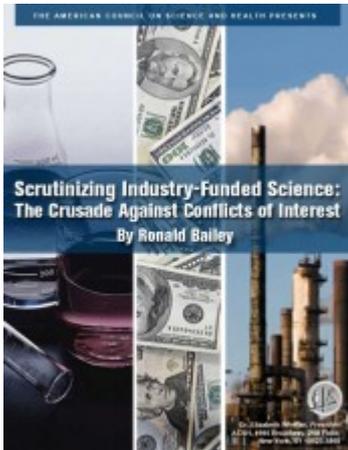


Scrutinizing Industry-Funded Science: The Crusade Against Conflicts of Interest

By ACSH Staff — April 2, 2008



[1] FROM THE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For approximately a century, industry has been a powerful motivating force in the creation of new technology and the underwriting of scientific research.

Yet the last two decades have seen the development of a sweeping conflicts of interest movement aimed squarely at curtailing academic/industry biomedical research collaborations and restricting membership on government scientific advisory boards to researchers associated within industry.

Conflicts of interest activists assert that ties between researchers and industry are harming patients and consumers, undermining public trust in research, food safety and environmental regulation and boosting the costs of medicine and other products. [But] contrary to the claims of conflicts of interest activists, the overwhelming majority of patients and research subjects are not being harmed, public trust in scientists and scientific research remains extremely high, and new drugs not only save lives but money....

The current obsession with conflicts of interest is not harmless. The activists have provoked the development of unnecessary and complex academic regulations and restrictions that are interfering with the speedy translation of scientific discoveries into effective treatments and new products and technologies.

The plain fact of the matter is that there is very little evidence that alleged conflicts of interests are significantly distorting scientific research, harming consumers and patients or misleading public policy. Most conflicts of interest activists clearly have prior strong ideological commitments against markets and corporations.

They view the conflicts of interest campaign as another tool to attack an enterprise which they already despise on other grounds. [Scrutinizing Industry-Funded Science: The Crusade Against Conflicts of Interest](#)

[2]

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