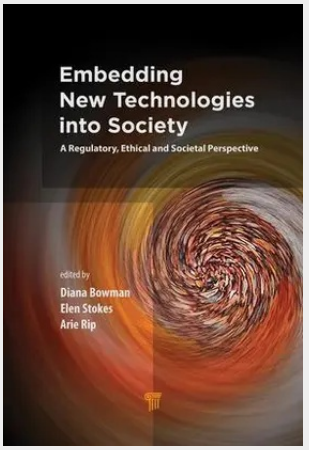
Bowman / Stokes / Rip

Embedding New Technologies into Society

A Regulatory, Ethical and Societal Perspective



The embedding of any new technologies in society is challenging. The evolving state of the scientific art, often-unquantifiable risks and ill-defined developmental trajectories have the potential to hinder innovation and/or the commercial success of a technology. The are, however, a number of tools that can now be utilized by stakeholders to bridge the chasm that exists between the science and innovation dimensions on the one hand, and the societal dimensions on the other. This edited volume will draw together leading researchers from the domains of law, philosophy, political science, public administration and the natural sciences in order to demonstrate how tools such as, for example, constructive technology assessment, regulatory governance and societal scenarios, may be employed by stakeholders to assist in successfully embedding new technologies into society. This volume will focus primarily on the embedding of two emergent and emerging technologies: nanotechnologies and synthetic biology. Government, industry and the epistemic community continue to struggle with how best to balance the promised benefits of an emerging technology with concerns about its potential impacts. There is a growing body of literature that has examined these challenges from various cultural, scientific and jurisdictional dimensions. There is, however, much work that still needs to be done; this includes articulating the successes and failures of attempts to the societal embedding of technologies and their associated products. This edited volume is significant and timely, as unlike other books currently on the market, it shall draw from real work experiences and experiments designed anticipate the societal embedding of emerging technologies. This empirical work shall be supported by robust theoretical underpinnings.

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