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Reflections on Dignity and Bioethics

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Editorial: Reflections on Dignity and Bioethics

This issue of *EJAIB* includes a range of papers on topics in bioethics, with a focus on medical ethics. One of the common themes is related to dignity, with various interpretations of this, through questions of life. The paper by Tanida explores the growing number of conditions that are becoming "medical"

ones, with a number of ethical and economic implications for human well being and treatment at not only the end of life – but throughout it.

The next paper reviews global ethics, with a range of theories that are available as descriptions of the ways that peoples make ethical decisions. The question of universality of ethics is also addressed in the review by Kaelin of how the UN/EU report on organ trafficking could be applied practically in a country with organ trafficking, such as the Philippines. Similar issues are raised in many other countries as well. Yoshida discusses the anthropological and sociological issues of corpses, and Talukder discusses the concept of persons. There are many disciplines which can contribute to our understanding of dignity. The final paper in this issue also looks at whether the ethical responsibility of alleviation of poverty upon individuals or states.

The Eleventh Asian Bioethics Conference (ABC11) and Fifth UNESCO Asia-Pacific School of Ethics Roundtable was held in Singapore, on 1-2 August 2010 on the theme *Mundalization, Bioethics and Policy*. There were about 80 papers presented, and the abstracts appeared in the July 2010 issue of *EJAIB*. Some of the papers will be published in forthcoming issues of *EJAIB*. There were a range of sessions on education, environment, neuroethics, Asian bioethics, genetics, biobanks, for example. Related to these theme are two new volumes of Asian-Arab Philosophical Dialogues available from UNESCO Bangkok, and on the web. The content lists are printed in this issue. A number of the papers explore concepts of dignity through history, and how to apply this to issues of war and peace, globalization and democracy.

Gunn in this issue considers Buddhism and genetic engineering. This issue of the dignity of life and human choices is an important example of how different facets of dignity can lead to conflicting responses to ethical decision making.

Finally, we encourage all readers to renew their membership of Asian Bioethics Association, in time for the forthcoming elections of a new board, that will occur in November 2010. The 2011 conference will occur in Taiwan, dates to be decided soon.

-Darryl Macer

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