

Computer Workshop
Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers
Society for the Social Implications of Technology
George Brown College
Toronto, Ontario

Workshop participants will form teams to complete hardware and software projects in areas such as humanities, engineering and ecology.

Registration fee: \$150.00 Canadian
Information: (416) 694-8385

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This issue produced by K. Sharpe and S. Jones

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