



CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

ASSOCIATION for the RHETORIC of SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

ANNUAL SEMINAR

Chicago, IL

Wednesday, November 11, 2009

(held as a pre-conference preceding the National Communication Association convention)

NEW TECHNOLOGIES: RISKS, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND RHETORIC

The fate of any new technology relies at least as much on its rhetorical crafting as on its scientific merits. Public reactions to genetically engineered foods illustrate how, once embroiled in public discussion, technological innovations embark on trajectories carved by patterns of discourse. Popular culture abounds with storylines, images, and tropes of technological dangers. Films, novels, television programs, and other cultural artifacts invite reflection on the relationships between scientific bases for technologies and the public decision-making apparatus that guides whether and how to implement the technologies. Evaluating any technology, whether newly emergent or newly revisited, also raises questions about the rhetorical aspects of risk construction. How do or how should different constituencies construct and evaluate not only the degree of risk but the very definition of risk itself? On an ethical level, what sorts of communication practices might guide public discussions about controversial technologies? How can the implementation of new technologies provide a civil common ground for engagements between scientists, financial investors, end users, and other stakeholders? To what extent might a more refined rhetorical awareness improve humanity's ability to manage its own creations rather than be manipulated by them?

This year's theme invites scholarly discussion of issues such as:

- The role of dialogue in discussions of technology
- Public engagement with technological innovations
- Communication aspects of particular developments or trends, such as nanotechnology
- How expertise and trust operate in deliberations about technological developments
- Analysis of case studies that illustrate triumphs and tragedies associated with adoptions of new technologies
- Framing of new technologies in popular or scientific discourse
- ...and many more possibilities...

Proposals may employ any methodological or theoretical approach. We especially invite interdisciplinary work. Student submittals and student-faculty collaborations are welcome. Send 1-2 page abstracts of sessions or individual presentations by **June 10, 2009** to Roy Schwartzman, University of North Carolina at Greensboro: docroy@triad.rr.com (www.roypoet.com). For more information about ARST, visit our web site at <http://arst.grad.uiowa.edu/>.