

James Madison Program
in American Ideals and Institutions

**GOVERNING SCIENCE:
TECHNOLOGICAL PROGRESS, ETHICAL NORMS, AND DEMOCRACY**
A PUBLIC CONFERENCE

APRIL 13-14, 2012
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The James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions, Princeton University

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The Bouton Law Lecture Fund,
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In the last decade, Americans have witnessed several political controversies regarding the ethics of forms of scientific research and the governance of science. Some political liberals claim that politics has distorted science across a range of issues, from climate change to evolutionary biology to embryonic stem cell research. In these cases, they suggest, non-scientific considerations, such as economic self-interest or sectarian religious views, have been allowed to get in the way of legitimate and valuable scientific inquiry. Many political conservatives respond by saying that good science ought not to disregard the common morality of democratic society and that the proponents of research involving the creation and/or destruction of human embryos, for example, are misusing the mantle of science in the service of profoundly contestable moral opinions, opinions that science by itself cannot establish as correct.

These contemporary controversies implicate issues about the regulation or governance of science that are hardly new. Since Bacon and Descartes, modern science has expanded the sum of human knowledge and produced enormous benefits to humanity. At the same time, however, many scholars have asked whether science undermines human rationality and dignity by reducing human beings to mere matter in motion. In addition, concerns about the regulation of scientific inquiry and experimentation have been fostered by the history of abuses of scientific research, as with the eugenics movement in the first part of the 20th century. These controversies remind us that the question of governing science may very well be a permanent element in modern society.

The James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions, with the cosponsorship of the Bouton Law Lecture Fund, the Keller Center for Innovation in Engineering Education, and the University Center for Human Values, is pleased to announce a conference on *Governing Science: Technological Progress, Ethical Norms, and Democracy* devoted to exploring these questions. The program includes scholars from a wide range of disciplines in the natural sciences, the social sciences, medicine, and the humanities. We seek to address a number of questions: what are the promises and the perils of the modern scientific project as envisioned by its founders? Does science always represent a heroic achievement or does it sometimes threaten to undermine human dignity? What was the relation of the eugenics movement to the science of its time, and to what extent does that science bear responsibility for eugenics? In the light of past misuses of science, what limits can or should a liberal democracy put on scientific research, or should science put on itself? Finally, in light of both the great benefits brought to us by science and its potential harms, how should responsible citizens today think about the governance of science in a way both that respects the integrity of the scientific enterprise and that keeps science in harmony with the moral foundations of the larger society?

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APRIL 13-14, 2012

FRIDAY, APRIL 13, 2012

10:15 a.m. to Noon: SCIENCE AND THE ELEVATION OF MAN

Panelists: Freeman Dyson, *Institute for Advanced Study*
Daniel Garber, *Princeton University*
Chair: Robert P. George, *Princeton University*

1:15 to 3:00 p.m. SCIENCE AND THE REDUCTION OF MAN

Panelists: Richard F. Hasting, *The Catholic University of America*
Holmes Rolston, *Colorado State University*
Chair: Adam Schulman, *MIT & St. John's College, Annapolis*

3:30 to 5:15 p.m. THE ABUSE OF SCIENCE: CONSIDERING EUGENICS AND OTHER TEMPTATIONS

Panelists: Adam Keiper, *Ethics and Public Policy Center & The New Atlantis*
Mark Largent, *National Science Foundation & Michigan State University*
William A. Schambra, *Hudson Institute*
Chair: Thomas W. Merrill, *Princeton University & American University*

SATURDAY, APRIL 14, 2012

9:00 to 10:45 a.m. "THE EFFECTING OF ALL THINGS POSSIBLE": WHAT ARE THE LIMITS?

Panelists: Charles T. Rubin, *Duquesne University*
Diana J. Schaub, *Princeton University & Loyola University Maryland*
Lee Silver, *Princeton University*
Chair: Jacqueline Pfeffer Merrill, *Independent Scholar*

11:15 to 1:00 p.m. GOVERNING SCIENCE IN A DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

Panelists: William B. Hurlbut, *Stanford University*
Jonathan D. Moreno, *University of Pennsylvania*
Yuval Levin, *Ethics and Public Policy Center & National Affairs*
Chair: Christopher O. Tollefsen, *Princeton University & University of South Carolina*

2:15 to 4:00 p.m. KEEPING THE SCIENTIFIC ENTERPRISE VIBRANT AND ETHICAL: A CONCLUDING CONVERSATION

Panelists: Donald W. Landry, *Columbia University*
Harold T. Shapiro, *Princeton University*
Moderator: Robert P. George, *Princeton University*

Conference Discussants:

Harvey M. Flaumenhaft, *St. John's College, Annapolis*
Erica Leah Goldman, M.D.
Alan Rubenstein, *Carleton College*
Jeffrey T. Salmon, Office of Science, *U. S. Department of Energy*