

A Note from the Editor

The story of humans and robots has been one of harmony and conflict. For all that Western society has gained in efficiency and ease, such benefits have been accompanied by rising fears of complete and emotionless automation. These fears have been most visible in discussions around the role of advanced technology in medical care. While medicine and robotics exist in many people's minds as completely distinct disciplines, it is much more apt to view their historical paths as ones that routinely converge and spur each other. No person perhaps knows this better than Dr. Christos Bergeles, a speaker for the Spring 2021 session of Purdue Honors College Visiting Scholars Series. His passion for effective, robust, and inconspicuous design has positioned soft robotics as the future of surgery.

Dr. Christos Bergeles is a Senior Lecturer and Associate Professor at King's College, London. He leads the respected Robotics and Vision in Medicine Lab, which has produced revolutionary advances in the field of image-guided, micro-surgical robotics. Dr. Bergeles has previously worked with Boston's Children Hospital, Harvard Medical School, and the Hamlyn Centre for Robotic Surgery to bridge the gap between robotics and medicine, improving patient experience and results. His lab has been responsible for globally renown innovations like Optic Nerve Sheath Fenestration and VIPER [Versatile Intraocular Precision Enhancing Robot], with a commitment to pushing the boundaries of computational robot design, robot control, and mechanism development. Notable accolades include the 2014 Fight for Sight Award and the 2016 Starting Grant.

The expansion of telemedicine since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic has irreversibly intertwined medical care with advanced technology. Yet some fear a technological future, and many patients are understandably wary of replacing their surgeon with a machine, given the decades of warnings that science fiction authors have produced. But Dr. Bergeles' encourages us to think not of "replacement" but augmentation, and his research provides a compelling argument as to how effective robotics could circumvent the limitations of the human hand.

About the Editor

Jannine Huby is an undergraduate student at Purdue University, where she is dual majoring in Political Science and Global Studies with a minor in Professional Writing. She is an active member of Purdue's Honors College and a representative for the College of Liberal Arts on the Honors Leadership Council (HLC). Around campus, Jannine can also be seen performing her duties as a Resident Assistant and as a member of Student English Association (SEA).