

***Robot Thought* – A Dialogue Event for Family Audiences**

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Abstract

An original and highly successful public engagement event format has been devised for encouraging family audiences to consider and convey their opinions on issues associated with robotics technology. The format uses the traditional approach of an entertaining science “show” to appeal to young and old alike. The show is broken down into a series of short dramatic vignettes to highlight important practical, personal and social issues relating to robotics. During each vignette a particular concept or issue is presented to the audience, who are then encouraged to express their opinions and concerns about issues, and debate the implications of robotics on future society. This paper describes the key features of the event format, with particular reference to the successful pilot performances held during October 2004.