

Abstract Submitted
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Defend Science: The Attack on Scientific Thinking and What Must Be Done JASON CURTIS, UC Berkeley / Defend Science Project — “In the United States today science, as science, is under attack as never before (*Defend Science*, defendscience.org).” Beyond, and underlying, the many particular attacks and outrages in different spheres and policy areas is the question of the scientific method and whether it is going to be upheld and applied, or whether – even in the realm of science itself – that method is going to be replaced by something antagonistically opposed to the scientific method. These attacks are increasingly coming from powerful forces, in and out of the Bush administration, with an extreme right-wing political agenda, a Biblical-literalist ideological agenda, and theocratic aspirations for society. Individual scientists may be atheists, agnostics, or may hold various religious beliefs, but if religious and theistic elements are forced into the definition of science, then the scientific process is undermined and science cannot really be practiced. We can and must develop a society wide battle, initiated by scientists, but involving ever growing masses of people to defend science and scientific thinking. Scientists from various fields must be mobilized to issue a public call to millions with this urgent message as the beginning of this effort. I will discuss the necessity, possibility, and some initial efforts toward developing this kind of societal movement in defense of science.

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