Research Project

Summary

In Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Victor Frankenstein warns Robert Walton: "Learn from me, if not by my precepts, at least by my example, how dangerous is the acquirement of knowledge" (47). Though separated by nearly 200 years, we live in a world not all dissimilar from the one in which Shelley lived. Though folks in her day obviously didn't have an iPhone at the ready any time something needed to be looked up, there existed a curiosity coupled with an expanding capability to invent, create, and discover. This blend of inquisitiveness and technology drives our contemporary society.

Still, as we have discussed at length, the pursuit of knowledge, while fascinating and necessary, can be dangerous. **For this project, you will explore some of major advances currently occurring in science and technology and try to determine what dangers it could bring for humanity.** Each group will have a different topic to explore and examine. At the conclusion of the research project, each group will be responsible for making and giving an in-class presentation on their findings.

Process

In order to complete this project responsibly and effectively, you will need to be thorough and organized. You will want to consider all necessary areas of the given topic (the standard who, what, when, where, why). You need to determine *what* it is before you can determine *how* it may affect us.

What to do…

I.   Assign responsibilities
   a. Each group is in charge of determining individual responsibilities. After each group has determined who will be accountable for what, they will submit a breakdown of responsibilities, which I will then approve or modify. All members **must** have equal responsibility.

II.   Gather information
   a. You may use any resource available to you. I assume that many of you will go straight to Google. This is fine. However, you must consider what is a reliable source and what isn't. (For example, Bob's Big Bad Science Page is likely not a trustworthy source of information.)
   b. Use Edmodo to share links and findings with other group members.

III.   Collaborate
   a. As you get a grasp on what you're researching, begin to discuss with your group members the larger question this project seeks to address: What are the potentially dangerous implications of this development? Try to address this question on a philosophical level.

IV.   Create an interesting and creative way to present your findings to the rest of the class
   a. Presentations must feature a shareable visual component with all gathered information. Do not limit yourself to a boring Powerpoint. Consider making a blog, or a webpage.
   b. Presentations must be given in class, on a specific date I will assign. All group members must be present and participate in the presentation. No exceptions.

Guidelines
Proposal of individual responsibilities: February 28th
In-class presentations begin: March 17th

Each group must use a minimum of five sources, which must be clearly cited in your finished project. All research must be completed under the agreement of the Honor Code: You may not simply copy from the Internet.

In additional to the final project, each individual group member must submit a report of their findings. The report should provide some insight into your own research process, and what information you discovered.

More information will be provided

Topics for Exploration
Note: These topics are complicated (and controversial). I do not expect you to completely understand them all, nor do I want a rationalization about whether the issue is right or wrong. This should be almost entirely an objective assignment: Gather information, and then analyze its worldly implications. Avoid moralizing and dogmatizing.

DNA/Genome Mapping
Michael
Jiho
Richkisha
Elena

Quantum Theory/Theory of Everything
Charlie
Lauren
Kyra
Marjorie
Noah

Drones/Amazon Prime Air
Varda
Kirk
Qwali
Christine U.

Virgin Galactic/Civilian Space Travel
Tristan
Brianna M.
Alyssa
Regina

Google X
Niye
Angelica
AJ
Kasandra

Higgs Boson
Justine
Sabrina
Catherine
Melissa L.
Eric

Data Collection/Targeted Advertising
Kaylee
Christine
Ethan
Daniel
Melissa R.

Mobile Technology
Brianna C.
Andrew
Kate
Ricky