

John L. Cordani Jr.

Science and Liberty

Patient Confidence in the Ultimate Justice of the People

SERIES IN POLITICS

About the author

John L. Cordani Jr. obtained degrees in Chemistry and Philosophy from Cornell University. Before attending Cornell Law School, he worked as a chemist and was named an inventor on two issued United States patents. His academic work has been published in the 'Cornell Law Review', the 'American Intellectual Property Law Association Quarterly', the 'Connecticut Law Tribune', and 'IP Watchdog'. John is a practising trial lawyer specializing in patent litigation. In addition, he serves as an adjunct professor at Quinnipiac University School of Law, where he teaches a course on patent litigation.

Summary

One of the most debated topics in law and politics is the role that science should play in setting policy. What does it mean to demand that politicians and the People themselves "follow the science" if science deals with questions of fact, not matters of moral or political values? This long-standing controversy has roots ranging from Plato's philosopher-kings to Enlightenment skepticism to modern progressivism and the rise of the administrative state. 'Science and Liberty' explores the idea that a constitutional republic provides a fitting role for science while preserving the People's liberty and right to self-government. It examines this topic from five perspectives: American, Historical, Philosophical, Scientific, and Moral. Providing direct access to primary historical sources, 'Science and Liberty' contends that America's founders designed a constitution that was predicated on the Enlightenment theory that liberty precedes government and that presupposed the engagement of the People and their representatives at all levels of free debate. Early twentieth-century progressivism was openly hostile to these founding principles in its desire for efficient rule by scientific administrators. However, it is impossible to philosophically ground political and moral values in the findings of science, despite what modern theorists claim. Ultimately, the injunction to "follow the science" demands to substitute the values of "experts" for the values of the People themselves. By illustrating numerous examples from the hard and social sciences, ranging from physics to Biblical criticism to climate science, this book also explains that the People have a role to play in reasonably engaging with and critiquing modern science. 'Science and Liberty' will appeal to those interested in a variety of subjects, including law, politics, philosophy, and intellectual history, as well as scientific criticism, particularly from an American perspective. It is written to be accessible for all ages while also engaging with complex issues and sources relevant for those with advanced degrees.

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