

Notes on STS Lectures:
- Students' Views of Atomic Power Plants -

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Living as we do in a scientific and technological era, it is important to be aware of our relationship, and that of society, with science and technology. The General Education course "Science and Society" aims to promote such an awareness. This paper focuses on the course content, which is designed, within a lecture format, to encourage students to think, gather information, and express their own opinions, and on the students' responses. Their comments show that, given the opportunity, the students have the capacity for independent research and in-depth thinking.

When they realize the relevance of social issues to their own lives, students begin to pursue self-directed learning. Their views are presented here as an example of the consciousness of learners seeking to play an autonomous part in society. These statements suggest that participatory learning has the potential to raise the awareness of a broad range of people toward social involvement.

Further, although these comments were made in a classroom situation, the views expressed regarding one form of technology, namely, atomic power, can also be seen as an example of decision-making by members of society with regard to a specific use of science and technology.