

SCIENCE

ISSUE BRIEF

Brochure from "Fixing Science" symposium Feb 7-8 2020 at Independent Institute, Oakland, CA Annotations by John Mashey See also [MAS2020]
<https://www.desmogblog.com/2020/02/07/dark-moneyed-denialists-fixing-science-symposium-doubt>

National Association of Scholars has very little science expertise, but very strong opinions that just happen to match those of their conservative funders with fossil fuel interests. Blog post showed close connection with The King's College in NYC (Peter Wood was Provost 2005-2007, at least 4 employees (3 now) hired from there.)

I repeat the description of **only** science course in current catalog:

"Scientific Reasoning This course is an historically informed introduction to modern physics, astronomy, cosmology, chemistry, and biology, with the goal of attaining a broad conceptual understanding of contemporary science, its empirical basis, and its harmonious relationship with the Christian worldview. Given the intellectual authority of science in modern Western civilization, it is impossible to engage the surrounding culture effectively with the claims of Christ without having a broad-based scientific literacy, a deep understanding of the deleterious effects that naturalistic presuppositions have had on both science and culture, the philosophical and scientific basis on which assumptions may be challenged, and a well-defined understanding that relates the biblical worldview to the world of science. The course will involve lecture, discussion, and laboratory components. ... COURSE CODE: SCI 212"

Anyone unfamiliar with the Dunning-Kruger Effect might want to read:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dunning%E2%80%93Kruger_effect

OVERVIEW

The National Association of Scholars (NAS) supports the proper teaching and practice of science: the systematic exercise of reason, observation, hypothesis, and experiment aimed at understanding and making reliable predictions about the material world. We work to keep science as a mode of inquiry engaged in the disinterested pursuit of truth rather than a collection of “settled” conclusions. We also work to integrate course requirements in the unique history of Western science into undergraduate core curricula and distribution requirements.

The NAS promotes scientific freedom and transparency.

We support researchers’ freedom to formulate and test any scientific hypothesis, unconstrained by political inhibitions. We support researchers’ freedom to pursue any scientific experiment, within ethical research guidelines. We support transparent scientific research, to foster the scientific community’s collective search for truth.

The NAS supports course requirements on the history and the nature of the Western scientific tradition.

All students should learn a coherent general narrative of the history of science that tells how the scientific disciplines interrelate. We work to restore core curricula that include both the unique history of Western science and an introduction to the distinctive mode of Western scientific reasoning. We also work to add new requirements in statistics and experimental design for majors and graduate students in the sciences and social sciences.

This is good, but How many NAS employees have expertise to do this?

The NAS works to reform the practice of modern science so that it generates reproducible results.

Modern science and social science are crippled by a *crisis of reproducibility*. This crisis springs from a combination of misused statistics, slipshod research techniques, and political groupthink. We aim to eliminate the crisis of reproducibility by grounding scientific practice in the meticulous traditions of Western scientific thought and rigorous reproducibility standards.

The NAS works to eliminate the politicization of undergraduate science education.

Our priority is to dismantle *advocacy-based science*, which discards the exercise of rational skepticism in pursuit of truth when it explicitly declares that scientific inquiry should serve policy advocacy. We therefore work to remove advocacy-based science from the classroom and from university bureaucracies. We also criticize student movements that demand the replacement of disinterested scientific inquiry with advocacy-based science. We focus our critiques on disciplines such as climate science that are mostly engaged in policy advocacy.

NAS has proved often that its nontech staff knows little of climate science.

The NAS tracks scientific controversies that affect public policy, studies the remedies that scientists propose, and criticizes laws, regulations, and proposed policies based upon advocacy-based science.

We do this to prevent a vicious cycle in which advocacy-based science justifies the misuse of government and private funding to support yet more advocacy-based science. We also work to reform the administration of government science funding so as to prevent its capture by advocacy-scientists.

The NAS’s scientific reports draw on the expertise of its member scholars and staff, as well as independent scholars. Our aim is to provide professionally credible critiques of America’s science education and science-based public policy.

False. Distinguished MIT climate scientist Kerry Emanuel tried valiantly to educate NAS about climate science, was ignored by NAS.

PRIORITIES

History of Science: We work for a rigorous education in the History of Science, in advanced placement tests and in undergraduate course requirements.

Science Education: We work for a rigorous education in scientific reasoning and experimental design, both in general undergraduate course requirements and in advanced requirements for students majoring in the sciences and social sciences.

Crisis of Reproducibility: We work to eliminate the crisis of reproducibility by institutional reforms to the practice of science. These reforms include improved statistics education, reformed research techniques, investment and regulation to make publicly accessible all research data and methodology used to inform government policy, and incentives to reduce disciplinary and political groupthink.

Depoliticizing Science on Campus: We work to remove advocacy-based science from the university, both inside and outside the classroom. We focus in particular on the sustainability movement, the fossil-fuel divestment movement, and civic science.

Reforming Science-Related Policymaking: We critique public policies based upon advocacy-based science and work to prevent the capture of government funding by advocacy-based scientists. We have proposed reforms to the discipline of climate science and to policies concerning linear no-threshold (LNT) dose-response and fine particulate air pollution.

If unfamiliar with LNT, try following. Many effects are worse at low levels,
<https://journals.plos.org/plosbiology/article?id=10.1371/journal.pbio.2003066>

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SELECT PREVIOUS WORK

Rachelle Peterson, *Sustainability: Higher Education's New Fundamentalism* (2015)

Rachelle Peterson, *Inside Divestment: The Illiberal Movement To Turn A Generation Against Fossil Fuels* (2015)

Peter Wood, "Concerns about National Academy of Sciences and Scientific Dissent" [Open Letter to National Academy of Sciences] (2015)

David Randall, *The Disappearing Continent: A Critique of the Revised Advanced Placement European History Examination* (2016) [History of Science]

David Randall, *Making Citizens: How American Universities Teach Civics* (2017) [Civic Science]

Jaime A. Teixeira da Silva and Judit Dobránszki, "Compounding Error: The Afterlife of Bad Science" (2017) <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12129-017-9621-0> *Academic Questions*

Edward J. Calabrese, "Societal Threats from Ideologically Driven Science" (2017)

<https://www.nas.org/academic-questions/30/4/societal-threats-from-ideologically-driven-science>

David Randall and Christopher Welser, *The Irreproducibility Crisis of Modern Science: Causes, Consequences, and the Road to Reform* (2018)

All but one of these were published on NAS's own website. The other (da Silva and Dobranszki) is in NAS' own journal, *Academic Questions*. da Silva has had his own issues: <http://retractionwatch.com/category/by-journal/asian-j-plant-sci/>

Neither David Randall nor Christopher Welser are scientists.

Peter Wood may once have been an anthropologist, but has not published peer-reviewed research in credible journals for a long time, if ever. He has written a few books through Encounter Books, not a science publisher, although it has published a few of Roy Spencer's books on climate, a negative.

PROSPECTIVE PROJECTS

Distress Signals: Distortions of Science in Higher Education

Has politicized advocacy corrupted science on university campuses?

Curiosity Unbound: Scientific Literacy in Higher Education

Are university science programs asking the big questions?

Code Blue: Unsound Science and Unsafe Regulation

Has faulty science led to the overregulation of public health?

Assessing Debatability in Undergraduate Science Education

Can the politicization of the sciences be measured—and if so, how?

To the extent one can find NAS funding, it comes from Sarah Scaife Foundation, L&H Bradley, Charles Koch, etc, who also fund many think tanks dedicated to obscuring any science inconvenient for corporate profits, arguing against any environmental regulation.

NAS staff members publish in its own universe, not peer-reviewed journals.

(Of course, they would argue that they are kept out due to groupthink, but if they want to do science, they might hire more scientists. Does Peter Wood actually know much about statistics?)

Science always has issues and serious scientists are always trying to improve them, and challenges in some areas of social sciences or medicine hardly apply to others, as much as NAS wants to claim that.

As for politicization, one might ask who caused that, especially on climate and environment?

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