Should There Be Limits on the Right to Privacy?
A History of Privacy and Surveillance in America.

Ronald Bayer, PhD

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Dr. Bayer discussed the cultural and ethical realities that characterize the history of public health practice, and the politicization of public health reporting, including HIV/AIDS. He asked the question "What does good public health require?" and distinguished between public health surveillance and public health research. Public health research, unlike surveillance, requires informed consent and IRB approval.

Dr. Bayer is Professor of Public Health at the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health. He serves as Co-Director of the Program in the History of Medicine and Public Health. His work on the ethics of public health has centered on AIDS, and he has studied tuberculosis policy and tobacco regulations in liberal democracies. He has recently been elected to the Institute of Medicine (IOM) of the National Academy of Sciences and is the principal investigator of an NIH-funded study on the Ethics of Surveillance in Computer Databases.