

Religious in U.S. Question the Moral Acceptability of Nanotechnology,

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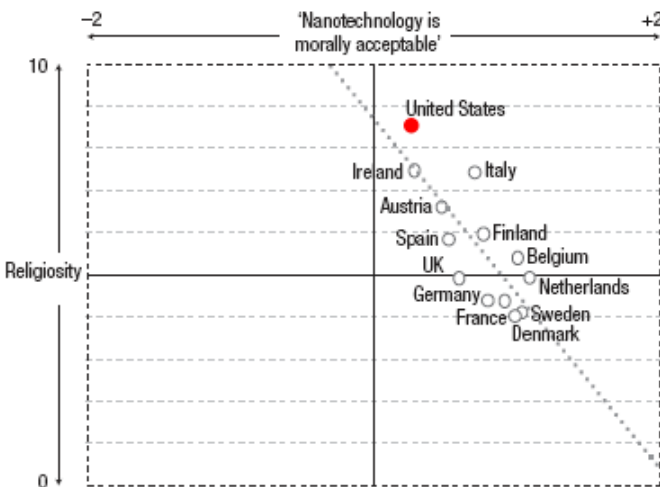
The view that science and religion occupy separate and non-overlapping domains may be naïve when it comes to nanotechnology's capacity to alter the fundamentals of nature. According to a December 2008 CNS-ASU report published in *Nature Nanotechnology*, survey results from the U.S. and Europe show that—particularly in the U.S.—people with strong religious beliefs are significantly less likely to see nanotechnology as morally acceptable.

Even after controlling for other country differences such as national research productivity, results show that religion remains one of the strongest predictors of whether or not nanotechnology is viewed as morally suspect. These results are consistent with recent research exposing broader negative public attitudes toward science when people filter their views through religion.

The findings have important implications for how scientists approach the emerging public dialogue concerning nanotechnology. Citizens are not looking only for information, but also for answers about the technology's social implications. In other words, they want to know not only what can be done, but what *should* be done. The more prepared scientists are to answer both questions, the more credible they will be perceived.



More information about the article, first published online on 12.7.2008 as doi, at <http://www.nature.com/nano/journal/vaop/ncurrent/abs/nnano.2008.361.html>



Relationship between strength of religious beliefs and moral acceptance of nanotechnology. Based on country-level data, we see a negative relationship between levels of religiosity (vertical axis) and beliefs that nanotechnology is morally acceptable (horizontal axis). More religious countries cluster together at the top end of the dotted regression line, and more secular countries at the bottom end.

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