

New book sheds light on conflicts of politics and science

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From stem cell research to needle exchanges to medical marijuana and HIV/AIDS prevention, politics is getting in the way of science, according to a new book by a leading authority on health-care policy and women's health issues at Weill Cornell Medical College.

"Truth, Lies, and Public Health: How We Are Affected When Science and Politics Collide" (Praeger Press, 2007) is authored by Dr. Madelon Finkel, professor of clinical public health, director of the Office of Global Health Education and director of Cornell Analytics Consulting Services (CACS) at Weill Cornell Medical College.

"While political activists and the government can bring much-needed attention and money to a public health problem, politics can also poison science," says Dr. Finkel. "Over the last two decades, politics and ideology have increasingly hijacked and distorted science to serve its own purposes -- often ignoring incontrovertible evidence and preventing much-needed policies to improve public health."

The new book looks at how ideology affects research funding and explores the evolution of public health policies on contraception, AIDS, stem cell research, medical marijuana, needle exchanges, tuberculosis control, dietary supplements, silicone breast implants, obesity, vaccination and disease prevention.

Source: New York- Presbyterian Hospital

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