

= Eppur Si Muove (The West Wing) =

" Eppur Si Muove " is the sixteenth episode of The West Wing 's fifth season , and episode 104 from the start . It originally aired on NBC March 3 , 2004 . Events centre on a controversy relating to the National Institutes of Health , involving President Bartlet ' s middle daughter Ellie . Written by Alexa Junge and directed by Llewellyn Wells , the episode contains guest appearances by Michael Gaston and Deirdre Lovejoy , as well as characters from Sesame Street .

= = Plot = =

Republican Congresswoman Barbara Layton (Lovejoy) starts a campaign against publicly funded NIH projects into sexual diseases . The attack is based on a list of seemingly useless projects , but by association , her real target becomes the president 's daughter Ellie , who is working on a study into the Human papillomavirus that researched conditions for prostitutes in Puerto Rico . The President is infuriated at having a family member dragged into political battles , and Toby tries to discredit the attack by finding its source . At first the list seems to originate from a far @-@ right group called the " Traditional Values Alliance " , but Toby 's assistant Rena uncovers an updated list that shows it came from within the administration . Toby immediately suspects the Vice President 's office . When confronted , Will takes full responsibility , and assures that the list was compiled purely for internal use and not leaked on purpose . Will suspects that his boss might have leaked the material on purpose , however , and Russell in private agrees he has ties to the Republicans on health issues and notes that having some distance from the President isn 't a bad thing for him . Will is left utterly disgusted with the VP .

Meanwhile , President Bartlet tries to persuade Ellie to speak to the press to contain the incidence , but Ellie insists she is not as comfortable with the spotlight as the other members of the family . She later watches her mother do a light @-@ hearted appearance on Sesame Street , to defend her right to practice medicine even after voluntarily giving up her licence . This inspires her to follow her father 's advice , and give a passionate public statement about the necessity of a politically independent scientific community .

In parallel storylines , Josh tries to end a deadlock on the appointment of a 6th Circuit federal court judge . His old friend Eric Hayden (Gaston) has been waiting for a year for confirmation from the Republican @-@ led Congress , and is offered the position of dean of Georgetown 's law school . But Josh suggests making a temporary recess appointment that will at least put the issue on the agenda and Hayden agrees . When Josh goes to suggest this to Leo he is told that the issue will have to wait for one of the Supreme Court justices has died . Assuming it is the ailing Chief Justice Roy Ashland that has passed , Josh is surprised to learn that it is 52 @-@ year old Justice Owen Brady , taken by a heart attack . C.J. , meanwhile , tries to make things right with resurfaced college boyfriend Ben , whom she has been forced to ignore due to her workload . Based on Ben 's reaction at the end of their very brief conversation , C.J. regrets her approach and fears that she may have caused things with Ben to end before they could even begin . Upon voicing this concern to Toby he advises her to go to Ben and fix it . Ryan Pierce , the intern working for Josh , (uncharacteristically) fails to show up for work . Josh had failed to even notice until Donna voices her concern as she tries , unsuccessfully , to get a hold of Ryan .

= = Social and cultural references = =

The title of the episode refers to the president quoting Galileo Galilei , leaving the Roman Inquisition after having recanted his heliocentric theory of the universe . " Eppur si muove " ? " And yet it moves " . The story ? as Ellie points out ? is probably apocryphal , but evidence shows that it was current as early as a decade after Galileo 's trial .

The advocacy group " Traditional Values Alliance " is a thinly veiled version of the real @-@ life " Traditional Values Coalition " (TVC) . TVC sent a letter of protest to NBC producers , reacting to their portrayal on the show . In particular it was the association with a group stating that " The Lord

Hates Homosexuals " that provoked the coalition , reading in this an allusion to the controversial anti @-@ gay pastor Fred Phelps . TVC , the group pointed out in its letter , had clearly distanced itself from Phelps and his methods .

The restaurant , " 1789 " , that Ben and C.J. planned lunch at is a real restaurant in Washington .