THE TECHNOLIFE METHOD

The TECHNOLIFE method maps ethical issues at early stages of S&T and represents social imaginaries relating to these issues. It is a suite of exploratory, qualitative and quantitative steps:

1. A scoping exercise that defines **hot topics** in relation to the technological fields. Hot topics are issues of concern that involve unsolved social, moral or political tensions and that are immature for regulatory definition and resolution.

2. Deliberation within **KerTechno**, our specially designed online open-source software in which citizens and stakeholders discuss the hot topics. The purpose of the deliberation exercise is to elicit arguments, concerns, imaginaries and alternative frames of understanding with respect to central policy issues seen in the light of broader cultural developments.

3. An online KerTechno **voting system**, allowing for quantitative analysis of results.

4. A qualitative, analytical procedure that identifies the **arguments, concerns, imaginaries and alternative frames of understanding** elicited by the participatory exercise and defines their relation and relevance to early stages of S&T and policy development.

Both the theoretical framework underlying it and its balance between approaches are essential features that give TECHNOLIFE its innovative character and robustness.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

CAPACITIES

TECHNOLIFE is a research project on the ethics of emerging science and technology, coordinated by the University of Bergen. Its partners include Univ. of Copenhagen, Lancaster Univ., Univ. of Manchester, Univ. de Versailles-St.Quentin-en-Yvelines, Univ. of Tartu, Univ. Autònoma de Barcelona and EC-Joint Research Centre (Ispra, Italy)

Project 230381: TECHNOLIFE—a Transdisciplinary approach to the Emerging CHallenges of NOvel technologies: Lifeworld and Imaginaries in Foresight and Ethics. Funded 2009-2011 by FP7-SCIENCE-IN-SOCIETY and coordinated by the University of Bergen, Norway. See http://www.technolife.no

TECHNOLIFE on YouTube:
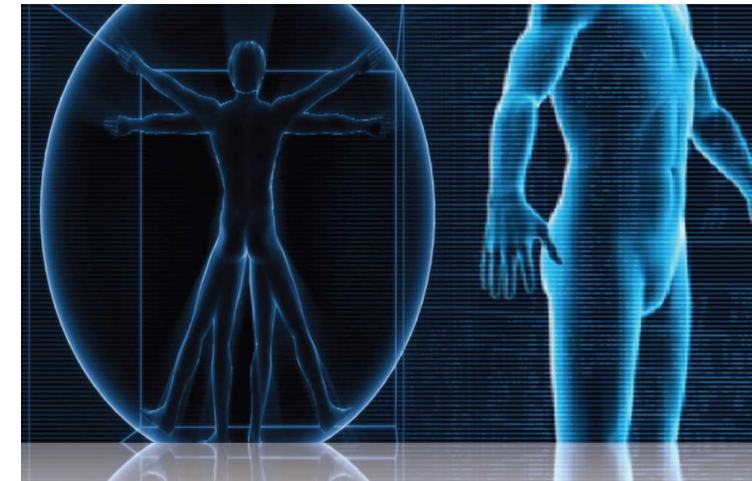http://www.youtube.com/TechnolifeDebate

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TECHNOLIFE: Ethics with People

Integration of participation and dialogue into ethical frameworks for emerging science and technology

Key Results

BIOMETRICS, GIS AND HUMAN ENHANCEMENT: HOT TOPICS

In the study of **biometrics** and the changing configurations of public and private, the following hot topics were identified: **Social justice, Surveillance and privacy, and Trust in technology and in government.**

In the case of **Geographical Imaging Systems**, the following hot topics were identified: **Trust in maps and images, Surveillance and privacy, and Equality and power.**

In the case of **Converging technologies** and the future of the human body, the following hot topics were identified: **The relationship between normality and perfection, Freedom of choice and social difference, and Change in the life-cycle and life-span of individuals and the human species.**

… scary developments. I would not want to live in such a world and I do not believe in human perfection. (ICT2010 participant upon watching our videos)

iotechnology, neuroscience, informatics. ll of these knowledge fields will soon conver

technOlife

SOCIAL JUSTICE, EQUALITY AND POWER

Citizens are concerned with **social justice, equality and power** when discussing emerging science and technology. This is a robust finding. Even if we as researchers framed the discussion otherwise, the citizens returned to social justice, equality and power.

This is important to of ethical frameworks. First, there are **issues** that should be attended to more than now. Secondly, the **frame** of social justice, equality and power should be given be more importance when discussing "conventional" ethical issues such as autonomy, privacy and beneficence.

THE FEELING OF BEING "BLOCKED FROM ABOVE"

If institutions are perceived not to address concerns of social justice in a satisfactory manner – if people feel **blocked, discouraged, fooled or obstructed by governments, authorities or private companies**, as we have evidence to believe – they will find other ways of addressing their concerns and needs. When the young and technologically proficient perceive current legal and ethical regimes of intellectual property rights to be obsolete, they will develop creative ways around them.

SOCIAL DESIRABILITY AS PART OF RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Questions of good practice, social desirability, precaution, codes of conduct etc presuppose a culture of **honourableness and good faith** – of honest **dialogue** and voluntary agreements between honourable people – in science in society. TECHNOLIFE has shown that such a culture can be achieved in an online forum, given that the appropriate methodology is applied.

… in this era of rapid and sweeping advancement, we see the old world struggling to guide and restrain the process of advancement into the new (next?) world. Recording companies howl bloody murder in the old courts about people "stealing their livelihood" by making and distributing pirate copies of their intellectual properties. Yesterday's telephone companies become today's facilitators of information and entertainment access. World governments gnash their teeth at the possibility of new technologies sparking sweeping economic change and the dashing of the old world's entrenched economic power structures. Change will happen according to the will and abilities of the masses, regardless of the old world sensibilities, («Rockpiler», TECHNOLIFE Forum participant).