**SUMMARIES OF RESPONSES TO TARRYTOWN 2011 COMMUNICATIONS SURVEY**

*Questions are labeled A–M, and complete responses are available separately. This is a somewhat impressionistic grouping of the responses to each question. There were 40 responders, but some did not respond to all questions, and some categories total significantly more than that because of multiple responses (e.g. several issues). Responses are grouped where it seems appropriate, sometimes with subgroups noted.*

A. What are the key human biotechnology initiatives/issues/campaigns that you are working on now?

These ranged broadly, and the selective grouping (84 topics from 40 people) is somewhat arbitrary. ART issues, genomics, DNA testing, forensic DNA & human rights in various guises came up frequently.

ART issues generally 13  
ART, SCNT and egg extraction risks in particular 7  
surrogacy and reproductive tourism 2  
global market in human cells, tissues 4

Biobanking and informed consent 8

DTC testing (& testing in general) 7

Race in genomics/medicine 7

Health & related human rights 10  
public health, human rights, health disparities 7  
disability access 1   
genetic privacy 2

Gene patenting, intellectual property 6

enhancement/transhumanism/eugenics 6

predictive & applied genomics 10  
personalized/high-tech medicine 5  
genomics, genetic determinism &c 5

DNA forensics (etc) 3

developing science & technologies 7  
synthetic biology 3  
convergence & environmental effects 3  
specific effects of gonadal hormones 1

Education 2

local issues/organizing in general 2

international governance 1

bioweapons 1

academic funding/Bayh-Dole 1

B. Who are your primary target audiences for these? Who do you most want to communicate to about your priority concerns?

Primary audiences listed seem to be among the elites who design and implement policy, more than the general public.

[Note: RH did this one, with a slightly different methodology]

Policymakers 26  
regulators/health ministers 7   
legislators 4   
politicians 3  
sci-tech policy makers 1   
Hill staffers 1  
city government 1

Scholars/academics/students: 22  
students 4   
educators 2  
scholars of biotechnology history 1  
scholars of law and policy 2   
teachers (pre-school-community college) 1

Scientists/researchers/medical & health professionals: 20  
scientists & researchers 8  
medical professionals 5  
clinicians 2   
health care providers 1   
fertility clinics 1   
Obgyns 1

General public / public 15

Journalists/press/the media 6

Civil society / social movements / NGOs 4

Women 3

Consumers / health care consumers 4  
fertility clinic consumers 1

Patients 2  
patients in clinical trials 1

Stakeholder groups 2

SINGLE MENTIONS:  
professionals  
parents  
progressives  
Maori  
church leaders  
funders   
courts  
children of IVF procedures   
Native Americans

C. What are the major challenges you experience in trying to communicate to these audiences?

Responses overlapped (50 in the summary from 38 respondents) but the main concerns seemed to be about communicating complex material to audiences who have been confused by conflicting messages.

scientific complexity 11

pro-biotech counter messaging/vested interests/fear 9

audience time/availability/knowledge 9

being seen as ignorant or with the religious right 4

stylistic/editorial constraints 4

difficulty framing the message 4

resource constraints 3

lack of contacts/responsiveness etc 3

no major challenges/none yet 2

no simple answer 1

D. What process do you or your organization use to develop messages for communicating with these audiences?

Notably, of the 35 responses, almost 70% (24 respondents) answered by describing how they *delivered* their messages, not how they *developed* the messages; 4 more responded that they had no method for developing (another 5 did not even answer the question), 4 used more or less informal feedback, 1 described a formal governmental consultation, and 2 specifically described content analysis or directed in-house discussion. Arguably at least 38 of the 40 could benefit from advice.

*Developing message:*

content analysis 1

discussion with in-house journalists 1

informal feedback/discussion 4

formal public consultation 1

none 4

*Delivering message:*

articles in newspapers, magazines, journals books, etc 10

videos, lectures &c 7

internet, email & social media 7

briefings to politicians/journalists 3

blogging 2

collaboration with other groups 2

institutional media office 2

via central & local offices 1

mailing list 1

filing lawsuits 1

E. Roughly, how many times a year do you send out a press release?

Most individuals responding do not send out press releases, though it is unclear how many of them are involved with organizations that do. A few do so regularly.

10 or more: 5

5–10: 3

1–4: 6

0: 26

Of those saying “none” at least 3 were associated with groups that did, at least sometimes

Of those sending 10 or more, one noted that only 2 or 3 related to DNA

F. Roughly, how many times a year do you talk with a reporter?

A few respondents talk with reporters a lot (some of them also covering non-DNA issues), most only occasionally (sometimes because their director does that), and a few actively avoid them.

21–100+ 9

10–20: 6

5–10: 5

1–4: 13

0: 7

G. Roughly, how many times a year do you publish an on-line or print op-ed or article (not including blog posts)?

Most do so rarely if at all, but a few do quite regularly.

10+: 5

5–10: 4

1–4: 16

0 (or rarely, or no response): 15

H. Do you or your organization have a blog?

Some do, most don’t.

Yes: 13

No: 23

Other electronic/social media, etc: 2

Yes, but rarely updated (or a website): 2

I. If you have a blog, how often do you post to it? On the average, how many unique viewers access your blog each week?

Few blog, and fewer know how many read them.

*Posting:*

Daily: 1

Weekly or more often: 5

Rarely: 3

No post, no blog, or no response: 31

*Viewers:*

Dont know (and said so): 4

Estimates provided: 3  
Daily blog has 16,000+ viewers/month  
50–100 unique weekly visitors  
Maybe 2,000/week

J. Roughly, how many times a year do you appear on local or national television or radio?

A few do so a lot (one almost weekly; and one listed as “1–4” did have one brief media burst), some occasionally, and most very rarely if at all.

10+: 5

5–10: 2

1–4: 12

0 (or rarely, or no response): 21

K. What other modes of communication do you use to get your messages across, other than those just mentioned?

The numbers make it sound like a speakers bureau, but it’s more that many people occasionally give talks; in general, it’s a bit of this and a bit of that.

one-on-one email & meetings: 4

Public forums & lectures: 13

Research committees/work with other organizations 2

Newsletters: 3

Electronic social media/websites: 9

Long-form print journalism: 2

Academic articles: 5

Conferences etc: 3

Teaching: 1

None/no response: 10

L. What capabilities would you like to develop to enable you to communicate to target audiences more effectively?

Aside from prayers for time and money, advice on framing and tone and how to interest editors came up a lot.

Better framing/hooks/tone 9  
(incl public speaking [1])

Better media lists (and how to interest them) 7

More funding, staff &/or time 6

Better press advisories 2

Better consumer articles 1

Better use of social media & publicity 2

More effective blogging 1

More networking? 1

No response (or dont know) 13

M. What questions do you have about effective communications that you would like to have addressed?

More than half of the respondents did not answer this question. Those who did tended to repeat points made earlier. Among them were:

framing, especially of complex issues without oversimplification

understanding the audience

how to use social media and other varying outlets

how to talk with journalists

how to network effectively