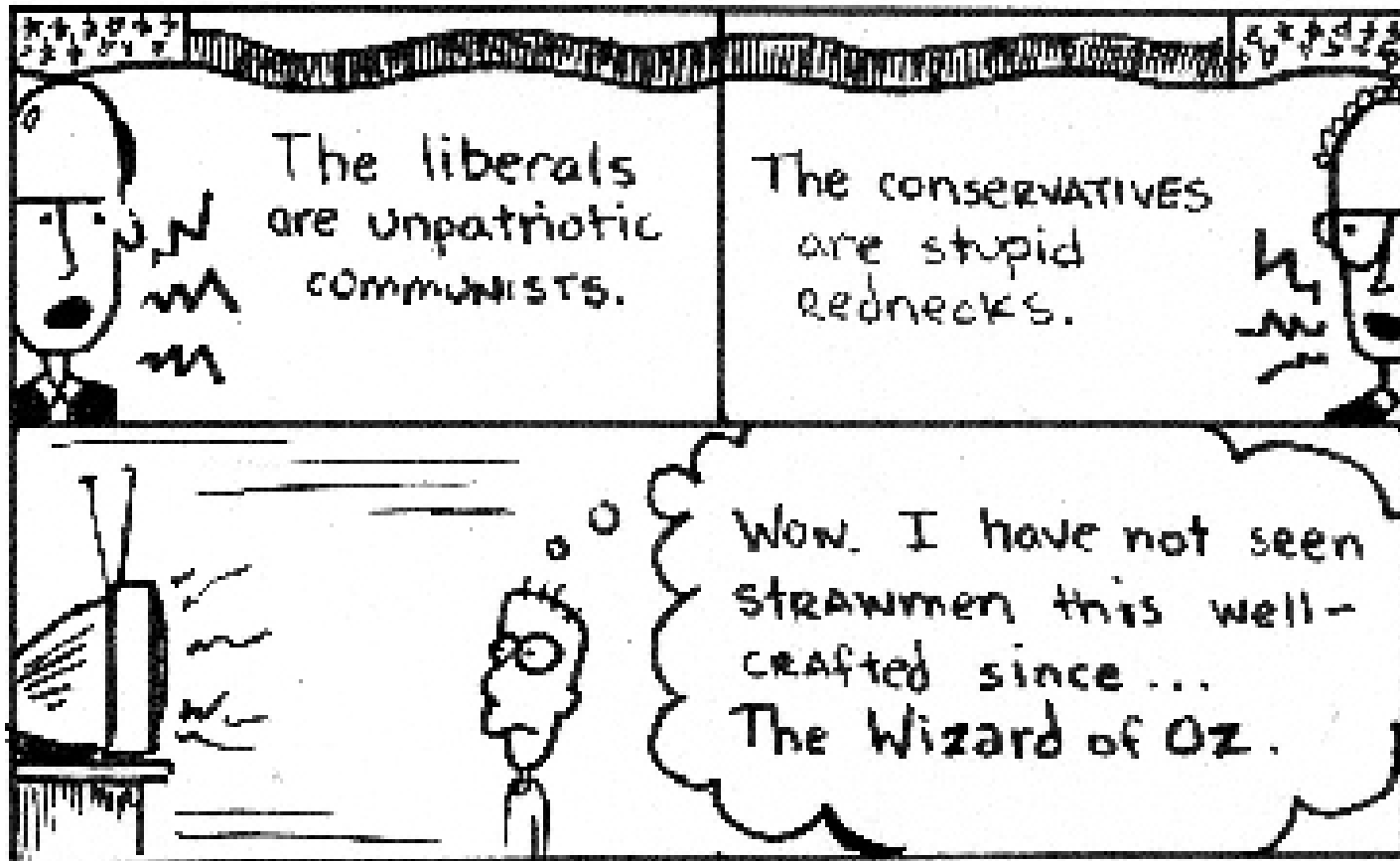


CHESTER



Bryan Cook

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!

CENTER FOR PROFESSIONAL AND APPLIED ETHICS
 UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHARLOTTE
 9201 UNIVERSITY CITY BOULEVARD
 CHARLOTTE, NC 28223-0001
 704/687-3542
www.uncc.edu/ethics

University of North Carolina at Charlotte is committed to equality of educational opportunity and does not discriminate against applications, students or employees based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation or disability. Moreover we are open to people of all races and actively seek to recruit and enroll a larger number of African-American and other ethnically diverse students. Produced in May 2005, by the Center for Professional and Applied Ethics. 750 copies of this public document were produced at a cost of \$2,331 or \$3.108 per copy.



Ethics on Call

Fall/Winter 2006

From the Editor

Bruce A. Arrigo, Ph.D.
 Professor
 Department of Criminal Justice



First, let me take this opportunity to welcome Dr. Lisa M. Rasmussen on board as the new co-editor of *Ethics on Call*. Lisa brings a wealth of experience to the Newsletter, especially in the area of bioethics. But more than this, her enthusiasm, warmth, creativity, intellect, and sincerity will undoubtedly help shape the Newslet-

From the Co-Editor

Lisa M. Rasmussen, Ph.D.
 Assistant Professor
 Department of Philosophy



Dear Newsletter Readers,

Happily, Bruce Arrigo has allowed me to join him in the editorship of *Ethics on Call*. We are planning new features for future issues of the Newsletter, and welcome input on areas you would like to see covered.

In the meantime, allow me to introduce myself, as I am also a new Faculty Associate for the Center for Professional and Applied Ethics. My doctorate is from Rice University in philosophy, with a specialization in bioethics. My main area of research is clinical ethics consultation – that is, the activity of the bodies known as ethics committees within hospitals and other health care institutions. I am also interested in the identity of the field of bioethics in general. As a new profession, bioethics is presently engaged in deep soul-searching regarding what its proper aims are, and this raises interesting questions.

One of the most profound of these questions concerns moral expertise and moral authority: What are these ethics ‘experts’ supposed to be good at, anyway? It turns out that there are many possible ways of answering this question, but perhaps not all are justified or desirable. For example, if we were to understand ethics committees to be ‘experts’ in the sense that they know the right answer when others don’t, that would convey a great deal of authority on their decisions. Most of us resist this interpretation, however, because

IN THIS ISSUE...

CASE REPORT
THOUGHTS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EXTRA-VAGANT C-SUITE COMPENSATION AND THE OUTBREAK OF CORRUPTION IN CORPORATE AMERICA

BY JOSEPH J. FIATO, MBA, DUKE UNIVERSITY
PRINCIPAL, SENIOR CHANGE MANAGER
BANK OF AMERICA.....4

ETHICS & PUBLIC POLICY
INTERNATIONAL NURSE MIGRATION: AUTONOMY OR NEO-COLONIALISM

BY SAT ANANDA HAYDEN, MSN, RN
PH.D. PROGRAM IN PUBLIC POLICY.....6

TERRORISM, CULTURE OF FEAR, AND ETHICS

BY CINDY COMBS, PH.D., PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT
OF POLITICAL SCIENCE.....8

2006 SE REGIONAL ETHICS BOWL COMPETITION
BY RICHARD H. TEONJES., PH.D.....12

Center for Professional and Applied Ethics at UNC Charlotte

From the Editor Cont.

EDITORIAL STAFF

EDITOR.....BRUCE ARRIGO, PH.D.
CO-EDITOR.....LISA RASMUSSEN, PH.D.
CENTER DIRECTOR.....ROSIE TONG, PH.D.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

ETHICS & PUBLIC POLICY.....WILLIAM BRANDON, PH.D.
CASE REPORTJULIA BEEMAN, M.S.

DIVISIONAL SUPPORT

CARTOONIST.....BRYAN COOK
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT.....CAROL CORRELL

ter in many important ways for years to come. Thank you, Lisa! I invite you to read Dr. Rasmussen's inaugural essay in this Issue so that you might get to know her just a little bit more.

In this installment of *Ethics on Call*, several noteworthy articles addressing different types of integrity-based con-

cerns are showcased. In our Featured Commentary, Dr. Cindy Combs examines the climate of fear that is bred, nurtured, and sustained amidst an expanding culture of terrorism. Exploring the character of selfless acts, two UNC Charlotte Professors (Mark Clemens a biologist; and Jayne Tristan a philosopher) respond to the essay authored by Aaron A. Maisto titled, "Altruism...Does It Exist?" This essay appeared in the Spring/Summer 2006 Issue of *Ethics on Call*. In our Case Report section, John Fioto reviews the problem of executive pay, suggesting that corporate scandals require both individual and societal levels of marketplace influence. In our Ethics and Public Policy section, Sat Ananda Hayden discusses several of the ethical and policy-based problems that emerge given the international immigration and emigration of health care workers (especially nurses; some physicians). Also included in this Newsletter Issue is the Center for Professional and Applied Ethics' schedule of events for Spring 2007, as well as Bryan Cook's take on American politics through the world of Chester, the Cartoon series.

From the Co-Editor Cont.

we are aware of the deep moral divides in our society and the right of individuals to make choices with which we might disagree. We might instead understand ethics committees to be mediators in cases of conflict, or patient advocates, or spiritual advisors. Each of these would generate different goals for ethics committees and corresponding areas of moral authority.

I have also been a member of Institutional Review Boards both at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas, and the medical school at the University of Alabama, Birmingham. The review of research protocols involving human subjects is fascinating on several levels. Through this review, one is exposed to new theories and discoveries and, in my case, an ongoing education in a new field. In addition, ethics questions regularly arise: is the use of prisoners in research acceptable? Where

is the appropriate balance between risks and benefits? When should a research trial be halted, either because it works or because it has harmful side-effects?

I am also the Associate Editor for the Philosophy and Medicine book series, by Springer Publishers (Netherlands). Founded in part by our recent visiting speaker Edmund Pellegrino, this series is over 90 volumes long and has been a rich resource for scholars in the areas of bioethics for over 30 years.

I am fortunate to be joining UNC Charlotte, the Department of Philosophy, and the Center for Professional and Applied Ethics at an exciting time of growth and engagement with the community. I look forward to watching and participating in the flourishing of each of these.

Save-The-Date

The Center for Professional and Applied Ethics, the Department of Philosophy, and the Belk College of Business are co-sponsoring a public lecture by Patricia H. Werhane, Ph.D., on February 22, 2007 at 4:00 p.m. in Storrs 110. Dr. Werhane is Ruffin Professor of Business Ethics and Senior Fellow of the Olsson Center for Applied Ethics. She holds a joint appointment at Darden and at DePaul University where she is Wicklander Chair in Business Ethics and Director of the Institute for Business and Professional Ethics. Dr. Werhane teaches Ethics Courses in the Darden MBA program and heads the school's Doctoral Program Operating Committee.

She is a prolific author, an acclaimed authority on employee rights in the workplace, one of the leading scholars on Adam Smith, and founder and former editor-in-chief of *Business Ethics Quarterly*, the leading journal of business ethics. She was founding member and past president of the Society for Business Ethics and, in 2001, was elected to the Executive Committee of the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics. Before joining the Darden faculty in 1993 Werhane served on the faculties of Loyola University Chicago and Dartmouth College. She was a visiting scholar at Cambridge University and the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand.

Among her 15 books are: *Adam Smith and His Legacy for Modern Capitalism* (New York: Oxford University press, 1991) and *Moral Imagination and Management Decision-Making* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999). She has also received several large NSF grants to study the process of putting ethics at the heart of environmental design.

Details for Dr. Werhane's visit are still in the planning stage. The purpose of this early Save-The-Date announcement is to permit interested parties to include Dr. Werhane's presentation in relevant course syllabi and/or on their calendars.

If you have any questions about Dr. Werhane's visit, please contact Dick Toenjes, Ph.D., Associate Director of the Center at 704/687-2164 or rhtoenje@email.uncc.edu.

17th Annual Barnhardt Seminar on Ethics and The World of Business

The 17th Annual Barnhardt Seminar on Ethics and The World of Business took place on October 11, 2006. Mr. Bertram L. Scott, Executive Vice President of Strategy, Implementation and Policy at TIAA-CREF was this year's guest speaker. Mr. Scott, who is also a member of the UNC Charlotte Board of Trustees, discussed a variety of ethical challenges he and the investment decision-makers face daily at TIAA-CREF. Among those challenges are whether to divest from enterprises that may not satisfy certain social responsibility screens, or rather to stay with those enterprises and pressure for change. And there are always struggles to balance the goal of financial returns for shareholders with concerns TIAA-CREF and individual shareholders have about the ethical character of the companies in the portfolio.

The format of the 17th annual seminar was changed from the case study approach in previous years. After an excellent dinner, with vibrant networking and discussion, Mr. Scott delivered his keynote address. This was followed by lively general discussion including questions and answers from the audience. With 107 business leaders, graduate students, faculty and Ethics Center faculty associates attending, this was the highest attendance in the seminar's 17-year history. Thanks go to William M. Barnhardt and the BB&T Foundation for sponsoring this fine event.



Conflict of Interest Conference

Conflict of Interest in Biomedical and Behavioral Research Conference

February 8-9, 2007

February 8

7:00-8:00 p.m. "Moral Courage in Clinical Research" Keynote Address
McKnight Hall

Speaker: Evan DeRenzo, Ph.D., Consulting Bioethicist, Bethesda, MD

February 9

8:00-8:30 a.m. Registration and Continental Breakfast
Cone Lucas Room 341

8:30-10:00 a.m. "Money and Human Subjects: Keeping the First from Harming the Second"
McKnight Hall

Speaker: Evan DeRenzo, Ph.D., Consulting Bioethicist, Bethesda, MD

10:15-12:15 p.m. "Conflicts of interest Issues in Not-for-Profit and For-Profit IRBs"
Presentation, Panel Discussion and Questions
McKnight Hall

Speaker: Felix Khin-Maung-Gyi, PharmD, MBA, CEO, Chesapeake Research Review, Inc.

1:00-1:45 p.m. "Guinea Pig or Patient?" Case Presentation
Cone Lucas Room 341

Speaker: Nancy King, JD, UNC Chapel Hill

1:45-2:30 p.m. Small Group Discussion

2:30-3:00 p.m. Conclusion

Campus Co-sponsors: Graduate School, College of Arts and Sciences, College of Health and Human Services and the Departments of Philosophy, Health Behavior and Administration, Biology and Psychology

Off-Campus Co-Sponsors: Association for Clinical Research Professionals, Northeast Medical Center, Carolinas Medical Center and Bioethics Resource Group

From the Director

*Rosemarie Tong, Ph.D., Director
Center for Professional and Applied Ethics and
Distinguished Professor for Health Care Ethics
Department of Philosophy*

Sex-Ratio Imbalance: Seesawing on an Ethical Dilemma

In order to understand why the United States does not ban sex-control procedures, we need to focus on three facts. First, the United States does not have a sex-ratio problem, for several reasons. It is an affluent nation; social safety nets for the elderly exist in the form of Social Security pensions and government-supported healthcare (Medicare and Medicaid); women outnumber men in institutions of higher education; women constitute about 46% of the workforce; women are increasingly visible in the professional worlds of business, medicine, law, and politics; and there are no strong cultural and/or religious reasons for preferring sons to daughters. Thus, there is no social imperative to ban sex-control procedures.

Second, people in the United States tend to privilege individual rights over the social good. Most people in the United States remain fairly fierce about their reproductive rights, convinced that the government should not meddle in their private matters. Thus, a legal ban on sex-control techniques would probably be met with considerable public resistance.

Third, physicians in the United States are a self-regulating profession with a well-developed tradition of medical ethics and a strong desire to safeguard their prerogative to make medical decisions for their patients without government interference. To be sure, there are those who are willing to do just about anything for money or causes they favor, but most U.S. physicians try to provide only medically appropriate treatments and prescriptions. Thus, it is the case that most U.S. physicians do not provide sex-control services for non-medical reasons. However, not all medical professionals are strong enough to withstand the temptation to provide

expensive genetic tests and assisted-reproduction technologies to couples who will pay to get them. In fact, some profit-driven U.S. fertility clinics have begun to unabashedly advertise on the Internet a wide variety of sex-control services available for U.S. residents and non-residents alike.

Yet, within the U.S. context, I am hesitant to lobby for laws that would legally prohibit this practice or, more dramatically, ban abortions and ultrasounds/chorionic villus sampling/amniocentesis. Because sex-selection abortions eliminate a developing being who would, were it not for its "wrong sex," otherwise be welcome into the human community, they are precisely the type of abortion that, in the United States, provide particularly good ammunition for those who would outlaw the abortion procedure altogether. In other words, to protect the reproductive rights of the millions of U.S. women who would never abort on the basis of the fetus's sex alone, I am pushed to try to protect the reproductive rights of U.S. women who want abortions for what I as a feminist, think are bad reasons—reasons like sex selection.

Does my willingness to rely only on a fairly successful system of professional self-regulation mean that I am opposed to civilly penalizing or even criminalizing some or all of these procedures in the context of China? Not necessarily. In the first place, China does have a very serious sex-ratio imbalance of about 120 to 100. If the sex-ratio imbalance persists in China, the social status of girls and women will worsen as it becomes more difficult to safeguard their rights and interests. Domestic violence and the trafficking of women/children will increase in frequency. The commercial sex trade will grow, and social shifts will occur, including societal stress from a growing population of males without partners or family.

Second, China does not have a large group of people who are vocally opposed to abortion.

Third, physicians in China are only in the process of

From the Director Cont.

developing a strong and detailed medical ethics. Although some physicians refuse to provide sex-selection services, many provide them willingly either for remuneration or because they have sympathy for people who want a son. Chinese physicians are, after all, a product of Chinese culture.

Thus, it would seem that in the short run in China, specific laws to impose civil and/or criminal penalties on medical practitioners who identify the fetus' sex and terminate pregnancy on that basis may be in order. But my concern is that the long-term consequences of such laws will not be much better for the Chinese people, particularly Chinese women, than the long-term consequences of the One-Child policy either in its original or relaxed forms are. Yes, the One-Child policy reduced the size of the Chinese population, but it also contributed to China's sex-ratio imbalance, and led to coerced sterilizations and even forced abortions – the kind of actions that cause a population, initially willing to sacrifice some of its individual rights to achieve a great social good, to show signs of rebellion. A new batch of reproduction-controlling laws might result in more female babies and girls being neglected, abandoned or even killed. People have a way of resisting the stick of the law, and when the people resist, the government has but two choices: to make its law more restrictive and repressive or to relax its laws until they no longer make

sense. I am therefore most impressed not by the laws that have been highlighted, but by recommendations such as the following:

- Mount advocacy campaigns to spread information and raise awareness about the wrongness and social disutility of sex discrimination. Use educational tools and the media to convince people not to use sex-control techniques.
- Change policies regarding social security, employment opportunities, property laws, and lineage laws so as to improve the status and value of girls and women.
- Improve and expand old age security to counteract son preference triggered by the custom of sons looking after their parents in old age.
- Provide preferential treatment to families with only daughters in order to erode son preference.

These kinds of recommendations will help create right relations between the sexes – a recognition that girls are as good as boys – and it is this recognition that will do the most to restore China's sex-ratio to a normal level. China's sex-ratio problem is not only a threat to China's stability, it is a human tragedy: I mourn the girls, the women, who could have been, but are not; we are, each one of us, less for their absence.

Case Report

Thoughts on the Relationship Between Extravagant C-Suite Compensation and the Outbreak of Corruption in Corporate America

*Joseph J. Fiato, MBA, Duke University
Principal, Senior Change Manager
Bank of America*

Given the accounting fraud disasters and document destruction scandals that corporate outfits such as Adel-

phia, Enron/Anderson and HealthSouth have produced – including their excessive and ridiculous levels of C-Suite compensation – should the public at large really be surprised by the resultant outcome => institutional corruption? I think not. As a society, should we rely upon increased government legislation/regulation and corporate self-policing to provide sufficient oversight and control of corporate America today? Once again, I think not. Let me explain.

Spring Calendar of Events

February 19

4:00 p.m. “Contemporary Aesthetics and Politics,” Public Lecture, Cone 210

Speaker: Gregg M. Horowitz, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Philosophy and Director of Graduate Studies, Department of Philosophy, Vanderbilt University

February 27

12:00-2:15 p.m. 2nd Annual BB&T Business Ethics Forum, Cone Lucas Room 341

Keynote Speaker: Michael Mulligan, President, General Dynamics, Armament and Technical Products

March 16

Time TBA Department/College Workshops and Public Lecture, “Gender Issues in Academic Ethics.”

Speaker: Virginia Valian, Ph.D., Tutorials for Change: Gender and Science Careers, Hunter College – CUNY, New York, NY

March 19

10:00 a.m. “Disaster Preparation and Emergency Response: Notes on Philosophy, Pedagogy, and Safe Campuses,” Public Lecture, Cone 112

12:00-2:15 p.m. “Why BiDil is Not the Answer: The Real Disconnection Between Race and Medicine,” Luncheon/Workshop, Cone 210

4:00 p.m. “What Women Have in Common and Why We Should Rule,” Public Lecture, Cone 113

Speaker: Naomi Zack, Ph.D., Professor of Philosophy, Director of Graduate Studies, University of Oregon

March 28

“Hooking Up: Sex, Alcohol & the Death of Romance on College Campuses” Public Lecture, (location TBA)

Speaker: Naomi Wolf, The Woodhull Institute for Ethical Leadership

April 24 or 25

12:00 – 2:30 p.m. Engineering Luncheon/Workshop, Cone 210

Speaker: Manuel Zapata, President, Zapata Engineering

TRISTAN RESPONSE TO COMMENTARY ON ALTRUISM

That spiritual experiences have demonstrated links to specific structures in the brain really shouldn't be too surprising. Spirituality and compassion are saturated with meanings, and one of the brain's functions is to gauge the salience of an experience. Once we think about it—it would be more surprising if it turned out that complex social meanings did not depend in some way upon such structures. Such dependence does not call the existence, or the legitimacy, of such experiences into doubt. Rather, it fuels speculation that such salience sensing structures exist for the purpose of ex-

periencing God, or in the case of mirror neurons for purpose of initiating compassionate connections between peoples and altruistic acts.

After all, we are interested in explanations because we want to better understand our experiences. A satisfactory causal explanation of an aspect of our experience should not result in the denial of the existence of the feature it sought to explain. The role of a causal explanation is to explain an experience, not to explain the experience away.

2006 SE Regional Ethics Bowl Competition, St. Petersburg, FL

Richard H. Toenjes, Ph.D.
Department of Philosophy

Our UNC Charlotte Ethics Bowl team made a strong showing Saturday, November 19, 2006 at the 3rd Annual Southeast Regional Ethics Bowl at the University of South Florida, St. Petersburg. But we didn't win.

Twenty teams competed. They finished in the following order:

Eckerd College
Clemson University
Tuskegee University
U.S. Military Academy
Barry University
University of Miami
Florida Atlantic University
Kennesaw State
Florida State University
UNC Charlotte
Belmont University
University of Richmond
Embry Riddle Aeronautical University

University of Central Florida
University of North Florida
University of Florida
Nova Southeastern University
St. Petersburg College
UNC Chapel Hill
University of South Florida

All teams competed in three contests. We lost to Tuskegee by one point, 50 to 49 (out of 60 possible). We lost to Clemson by 3 points, 53 to 50, and we beat USF Tampa 54 to 47. We were disappointed to finish in 10th place, until we saw the small margins by which we lost. Next year we intend not only to make the final four but also to win.

UNC Charlotte team members were Denver Carlstrom (sophomore undecided), Thomas McComb (freshman undecided), Chris Outlaw (senior, philosophy), Steven Spero (sophomore, philosophy), and Pete Sikorsky (senior, English). Dick Toenjes was the team coach. The team prepared for the contest in Dick's philosophy course entitled "Ethics Bowl."

CASE REPORT CONT.

What these recent business disasters and industrial scandals tell us is that dependence on corporate self-policing and legislative/regulatory activities is woefully insufficient. In order to establish truly effective checks and balances in a capitalistic society, the response must include market forces exerted by the collective will of society, as well as marketplace dynamics exercised by individuals themselves. At the individual level, influence over corporate behavior should occur through our checkbooks, especially with decisions made in both spending and investing marketplaces. However, at the collective/societal level, this influence is more difficult, though certainly not impossible, to sustain.

Boards of Directors should be pushed to responsibly engage in their oversight and control of companies in order to raise the standards and benchmarks utilized in their measuring, evaluating and reporting of management performance. Moreover, analysts in both the Financial and Credit Markets should be held accountable to raise the standards and benchmarks utilized in the measuring, evaluating and reporting of corporate performance in the marketplace. However, what mechanisms can be utilized to help guarantee this type of corporate responsibility? A number of suggestions come to mind.

Considerable historical information exists, documenting corporate annual reports as well as financial ratio/analyses of corporate annual reports. Consequently, statistical analyses should be employed that would support the establishment of financial ratios or metrics. These financial ratios would yield new performance measures relating to the amount of compensation an individual C-level officer could receive. This analysis is also applicable to the amount of compensation provided to the collective members of the C-Suite, including such things as shareholder value, revenues, net income and/or other accepted financial performance measures. With these goals in mind, several examples of the type of statistical analyses that are warranted come to mind. A few of them are listed below:

--COO total compensation (defined as salary, incentives, stock/options, benefits, and perks) as a percentage of Net Income (Gross Revenue or Sales less Expenses)

--C-Suite total compensation (defined as the salary, incentives, stock/options, benefits, and perks of all C-level Executives) as a percentage of Net Income (Gross Revenue or Sales less Expenses)

--changes in COO total compensation as a percent of change in Market Value (defined as the number of shares in issue multiplied by their current market price)

--C-Suite total compensation (defined as the salary, incentives, stock/options, benefits, and perks of all C-level Executives) as a percent of change in Market Value (defined as the number of shares in issue multiplied by their current market price)

By establishing financial ratios such as these as measures of customary norms (comparable to the Debt/Equity ratio of 80/20 that has been a well established, traditional metric utilized in the residential mortgage lending business), efforts to curb the ethical abuses of industrial and corporate America can occur. The marketplace understands when exceptions happen and exerts its influence over those behaviors that fall outside the scope of what constitutes acceptable behavioral norms. The marketplace addresses these exceptions through control mechanisms such as higher cost of borrowing or adjustments in interest rate. These measures provide adequate checks and balances.

However, should we permit the abject greed of a handful of C-Suite participants to continue to distort marketplace economics in ways that devastate the lives of hard working, dedicated employees to the point of bankrupting companies? I say no! The C-Suite must acknowledge its obligations and responsibilities to all of its key stakeholders. This includes shareholders, employees, customers, and vendors, as well as the marketplace and the public at large.



CASE REPORT CONT.

Activist investors such as Ralph Whitworth and his former United Shareholders Association from the early 1990s focused on issues such as executive pay. They had the right idea. The time has come once again to pick up the baton and mobilize the collective forces that only the participants in the market-

place can exercise. The time is long past due for honesty, integrity and moral character to return to the C-Suite of Corporate America. Society and the economic future/security of its citizens can ill afford to ignore the ethical implications of this important and timely issue.

ETHICS IN PUBLIC POLICY ESSAY

International Nurse Migration: Autonomy or Neo-Colonialism

Sat Ananda Hayden, MSN, RN
Ph.D. Program in Public Policy

Debt and dependence on aid puts less-developed countries “between a rock and a hard place”. Less developed (Southern) countries lose more health professionals to developed countries (Northern) each year than they produce¹. Some hospitals have a small percentage of the nurses they need; others have no pharmacist; others close because their physicians migrate². Foreign recruitment of health professionals has become a brisk trade. This essay discusses the ethical implications of nurse migration for both Northern and Southern countries.

An analysis of health and ethics literature³ reveals that nurse migration is a global concern viewed through two ethical perspectives. Northern countries regard nurse migration as an issue of individual autonomy; Southern countries view recruitment of their nurses as a social justice issue. Is nurse migration a case in which individual autonomy trumps social justice or is it neo-Colonialism⁴ masquerading as autonomy?

Northern nations provide financial aid and loans to bolster struggling Southern economies. To help Southern countries repay their debts, international lenders such as the World Bank and developed countries have instituted structural adjustment plans

(SAPs). Since most public spending is on the labor force, SAPs require debtor countries to decrease the number of public employees. Because most Southern countries have little or no private health care sector, nurses are public employees eligible for downsizing.

According to Southern countries, SAPs keep them indebted and prevent full employment of nurses. With a SAP in place, the newly graduated nurse may not be able to find employment in her own country and may have to volunteer her services while waiting for a paid position to become available. As a result nurses are more easily recruited for work in the North; draining the South of highly educated women. This drain has greater health ramifications for a country because of the link between population health and female literacy⁵.

In many countries, more nurses migrate than graduate each year. This results in a “care drain” at a time when HIV/AIDS and Malaria are pandemic⁶. The dollars received in aid from the North do not offset the investment by Southern countries in government-sponsored nursing education that is lost when nurses emigrate. Implementation of loan repayment, bonding, or required practice programs in country prior to migration makes costly demands on infrastructure and monitoring⁷. In effect, the North reaps the benefits of Southern educational investments. This argument establishes the South’s claim of neo-Colonialism.

Northern nations argue that nurses who migrate do so of their own free will; migration is an autonomous and freely made individual choice. This argument is supported by claims that governments in the South cannot pro-

TRISTAN RESPONSE TO COMMENTARY ON ALTRUISM

The Genesis of Altruism

Jayne Tristan, Ph.D., Lecturer
Philosophy Department

How do things like altruism exist? A North Charlotte Mecklenburg High School student, Aaron Maisto, concluded in the Spring/Summer 2006 issue of Ethics on Call that altruism does not exist. In his well-researched article, he argues that because scientists have discovered that mirror neurons are involved in compassionate behavior—the case is closed: altruism is really just the firing of mirror neurons. Aaron interprets the scientific facts about the brain in a way that reduces the significance of altruism: Selfless acts are deceptively so, and altruistic acts are really illusory.

His conclusion is troubling, because, if true, our shared appreciation of altruistic acts and widespread admiration of altruistic character traits suggests merely that we are dupes. The elimination of characters of our shared experience in favor of a structure in the brain that can be reliably isolated and measured is akin to the claims of eliminative materialism, a view which advocates abandoning a term like ‘belief’ because it does not correspond nicely to structures in the brain. Altruism is just a word, eliminative materialists might argue, that corresponds to nothing in reality. Such a view, if taken at face value, squeezes the significance out of altruistic acts and reduces conscious social experiences to brain states.

The complexities of meaning in social relationships, while relying on underlying structures, are simply not reducible without remainder to those underlying structures. The novel is not reducible to its paper and ink, nor is it reducible to the letters of the alphabet used to ‘store’ its significance. Emotion-saturated events and human interactions exist after a manner quite different from their underlying components. It is, of course, disquieting to realize that, by merely stimulating specific brain structures, it is possible to trigger a feeling of self-

less compassion, which is not motivated in the expected ways. Even more alarming, electrically stimulating an area in the limbic system produces a deeply moving spiritual experience that subjects report variously as ‘experiencing the presence of God,’ ‘sudden insight into the meaning of life,’ or ‘now it all makes sense?’ The question is: What are we entitled to conclude from such observations?

To learn that mirror neurons are at the root of altruistic compassion does not eliminate the shared experiences of admiring altruistic acts—the tear in one’s eye, the catch in one’s voice—are still felt and recognized for what they are: the welling up of emotion in the face of sacrifice. Altruistic acts are admired and emulated and cannot be explained out of existence. Martyrs emerge throughout history with predictable regularity; we may quarrel with their interpretation, and renounce their methods, but nevertheless recognize self-sacrifice. The urge to assist others manifests in myriad disguises: volunteering to serve in high-risk capacities: fire fighter, soldier, journalist, and so on. Parents sacrifice for their children, and children, for their elderly parents. And if they don’t, we think they should. People tend to report greater satisfaction when they believe their efforts assist others. So, altruistic programs and individual acts of heroism undoubtedly occur, are encouraged, and elicit much appreciation. Why reduce so many events, desires, and satisfactions to a set of brain states?

Information about the nuts and bolts of brain function does not result in better understanding of either our experiences of, or our propensity to appreciate, altruistic behavior. An explanation of human experience that denies the experience it sought to explain should be suspected of failing in a crucial way. This conundrum stems, in part, from anticipating that a ‘causal account’ should yield a more comprehensive understanding of human experience—once the machinery and its workings are isolated—we should understand more, not less. Human experience is not enough like an automobile for this to be true.



CLEMENS RESPONSE TO ALTRUISM COMMENTARY CONT.

science. Clearly, arguments that are patently illogical are of little use in science; however, the logic is only as good as the assumptions on which the logic is based. In his arguments, Mr. Maisto tends to mix the biological and the common definition of “altruism” and wanders a bit further from the data than most scientists would find comfortable. In strict biological terms, altruism is defined as behavior that benefits another organism without benefit to itself. In this definition based on evolutionary arguments, benefit is clearly, simply and precisely reproductive fitness. It is important to emphasize that the intent or motivation of the organism said to act altruistically is totally irrelevant to the argument. This is really not a philosophical argument, but rather a mechanistic one. The controversy based on natural selection is not how could an “altruism gene” arise in a population, but rather how could an altruistic gene be retained over evolutionary time. In other words, if an altruistic act removes the individual from the gene pool, why doesn’t it eventually disappear? This question remains controversial, but there is substantial evidence to support the notion that such a trait should be retained. It is beyond the scope of this response to critically review this evidence. I refer the reader to an excellent summary by Okasha for such a review. I will discuss one mechanism because it has some relevance to the social aspect of altruism. This mechanism is kin preference.

In its simplest form, kin selection states that organisms are more likely to act altruistically toward other organisms that are more closely related to them and thus would share many genes which would then be propagated. There are many subtleties of this theory that are beyond the scope of this comment, but suffice it to say that there is considerable empirical as well as mathematical evidence to support this explanation for how biological altruism could be retained over the course of evolutionary time. An important concept in this theory is that altruistic behavior does not need to be favorable for propagation of the trait in every instance to be retained. Rather, on average for many organisms carrying the trait, the overall benefit must exceed the overall cost. Because of this probabilistic slop in

the system, the apparent tyranny of the gene is much less than one might surmise from discussions in the lay press. Nevertheless, the preference toward those more genetically similar or apparently so, is consistent with many observed human behaviors including patriotism, tribalism, racism and good old “family values.”

But is this “true” altruism? Here I quibble not with the answer, but with the question itself. What is commonly referred to as true altruism, is not a biological question but rather a philosophical one. Within the philosophical realm also, the existence of altruism appears to depend on how we define it. Mr. Maisto identifies the very interesting question of whether an act can be said to be altruistic if it is the result of being biologically hardwired. Thus a paradox, if biological altruism really exists and is a dominant force in determining our behavior, then can “true” altruism exist? The trivial answer is that we just need to listen to Humpty Dumpty and be the master of the word. Define “true altruism” such that it conforms to the conclusion we wish to reach. On the other hand, the complex probabilistic nature of biological phenomena would suggest that no such conflict need exist. Mr. Maisto cites the discovery of mirror neurons which account for empathy as a possible biological explanation that is a mutually exclusive alternative to “true” altruism. Can an act truly be selfless in intent if it is neurally hardwired? Ultimately everything we do has a biological basis, but the complexity of multiple influences leaves the system only vaguely deterministic. The existence of “true” altruism may be argued based on agreed meaning of altruism, but it cannot be refuted based on biological arguments any more than racism can be excused by them.

This comment was produced with no expectations for personal benefit by the author.

ETHICS & PUBLIC POLICY ESSAY CONT.

Labour Office.

vide adequate public services or jobs, so those who can, migrate. These destination countries suggest that migration repays the sending country by stimulating economic human capital and growth⁸. As a result, the North rejects charges of neo-Colonialism.

The United States does not have the highest nurse to patient ratio, but we are the destination of choice for migrant nurses⁹. Approximately 11% of our 2 million nurses are migrants. In the 2004 issue of *Ethics on Call* (p. 15) Dr. Steven Miles told us that bioethics needs to speak to issues with courage and honesty. When we speak about the effects of nursing migration on the health of people in living in the South, what will we say?

References:

1. Kingma, M. (2001). Nursing migration: Global treasure hunt or disaster-in-the-making? *Nursing Inquiry*, 8(4), 205-212. Muula, A. S., Mfutso-Bengo, J. M., Makoza, J., & Chatipwa, E. (2003). The ethics of developed nations recruiting nurses from developing countries: The case of Malawi. *Nursing Ethics*, 10(4), 433-438. Singh, J. A., Nkala, B., Amuah, E., Mehta, N., & Ahmad, A. (2003). The ethics of nurse poaching from the developing world. *Nursing Ethics*, 10(6), 666-670.
2. While much in this article can be applied to all human resources for health, this essay only focuses on registered nurses.
3. Much of this research looked at the impact of health professional migration but can be generalized to all highly skilled, female workers. See especially the Philippines: Albuero, F. A., & Abella, D. I. (2002). Skilled labor migration from developing countries: Study on the Philippines (Paper No. 51). Geneva: International

4. In this article neo-Colonialism is defined as the appropriation of resources from a lesser developed country by a more developed country.

5. Hayden, S (2005). Why Malaria Matters. Unpublished paper

6. Carr, S. C., Inkson, K., & Thorn, K. (2005). From global careers to talent flow: Reinterpreting ‘brain drain’. *Journal of World Business Global Careers*, 40(4), 386-398.

7. These programs would also be ineffective because many nurses do not declare their intent to migrate when leaving the country to travel abroad.

8. Adams, J., Richard H., & Page, J. (2005). Do international migration and remittances reduce poverty in developing countries? *World Development*, 33(10), 1645-1669. O’Neil, K. (2003, June 1, 2003). Using remittances and circular migration to drive development. Retrieved June 2, 2004, from <http://www.migrationinformation.org/USfocus/print.cfm?ID=133>. Stark, O., Helmenstein, C., & Prskawetz, A. (1998) Human capital depletion, human capital formation, and migration: a blessing or a “curse”? *Economics Letters* 60363-367.

9. In the United States, we have approximately 850 nurses/100,000 people; Uganda has 5 nurses/100,000: for more international comparisons see Aiken, L. H., Buchan, J., Sochalski, J., Nichols, B., & Powell, M. (2004). Trends in international nurse migration. *Health Affairs*, 23(3), 69-77. Many nurse migrants travel through many countries to get to the United States. Exact numbers cannot be determined because no country keeps records of nurses who leave (see Kingma, above). The US has begun tracking nurses who enter the US but not when they leave or where they practice.



Living in a Culture of Fear: Assessing Costs and Making Choices

Cindy C. Combs, Ph.D., Professor
Department of Political Science

They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety.

Benjamin Franklin - 1759

Since the events of 9/11, Americans have lived in a "culture of fear," an atmosphere which has affected the way we interact with each other and with our world, costing far more than the original terrorist attack in terms of money and, more importantly, the freedoms we treasure. Assessment of the "risks" incurred by this new "culture" which we are allowing to shape our world may help us decide whether the "temporary safety" it may generate is worth the price we are paying.

One of the fundamental goals of most groups or individuals engaging in acts of terrorism is to "delegitimize" the state, forcing it to change in fundamental ways as it copes with the terrorist acts in ways that are not legitimate to its system of government. In the wake of 9/11, the United States has taken constructive actions to unite international efforts to combat terrorism, but it has also taken steps, which are fundamentally incompatible with our democratic principles of liberty and justice "for all." These steps are evident:

- in our holding of "prisoners" at Guantanamo Bay, more than 100 of whom we have admitted cannot be charged with any crime, yet who are still held without bond

- in our efforts to circumvent both Constitutional and Geneva Convention provisions as they apply to those we designate as "enemy combatants"

- in our willingness to allow warrant-less surveillance of US citizens not accused of any crime

- in profiling and seeking to restrict by law those who share a faith or just a cultural heritage, in a system which has always proudly proclaimed that there is no "guilt by association."

Our nation, with a legacy of democratic ideals, claimed a "moral high ground" in its "war on terror," defining terrorism as illegal, under the laws of peace and those of war, since such acts deliberately target "innocent, non-combatants." War, like terrorism, seeks to create a mood of fear in an audience in an effort to promote political or social changes, but civilian casualties are "collateral damage," not targets in war, as they are in acts of terror. But the moral high ground is lost when a democracy, in its fear, chooses to go outside of the law - its own, and that of its international community - to deal with terrorism. The democracy becomes less of a democracy, losing the "high ground" and giving the terrorists one of their principal goals: the disruption or diminishing of the system. Everyone loses.

The "War on Terrorism" declared by President Bush, and the 2003 invasion of Iraq, have generated a "culture of fear," spurred by efforts to increase support for strong military and domestic security operations. We have become afraid to take risks, in any form, from our fears about airline security (which almost bankrupted all of our airlines after 9/11) to our efforts to close our borders (in denial of our roots as a culture of immigrants). It has become a "risk" to ask questions about the policy our government is endorsing, a risk too many are afraid to take. "Safety" has become a moral principle, an end in itself, not a technical quality, and one for which liberty - of person, of speech, of belief - is sacrificed, gaining perhaps a small additional modicum of security. Terrorist targets are prolific; individuals and groups capable of terrorism abound. Terrorism experts emphasize that there is no way to prevent or to protect against all acts of terror in a democracy, no

security which can offer real safety against terrorism. Historically, the only systems that have successfully secured themselves against terrorism are totalitarian systems like Stalin's USSR, which boasted no personal liberty but "security" against non-state terror.

Yet peace is still the norm in much of the world. This is not because the world has improved its security practices, but because a strong sense of community still guides most lives. More terrorist incidents are prevented because members of communities feel comfortable talking with authorities about their concerns, telling them of unusual behavior and answering ques-

tions (without force or torture!) about patterns within their community. Torture does not provide this information--trust and understanding can. Democracies like the United States would be wiser to build strong community relations between those responsible for "homeland security" and those whom they are seeking to protect, making "homeland security" everyone's business.

We must not, as Franklin warned, sacrifice essential liberties to obtain a little safety. Legalizing the use of torture, holding prisoners "outside of the law," and other such measures sacrifice too much, for too little return. We need not accept this "culture of fear" if we have the courage to take the risks required in reaching out to understand and to work together.

CLEMENS RESPONSE TO COMMENTARY ON ALTRUISM

Mark G. Clemens, Chair and Professor
Department of Biology

'I don't know what you mean by "glory,"' Alice said.

Humpty Dumpty smiled contemptuously. 'Of course you don't -- till I tell you. I meant "there's a nice knock-down argument for you!"'

'But "glory" doesn't mean "a nice knock-down argument,"' Alice objected.

'When I use a word,' Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, 'it means just what I choose it to mean -- neither more nor less.'

'The question is,' said Alice, 'whether you CAN make words mean so many different things.'

'The question is,' said Humpty Dumpty, 'which is to be master -- that's all.'

Lewis Carol, Through the Looking Glass.

Why a quote from "Through the Looking Glass" to introduce this response to an essay on Altruism? Like many arguments that draw upon scientific fields with highly specialized vocabulary to provide a basis for analyzing social phenomena, an effective strategy for championing a view is to be the master of the words- to make them mean what you want them to mean. In his commentary on altruism, Aaron Maisto is to be congratulated on his thoughtful treatment of a very interesting topic; nevertheless, he does fall into the trap of mixing biological and vernacular meanings of key terms at the peril of the validity of his conclusions. In reality, either the existence or non-existence of altruism can be supported with great certainty. One just needs to be the master of the word and make it mean what one wants it to mean.

In his discussion of biological altruism, Mr. Maisto discounts the coherence between the existence of altruism and evolutionary theory as a "logical fallacy". One must be careful in using logic as a supreme tool in empirical

