

“SCIENCE, UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL”

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Note: See the accompanying PowerPoint Slide Show for each of these Lectures.

February 28, 7pm:

“THE NEW SCIENCE OF THE MIND AND BRAIN”

Already in the early 17th century, partisans of the “new science of nature” envisioned a series of innovations that would revolutionize the conditions of human life. Until now we have experienced them largely as “external” technologies. With the coming of genomics, however, science gets personal and intimate – and, I suggest, the *meaning* of science for us changes dramatically as a result.

March 14, 7pm:

“SCIENCE AND SOCIETY IN THE MODERN PERIOD”

In the eyes of its early partisans modern science was never just about new technologies that confer power over nature on us. It was also an “Enlightenment project” that would, it was expected, transform the very nature of human societies. As of now, science is universal – but Enlightenment is not. This is, I suggest, by no means a trivial matter.

March 21, 7pm:

“SCIENCE AND ETHICS: THE CHOICES THAT CONFRONT US”

For most people religion has provided the traditional foundation for personal and social morality. But a variety of factors, including the increasing “presence” of science in public life, seem to have eroded that foundation. Can a scientific world-view replace religion for this purpose? Can the religious and the scientific world-views be easily reconciled? I suggest there are no easy answers to these questions, and therein lies a whole series of important problems for us, especially where genomics is concerned.