



Editors' Note

“Whether it’s the science to slow global warming; the technology to protect our troops and confront bioterror and weapons of mass destruction; the research to find life-saving cures; or the innovations to remake our industries and create 21st-century jobs — today, more than ever before, science holds the key to our survival as a planet and our security and prosperity as a nation.”

— President Barack Obama. *Science Team Rollout Radio Address. December 17, 2008.*

President Barack Obama’s proclaimed dedication to promoting science promises to make the next four years a very exciting time for the advancement of science and technology. President Obama has pledged increased funding for research and development and has surrounded himself with a number of brilliant science advisors to assist him, including two Harvard professors. Dr. John Holdren, a physicist famous for his work on climate and energy, is the Director of the Program on Science, Technology, and Public Policy at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government. Dr. Eric Lander, who helped drive the mapping of the human genome, is the Founding Director of the Broad Institute for genetic research at MIT and Harvard. Also selected by President Obama were Dr. Harold Varmus, a Nobel Laureate and former Director of the National Institutes of Health during the Clinton Administration, and Dr. Jane Lubchenco, an environmental scientist and ecologist and former President of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Although the advancement of science and discovery and development of new technologies are critical, as described by President Obama, it is equally important that scientists

and non-scientists alike are informed about and consider the ethical and moral questions facing science today. Inside this issue of the Harvard Science Review, entitled A Brave New World: Controversial Science, readers will find articles about a broad spectrum of controversial scientific techniques and discoveries, from the ethics of pre-implantation diagnosis, to the controversy surrounding the Large Hadron Collider and of course, advances in the development of alternative energy sources.

Our writers have covered a fascinating array of topics, from the rewilding of North America, to possible uses of satellites and GPS technology. In this issue, we hope to update readers on more familiar controversies, such as stem cells and the relationship between vaccines and autism, and to inform them of less well known issues, such as the development of artificial wombs.

We are especially honored to include in this issue two fantastic articles by Harvard faculty members, one on taboo words by Harvard Professor of Psychology Steven Pinker, and one on biolinguistics by Associate Professor of Linguistics Cedric Boeckx.

Thank you for reading the Harvard Science Review, and enjoy! ■

Susan DeWolf and Amrita Goyal

Editors in Chief

