It is 2018. In the era of cell lines, genome editing, and digital shadows, do you know who and where you are, let alone what your rights are and how these are to be protected? How can constitutions and laws drafted for a simpler time — a time when our bodies, minds, and selves seemed more integrated — rise to the challenges of this fragmented age? In this talk, I combine thinking from legal studies and science and technology studies to indicate why we need renewed reflection on the idea of the “human” to which we have attached so much of our thinking on rights.

Sheila Jasanoff is Pforzheimer Professor of Science and Technology Studies at the Harvard Kennedy School. A pioneer in her field, she has authored more than 120 articles and chapters and is author or editor of more than 15 books, including The Fifth Branch, Science at the Bar, Designs on Nature, and The Ethics of Invention. Her work explores the role of science and technology in the law, politics, and policy of modern democracies. She founded and directs the STS Program at Harvard; previously, she was founding chair of the STS Department at Cornell. She has held distinguished visiting appointments at leading universities in Europe, Asia, Australia, and the US. Jasanoff served on the AAAS Board of Directors and as President of the Society for Social Studies of Science. She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. Her honors include a Guggenheim Fellowship, the University of Ghent Sarton Chair, an Ehrenkreuz from the Government of Austria, and membership in the Royal Danish Academy. She holds AB, JD, and PhD degrees from Harvard, and an honorary doctorate from the University of Twente.