

Goldstein to debate ethics of "breaking the carbon barrier"

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Dr. Alan H Goldstein, the Fierer Professor of Biomaterials Engineering at Alfred University, will be a featured speaker at the 13th Foresight Conference on Advanced Nanotechnology to be held Oct. 22-27. Goldstein will debate science correspondent Ron Bailey at 2:45 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 23, on the topic "NanoBio in Humans: Are we ready to cross the Carbon Barrier?" The debate will be part of the Foresight Institute's 'Vision Weekend', an off-the-record, informal discussion and debate among technology leaders and Foresight Participating Members, taking on the controversial issues and surprising results expected from the Nanotech Revolution. Nanotechnology is defined, according to Goldstein, as the "fabrication of molecular devices with atomic precision," while biotechnology "uses molecular fabrication systems designed by evolution." Biomaterials engineers "are on the cutting edge of nanobiotechnology because of their work on biomimetic materials, especially for implantation in the human body. In this work, biomolecules, such as proteins and carbohydrates, are often used to modify the surface of an artificial material, such as Teflon or silica," Goldstein explained. Since winning a bronze medal (third prize) in the Shell-Economist competition in 2003 for his essay entitled "Nature vs. Nanotechnology," Goldstein has become known for his writing on the unexpected consequences emerging from the direct intermingling of living and non-living materials at the atomic level. He calls the event "breaking the Carbon Barrier of life." For more information see <http://www.foresight.org/...>