



## Robert McGinn

Professor (Teaching) of Management Science and Engineering, Emeritus

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### Bio

#### BIO

Robert McGinn is Professor (Teaching) Emeritus of Management Science and Engineering (MS&E), and of Science, Technology, and Society (STS). He received a B.S. in Unified Science and Engineering at Stevens Institute of Technology in 1963, a M.S. in mathematics at Stanford in 1965, and a Ph.D. in philosophy and humanities, also at Stanford, in 1969. Apart from a year at Bell Laboratories in 1978-79, where he directed its Science and Society Program, McGinn was at Stanford from 1971 to 2019.

McGinn's general research area is technology and society, a field devoted to study of social, cultural, ethical, and policy issues raised by developments in science and technology. His specific research area is ethics, science, and technology, a specialty within applied ethics that explores ethical issues raised by developments in contemporary engineering and science, and ethical issues raised by the diffusion of technical innovations in society.

McGinn's publications include SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND SOCIETY (Prentice-Hall, 1990), and articles in scholarly journals such as Professional Ethics; Technology and Culture; Science, Technology, and Human Values; Science and Engineering Ethics; and Nanoethics. His book, THE ETHICAL ENGINEER: Contemporary Concepts and Cases, was published by Princeton University Press in 2018.

From 1995 to 2011, Prof. McGinn served as director or co-director of Stanford's Science, Technology, and Society (STS) Program. He was a long-time member of the STS Executive Board and served as an STS Faculty Fellow from 2014-2017. For over two decades, McGinn was a member of the School of Engineering's Undergraduate Council and coordinated the School of Engineering's Technology in Society (TiS) Requirement.

From 2004 to 2014, McGinn conducted research on ethical issues related to nanotechnology for the National Nanotechnology Infrastructure Network (NNIN), for which he served as Ethics Investigator. He was also Social and Ethical Issues Coordinator for the Stanford Nanofabrication Facility (SNF). From 2004-07, he conducted a large-scale study of the views of researchers working in nanotech laboratories at thirteen U.S. universities about ethical issues related to their work.

McGinn received research grants from the Mellon Foundation, the Marshall Fund, and the National Endowment for the Humanities. In 1996, he received the Stanford Tau Beta Pi Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching. In 1997, he received the Dinkelspiel Award for Exceptional Contributions to Undergraduate Education and the Perin Award for Undergraduate Engineering Education.

In April 2019, McGinn was appointed Adjunct Professor in the Department of Biochemistry and Biophysics in the School of Medicine at U.C. San Francisco. He is Lead Ethics Investigator and Coordinator for the Center for Cellular Construction.

## ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- Emeritus Faculty, Acad Council, Management Science and Engineering

## HONORS AND AWARDS

- Member, Tau Beta Pi
- Associate Member, Sigma Xi
- Recipient, National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Stipend
- Recipient, Andrew J. Mellon Foundation Faculty Research Grant (1977)
- Recipient, Norwegian Marshall Fund Grant for Visiting Faculty (1989)
- Phi Beta Kappa Undergraduate Teaching Prize, California Beta Chapter, Stanford University (1996)
- Tau Beta Pi Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, California Gamma Chapter, Stanford University (1996)
- Recipient, Perin Award for Undergraduate Engineering Education (1997)
- Recipient, Dinkelspiel Award For Exceptional Contributions to Undergraduate Education (1997)

## PROGRAM AFFILIATIONS

- Science, Technology and Society

## PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

- PhD, Stanford , Philosophy and Humanities (1969)
- MS, Stanford , Mathematics (1965)
- BS, Stevens Institute of Technology , Unified Science and Engineering (1963)

## Research & Scholarship

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### CURRENT RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY INTERESTS

exploration of ethical issues related to nanotechnology

## Publications

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### PUBLICATIONS

- **Startup Ethics: Ethically Responsible Conduct of Scientists and Engineers at Theranos.** *Science and engineering ethics*  
McGinn, R. E.  
2022; 28 (5): 39
- **"Discernment and Denial: Nanotechnology Researchers' Recognition of Ethical Responsibilities Related to Their Work"** *NanoEthics*  
McGinn, R.  
2013; 7 (2): 93-105
- **"Ethical Responsibilities of Nanotechnology Researchers: A Short Guide"** *NanoEthics*  
McGinn, R.  
2010; 4 (1): 1-12
- **"What Is Different, Ethically, About Nanotechnology? Foundational Questions and Answers"** *NanoEthics*  
McGinn, R.  
2010; 4 (2): 115-128

- **"Ethics and Nanotechnology: Views of Nanotechnology Researchers"** *NanoEthics*  
McGinn, R.  
2008; 2 (2): 101-131
- **"Mind the Gaps": An Empirical Approach to Engineering Ethics, 1997-2001"** *Science and Engineering Ethics*  
McGinn, R.  
2003; 9 (3): 1-26
- **What Makes Safety In the Nanotech Lab an 'Ethical Issue'?**  
Robert, M.  
2011
- **"The Art of the Invisible: Achievements, Social Benefits, and Challenges of Nanotechnology"** *Frontiers of Knowledge*  
Tiwari, S., McGinn, R.  
Fundación BBVA.2008: 93–101
- **"Ethical Issues in Nanoscience and Nanotechnology: Reflections and Suggestions"** *Nanotechnology: Social Implications II -- Individual Perspectives*  
McGinn, R.  
Springer.2006: 169–172
- **Ethical Issues in Nanoscience and Nanotechnology: Reflections and Suggestions** *Nanotechnology: Social Implications II - Individual Perspectives*  
McGinn, R.  
edited by Roco, Mihail, C., Bainbridge, William, S.  
Springer.2006: 169–172
- **"Ethical Issues Faced By Water Professionals: Some Tools for Analysis"** *Navigating Rough Waters: Ethical Issues in the Water Industry*  
McGinn, R. E.  
American Water Works Association.2001: 17–37
- **Navigating Rough Waters: Ethical Issues in the Water Industry**  
edited by McGinn, Robert, E., Davis, Cheryl, K.  
American Water Works Association, Denver.2001
- **Foundational Issues and Future Directions** *Navigating Rough Waters: Ethical Issues in the Water Industry*  
McGinn, R., Davis, C.  
American Water Works Association, Denver.2001: 381–394
- **Ethical Issues Faced By Water Professionals: Some Tools for Analysis** *Navigating Rough Waters: Ethical Issues in the Water Industry*  
McGinn, R.  
American Water Works Association, Denver.2001: 17–37
- **Expectations and Experiences of Ethical Issues in Engineering: A Survey of Stanford Engineering Students and Practicing Engineers** *Online Ethics Center For Engineering and Science*  
McGinn, R.  
1999
- **"Optimization, Option Disclosure, and Problem Redefinition: Derivative Moral Obligations of Engineers and the Case of the Composite-Material Bicycle"** *Professional Ethics*  
McGinn, R.  
1997; 6 (1): 5-25
- **"The Engineer's Right to Reputational Fairness"** *Science and Engineering Ethics*  
McGinn, R.  
1995; 1 (3): 217-230
- **"Technology, Demography, and the Anachronism of Traditional Rights"** *Journal of Applied Philosophy*  
McGinn, R.  
1994; 11 (1): 57-70

- **"The Built Environment: Recent Developments, Issues, and Policy Initiatives"** *Ecology, Industrial Relations, and Business*  
McGinn, R.  
Fundacion BBV.1993: 155–186
- **Science, Technology, and Society** *Foundations of Sociology*  
McGinn, R. E.  
Prentice-Hall.1990
- **"Stokowski and Bell Telephone Laboratories: Collaboration in the Development of High Fidelity Sound Reproduction"** *Technology and Culture*  
McGinn, R.  
1983; 24 (1): 38-75
- **"Verwandlungen von Nietzsches Uebermensch in der Literatur des Mittelmeerraumes"** *Nietzsche Studien*  
McGinn, R.  
1982; 10-11: 597-614
- **"The Anatomy of Modern Technology: Prolegomenon to Improved Public Policy for the Social Management of Technology"** *Daedalus*  
McGinn, R., Hannay, N. B.  
1980; 109 (Winter): 25-54
- **"Nietzsche on Technology"** *Journal of the History of Ideas*  
McGinn, R.  
1980; 41 (3): 80-92
- **"In Defense of Intangibles: the Feasibility-Responsibility Dilemma in Modern Technological Innovation"** *Science, Technology, and Human Values*  
McGinn, R.  
1979; 29: 4-10
- **"What is Technology?"** *Research in Philosophy and Technology*  
McGinn, R.  
1978; 1: 179-197
- **"The Problem of Scale in Human Life"** *Research in Philosophy and Technology*  
McGinn, R.  
1978; 1: 39-52
- **"Nietzsche's BIRTH OF TRAGEDY as Culture Criticism"** *Nietzsche Studien*  
McGinn, R.  
1975; 4: 75-138
- **"Energy and Ethics"** *Stanford Journal of International Studies*  
McGinn, R. E.  
1974; 9: 246-264
- **"Prestige and the Logic of Political Argument"** *The Monist*  
McGinn, R. E.  
1972; 56 (1): 100-115
- **"About Face"** *Social Theory and Practice*  
McGinn, R.  
1971; 1 (3): 87-96