

RISK & MORALS

We all know that life is risky, but we also know that part of learning to live is learning to identify risks and, either avoid them, or ~~save~~^{dismantle} them. Now, it is one thing to run a personal risk, another to place others in risk situations. Society has little to say about the first, except insofar as it has to foot the bill for the damages resulting from an unhappy outcome. But the public has the right to demand that the law protect individuals from decisions that put the welfare of others on risk. The technologist cannot avoid responsibility in this regard, for he is the one called to design machines or programs that may endanger the environment or the health of other people. Examples from recent past: auto safety regulations, ban of hundreds of dangerous food and drug items, accidents in nuclear power plants,

