

Center for Ethics in Science and Technology

ETHICS CENTER UPDATES

FALL 2006

Message from the Co-Directors

Welcome to the inaugural issue of *Ethics Center Updates*, a quarterly report designed to keep you up-to-date with activities of the Center for Ethics in Science and Technology. Our goal is to keep you apprised of upcoming events and solicit your input on plans for the future.

Please take a close look at this first issue of *Ethics Center Updates* and don't hesitate to let us know your thoughts, suggestions, or questions. Thank you for your continued participation in these important discussions.

Lawrence M. Hinman and Michael Kalichman

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The Legler Benbough Foundation

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THE ETHICS CENTER: 2003 TO TODAY

As many of you know, the impetus for creating a San Diego Ethics Center was a luncheon lecture by Tom Murray, the director of the Hastings Center, just three years ago. Following that meeting, which included a group of invited leaders from throughout the San Diego community, we conceived of creating this Center and identified three principal areas of focus: stem cells, neuroscience, and computers and information technology. For a variety of reasons, much of our initial focus has been on stem cell ethics. We organized and sponsored, often in collaboration with other institutions and groups in San Diego, multiple conferences, panels, and lectures on ethical issues in stem cell research and published several op-ed pieces in this area. In collaboration with Evan Snyder of the Burnham Institute, we co-authored a scholarly article in *Nature Biotechnology* on alternative sources of human embryonic stem cells, and co-edited an issue of *Stem Cell Reviews* devoted to papers from various conferences on stem cell ethics. That issue was quickly given a second printing, and copies have been widely distributed to legislators and policy makers. We are working again with Evan to develop an anthology on stem cell ethics for Humana Press. Similar efforts are envisioned now for our work on ethics in neuroscience and computer science.

This fall marks an important turning-point in our endeavor to make the Center self-sustaining. Each of three major universities in San Diego (USD, UCSD, and SDSU) has made a five-year commitment of \$40,000 annually to support operating costs for the Center. We are deeply grateful to the leadership of these three institutions for their strong vote of confidence in the work of the Center. This provides us with baseline support for faculty and staff time and resources at each of the three institutions. Mike Kalichman remains the primary representative from UCSD, and Larry Hinman continues to be the principal contributor from USD. For SDSU, we have benefited from the long-standing membership of Tom Scott (SDSU Vice President for Research) on our Board of Advisors. However, we are delighted to also report an exciting new relationship with Stuart Henry, the newly-arrived Director of SDSU's School of Public Administration and Urban Studies. We look forward to continued broad-based participation from all three of these institutions, as well as continuing involvement from research institutions, including the Burnham, Salk, and Neurosciences Institutes and the newly-formed San Diego Consortium for Regenerative Medicine.

ACTIVITIES OF THE CENTER - IN BRIEF

The mission of the Ethics Center continues to be to help our community address ethical implications of new developments in science and technology. This serves multiple purposes, including a more informed community, increased public confidence in the research enterprise, and increased accountability on the part of researchers. Taken together, this project is helping to promote science that is in the public interest. With this in mind, the Center has a focus on three areas of particular interest to the San Diego community: stem cells, neuroscience, and computer science and information technology.

This year we have held three public events:

- **March 20** *Surfing the Internet: Who's Watching? Who's Censoring?*
- **May 13** *Social Justice and Stem Cell Research: Who gains? Who loses?*
- **June 29** *Caught Unawares: Emerging Technologies, Surveillance and Self*

These are each described in more detail on Page 3.

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- The Ethics Center is a multi-institutional regional resource.
- The primary goal of the Ethics Center is to promote balanced and deliberative community discussion of the ethical implications of new developments in science and technology.
- The Ethics Center is an advocate for seeking areas of common ground.

SURFING THE INTERNET: WHO'S WATCHING? WHO'S CENSORING?

The Ethics Center's previous panel discussion on the Internet (November 2005) was a great success, raising important issues about Internet search engine privacy and transparency issues that soon after our conference became increasingly popular themes in the public press. We were, if anything, a bit ahead of the curve on this topic, anticipating issues that had not yet received widespread public notice. With the public being fully engaged with this issue, we presented a special public event hosted at USD/Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice, produced by KPBS, and subsequently broadcast on *These Days* on KPBS.

Tom Fudge, host of *These Days*, moderated a panel including:

- David Brin
Science fiction writer and author of *The Transparent Society*
- Lance Cottrell
Founder, President, and Chairman, Anonymizer, Inc.
- Pam Dixon
Founder and Executive Director, World Privacy Forum
- Lawrence Hinman
Director, Values Institute and Professor of Philosophy, USD



Surfing the Internet: Who's Watching? Who's Censoring?
USD, March 20, 2006

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND STEM CELL RESEARCH: WHO GAINS? WHO LOSES?

In November of 2004, Proposition 71 authorized \$3 billion to be spent in California on stem cell research, which promises to develop medical therapies for various diseases. The potential medical benefits are staggering. But so are the ethical and moral questions. What are the social costs of this research? Who will bear those costs? Who will benefit from stem cell research? What civic oversight is in place as the research is implemented? This event was jointly organized with the Episcopal Student Association at UCSD and co-sponsors included UCSD Thurgood Marshall College, Burnham Institute, Episcopal Diocese of San Diego, The Salk Institute, UCSD Burke Lectureship Board, UCSD Health Care – Social Issues, UCSD Sixth College, Newman Center, Catholic Community at UCSD, St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral Peace & Justice Committee, United Methodist Wesley Foundation, Center for Ethics and Spirituality at UCSD, and UCSD TV.

- Ronald B. Miller, M.D.
Clinical Professor of Medicine Emeritus, University of California, Irvine.
- Wesley Smith, J.D.
Author and Senior Fellow with the Discovery Institute in Seattle
- John Evans, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, University of California, San Diego
- Alta Charo, J.D.
Warren P. Knowles Professor of Law and Bioethics at the University of Wisconsin, and Visiting Professor of Law at the University of California, Berkeley



Social Justice and Stem Cell Research: Who gains? Who loses?
UCSD, May 13, 2006

The panel included:

Small groups grappled with points raised by the panelists and developed their own formulation of key issues and questions. Participants came back together in a large group with the panelists and shared the concerns and questions that were formulated in the small group discussions. UCSD TV aired the conference's morning session on June 1, 2, 4, and 6, premiered nationally on University of California Television (UCTV) in July, and is available for viewing "on-demand".

"Excellent conference - speakers, small groups, & afternoon discussion terrific - thank you."

CAUGHT UNAWARES: EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES, SURVEILLANCE AND SELF

Deborah Hurley, an international expert in privacy and surveillance issues and the past director of the Harvard Information Infrastructure Project, presented an evening lecture at University of San Diego, Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice. Ms. Hurley reviewed the present state of the surveillance society and emerging technologies and their characteristics of embeddedness, decentralization, ubiquity, and complexity. The deployment of surveillance technologies was also

reviewed, including RFIDs, the ubiquitous information environment, locational technologies, sensors, and technologies that gather and exchange information outside the range of human awareness. The social and policy implications and impacts of this powerful trend were also explored, along with measures to preserve autonomy and human dignity.



Deborah Hurley, *These Days*, KPBS, June 29, 2006

In addition to conferences, the Ethics Center is dedicated to communicating ethical issues through the media. We have had an impact through a variety of forums. These communications include interviews for print and broadcast media, op-ed pieces for newspapers, and academic publications summarizing findings from our conferences.

IN THE NEWS

Terri Somers. "Lab in secret location banks donated embryos." *The San Diego Union-Tribune*. March 7, 2006.

Scott LaFee. "Does legal ownership of genes, stem cells and other biological material go beyond the pale?" *The San Diego Union-Tribune*. April 19, 2006.

INTERVIEWS

Lawrence M. Hinman. "Will physician-assisted death be allowed in California?" KPBS *These Days*. January 19, 2006.

Michael Kalichman. "New drug may blunt bad memories." KPBS *These Days*. January 30, 2006.

Michael Kalichman. "San Diego's embryo bank raises provocative issues." KPBS News. March 7, 2006.

Mary Blair-Loy and Lawrence M. Hinman. "Who will benefit from stem cell research?" KPBS *These Days*, May 10, 2006.

Deborah Hurley. "Are your human rights being violated by common surveillance equipment?" KPBS *These Days*, June 29, 2006.

OP-EDS

Lawrence M. Hinman. "Why Google matters." *The San Diego Union-Tribune*. March 16, 2006.

Michael Kalichman and Lawrence M. Hinman. "Words that divide. Stem cell debate is semantical minefield." *The San Diego Union-Tribune*. May 24, 2006.

ACADEMIC

Evan Y. Snyder, Lawrence M. Hinman, and Michael W. Kalichman (2006). "Can science resolve the ethical impasse in stem cell research?" *Nature Biotechnology* 24: 397 – 400.

Michael W. Kalichman and Lawrence M. Hinman (2006). "Consensus and the search for pluripotent stem cells." *Stem Cell Reviews* 1(4).

Michael W. Kalichman, Lawrence M. Hinman, and Evan Y Snyder, eds. (2006). "Exploring Common Ground in the Stem Cell Ethical Debate – A Perspective for Scientists." *Stem Cell Reviews* 1(4).

"Will physician-assisted death be allowed in California?"

KPBS *These Days*.
January 19, 2006.



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