**How to Rule the World:
Boston College Fall 2012**

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Sample Discussion Questions

1. What does it mean to “torture” nature? What about human nature? What examples of it are there in the *New Atlantis*? How does Bacon justify it? Do you agree that it is justified in all cases, just some cases, or never?
2. Think about Hobbes’s account of natural equality in 13.1. Is this what we mean by equality? Is this what the Declaration of Independence means when it says that “all men are created equal”? What standard does this equality presuppose? Is this different than the standard presupposed by the Hobbes?
3. What is it about atheism that Locke objects to? Are there major world religions that share this characteristic, and would therefore be excluded from toleration?
4. Did Governor Romney’s “47%” remarks violate the “courtier spirit” (p247) that Tocqueville observes among American officials? Think of reasons *both* why and why not.
5. Hobbes wrote that “as oft as reason is against a man, so oft will a man be against reason” (*Elements* Ep. Ded.). If that is true, what would it mean for Aristotle’s argument that “the work of a human being is an activity of soul in accord with reason” (1098a8)?