

24.191S15 LAUNCH QUESTION #7

MILITARY FUNDING AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

In “The ‘Star Wars’ Project – My Struggle as a Participant and My Decision to Blow the Whistle,” Subrata Ghoshroy argues that the US government spends far too much money on military research and development that is both wasteful and dangerous. He argues that US research universities are complicit in this military project, as a great deal of their research is funded by the pentagon: 72% of electrical engineering research, 75% of mechanical engineering research, 35% of materials science research, and 30% of mathematics and computer science research.

Ghoshroy argues that this funding has a pernicious effect: "The military necessarily skews the research agenda to satisfy its own objectives. Thus vital areas of research that could benefit the society at large are neglected. For example, large sums are spent on developing missile defenses, high-power lasers, and stealth technology, while programs for high-speed rail or renewable energy technologies get short shrift."

Do you agree that military funding of scientific research is ultimately destructive? If not, why not? If so, what do you think could be done to address the problems Ghoshroy identifies?

Ghoshroy, Subrata. "The 'Star Wars' Project – My Struggle as a Participant and My Decision to Blow the Whistle." In *Social Responsibility of Scientists and Engineers in Military Settings*. Edited by Thomas Borson. Aalborg University Press, 2015. © Aalborg University Press. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <http://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>.

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