

Center for American Progress



SPECIAL PRESENTATION:

**“BIOETHICS AND POLITICS:
PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.”**

PANEL II: THE FUTURE OF PROGRESSIVE ETHICS

MODERATOR:

**MARK LLOYD,
SENIOR FELLOW,
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SPEAKERS:

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**GLENN MCGEE, FOUNDING DIRECTOR,
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**VIRGINIA ASHBY SHARPE, VISITING SCHOLAR IN ETHICS
AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY**

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MR. JONATHAN MORENO: – Mark Lloyd, who is a senior fellow here and a communications whiz himself in many ways, will introduce the panel. Thanks for your patience.

MR. MARK LLOYD: Well, good afternoon. I know you've been waiting for this panel. (Laughter.)

MR. MORENO: Literally.

MR. LLOYD: We appreciate those of you who were able to come this morning and stick around. It's been a long day, but a lot of the questions that were presented about trying to see if we can figure out what it means to be a progressive bioethicist, I think our panel is able to answer and address, and we certainly hope to get to your questions. We've started a little later than we planned, but we do want to get your questions in, so hang in there. The only other thing that I want to emphasize is that I hope that you've all got your cell phones turned off and that your attention's focused on this. And we want to – if you have a clarifying question as each panelist finishes, we'll allow that clarifying question, but we really want to reserve the questions and comments particularly after the end of the panel, but we do want to try and get all of them in.

Also I want to thank Jonathan very much for pulling this program together and making this issue of bioethics an important part of the work here at the Center for American Progress.

The only thing that I know for certain is that in at least a couple of years President Bush will step down and that we'll have some decisions to make about how we move forward in this country, and one of the important sets of decisions that we'll have to consider is what sort of agenda do we want to put in place for science – the life sciences as well as the other sciences? And having a firm sense of what we as progressives think about a bioethics, I think, would be useful for us.

Let me very quickly say that my role as moderator will only be to try to make sure that this train moves on time and to ask the other panelists to step up. We will have a slide presentation, which we've been sort of getting ready for, to begin and then two panelists will speak and then we'll have another slide presentation with Glenn at the end. But we'll try to continue to move this forward.

Let me introduce in order that we will have them speak: Kathryn Hinsch, James Fossett, Virginia Ashby Sharpe and Glenn McGee. And just very briefly – you should have information about each of our panelists. As has been suggested earlier, Kathryn Hinsch – am I pronouncing it correctly? – founded the Women's Bioethics Project in June 2004. She's a senior executive at Microsoft Corporation but her, I think, real

expertise comes from her own education and passion around these sets of issues, which she will share with us in just a moment.

Following, as I said Kathryn Hinsch, James Fossett, and Mr. Fossett is an associate professor, public administration and health policy and management in the University of Albany, the State University of New York. He is a faculty member of the Alden March Bioethics Institute, Albany Medical College, and a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Vanderbilt and a Ph.D. from political science, which was my degree – not a Ph.D. at the University of Michigan. I am happy to have him here with us as well.

Virginia Ashby Sharpe will be following Dr. Fossett and Dr. Sharpe is a visiting scholar of the Georgetown University where she teaches clinical ethics, environmental justice. She's also on the staff of the National Center for Ethics at the Veterans Administration – Health Administration here in D.C.

And then last but not least, Glenn McGee who, as I indicated before, will also have a presentation – slide presentation for us. And Dr. McGee is the founding director of the Alden March Bioethics Institute created in 2005.

And with those introductions, brief as they are, let me ask Kathryn Hinsch to step to the panel and provide, and please a round of applause to welcome her. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. KATHRYN HINSCH: Thank you. All right. Yes. Yes. My background is from Microsoft and so I'm a little bit embarrassed that our software was not working correctly, but I can reassure you that this used to happen at Bill Gates' presentations that I was responsible for too, so please forgive us. (Laughter.)

I was asked by Jonathan Moreno to start this panel on "The Future of Progressive Bioethics" by giving a quick overview of how conservatives are using bioethical issues to further their political agenda. I think he asked me to do this – part of my background at Microsoft was doing competitive analysis about Microsoft software competitors, but when we did that, it was not just about looking at specific software features but it was looking at who was behind these products, what did they think, what did they eat for breakfast and really understanding their mindset and the political mindset of which they were introducing these products.

So I'm happy to say I'm taking the same kind of cutthroat analysis of the right wing on these issues and perhaps I'll be saying some things that are provocative and things that you might not agree with, but it's as I see it. I'll also just give you a little more in the sense of who I am. My transition from Microsoft to bioethics was by way of Harvard Divinity School; I'm very interested in these issues from a spiritual perspective. But I also – in the last 10 trips that I've made to the Washington, D.C. the only time that I have visited any kind of a cultural institution was last time and that was to see the Spy Museum. So with that let me move forward.

I also want to mention that in your packets that there is a report that our organization, with the help of Jonathan Moreno, wrote on “Bioethics and Public Policy: Conservative Dominance in the Current Landscape,” and I’m just bringing it to your attention because that has more background in specific details about what I’m going to highlight in my next 10 minutes, so I’m going to make a lot of assertions that does not have the data backing it up in this presentation because I only have 10 minutes.

What was our key finding of our report? To date, only conservative religious groups have devoted substantial resources to affecting bioethics public policy. Now, they’re doing so for strategic and tactical reasons. Strategically, conservatives have seized on bioethics as a way to build the society based on their values and their worldview, which I would argue is anti-science, pro-religion, anti-reproductive freedom, by aggressively framing how bioethical issues are considered. But just as importantly, there are important tactical implications. They’re using it as a way to gear up their troops, to galvanize their base, to polish their image as protectors of society’s values, and perhaps most importantly to divide progressives.

But you don’t have to take my word for it. Conservatives haven’t been shy about their intentions. So here you would be seeing a slide of the *New Atlantis* article. In the Spring of 2003 of the *New Atlantis*, a conservative journal on technology and society, Yuval Levin, former chief of staff for the President’s Commission on Bioethics, now a member of the White House policy staff, noted that bioethics has become a key conservative priority and that while the right has always concerned itself with a broad array of medical, moral issues, such as abortion and assisted suicide, he claims that it’s not until fairly recently that bioethics has emerged as a general and prominent category in concern for the American right.

So how has this key priority manifested? The next slide – let’s see if I can get them to change, oh, here we are on the side here, at least you can see the *New Atlantis*. Next slide which is a picture of the *Hastings Report* – the priorities have manifested by one: they’re building a framework. They’re building a conservative bioethics framework. In the January/February issue of the *Hastings Center Report*, which is to those who don’t know, a prominent bioethics journal, Eric Cohen, director of the bioethics and American democracy program at the Ethics and Public Policy Center, details that framework in an article called “Conservative Bioethics and the Search for Freedom.” It is based on what they consider their version of human dignity. And as progressives, I was particularly struck that he highlighted that one of the key differences as he saw it between them and us, is how they understand the concept of the moral ideal of equality, and I just want you to keep that in mind as you see who else is weighing in on these issues.

But it’s not just a few conservative scholars out there debating obscure philosophical ideals. They are aggressively moving to action. Here’s an article from *The Washington Post*, March 2005, where Leon Kass, then head of the President’s Commission on Bioethics, describes how a coalition of influential conservatives have

drafted and is raising support for a bioethics agenda for the president's second term. He calls the work "a bold and plausible, offensive bioethics agenda."

You see on the screen here logos from the top conservative bioethics centers. Conservatives have broad outreach channels to support their agendas. Conservatives have established bioethics centers that are interlocking and supportive of each other. The National Catholics Bioethics Center was established in 1972, but the others – the Center for Bioethics and Culture, the Center for Bioethics and Human Dignity, the Council for Biotechnology and Policy, and the American Bioethics Advisory Commission – were formed in the '90s, probably as a response, as Dr. Faden was saying earlier, of feeling that they weren't getting their own voices heard within the bioethical community. But while their tactics and audience differ, what they have in common is a unified philosophy that is based on conservative religious values and they're active in a range of bioethical issues.

But it is not just a few scholars and a few bioethics centers that are weighing in, we're beginning to see some brand new players on the horizon. This article from the *Wall Street Journal*, November, 2005, highlights a group called Americans United for Life. What we have seen is a trend that towards established formerly single-issue groups are adding bioethics to extend their missions. Americans United for Life is an example of this.

In a recent paper, we document how they made a transition from previously a well established, well funded, pro-life law firm that was solely dedicated to overturning *Roe v. Wade* to one that encompasses a broader range of bioethical issues from embryo research, cloning, genetic engineering, and nanotechnology. They now even refer to themselves as a bioethics public interest law firm. This is a shot from their website.

So lest you think that the Americans United for Life efforts are merely a clever way to exploit the current popularity of bioethics – and, Jonathan, who ever thought we'd be the popular kids? – AUL has recently released a comprehensive policy guide that has model legislation on bioethical issues, which have been broadly distributed to state legislators around the country. They rate each state on a scale from protective to dangerous on a range of bioethical issues. I must say, our progressive legislators are begging for help.

Now, I happen to have this book with me. It's extremely impressive for any of you've been involved in drafting legislation. It's one of the most comprehensive and intense piece of policy work that I have ever seen. But then in doing any kind of analysis, one has to think – step back and say, "Wow. That's a lot of activity. Where is the money coming from?" And I must say it is hard to track directly, but we know that conservative foundations are strategically funding high profile cases that have broad bioethics agenda. Here you'll see a photograph of a new book called *Using Terri* by attorney Jon Eisenberg that demonstrates how a consortium of conservative foundations with \$2 billion in assets have funded the legal and public relations boards of Terri Schiavo in a case in order to further their own agendas.

But even more importantly, conservatives are using their existing infrastructure to drive their agenda, including their think-tanks. See here logos of prominent think tanks: well-established conservative think tanks that have traditionally focused on broad economic, social, and foreign policy have added bioethics to their agenda in the last few years. An example: the American Enterprise Institute held a conference on “Bioethics and the Constitution,” you know, pursuit of life, liberty and happiness – pro-life, liberty, happiness. The Ethics and Public Policy Center funded stem cell research pamphlets – anti-stem cell research pamphlets that were distributed by the National Catholics Bioethics Center – great pamphlets, I must say, if you’re on that side.

The Family Research Council or the Federalist Society carefully monitoring UN bioethics initiatives. They are one of the most important groups that are trying to influence international bioethics – something that has just totally been off the radar screen of progressives. And then, perhaps they are not in the same category of these other prestigious conservative Washington, D.C.-based think tanks, but I had to include the Discovery Institute from my own hometown. For those of you in Seattle who are not familiar with their recent claim to fame on intelligent design, their efforts on bioethics has not gotten as much coverage in the paper, but they too fund op-ed pieces and book tours for conservative authors.

These think tanks collectively have the potential to drive an amazing agenda, but it’s not just the think tanks. It’s not all just based here in Washington, D.C and, in fact, there is a much more potent group out there. Because what is even more startling is that conservative religious groups are using their vast resources worldwide to drive a conservative bioethics agenda. Here is a screenshot from James Dobson’s Focus on the Family. This website provides a series of what I call mini White Papers on bioethics and advice on how God would have us respond to these issues, and I’ve highlighted here on the screen – I’m not making this up – how God would love us to respond on these issues.

So as we look to the future of progressive bioethics, we must keep in mind that our worthy competitors – bioethics is not about adding another tab on the briefing book or a fellow to the masthead or even the next election. For them, it is about the ultimate battle of evil and good. The outcome they believe might determine the direction of society for decades to come. And if you think I’m being a little overdramatic in my assessment, let me leave you with one last slide. It’s the Pope. In last week’s Good Friday meditation, the Pope had a particular condemnation reserved for scientific advancements and warned us to beware of the geneticists who play at being God.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. LLOYD: Okay. So do I see any hands for any clarifying questions? Except about the PowerPoint presentation. (Laughter.)

With that, James – Dr. Fossett, please?

MR. JAMES FOSSETT: In the interest of gaining as broad an agenda on the table as possible, I'm going to go in another direction entirely. The kind of sound-bite version of my talk, for those of you who remember Stanley Kubrick, is something called like "Federalism and Bioethics" or "Why Progressives should stop – learn to stop worrying and love the state." And this stems from an observation and I'm a political scientist, so when Glenn recruited me to start thinking about bioethics, one of the first things I noticed was that bioethicists seem to have a kind of a single standard federal government kind of perspective: they like single standards, they like national institutions, and they don't particularly care for decentralized, pluralist kind of organizational arrangements. So if you read articles in various places about how we should handle assisted reproduction or how should we govern stem cell research, you've got a great, big, huge footnote that says let's do it like the British do and then one little bitty anemic article citation down at the very bottom that says let's not do it that way.

And what I want to argue very briefly is that this neglect of states is empirically unfounded and normatively flawed. We don't do things the way the British do. We stole their institutions and some of their good authors, but we don't take our public institutions from them. But what I want to argue is that federalism's gotten a bad name – a bad rap from its days of association with the South and segregation and it doesn't deserve that anymore and its very real advantages for progressives at a time when Washington's dominated by conservatives need to be explicated and exploited in bioethics just like they've been in several other fields.

So two big points. One is states are now, have been, and will continue to be heavy players in a whole lot of major bioethical issues. In addition to the sort of headline getting things about embryonic stem cells and Plan B and what you can argue as emerging as a similar kind of action on the HPV virus, there're a whole wide range of major issues on which states are the primary or even the exclusive players.

The right to die, what's appropriate medical practice, physician-assisted suicide, what are the legal consequences of assisted reproduction, and a whole lot of others are basically governed by laws passed by state legislatures and interpreted by state courts. So no matter what you think about it, states are going to continue to have a lot to say about what happens on these issues, so the real bioethicists – the functioning ones who make the choices – sit as much in state capitals as they do in Washington.

Big point number two is that this is not a bad thing because under the American federal system, states are not branch offices of the federal government. They are separately elected governments that a whole range of case law says the feds cannot tell – the Congress cannot tell them what to do. They can try to bribe them to do certain things. They can try to attach all kinds of conditions to money that they give them, but simply writing a law that says states will do this, courts have been nearly unanimous in tossing those kind of dicta out the window.

But there are three, I think, really good reasons why states ought to be big players in the bioethical system. One, they're very good devices for managing conflict. And in issues where we don't have a national consensus, the existence of the possibility of multiple outcomes allows for a better fit between public preference and public policy than a single national standard does. States were settled by different ethnic groups with different religious and cultural traditions and they've manifested distinctive, fairly stable, ideological and cultural belief systems among their residents and relatively stable interest group structures. So this kind of multiple access points – the fact that you can go to different places – provides a kind of a geographic version of an argument that a lot of people have offered for dealing with pluralism. You want to commit to a process and if you have a way for public policy to reflect public preferences, that's a good thing. You may not be able to get a national majority, but at least you can get a state one. And so that's number one.

Number two is it provides advocates with multiple forums, so if you lose at one level, you can always press your claims at another level, and that's exactly what liberals have been doing over the past several years when the Washington institutions have been dominated by conservatives. And if you look at a wide range of issues: improvements in state minimum wages, improvements in environmental protection, lobbying reform, energy policy and several others, so that Washington's a bit hard; state capitals have, believe it or not, been easier.

And this is also true around the question of stem cell research. The debate in states has been more about jobs and economic development and state prestige than it's been about ethics. There's a lot of research that says economic voting is a bigger deal in the states than it is in the federal government, and governors worry a lot about their electoral futures because they think they're tied to state economic growth prospects.

So what this concern for their electoral futures has done has meant that a lot of governors, even in so-called red states where you would think hostility to this kind of stuff would be the strongest, have invested big political chips in biotech as an economic development strategy and they don't want to appear to be hostile to science, particularly in states like Texas and Missouri, where there's already a big medical research complex in place. The claim that states will suffer brain drain or lose jobs and prestige to California really does have some traction. So the Republican Party in states like these is split between the chamber-of-commerce, pro-growth Republicans and the evangelicals, so they've not been able to be as effective as they might otherwise be. So a pro-life governor in Missouri has vetoed a bill outlawing therapeutic cloning and is supporting a constitutional amendment that explicitly legalizes therapeutic cloning. This is Missouri. And in Texas, of all places, the ultimate red state, one of the Republican candidates for governor's actively supporting stem cell research. So this need to appear pro-science has made a lot of red-state governors look more pink. (Laughter.)

Now, what it's also done is a lot of nominal blue-state governors – Governor Romney in Massachusetts and my own Governor Pataki in New York – have been less active in backing this stuff than you might suspect. They have their own national

political aspirations. But the fact remains, states do compete with each other for such things and the prospect of states competing with each other to lure scientists and research and prestige creates a kind of a competition that if you're in favor of this kind of research is actually a pretty good thing. You have to make cause with some allies that you never would have thought and you may feel a kind of uncomfortable with, but in this kind of business, I would argue you take what you can get, and if it means being nice to the guys from Merck or SmithGlaxoKline, that's what you've got to do.

And finally, states offer a way to experiment that a federal policy doesn't offer. There's an old saying by Justice Frankfurter about states serve as laboratories of democracy, and that implies a degree of clinical precision that's hardly ever there, but states do pay attention to what each other does and they do learn from each other. So again, it's a way of getting experience at operating complex issues and how you actually manage complex bioethical things. So I would argue that one of the things we need to start thinking about is less what national standards ought to be and more what the division of labor in setting bioethical goals and standards should be between the states and the federal government.

There's an old line from the *Federalist Papers* about the mischiefs of faction and we're probably not going to get rid of those in these contexts, but we do have a workable means of mitigating their adverse effects and we ought to take advantage of it.

(Applause.)

MR. LLOYD: Thank you, Dr. Fossett. Any clarifying questions?

Please?

Q: Yes. If I might follow up with a comment –

MR. LLOYD: No, quick question, please.

Q: Okay.

MR. LLOYD: All right. Sorry to be so – we're running a little bit short here and we want to make sure that one of our panelists can actually leave at 3:00.

Dr. Sharpe?

MS. VIRGINIA ASHBY SHARPE: I want to thank Jonathan for inviting me here today, for Lisa Eckenwiler for suggesting the invitation on the eve of Earth Day. I was asked to come and speak about environmental issues on the progressive bioethics agenda.

And I think it's fair to say that in the last 35 years, in the 35 years of contemporary bioethics, environmental issues have not been on the top of the agenda

despite the fact that one of the original uses of the term “bioethics” was to refer to ethical issues in the biosphere. Biomedical issues early on claimed priority and retained that priority for a number of reasons. Issues in contemporary biomedicine could easily be placed on the historical continuum with medical ethics, for example, direct harms and abuses associated with human subjects research in Nazi Germany and the U.S. were highly visible and amenable to critique in part because they were associated with medical actors who were in violation of established norms of professionalism.

Environmental harms, by contrast, may be so distant and so indirect that they’re either difficult to associate with specific actors or those actors – corporations, governments, and individuals – are not bound by clear roles, specific obligations. In the field of bioethics, biomedical issues have also had priority over environmental issues because the impact of new biomedical technologies has been dramatically displayed in personalized conflicts in the healthcare setting: think Terri Schiavo, Karen Quinlan, Barney Clark, Baby M.

Environmental issues, by contrast, have not been easily personalized, in part because people have not been seen as the immediate objects of environmental degradation and people have had a hard time resonating with harms to non-human species, to land, to air, to water. Witness how effective the rhetoric of tree-hugger has been in trivializing environmentalism. But as sophisticated methodologies such as climate modeling, biomarket research and environmental epidemiology and social science research on health disparities and environmental justice have borne fruit in the last two decades, the human impact of environmental degradation have become more evident and more compelling. Thanks in part to this research, it’s becoming clearer, as Paul Epstein at the Center for Health and Global Environment has said, how bad environmental policies can make people sick.

I’d like to suggest that placing environmental issues higher on the bioethics agenda is a way not only to define progressive bioethics, but to give bioethics strategic relevance in support of a broader progressive political agenda. By environment, I mean land, air, and water on which all life depends, whether it’s land that’s environmentally at risk in New Orleans’s Ninth Ward, land used to manufacture or store chemicals, or land used as a child’s playground; air that carries CO₂ molecules to the ozone layer, air that contains nanoparticles in occupational settings, or air that contains particulate matter from bus and truck depots located in low-income communities; or ground water that becomes a reservoir for mine tailings, surface water at risk for pesticide runoff, water treatment plants managing billions of excreted pharmaceuticals per year, or the privatized resources that are no longer available to local communities.

If it’s true, though, that only 30 percent of Americans say that they support the goals of environmentalists, why should progressive bioethics want to hitch its star to a political nonstarter? Part of this is a framing problem. By now, we should understand and be able to communicate that environmental issues are public health issues, many of which disproportionately affect the poor, people of color, and industrial workers. As

public health experts have long known, these are aspects of the natural environment – land, air and water – are intimately related to the built and to the social environments.

Environmental issues are also matters of local, global and international security. Unequal distributions of the benefits and burdens of environmental resources creates civil unrest and can contribute to an overall decline in health, prosperity, and stability in unequal societies. Environmental issues are also economic issues with companies competing on the basis of environmental performance measures. Environmental issues are also social justice issues that require transparency and public participation in decision-making regarding risk and fairness in burden-sharing and the distribution of public goods.

So progressive bioethics, I think, needs to shape its identity proactively, not reactively, and to see itself as a partner to likeminded groups, not as a counterpoint to ideological opponents. It's just as much a mistake, I think, for a group that supports something called progressive bioethics to shape its identity in response to a conservative agenda as it is for something called the Democratic Party to shape its identity in response to neoconservatism. Perhaps, a lesson could be taken from the proactive work done by social investment companies such as the Calvert Group that have set corporate best practices on social environmental and management issues; religious groups such as the Interfaith Climate Change Network that advocate for sound energy policy; and the United Church of Christ and grassroots groups such as the West Harlem Environmental Action that do policy and advocacy work on environmental justice.

The Calvert Group, for example – one of the pioneers in socially responsible investing – has established ratings based on ethical criteria such as human rights, including worker safety, fair compensation, indigenous people's rights, comprehensive and consistent standards for national and international corporate operations, product safety including integrity in advertising and labeling in goods and services that improve the health and quality of life of consumers, environmental sustainability including pollution prevention and environmental performance measures for senior management, and transparency in environmental performance including the publication of environmental emissions information and environmental audits.

The Interfaith Climate Change Network campaigns have, for example, recruited 25,000 individuals as advocates to reduce greenhouse gas emissions on the basis of arguments from social intergenerational justice. The United Church of Christ and West Harlem Environmental Action are two of the first organizations of any kind to recognize and address through public participation the disproportionate impact of environmental hazards on minority communities.

So giving a more prominent place to environmental issues on the bioethics agenda underscores the need to orient bioethics to the public interest. It orients the field to public health issues that have only recently begun to receive concerted attention in the field and it points the way for bioethics to form partnerships with organizations that have already committed themselves to commonly shared ethical principles across a political spectrum.

Let me end with a word of caution. In the last decade, corporate players in biomedicine, most notably in the biopharmaceutical industry, have hired bioethicists as consultants to burnish their corporate image or to lend credibility to troubling avenues of research. These affiliations threaten to compromise the ethics of bioethics. So as environmental issues hopefully gain greater priority on the bioethics agenda, nevertheless we can expect industry to come calling. Let's make sure that progressive bioethics takes the lead in demanding standards of ethics and accountability for all industries including the bioethics industry.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. LLOYD: Thank you. So any quick clarifying questions for Dr. Sharpe? Hearing none, I think we have our final panelist – and it seems to me that Alex actually was able to get the slides working for at least the moment. I see them up on the other screen.

Dr. McGee, would you like to start?

MR. GLENN MCGEE: I can be whiny anyway. (Laughter.) But I am in the interesting position of talking about – Jonathan, whom I thank very much for inviting me, asked me to say nothing of substance, which wouldn't be tough, but in this case actually my assignment is to talk about one of what I think we all can agree has become one of the more potent modes of transmission of information: not only the internet broadly, but blogs specifically. And I'm going to talk about that not only from the point of view of someone who's wasted countless hours in blogdom, but also from the point of view of the experiment of a blog. And so I'm especially happy to be testing the question of whether or not it is possible to talk about blogs without a projector. (Laughter.) It looks like it wants to come back; it was happy before. Yeah.

Well, anyway, there are a couple of claims that I can make without – can you see – is there a picture up there? (Laughter.) Okay. Well, see now the problem for me is that I can move the – do you see little pointers going over around? Can you tell me when I get to that X for the library. (Laughter.) See this is – okay. This is the first point I wanted to make and I promise I didn't stage this. Bioethics is probably among the lowest tech – pardon?

MS. : Participatory presentation.

MR. MCGEE: Thank you. Sounds great. (Laughter.)

Bioethics is probably one of the more low-tech disciplinary or research areas in all of biomedical science. It is far more low-tech as a way of explicating that point than philosophy. All right? So an area, which in my own memory trained primarily as a

philosopher, I remember it as a kind of area where – look at that – well, I’ll be – an area where, you know, you went because you wanted to avoid the sort of thing that might happen were technology to become a primary focus. Oh, lord. Is the mouse back? All right. This is what I associated back in the early ‘90s with research, and I don’t know what your training was like, but this is a place you probably – when was the last time you were in a library to do research – a physical place called the library to do research? And please exclude from that calculation a library that you built into your research institute. Anybody been to one in the last three weeks? Okay. So from this room, less than a tenth have been to a library.

We all know now that the majority of activity that involves research in one way or another whether it is the research that we characterize as part of our academic lives for those of us who think of ourselves as having that life for whom that is where the paycheck comes from, and as well for those around the United States for whom googling and research generally is a home hobby. Right? I mean, this is a point that not just folks like Lewis Lapham had made, but it’s become a broadly accepted idea, frankly, that – you know, I don’t know about you, but I spend a significant amount of my time when I’m not bouncing a child up and down looking for information in a way that would not have been possible to conceive seven or eight years ago.

So some time ago and I’m going to tell a little story which is not apocryphal, believe it or not, from a couple of weeks ago. Some time ago, I decided, I guess this is in 1995, that it would be neat to create a bioethics website. The internet was just becoming the web, so a number of websites existed and it was just in 1996 possible, I believe, to buy URLs and so we developed slowly what was – and then originally a kind of fireside chat thing, that built in to other things and so on and so forth.

To make a long story short, when Massachusetts Institutes of Technology Press contacted me and said, “Would you like to make a journal?” My first response was: “Well, there’re already too many.” Right? And what is the real readership? Because back then you counted readership in subscribers. There were these people who got journals in the mail and then physically read them. (Laughter.) All right? I mean, I look at the covers, but let’s be frank, right? So in this time, it was still – it was still, it seemed to me, interesting that it was possible to try to do some of the things that we associate now – they’re actually archivists of the web, and a number of them, who keep track – in fact, on the web, if you like, you can go to – one of them is sponsored by Amazon, you could actually go back and look at a slice of most major websites across the internet, going back four or five years. It’s interesting.

In any event, a number of these projects have attempted to capture that. The original idea though, in 1998 with MIT Press, was let’s see if we can create a paper journal that wouldn’t have the problem of just being redundant to the other journals that speak to the crowd of academic bioethicists and then reach out more broadly in the mission of the *Hastings Center Report*, for example, to an audience of thoughtful others who work in policy and in other dimensions who are, you know, where bioethics might be a thing they want to work on for a little while, and readership of that might in some

ways also play the same kind of role as reading *Atlantic Monthly* because of the quality of the articles is so great. Well, that was never going to happen with the journal I ran, so instead we opted for a large audience, right?

And with – the model for the journal was that – and I’m coming to a story that’s not apocryphal – the model for the journal was that would publish in the ordinary sense and then in the addition to the ordinary articles we publish with this new thing we came up with called target articles, if you don’t know our journal, we also published journals called “In Focus.” Now, originally it was a big problem. In Focus was a huge problem to recruit people to write articles that were called In Focus because they – they’re, although listed – oh, dear, stop it – although they’re listed in the table of contents, we solved the problem of online publishing: they exist in ISI, that’s the real world for tenure, right, and Pubnet and so on and so forth. They actually only physically exist here. You can print them, but the best example of this is the cover of *American Journal of Bioethics* three issues ago had Katrina on and it was a very special issue for us dedicated to a set of questions about how we’ll all deal with and recover from Katrina, and more specifically questions that Jonathan Moreno raised about what Katrina says about public health and bioethics.

So we put a lot of energy and attention to that. We couldn’t do it quickly on the production cycle of a journal, but more importantly, the audience for such an article is enormous. Six hundred thousand people downloaded that article, and yet last week I got a phone call from the incredibly irate author who said to me, “You mean my article’s not going to be in the print version?” Okay. So I’ve opened with bioethics is a Luddite discipline and I am not only thinking of Ed and his electric typewriter, I promise; I mean, generally. We as a discipline, we have moved slowly in the world of the web. The way we think about publishing influences deeply our capacity to reach broad audiences. The way that we conceptualize academic activity is a metaphor for how we think about the role of the electronic media more broadly.

So from the journal, which has existed now for – I don’t know, we’re in our 60 year, and we are about to become 12-issue-a-year journal with a separate sub-journal called *AJOB Neuroscience*. We decided that we’d try something that no other biomedical science journal had tried before, which was to create not just a blog, but a blog by editors. I’m having trouble here with how to get to – you’re just going to have to forgive me. That’s not what I want. That’s not what I – okay, I’ll stay with this. A blog by editors.

Now, there are reasons why no one will do this. The role of an – yes, that is placenta. The role of editors in an academic journal has some, you know, pretty well understood characteristics. When you write an editorial, it passes through a process. It’s not like peer review in most cases, but it does have some strictures and the voice of an editor, which develops over a long period of time, is something that is – take it from me – very difficult to learn and as editors move around, journals treat this differently.

So, for example, Eric Cohen’s journal, *New Atlantis*, the editorials are unsigned, right? It’s possible to have a journal that has an enormous number of articles without

references that – and call it all editorial material. In our own case, we developed what we thought was the model of a biomedical science journal and then one day is this – we come up with this blog thing. And the thing, believe it or not, almost immediately, because there are no other such things in the world of blogdom, becomes quite popular. And so, for example, as we cover – and someone will post it across the three editors in the primary office of the journal and then with additional folks who blog pretty frequently like Art Kaplan. (Laughter.) We cover a pretty broad range of health and science news.

Now, we're helped in several respects. We have an exchange of information with Alta Charo, who I believe must be connected by fiber optics to all media. (Laughter.) So we exchange information about news and much of what we cover comes from her and vice versa.

Years ago – five, six years ago, the life – the way in which we all in the discipline of bioethics stayed connected with conversations in politics and so on was through Medical College of Wisconsin's e-mail list, which many a bioethics no longer subscribe to. I still find quite interesting. It was a news exchange. That doesn't take place there – but to make a long story short, the purpose of the blog was to aggregate news and conversation, and the news and conversation had to find a way to take us into the realm of the blog so that we'd reach yet another and somewhat larger audience, but not alienate us in our roles as editors.

So as soon as we start this thing, people began contacting us and saying, "We'd like to do that too." First group we worked with was *Nature*. So *Nature Neurosciences* and *Nature Biotech* created editorial blogs and we got together and formed a little conference on how to do editorial blogs. There are now something like a 150 editorial blogs and they all look roughly the same. Many of the blogs, however, in the world of medicine and science look quite different. They have nothing whatever to do with journals and yet they are the primary source of information for a number of those who also get their research data from Pubnet and who also access biomedical ethics journals primarily through the web. So I'll just cycle through a couple of them. I can't pronounce the name of this blog, but it's one of the top 20 blogs in the world.

MR. : (Off mike.)

MR. MCGEE: So anybody? There's a – there's a root to this, but in any event she often covers bioethics; she's a philosopher in New York. The – this is a – this is an example of what's happened in blogdom. *Seed Magazine* and a couple of other magazines have begun to accumulate the blogs. So Chris Mooney who I'm coming – is this Chris? Yeah. This is Chris, isn't it? No. No. No. No. Here – where's Mooney? No. I've got him up here some place. Chris Mooney is probably the blogger that bioethicists think of most often. He's got a book called the – did he speak at the last CAP thing? No. He's – well, he's coming to the politics and bioethics conference in Albany. He has a book on the Republican control of science. He's, as many journalists who are also essayists who also participate to some degree in the bioethics community, has primarily exercised his pen in the blog. Now, he publishes 15 or 20 articles in places like

Atlantic Monthly every year. He's constantly in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, but his work is on the blog. So if you like him, you go there. Will Saletan at Slate: same deal. He's in other places, but at Slate, they do what, I hate to admit, is the best job of aggregating information about where things are going in biotechnology.

And now, a few others like this; many of them have been bought up, which we've refused to do. Some of them – this is the most popular medical blog – are sponsored by pharmaceutical companies and make an enormous amount of money even though you'd think that wouldn't happen. And I pointed the reason why you think that wouldn't happen is that unlike websites, it is easy to determine where a blog comes from. And if you don't read blogs, this may not make sense to you, but on a website, you know, – I mean, the world of Pharma is such that I don't happen to tell you if you read websites that a website's content can very easily be made to look more authoritative and less sponsored through design. Blogs are like the erector sets, right? And the voice of the blogger is the primary piece that's there and any advertising is excruciatingly notable and there is a well understood practice among bloggers that you disclose from whom you receive whatever sort of money you receive.

And the last thing I'm going to do is read our little disclosure because it's funny. Where's my – where's my pointer? So the natural history of blogs and bioethics for us has included a few posts that have been significant. Let's see, I want to pick this one. Where are they? I don't want to run out of time.

Well, first, I'll – first, I'll mention conservative blogs. There are – there are several that are extraordinarily popular. The most popular is by Wesley Smith called "Secondhand Smoke." It actually links to us – well, I don't know why. We get a significant traffic from – from this – reactionary blog. Secondhand Smoke is updated every couple of hours and is kind of an all-encompassing advocacy/news information service for those who are committed to defeating federal funding of stem cells. The "Human Future" is the most popular of the blogs that deals with entirely with intelligent design and science.

And then this is my favorite. This blog is called "The Thing Is," but they have a special section called "Kaplan Watch" that they update every 18 hours. The real purpose of this blog is to attack AJOB, but it in addition does something that a number of blogs – that what we think of blogs in the world of politics do, it does it effectively in a way I think we should look for in the future of bioethics. It is, as are many of the top 5 blogs out there, these little snippets – nothing at all, no real argument, no real analysis, it's just kind of vitriol, right, which is what attracted people to blogs – most of them – in the first place: here's some vitriol, right? That's very effective and – and for some reason the right wing is very good at it. So there are a number of these blogs that do quite a good job.

So I've mentioned that in addition we've had a number of cases where the blog has served specific purposes for us. What are they? Well, first, the zoom feature. The blog allows us to do something we could never do on the website and that is to zoom in

very close or pull out very far from an issue that is of great concern, not only in the world of bioethics, but in the world of policy. We devoted more attention to the Korean stem cell scandal than anyone. Most media outlets – it's not an exaggeration to say most media outlets, not only in the United States, but in Korea, quoted the blog as we translated – we have people at Stanford translating reports from Korean – but we actually followed every major news source – we didn't sleep for weeks – to follow this as it, you know, as the onion peeled.

Why? Because as the onion peel, it became a more and more interesting set nest of questions. I've never had an encounter quite like that. I'm not sure it was a scholarly encounter, but it had this zoom in, zoom out thing. So if you were interested in Korea and you wanted to know about it, and you put Korea and ethics into Google, we're like number one through five, so you would come to us and a number of comments that that generated and so on was interesting, but the point is that you can't do that in a journal, right? The turnaround time for a journal issue is eight months. The turnaround time for a website is, you know, a month.

Second piece is that you can feed people. Blogs have this – this mechanism called feeding. I don't understand it myself, but it allows the material that's on the blog to be taken up and retransmitted into other outlets. That is an extraordinarily useful feature, so for example, one of the things I'd like to see ASBH do in the not too distant future is to gather together this kind of information from a variety of different sources ranging from reports from president's commissions to new information from the project on reproduction that Kathy Hudson runs. All that stuff should be in one place. People should be able to get it and it can be fed. Right now, we don't have that. We have sixty-five 21-year olds in 60 different bioethics centers doing the same thing for 10 bucks an hour. I mean, it's silly, right, it's preposterous.

But the journal – the blog does also do things that are important for us that we probably couldn't do in other places. So, for example, when we retracted an article dealing with the Korean stem cell scandal, a number of questions were raised about the journal and about how that happened and so on, and we answered some of them in an article in *Science*, but when a number of the questions weren't very public or comments about the journal made by authors in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, some of that just seemed to the editors to be the proper sort of thing to address in the blog.

Another piece, the journal has – how are you to respond when the journal is attacked directly by someone out in the general media? The general media attack in this case is Carl Elliot in the *Lancet* arguing that AJOB is bought off by Pfizer. Well, this was a tough argument to answer. I mean, do we write an article to the *Lancet*? Do we write a letter to the editor? We decided we'd respond in a kind of longish, careful way in a blog. A blog is the only easy way to do that and it was read more that way than it would have been otherwise. There are other bioethics – I'm going to shut – I should shut up soon, huh?

MR. LLOYD: If you want to get out of here at 3:00.

MR. MCGEE: All right. (Laughter.) All right. I apologize. So there are other bioethics blogs and I'll just shout out to them real quickly. This is Chris Mooney. This is the "Global Bioethics" blog, which is the – has been an incredibly popular blog because it works in coordination with some at WHO and in UNESCO to get information out that otherwise you'd never see because it's buried in their horrible websites. This is the "Neuroethics and Law" blog and I should also mention there's also one the Judy Illes runs at Stanford. Here's the blog of the Women's Bioethics Project, which receives an enormous amount of traffic. (Laughter.) It does. And then finally, the newest blog on the block, which declares that it is not a blog and is extraordinarily well done from the Hastings Center called "Bioethics Forum," which has just been out for a couple of weeks.

So I'll close with that. I was going to read you this very funny post about who funds us, but I won't. There's – there's this great line about how we took money from a company that makes suits. Can I read just that? (Laughter.)

MS. : Yes.

MR. MCGEE: Let's see. So naturally we want to close out the blog this year by giving props to those who – and then scratched out here is "Return the Ring to Smeagle. Gollum, Gollum." – made financial contributions to the blog. Thanks to PBS, WGBH, MSNBC, to Basic Books, to Scholarly Publishing, to (unintelligible) bookstore, Gaelic meeting, and to mycustomtailor.com because when the – scratched out here, evil Pharma money people – reporters show up to film your comments about Hwang, you don't want to be caught in off-the-rack suit. (Laughter.)

And then finally I should say that the entire blog project was made possible by a very generous grant from the Greenwall Foundation and that the project, which we've called an experiment from the start, may well just die. It's been around for about a year. But the ability to kind of do this and have a sense of humor has been very helpful but at the same time, I guess I want to close by saying I think blogs are the future of interaction among those who are immediately politically motivated; that it is critical that we take seriously as a part of taking electronic publishing seriously the role of the blog and get over the idea that blogs are stories about lint in our navels because the notion of a scholarly blog has now been embraced by every one of the top 10 science journals. It is clearly a thing that can be done well whether we do it or not and if you're interested in doing one, I'd love to talk to you about that and other things.

Thank you for the time.

(Applause.)

MR. LLOYD: Thank you. Thank you. So let me – let me see if I understand this so far. The name of this panel is "Bioethics and Politics," the focus here was on present and future. Kathryn suggests that the present, at least, is going to be dominated by

conservatives who've organized themselves and gotten themselves together in a very effective way to frame the debate about bioethics and what it means for us.

James has suggested that the future of bioethics may be in the states and we need to focus and find out what's going on in the states with regards to that. And I think Glenn has just suggested the debate about bioethics, at least, is going to be in the blogosphere, or at least a major portion of that is in the blogosphere. And Virginia really, I think, helped to sort of bring in some of the conversation that Professor King was talking about earlier today, which is that the need to begin to broaden out the notions of bioethics and include other fields, specifically environment, and I think environmental justice you were talking about, and that that may be the future debate over bioethics.

With that, I would like to find out from Jonathan or someone how long we ought to go here. It's about 3:00 now and we were supposed to wrap up in a half hour. Fifteen minutes? So that's 15 minutes' worth of questions and answers with the audience. So we want to wrap up at 3.15. It's not much time. Do we have any questions for our panelists? Please. If you could stand up in the front. Tell us where you're from, your name and quick question.

Q: Hi. I'm Tania Simoncelli. I work for the American Civil Liberties Union. And I want to pull together a sort of comment and throw it out and see what happens. Harkening back to something Pat King was talking about and also touching on Virginia's comments and Kathryn's comments – at the ACLU, I think one of the hardest things – the issues that are most contentious for the organization I work for, I think, it's fair to say are those where you see very strong clashes between individual choice and social justice. And I'd like to propose that I think one of the greatest challenges for progressive bioethics is reconciling this very tension and, you know, Pat was clearly making a pitch – I think she's not here anymore – but for a stronger emphasis on social justice and I think that one might argue that one of the reasons conservatives have been successful in framing these arguments is that they've been sort of claiming values and those values tend to be social values.

And that one of the reasons that bioethicists have failed to include environmental justice is again this overemphasis, perhaps, on individual choice and a lack of attention to the more social justice issues. So I'm just wondering if some of the panelists could respond to: how do we reconcile the tensions between individual choice and social justice?

MR. LLOYD: Great. Virginia, you want to take that on?

MS. SHARPE: Sure. Great question. Thank you. I guess from the point of view of making a compelling argument, Wilkinson's book, *Unequal Societies*, essentially makes the argument that unequal societies, social injustices are bad for everybody. They're not just bad for the people at the bottom of the heap; they're bad for the whole society in terms of health outcomes, in terms of social stability, in terms of security. It's a utilitarian argument, but it's an argument that's very compelling to some, so that if you

don't believe in a welfare state, you at least believe in a state that can be stabilized and if one way to do that is to decrease the economic and environmental inequities, why not do it? It's one argument. It's not the typical argument that you hear from Democrats or progressives, but I think it's a compelling one that could be used strategically.

MR. LLOYD: So, Jim, did you want to –

MR. FOSSETT: Well, I think part of – it's been kind of an accident of history about why bioethicists haven't made this sort of social questions a bigger part of their portfolio. You know, we've been hit with a series of issues that have been very much about individual choice, and it's not like there's not a progressive debate about social justice and inequality and healthcare going on. I mean, it's all over the *American Journal of Public Health*. It's all over the *Milbank Quarterly*. It's all over the *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*. I mean, this is a big theme of other people. We just haven't pulled that into our portfolio yet. I mean, we're identified with these, you know, 'it's the individual's right to choose' kind of things and we have not been successful at broadening our portfolio to include these other things. I mean, they are there to be pulled in; we just haven't done it yet.

MS. HINSCH: I was just going to add that this is the tension between autonomy and social justice. It's just one of the many ways that conservatives will be able to divide progressives. If we think about, say, the advancement of scientific research and taking care of women's health in terms of the stem cell research and harvesting eggs, we can go down the line issue by issue of ways that if we don't figure out what our philosophical framework and how we're going to resolve these things behind closed doors, they are going to be exploited, as we saw in the proposition in California where traditional groups – pro-life groups bonding with feminists over issues to stop scientific progress. So I'm just suggesting that there are a whole list of issues that we need to resolve as progressives.

MR. LLOYD: Great. Thank you.

Michael, you've got someone else over there? Please.

Q: Hi. I'm John Evans, University of California, San Diego. I have a question for Kathryn. I think that any debate like this it's really critical that we tightly define what we're talking about here. I have a question about the terms you're using, which seem to have more slippage in them than is usual in this debate. I mean, one being progressive. I mean, I'm surprised that you are including these transhumanists, for example, who advocate their founder, James Hughes – I should admit a trained sociologist from Chicago who advocates that we should be trying to get a situation where we engineer everyone to have four arms in one of his famous articles that was obvious progressive agenda. But to take one of the questions, you say before that they – for example, the right-to-life groups are anti-science.

I just finished an interview study of 180 members of religious congregations across the country and I didn't find one person I would categorize as an anti-science. And I don't – can't – like the Catholic Church is certainly not anti-science. No one is opposed to the scientific method. No one is opposed to science writ large. I think a more accurate way to put it is that there are some religious traditions that are wont to use certain values to guide science and say that there are certain things science should not do, but we can't say that, you know, these religious groups or movements are opposed to science writ large. So –

MR. LLOYD: So Kathryn, do you want to – yeah?

MS. HINSCH: Well, yeah. It's hard to say. One that – I pointed out that my 10-minute analysis was not going to be very satisfying, but even if you look specifically into the report that I did, there was a large survey that we did of 157 groups who self-identified as progressive. So that while you may not feel comfortable and many in this room of us would not feel comfortable with lumping ourselves in with the transhumanists, they are – that is how they self-identify themselves. So that was one of those issues.

Yes, I agree. This is actually the bane of progressives. We'd like to see the nuanced scholarly analysis, but when you're out there and you're looking at – and we're not looking at – from a competition standpoint and you have many white papers to focus on the family, which is \$127 million pumping out this information, I think that we have to be realistic about how many sound bites we can get out in helping people understand it. So yes, I did resort to using, perhaps, inflammatory and even inaccurate information to describe these things, but as a way of starting a conversation and frankly waking progressives up.

MR. LLOYD: Let's see if we could – right here.

Q: I'm Frances Kissling with Catholics for a Free Choice. I just want to pick up and ask the panel, and I think Jonathan may comment a little bit on this in his closing remarks or at least I hope he will, on Virginia's remark about a movement or a field who as a large part of its rationale is counteracting another movement. And I have been thinking about that quite a bit in the context of how I feel about progressive bioethics; in general how I might feel about adjectives associated with movements in general. And I wonder if you would care to – you know, this may fall in the category of biting the hand that fed you lunch, but this is something that I am quite used to doing. (Laughter.) So I wonder in that context if you or others would want to expand on that and the potential dangers, I mean I think politicization is one thing that we were talking about and polarization is another problem that all of us are very deeply concerned about and does categorizing bioethics into these two camps – conservative and progressive – have some danger associated with it as well as some potential and were you referencing that?

MR. LLOYD: Yeah. Virginia, did you –

MS. SHARPE: Yeah. I think that strategically there're obvious reasons why there are movements and counter-movements. You need – in a city like this especially, you need to be very nimble, you need to be very responsive to what's going on, but I think if you get outside the Beltway and you talk to people about what they care about, they care about big issues and they wonder why some political actors or parties don't focus on those issues but are instead just clubbing one another.

I mean, you know, we do that here and I think people get so fatigued with it. And the truth is there's a lot of energy, there's a lot of – there's a lot of insight about what it is that we might want to accomplish and there are a lot of people who are already out there in the grassroots doing it. Let's connect with them. Let's connect with what matters to the people who are not here clubbing one another. Practically, I understand the reason, but it goes on the other way though.

MR. LLOYD: Kathryn, did you have any thoughts about that? I mean, you started out talking about the power of the conservative movement in framing bioethics and Virginia's suggesting that maybe we need to stop worrying about them and begin to frame it more broadly there, I think.

MS. HINSCH: Jonathan asked me to talk about what the conservatives were doing. Part of the reason we need to look at that is because progressives are not putting resources into thinking about these issues whether it's tactically getting people to think about it or a philosophical framework. We have a huge opportunity with these emerging technologies. So instead of them being called designer babies or snowflakes or some of the other pejorative terms that have come to describe these things, we have the opportunity as progressives to have those new technologies reflect progressive values.

I'm not necessarily even that comfortable with the word "progressive." If you go to the Women's Bioethics Project, what we're all about, and which I didn't have an opportunity to talk about today, is about getting those voices who have not been at the table at the bioethics table or at the policy table to weigh in. We just launched our bioethics book club where we've taken three works of fiction that we asked bioethical questions and we're getting women – pro-life, pro-choice women around the country to sit down to talk to each other about these issues and we're reaching out to women of color and we're reaching out to people internationally.

So lest you think that we're just some radical Seattle group just bashing their right wing, no. But I think we have to understand what context we're working in and emphasizes the terms are, we have to understand that it's not just a good idea to weigh in on these issues. There's a whole set of other people whether you're marginalizing – I heard a scholar tell me last night, "Well, we don't need to worry about Leon Kass anymore; he's over." All right. Great. But the type of coalitions that he has put in place are not over and they're moving ahead and we do – we ignore them to our own peril.

MR. LLOYD: James, one of the things that I think you seem to suggest is that the debate in the states is really much richer than the debate we seem to have here in Washington oftentimes.

MR. FOSSETT: Well, I think it's gotten defined in a way where it's resolvable. I mean, where you just don't bash each other. And I come from a state capital: we do a lot of bashing. But the fact that in a lot of states it's seen as about jobs, about economic development and not really an ethical issue at all takes a lot of the moral kind of fervor out of it and it makes it possible for people who normally don't agree with each other – I mean, a deal's much easier to get. And, you know, I'm enough of a – I said I'm the political scientist that thinks that there is no moral conundrum that can't be resolved by the application of a large enough amounts of cash. (Laughter.) And, you know, I'll take a done deal to a moral conundrum any day.

MR. LLOYD: To – I think we have room for only one more question, please. Michael?

Q: J. D. Hanson. I work now for the International Center for Technology Assessment, but I used to work for the United Methodist Church. I consider myself a progressive; I'm pro-choice. I am concerned about having a long litmus test. I could pass every litmus test I've heard here today except I think there were some issues not connected to the status of the embryo, that we should not be doing cloning at this time. That's one point I would like to have some comment about. How do we get a more of a religious voice here? I look at my children and say, they're very religious. One's lesbian; they're very politically active, but if they're told they couldn't be religious to be here, they wouldn't be here.

The other thing is about money. I think one of the reasons that there's not some more players in this field is – really is money and even the National Council of Churches went to the Biotechnology Industry Organization for money to fund its bioethics task force. I challenged the general secretary and said, "You wouldn't have gone to the American Petroleum Institute to do your climate change work. Why did you go to BIO to do your bioethics work now?" I'll stop there.

MR. LLOYD: Great. Thank you. So money and religion: great topics here for closing. (Laughter.) Yeah. Yeah. For the next couple minutes. Do you want to take a crack at any of it?

MS. SHARPE: No. I mean, for the next event. (Laughter.)

MR. LLOYD: Oh. (Laughter.) Any response from our panelists on either of those?

MS. HINSCH: I have a response. J. D., good to see you for one. Yes, I think one of our biggest opportunities is to activate progressive religious communities because we're unhappy with what has been spoken in our name. I am an active Episcopalian.

These are deeply religious, moral concerns. I think that we need to – and interestingly enough, some of these issues that the religious right are coming out on, we may actually come to the same conclusion as progressives and as religious progressives that perhaps, say, with the issue of cloning that we should have a worldwide ban on it. But I suggest that perhaps we might come to that decision for different reasons and have different values and concerns underlying it and I think it's very important for us to have that discussion and to activate our religious communities.

MR. LLOYD: Great. I think with that we want to wrap up the panel. If we could give them a nice round of applause.

(Applause.)

MR. MORENO: And thanks to Mark for doing such a wonderful job keeping us on track. I want to just close with a couple of remarks. I was telling somebody earlier – speaking about money and religion that this reminded me of my bar mitzvah today because there are a lot of people here who are old friends that I didn't get to talk to. There are some new people. People are arguing about politics. I got to give people lunch without worrying about who's paying for it. (Laughter.) So it was sort of a déjà vu experience in that respect.

Interestingly, a couple of the themes that came out as tensions in the last panel are ones that we've been talking about here at American Progress in bioethics: the tension between people who are more interested in the marketplace and people who are more interested in control and regulation – very clearly a tension in bioethics left or right.

There are people who identify themselves as progressives in bioethics – Kathryn and I have talked about this – who are more, I would say, green on biotechnology issues and there are those who are more libertarian on biotechnology, so you've given me hope that we're moving in the right track and I think we will be moving, in fact, in that more specific direction looking at those tensions within progressive bioethics, whatever that is.

Dan Callahan challenged me when I invited him down to do this today. What is progressive bioethics, anyway? You will find in your packets initial thoughts about what progressive bioethics might be and what its values might be. I'm a Deweyian; I'm a follower of the philosophy of John Dewey, so I think anything you say about the world is always tentative, it's always a work in progress. So I'm sure many of you will have many things to tell me about what you think about our initial efforts to define progressive bioethics, but it's not finish. It's an ongoing project.

I do want to thank a number of people who concretely made the day work: Michael Nguyen, Anna Soellner, Tyler Hall, Alex Pryor, Abby Witt, Erin Green, Dan Weber and Summer Johnson all here at the Center, and my magic administrative assistant, Sam Berger. So if you have any complaints, please talk to one of them. (Laughter.) I hope we will see you often, again, at the Center for American Progress. The best part of the day for me is the fact that people of diverse views did come into the

building. That's what we want to encourage and we want to know what you liked and what you didn't like and I hope to see you again very shortly. So thanks again to all our panelists and thank you for coming.

(Applause.)

(END)