

# Science, Politics and the Professional-Managerial Class

James J. Hughes, Associate Provost, University of Massachusetts Boston

[Jamesj.hughes@umb.edu](mailto:Jamesj.hughes@umb.edu)

## Abstract

In the last fifty years support for science has become increasingly polarized in domains such as climate science, embryonic stem cell and gun violence research, vaccines and evolution. Some believe that, rather than infusing data into public discourse, Internet-mediated politics has become completely unmoored from evidence. In the 2000s I suggested that the divisions between transhumanists and bioconservatives would become increasingly salient, which has not happened. Nonetheless the political and cultural divisions between the growing urban professional-managerial class, whose human capital is expert knowledge and who tend towards technocratic politics, and rural and blue collar workers, whose cultural anxieties and economic insecurity have driven social democratic losses to the far right, are contributing to the politicization of science. Given existing trends what can we expect in the coming decade around support for higher education and basic science? How will debates about automation, genetic engineering, life extension and surveillance capitalism contribute to and be shaped by egalitarianism, fascism, and climate justice? When debates about human enhancement and artificial intelligence do become pressing partisan issues, the politicization of science is likely to determine the nature of the debate.