

## Center for Ethics in Science and Technology

## ETHICS CENTER UPDATE

SPRING 2007

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Lawrence M. Hinman, Ph.D.  
Director  
The Values Institute,  
University of San Diego  
hinman@sandiego.edu

Michael Kalichman, Ph.D.  
Director  
Research Ethics Program,  
University of California,  
San Diego  
kalichman@ucsd.edu

Stuart Henry, Ph.D.  
Professor and Director  
School of Public Affairs,  
San Diego State University  
stuart.henry@sdsu.edu

Administrative Contact:  
Diane Ballard  
Program Coordinator  
Research Ethics Program,  
University of California,  
San Diego  
(858) 822-2647  
FAX: (858) 822-5765  
info@ethicscenter.net

## Message from the Co-Directors

Since its creation three years ago, the Center for Ethics in Science and Technology has had the chance to work with many members of the San Diego community to define and refine our focus and our activities. This is reflected in the events and activities discussed in this, our third quarterly, ETHICS CENTER UPDATE.

Stuart Henry Joins Ethics  
Center Executive Committee

In this update, we particularly want to alert you to an important change in the leadership of the Ethics Center. As you may know, the Executive Committee of the Ethics Center consists of two Co-Directors assisted administratively by Ms. Diane Ballard. We are delighted to now report that in April our Board of Advisors unanimously agreed with our proposal to add Dr. Stuart Henry as a new Executive Committee member.



Stuart Henry: "In the Ethics Center, for the first time I saw folks interested in ethics as part of the process of science rather than as a set of values to be applied to it. That was refreshing, exciting and resonated with my own views"

Dr. Henry recently joined San Diego State University (SDSU) as a Professor of Criminal Justice and Director of the School of Public Affairs. He was born and trained in England, but subsequently accepted a variety of positions at U.S. universities. Immediately prior to joining us in San Diego, he served as Chair of the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies at Wayne State University in Michigan. Dr. Henry brings a valuable new perspective to the Ethics Center with his focus on

criminological theory, and particularly on white-collar crime. His research in these areas is internationally recognized and can be found in numerous books, including *The Hidden Economy: The Context and Control of Borderline Crime* (1978), *The Deviance Process* (1993), *Constitutive Criminology: Beyond Post-modernism* (1996), and *Essential Criminology* (2004).

Because of his insights into decision-making, as well as the institutional dynamics that shape good and bad decisions, Stuart Henry contributes complementary perspectives that significantly enrich our efforts through the Ethics Center.

Please join us in welcoming Stuart to the Ethics Center Executive Committee.

Lawrence M. Hinman and  
Michael Kalichman

The Ethics Center and its activities have enjoyed generous support from:

Legler Benbough Foundation ~ The Parker Foundation  
Donald C. and Elizabeth M. Dickinson Foundation  
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Salk Institute for Biological Studies ~ The Scripps Research Institute,  
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UPDATES AND SUMMARIES OF RECENT EVENTS

**May 13, 2006 – Social Justice and Stem Cell Research: Who gains? Who loses? (University of California, San Diego)**

UCSD TV posted a video from our 2006 event at: [http://webcast.ucsd.edu:8080/ramgen/UCSD\\_TV/11714.rm](http://webcast.ucsd.edu:8080/ramgen/UCSD_TV/11714.rm)

**February 9, 2007 – Stem Cell Research Hits the Road (Stanford University)**

This event was the first attempt at coordinating activities between the Ethics Center and Stanford Program on Stem Cells in Society. Michael Kalichman was one of the speakers and Lawrence Hinman captured the event on video, which will be available soon on the Ethics Center Website.

**February - May, 2007 – Speaker Series: Ethics at the Frontiers of Science (University of San Diego)**

This course at the University of San Diego, based on the focus of the Ethics Center, was organized and taught by Lawrence Hinman. The lectures were free and open to the public. Video of the lectures, PowerPoint slide presentations, and other resources can be found at: <http://ethics.sandiego.edu/Courses/phil334>.

**April 6, 2007 – San Diego Stem Cell Ethics Conference (Salk Institute for Biological Studies)**



Laurie Zoloth, Keynote Speaker  
Northwestern University

There were approximately 160 people in attendance at this fourth annual stem cell event. Based on evaluation comments, this was one of our best received conferences to date. Nearly all of the written comments were enthusiastic. A sampling includes:

*Amazing conference with distinguished speakers*

*Excellent; stimulating; fabulous presenters; well organized*

*I'm very impressed! A good sampling of issues!*

*Very well organized, discussions and talks were very informative. I think more public discussions such as this should be held to help educate the public, so that more are aware of these issues and ongoing research.*



Panel 1 - Donation of Eggs and Embryos

In answer to the question **What topics would you suggest for future public discussions of science and ethics?**, one response was *You choose - I'll be there.*

With the help of a high school intern from the Preuss School, Michael Kalichman made contact with over 60 local high schools and extended a specific invitation for their students to attend the conference. Students from 10 high schools responded. This will hopefully be the first of many opportunities to involve San Diego high school students in discussions about ethics in the context of science and technology.



Panel 2: Strategic Plans for Stem Cell Research  
Christopher Scott, Duane Roth, and Ted Love

An event such as this would not have been possible without the help of volunteers. We wish to thank the following volunteers for their generous assistance:

Theresa Bishop, University of San Diego

Andrew Heisel, University of San Diego

Louise Laurent, University of California San Diego

Marlene Lleva, Preuss School UCSD

Ashlee Schultz, California Western School of Law



Volunteers Ashlee Schultz, Theresa Bishop, and Andrew Heisel



Panel 3: Milestones for Clinical Trials  
R. Alta Charo

Listen to a pre-conference broadcast with Lawrence S. Goldstein and Laurie Zoloth broadcast April 5th, "Stem Cell Researchers on Ethics and Science" on KPBS *These Days*:

[http://www.kpbs.org/radio/these\\_days?id=7917#](http://www.kpbs.org/radio/these_days?id=7917#)

Video of the conference will be posted on the Ethics Center website soon.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**July 12-14, 2007 - CEPE 2007 Conference (University of San Diego)**

This 2007 international conference of the Computer Ethics and Philosophical Enquiry (CEPE) organization is being hosted at the University of San Diego, organized by Lawrence M. Hinman, and jointly coordinated with the Ethics Center. The conference is the seventh in a series of international conferences and will be held over three days.



James H. Moor

CEPE 2007 will feature keynote addresses from James H. Moor and Vernor Vinge. James Moor, a professor of philosophy at Dartmouth, is a co-founder of CEPE and the current president of INSEIT. His keynote address will be on "Why Ethics Is So Crucial in Artificial Intelligence." Vernor Vinge, a professor emeritus of computer science and mathematics at San Diego State University, is a three-time winner of the Hugo Award and the author of numerous science fiction stories and novels. His "True Names" was the first piece of science to explore in detail the concept of cyber space. One of most recent non-fiction pieces, "2020 Computing: The Creativity Machine," appeared in *Nature* in 2006.



Vernor Vinge

Contact: Lawrence M. Hinman, Conference Director, (619) 260-4787, hinman@sandiego.edu  
For more information, please see <http://cepe2007.sandiego.edu>.

**July 10, 2007 - MySpace or Your Space? (Reuben H. Fleet Science Center)**

To engage high school students, the Ethics Center is now working with the Fleet Science Museum to host an invitation only event at the Fleet Museum on July 10. The topic will be "MySpace or Your Space: A Look at Privacy in Online Forums."

To help us explore this timely and relevant topic, we will be joined by renowned science fiction author David Brin. Dr. Brin is a winner of multiple Hugo and Nebula awards and the author of the non-fiction book, *The Transparent Society: Will Technology Force Us to Choose Between Freedom and Privacy?*



*"This is a great opportunity to provide students with access to an ethical issue that affects their lives directly. The Reuben H. Fleet Science Center welcomes this opportunity to work with the Ethics Center to help engage the students in an aspect of the information age they need to recognize."*  
Jeffrey Kirsch, Executive Director, Reuben H. Fleet Science Center

For more information, please see <http://ethicscenter.net>

**October 1-7, 2007 - Neuroethics**

Internationally recognized leaders in the field of neuroethics have agreed to be members of an advisory board for planning a week of neuroethics events: Stephanie Bird (co-editor, Science and Engineering Ethics), Floyd Bloom (Professor Emeritus, The Scripps Research Institute; member, President's Council on Bioethics), Mark Frankel (Director, Scientific Freedom, Responsibility and Law Program of the American Association for the Advancement of Science), Michael Gazzaniga (Director, Sage Center for the Study of Mind at the University of California, Santa Barbara; member, President's Council on Bioethics), Judy Illes (Director, Program in Neuroethics and Senior Research Scholar, Stanford Center for Biomedical Ethics, Stanford). We are scheduling a variety of events including focus groups, roundtables, lectures, panels, and debates. In addition, we plan to involve students (especially high school students) through competitions and specific invitations, and the general public in small group discussions in coffee shops with graduate students, modeled after "Café Scientifique" where scientists meet in coffee shops and lead discussions.

**November 7, 2007 - Daniel Sulmasy, OFM, MD, PhD.**

Dr. Sulmasy, a Franciscan Friar, holds the Sisters of Charity Chair in Ethics at St. Vincent's Hospital, Manhattan, and serves as Professor of Medicine and Director of the Bioethics Institute of New York Medical College, Valhalla, NY. He is a general internist and philosopher with research interests in both theoretical and empirical studies of end-of-life decision making, ethics education, and spirituality in medicine. An evening event is planned and the details will be arranged as we draw closer to the event.



## WHAT DO WE MEAN BY “ETHICS”?

The word “ethics” is commonly used. We see or hear it daily in news reports. We often find ourselves describing individuals or their actions as being particularly “ethical” or “unethical.” In most of these cases, ethical behavior is defined to be synonymous with following the rules or laws. This is an important consideration, but the focus of the Ethics Center is about much more than just following the rules.

One way to better understand what is meant by ethics is to look at how it is defined in the dictionary. The Merriam-Webster online dictionary (<http://www.m-w.com/dictionary/ethics>) gives the primary definition of ethics as:

“the discipline dealing with what is good and bad and with moral duty and obligation.”

It is important to be clear that this definition is not based on a relationship to rules or laws; not all of our actions are governed by rules or laws, and as most of us have learned not all laws are ethical. It is also important to be clear that this definition does not relegate ethical judgments to someone else; it is our personal responsibility to engage in an ongoing effort to identify ethical challenges and approach them through transparent and inclusive discussions. The answers we find will not always be complete or satisfactory, but the alternative (to not try at all) would be in itself unethical.

The focus of the Center for Ethics in Science and Technology is to promote conversations that will help us to identify and address the ethical challenges raised by new developments in science and technology. To do so, we can all bring to

the table what we know about rules and laws, our religious or moral biases, and our experience. However, the particular role of the Ethics Center is to create forums in which these individual perspectives can challenge and be challenged by researchers working at the cutting edge of science and technology. The result will be a more informed public and an increased chance that science and technology will best serve the public interest.

If you share our views of the role of ethics in science and technology, we hope to see you at our upcoming events and to hear your thoughts on how best to meet our goals.

Michael Kalichman

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## ABOUT THE ETHICS CENTER

The Center for Ethics in Science & Technology is an independent center that has a close working relationship with the University of California San Diego, the University of San Diego, and San Diego State University.

**Contact:** (858) 822-2647, <http://ethicscenter.net>

## ETHICS CENTER MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Center for Ethics in Science and Technology is to foster science in the public interest by promoting awareness, understanding, and discussion of the ethical implications of new developments in science and technology. To carry out its mission, the Center promotes more informed policy development and ethical decision-making on the part of individuals and institutions through education, outreach, and scholarly forums.