

## Introduction (Encouraging Student Interest in Science and Technology Studies)

Knowledge is already one of the main drivers of today's economic system. In the future those nations, regions, and even local areas that succeed best will be those capable of capturing the benefits of scientific and technical innovations and transforming them into marketable goods and services in the face of global competition. The education system is of course vital to this process, training the scientists, engineers and technicians who constitute the "human capital" of an increasingly fast changing, knowledge intensive economy. But an understanding of science and technology is necessary not only for those whose livelihood depends on it directly, but also for any citizen who wishes to make informed choices about issues ranging from stem cell research to global warming to genetically modified organisms to teaching the theory of evolution in schools. And new issues are bound to emerge in the years to come.

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