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Note from the Editor

Consider that a mission to the Moon, nuclear power, and the Internet were each once thought of as heralding a new generation. Today, we live in that generation. We think instead about the impact of bigger and better ideas, like plans for a human colony on Mars, or the capacity to genotype thousands of consumers curious about their DNA. We are witnesses also to smaller and savvier advances: proteins and viruses that can reach intracellular targets with astonishing precision; smartphones, smart watches, and even smart fridges.

All of these topics and more are explored in the following pages, in which our writers detail not only the marvels of accelerated scientific progress, but also the unavoidable ethical and logistic dilemmas brought by such progress. In our interviews with three Berkeley professors, we ask about the implications of their pioneering work in the distinct fields of psychology, ecology, and neurobiology. Notably, as undergraduate students at UC Berkeley, we are lucky to attend a school that houses so many labs powering next-generation research.

What is considered 'next-generation' has always been a relative concept—an event or advancement that feels as if it could belong in another lifetime. By exploring today's 'futuristic' areas of science, this issue, I hope, will make them seem more familiar.

—Rachel Lew, Editor-in-Chief

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