



KENNEDY INSTITUTE OF ETHICS

Georgetown University ✦ Member's Newsletter No. 16, Spring 2006

From the Director's Office

No Lessons Learned?

Almost a year after the Gulf coast region was hit by Hurricane Katrina many people are unable to return to their homes. Lack of essential services, a polluted environment, lack of capacity to undertake widespread clean-up, lack of jobs to sustain returning residents, and lack of insurance or, in many cases, lack of resolution of the legal issues surrounding insurance coverage, are among the many well-known facts of life in that region. Equally well-known, but increasingly less discussed in the national media, is the disproportionate negative impact on the poor, the elderly, racial minorities, and many others who, for a variety of reasons, often are among the most vulnerable members of society. For a brief moment, all the pundits on cable talk shows and on Capitol Hill predicted a debate on the moral significance of race and class in the United States. That prediction has yet to be fulfilled.

What is missing from our current political dialogue? The most conspicuously absent topic is the matter of social justice and what it encompasses. A core factual insight of any reasonably well-informed account of social justice is that there are multiple causal pathways to numerous dimensions of social disadvantage. The causal pathways to disadvantage include poverty, substandard housing, poor education, unhygienic and polluted environments, and social disintegration. These, and many other causal agents, lead to systematic disadvantage in nearly every aspect of social, economic, and political life. Inequalities of one kind beget other inequalities, and existing inequalities compound, sustain, and reproduce a multitude of deprivations in well-being. Taken in their totality, multiple disadvantages add up to markedly unequal life-prospects.

Systematic disadvantages are widespread and are found in all spheres of life. Multiple, compounding disadvantages are deep, pervasive, and hard to escape. The presence and persistence of densely woven patterns of systematic disadvantage suggest that the challenge of combating their pervasive and devastating consequences can only be met with a coordinated and systematic response among all levels of government.

Consider the implications for our response to Katrina. Much has been said and more will surely follow about what was known or anticipated and who bore primary responsibility for action in the circumstances. I have neither expertise nor access to the facts to answer such questions. However, we can say a great deal about what might have been within the reasonable realm of moral imagination had a public commitment to social justice in the design of public policy been more robust.

Health and disaster response officials would have foreseen that the poor would not have private transportation nor the means to stock up on food or supplies. They would have anticipated that some of the poor, sick, aged, homeless or persons with physical (sight, hearing, mobility) or mental (psychosis, depression, learning difficulties) disabilities would not be able to communicate and act decisively as others would. They would have known also that such emergencies threaten the entire community but that the poor and disabled are at heightened risk because of a combination of fewer private resources and greater impediments to acting on their own behalf.

Social justice, however, demands more than attention to the fair distribution of resources and burdens in circumstances of extreme emergency. A failure to act

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IBC 2006 - Bigger and Better!

We hope that everyone received this year's IBC brochure and has had a chance to review the great line-up for the Intensive Bioethics Course (June 6-11, 2006).

We are incorporating the add-on symposia (Library, Organizational Ethics and Clinical Ethics) into the 'regular' week and hope that this works out well for participants.

Our opening lecture will be presented by Hilary Bok, Ph.D., from the JHU Phoebe Berman Bioethics Institute. We are pleased to welcome back Patricia King, J.D., Carmack Waterhouse Professor of Law, Medicine and Public Policy from GU's law center, who speaks on *Race and Gender in Health Disparities*. David Wender, Ph.D., head of NIH's Vulnerable Populations Unit in clinical bioethics, will lecture on *Ethical Issues in Clinical Trials Involving Humans*. John Keown, D.Phil., Ph.D., offers views on *The Euthanasia Debate*, and Carol Taylor, R.N., Ph.D., takes the podium to speak on *Care and Justice*. We are trying out another new lecture this year in response to participant requests, and Robert Veatch, Ph.D., will help us sort out *Conflicts Among Principles and Theories*. We'll have Beauchamp and Childress, too, as well as the President's Chair of the Council on Bioethics, "our own" Dr. Pellegrino, who will close out the plenary series with *Virtue Ethics* in what has become an IBC tradition for Sunday morning.

We are pleased to announce that the IBC has been approved to offer 32.5 Category 1 CME credits for physicians. Our application for nursing credits to the Maryland Nurses Association is currently pending. University CEUs are also available for participants.

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From the Director, continued

expeditiously and with equal concern for all citizens, including the poor and less powerful, harms the community by eroding public trust and undermining social cohesion. It signals to those affected, and to everyone else, that the basic human needs of some seem to matter less than those of others. If a robust commitment to social justice had been an animating principle in the response to Hurricane Katrina, public officials would have understood and would have been guided by the knowledge that vulnerable people, without special help, could not protect themselves from harm. They would have known that as a result of government inaction or delayed action many people would experience a double loss—first to their health and other tangible interests, and then to their standing as members of a common community in which all are supposed to possess equal dignity and worth.

A fuller range of matters of social justice would be the subject of extended public conversation if the pundits turn out to be right in their prediction that a new era of awareness of class and race is on the horizon.

Madison Powers

Ideas from this essay are drawn from Madison Powers and Ruth Faden, Social Justice: The Moral Foundations of Public Health and Health Policy (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).



IBC 2006, continued

The group returns to the French Embassy for its Saturday night banquet, we've locked in our great caterer for breakfasts and lunches, and feel like "all systems are go." We're up and running and ready to take your reservation, and we all just have a feeling that this may be one of the best courses ever! If you would like more information, please call Linda (202-687-6766) or Sally (202-687-8099).

EDMUND PELLEGRINO DELIVERS BRENNAN LECTURE

Edmund Pellegrino, M.D., presented this year's Annual Brennan Lecture on March 15, discussing the ethical challenges that will arise for individuals, physicians, and society as regenerative medicine becomes a reality in the coming years. The take-away question from his provocative talk was, "Do we really *want* to be immortal?"

Regenerative medicine, according to Pellegrino, is medicine that aims to repair, restore or replace tissues and organs damaged by disease or genetic defect — "tissue engineering," so to speak. He also made it clear that regenerative medicine differs from "enhancement medicine" as it holds the possibility of improving quality of life for many patients (diabetics being just one group mentioned).

Pellegrino's remarks acknowledged the current controversies over embryonic stem-cell research, but focused not on these issues, which regard the development of regenerative technologies, but instead on how those technologies will be utilized, once they are available.

Pellegrino pointed out that as such technologies become available, physicians will be faced with the question of whether a regenerative surgery is appropriate in all cases that it might be possible.

In terms of societal challenges, the questions become even more challenging. Will the use of regenerative medicine contribute to (or detract from) the common good? What are the ethical ramifications of an ever-growing aged population? Is regenerative medicine a universal right, or will it be distributed on the basis of ability to pay?

Pellegrino said that these issues will have to be solved by society as a whole, as the challenges are far beyond the scope of medicine alone. He called for a serious interdisciplinary and international effort to raise these questions, and work to determine the ways in which these decisions can be made.

Pellegrino currently serves as chairman of the President's Council on Bioethics and is a Senior Research Scholar at the KIE. He is Professor Emeritus of Medicine and Medical Ethics.

Jacques Arsenault
GU Communications

The Brennan Lecture series was established with gifts from the Brennan Family and the law firm of Sutherland, Asbill & Brennan, in honor of a three-generation relationship between the Brennans and Georgetown University.

SAVE THE DATE!

April 24, Isaac Franck Lecture

The Baroness Julia Neuberger DBE will present this year's Isaac Franck lecture titled, 'The Quality of our End — Death, Dying, Assisted Suicide and the Great Death Debate.' This will be held in the ICC Auditorium at 6 p.m. on April 24, followed by a reception in the Galleria. All are invited to attend (RSVP: 202-687-8099, or e-mail, schofies@georgetown.edu). See the website for additional information (<http://kennedyinstitute.georgetown.edu>). The baroness became a rabbi in 1977, and served the South London Liberal Synagogue for twelve years before going to the King's Fund Institute as a Visiting Fellow to work on research ethics committees in the United Kingdom. Her book, *The Moral State We're In*, was published in March 2005. She is currently a visiting professor at Harvard University.

KIE BOOKSTORE ORDER FORM

| TITLE | AUTHOR | PUBLISHER | MEMBER'S DISCOUNT PRICE | NON- MEMBER PRICE | QTY | AMT | TOTAL |
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| <i>Abortion, Doctors and the Law</i> | Keown | Cambridge U. Press | \$20.79 | \$22.00 | | | |
| <i>Applied Ethics in Animal Research: Philosophy, Regulations, and Laboratory Applications</i> | Gluck, DiPasquale, Orleans | Purdue Press | \$18.91 | \$24.95 | | | |
| <i>Bibliography of Bioethics, Vol. 31</i> | Walters, Kahn, Goldstein, eds. | KIE | \$56.00 | \$70.00 | | | |
| <i>Bioethics Searchers Guides: Using Databases of the National Library of Medicine and National Reference Center for Bioethics Literature</i> | NRCBL | KIE | \$28.00 | \$35.00 | | | |
| <i>Case Studies in Nursing Ethics</i> | Veatch | Jones & Bartlett | \$41.40 | \$44.95 | | | |
| <i>Christian Virtues in Medical Practice</i> | Pellegrino | GU Press | \$20.67 | \$29.79 | | | |
| <i>Contemporary Issues in Bioethics, 6th ed.</i> | Beauchamp, Walters | Wadsworth | \$70.15 | \$81.95 | | | |
| <i>Cross-Cultural Perspectives in Medical Ethics</i> | Veatch | Jones & Bartlett | \$37.38 | \$40.95 | | | |
| <i>Disrupted Dialogue, Medical Ethics & the Collapse of Physician-Humanist Communication (1770-1980)</i> | Veatch | Oxford | \$45.95 | \$49.95 | | | |
| <i>Ethical Issues in Death and Dying, 2nd ed.</i> | Beauchamp, Veatch | Prentice Hall | \$50.03 | \$58.00 | | | |
| <i>Euthanasia, Ethics and Public Policy</i> | Keown | Cambridge U. Press | \$21.74 | \$23.00 | | | |
| <i>Euthanasia Examined</i> | Keown | Cambridge U. Press | \$33.08 | \$35.00 | | | |
| <i>Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, A Moral Vision for America</i> | ed: Langan | GU Press | \$13.08 | \$18.95 | | | |
| <i>Medical Ethics, 2nd ed.</i> | Veatch | Jones & Bartlett | \$56.35 | \$61.95 | | | |
| <i>Moral Acquaintances</i> | Wildes | U Notre Dame Press | \$18.40 | \$20.00 | | | |
| <i>Moral Particularism</i> | Hooker, Little, eds. | Oxford | \$50.60 | \$55.00 | | | |
| <i>Principles of Biomedical Ethics, 5th ed.</i> | Beauchamp, Childress | Oxford | \$27.55 | \$29.95 | | | |
| <i>Social Justice: The Moral Foundation of Public Health and Health Policy</i> | Powers, Faden | Oxford | | \$45.00 | | | |
| <i>Source Book in Bioethics (paper)</i> | Jonsen, Veatch, Walters | GU Press | \$29.33 | \$42.50 | | | |
| <i>The Basics of Bioethics</i> | Veatch | Prentice Hall | \$23.98 | \$27.80 | | | |
| <i>The Ethics of Human Gene Therapy</i> | Walters, Palmer | Oxford | \$36.11 | \$39.25 | | | |
| <i>The Patient-Physician Relation: The Patient as Partner, Part 2</i> | Veatch | Indiana U. Press | \$23.10 | \$29.95 | | | |
| <i>The Story of Bioethics, From Seminal Works to Contemporary Explorations</i> | Walter, Klein, eds. | GU Press | \$23.90 | \$29.95 | | | |
| <i>Transplantation Ethics</i> | Veatch | GU Press | \$20.67 | \$29.95 | | | |
| <i>The Philosophical Foundation of Medicine: Essays by Dr. Edmund Pellegrino</i> | Bulger, McGovern, eds. | Carden Jennings Publishing Co., Ltd. | \$20.75 | \$26.00 | | | |

This is a partial list of currently available books from KIE faculty scholars.

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Isaac Franck Lecture
April 24, 2006!

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NEWS FROM THE BIOETHICS LIBRARY

Bioethics Organizations Database Now on the Web

The NRCBL has identified more than 1,200 former and ongoing organizations, centers, professional societies, and government commissions involved in public policy on bioethics and related areas of interest. Most of these organizations have links to websites. Point your browser to: <http://bioethics.georgetown.edu/orgs.htm> and make a virtual visit to organizations worldwide. If your home institution isn't listed, please complete our online entry form so we may update ORGS on the Web.

Scope Notes Added to NRCBL Website

The full text of classic and more recent Scope Notes may be read, downloaded, or simply added to your syllabi; twenty-five of them are now online. Those on genetics are updated routinely. Visit <http://bioethics.georgetown.edu/publications/scopenotes/index.htm> for a full list.

WHAT'S UP WITH FACULTY

In February LeRoy Walters attended a transnational conference on policies for human embryonic stem cell research. Thanks to excellent advice and helpful advance planning by John Keown, LeRoy was able to visit with faculty colleagues at

both Oxford and Cambridge universities before and after the meeting. Highlights of the trip included high table at two colleges, evensongs in both cities, and visits to the Bodleian Library at Oxford and the Cambridge University Library. The time spent at Duke Humphrey's Library, part of Oxford's Bodleian Library, was a special treat. The library was originally opened in 1488, purged of books in 1550 after the Protestant Reformation, and rescued by Thomas Bodley, who planned and financed the library's reopening in 1602. The library space is ancient and beautiful.

NRCBL EXHIBIT SCHEDULE

Medical Library Association, Phoenix, AZ, May 20-23
Special Library Association, Baltimore, MD, June 11 -13