

# Social Expectations and Biotech Developments

***Ruth SCHWARTZ COWAN***  
***University of Pennsylvania, United States***



# Expectations and biotech developments

- Though it is hard not to fall into this way of thinking, the path of technology is not set in advance.
- Projections of the future routinely turn out to be mistaken for technological & societal reasons.
- All the same, these projections are crucial since they can have a significant influence over the future.

# The path of technology is not pre-ordained.

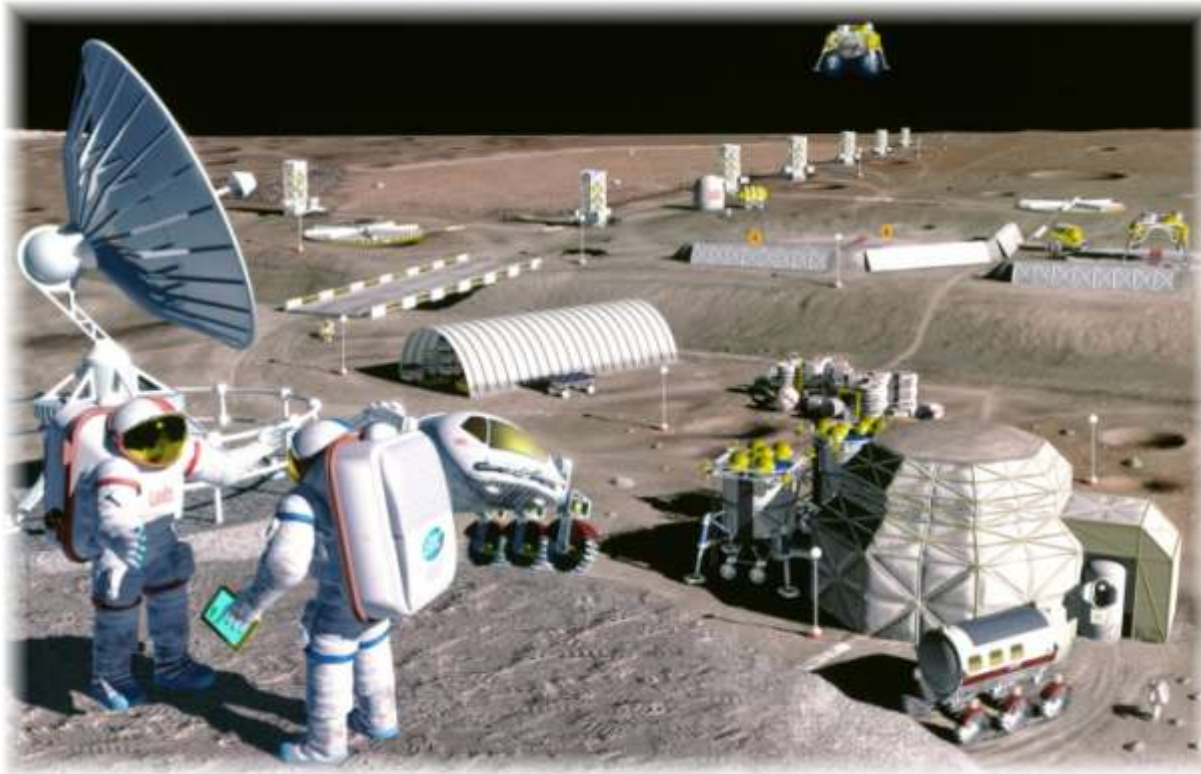


[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fremont\\_Fair\\_2007\\_Art\\_car\\_03.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fremont_Fair_2007_Art_car_03.jpg)

the role of  
consumers

just what is  
“better” anyway?

# Projections into the future routinely turn out to be mistaken for technological & societal reasons



<http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mooncolony.jpg>

**Expectations are crucial since they can have a significant influence over the future.**

Firms, politicians, pressure groups, academics are all engaged in generating expectations.

Expectations are not insulated from the world they are trying to “predict”.