Top 50 Bioethics Journals and Top 240 Most Cited Bioethics Articles Published Since 2009

Mar 26, 2015 | BRL Blog

An updated 2016 edition of this analysis, including articles published in 2015 and an updated Top 50 list is now published. Check it out here!

Bioethics is an interdisciplinary field that has been growing tremendously over the last 40 years. There are now over 50 journals publishing scholarly work closely related to bioethics with an aggregated production of over 16,000 articles over the last six years, or about 7 articles a day!

Here are the top 240 most cited articles from 50 select bioethics journals published in 2009 through 2014. If you’d like even more journals I have also created a top 100 bioethics journal list. Another great resource on which journals to avoid publishing in is available from “The Ethics Blog” by Uppsala University.


View the Top 50 Bioethics Journal Ranking for 2009 to 2014.

About this Analysis

Inspired by the blog posts “top 20 bioethics journals in the world” and “top 30 bioethics journals on earth” I have calculated impact factors for these journals to find the overall ranking for the period from 2009 to 2014. For this analysis I used Harzing’s Publish or Perish to calculate the h5-index for journal impacts (because some journals were not included in Google’s automatic metric due to not reaching the minimum number of publications per year). This ranking is based on Harzing’s citation analysis method for creating an index h, which is an aggregated score of how many highly cited articles an author publishes each year, but for a five year period and a journal rather than individual:

“A scientist has index h if h of his/her NP papers have at least h citations each, and the other (NP-h) papers have no more than h citations each.” Harzing 2005

If 27 articles have 27 citations each over five years, the h5-index for that journal is 27. If they had 29 cited 27 each, it’s still 27. Or if they had 100 cited 10 each, it’s 10. Here are the data I
gathered for this analysis, including the 16,000 articles in a spreadsheet. If you’d like to use it in a publication just let me know.

Author: Mark T Hakkarinen, M.A.

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**Bioethics Journal Impact Analysis**

This analysis uses the h5 index measurement in Publish or Perish Citation information data gathered in March, 2015. The Google Scholar metrics are based on data in their index as of June, 2014. More notes about accuracy available here: [http://www.harzing.com/pophelp/accuracy.htm](http://www.harzing.com/pophelp/accuracy.htm)

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### Bioethics Outlook

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### New Bioethics: A Multidisciplinary Journal of Biotechnology and the Body

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### Top Bioethics Articles by Year

#### 2014

*As of March, 2015. Rankings for 2014 will skew more heavily than usual towards articles published earlier in the year.*
3. “Withdrawing artificial nutrition and hydration from minimally conscious and vegetative patients: family perspectives”. C Kitzinger, J Kitzinger. *Journal of medical ethics* 17 cites


25. “Neuroimaging, expert witnesses, and ethics: Convergence and conflict in the courtroom“. L Berlin. AJOB Neuroscience 10 cites

26. “A review of the key issues associated with the commercialization of biobanks“. T Caulfield, S Burningham, Y Joly. and the Biosciences 9 cites


30. “Death, treatment decisions and the permanent vegetative state: evidence from families and experts“. S Holland, C Kitzzinger, J Kitzzinger. Medicine, Health Care and Philosophy 9 cites


33. “Sharing in or benefiting from scientific advancement?“. C Timmermann. Science and engineering ethics 8 cites

34. “Authorship matrix: a rational approach to quantify individual contributions and responsibilities in multi-author scientific articles“. TP Clement. Science and engineering ethics 8 cites

35. “Moderate eugenics and human enhancement“. MJ Selgelid. Medicine, Health Care and Philosophy 8 cites
37. “Informed consent as an ethical requirement in clinical trials: an old, but still unresolved issue. An observational study to evaluate patient’s informed consent ...“. V Sanchini, M Reni, G Calori, E Riva.... Journal of medical ... 7 cites
40. “Shared vulnerabilities in research“. E Chwang. The American Journal of Bioethics 7 cites

2013
1. “An ethics framework for a learning health care system: a departure from traditional research ethics and clinical ethics“. RR Faden, NE Kass, SN Goodman.... Hastings Center ... 64 cites
2. “The Research–Treatment Distinction: A Problematic Approach for Determining Which Activities Should Have Ethical Oversight“. NE Kass, RR Faden, SN GooDMAN.... Hastings Center ... 53 cites
3. “Engineering ethics beyond engineers' ethics“. JM Basart, M Serra. Science and engineering ethics 52 cites
4. “Against autonomy: justifying coercive paternalism“. S Conly. Journal of medical ethics 47 cites
5. “Do researchers have an obligation to actively look for genetic incidental findings?“. C Gliwa, BE Berkman. The American Journal of Bioethics 42 cites
8. "Just how cognitive is “cognitive enhancement”? On the significance of emotions in university students’ experiences with study drugs“. S Vrecko. AJOB neuroscience 31 cites
10. “Improving understanding in the research informed consent process: a systematic review of 54 interventions tested in randomized control trials". A Nishimura, J Carey, PJ Erwin, JC Tilburt..... ... medical ethics 30 cites
15. “Physicians under the influence: social psychology and industry marketing strategies“. S Sah, A Fugh-Berman. ... *Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics* 27 cites
18. “Case-based knowledge and ethics education: Improving learning and transfer through emotionally rich cases“. CE Thiel, S Connelly, L Harkrider...... ... *and engineering ethics* 24 cites
19. “What is personalized medicine: sharpening a vague term based on a systematic literature review“. S Schleidgen, C Klingler, T Bertram...... ... *medical ethics* 24 cites
26. “Key opinion leaders and the corruption of medical knowledge: what the Sunshine Act will and won’t cast light on“. S Sismondo. *The Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics* 20 cites
27. “Salvaging the concept of nudge“. Y Saghai. *Journal of medical ethics* 19 cites
28. “Moral enhancement, freedom, and what we (should) value in moral behaviour“. D DeGrazia. *Journal of medical ethics* 19 cites
29. “If I could just stop loving you: Anti-love biotechnology and the ethics of a chemical breakup“. BD Earp, OA Wudarczyk, A Sandberg.... *The American Journal* ... 19 cites
32. “Media, politics and science policy: MS and evidence from the CCSVI Trenches”. D Pullman, A Zarzeczny, A Picard. *BMC medical ethics* 19 cites
36. “Vulnerability in research ethics: A way forward”. MM Lange, W Rogers, S Dodds. *Bioethics* 18 cites
37. “Assessing decision-making capacity in the behaviorally nonresponsive patient with residual covert awareness”. A Peterson, L Naci, C Weijer, D Cruse……. *Neuroscience* 18 cites
40. “The apomediated world: Regulating research when social media has changed research“. D O’Connor. *The Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics* 18 cites

2012

1. “After-birth abortion: why should the baby live?“. A Giubilini, F Minerva. *Journal of Medical Ethics* 104 cites
3. “Seeking better health care outcomes: the ethics of using the “nudge”“. JS Blumenthal-Barby, H Burroughs…. *American Journal of Bioethics* 52 cites
6. “The quality of informed consent: mapping the landscape. A review of empirical data from developing and developed countries“. A Mandava, C Pace, B Campbell, E Emanuel…. *Journal of medical* …. 40 cites
7. “Nurses’ perceptions of and responses to morally distressing situations“. C Varcoe, B Pauly, J Storch, L Newton…. *Nursing Ethics* 40 cites
8. “A multidimensional analysis of ethical climate, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behaviors“. CC Huang, CS You, MT Tsai. *Nursing*
9. “Consequences of clinical situations that cause critical care nurses to experience moral distress”. DL Wiegand, M Funk. *Nursing Ethics* 37 cites
10. “Those who have the gold make the evidence: How the pharmaceutical industry biases the outcomes of clinical trials of medications”. J Lexchin. *Science and engineering ethics* 37 cites
11. “To tell the truth, the whole truth, may do patients harm: the problem of the nocebo effect for informed consent”. RE Wells, TJ Kaptchuk. *The American Journal of Bioethics* 36 cites
12. “Development and testing of an instrument to measure moral distress in healthcare professionals”. AB Hamric, CT Borchers, EG Epstein. *AJOB Primary Research* 34 cites
16. “The ethics of ‘public understanding of ethics’—why and how bioethics expertise should include public and patients’ voices”. S Schicktanz, M Schweda, B Wynne. …, *health care and philosophy* 31 cites
17. “‘Human-on-a-chip’developments: a translational cutting-edge alternative to systemic safety assessment and efficiency evaluation of substances in laboratory ...“. U Marx, H Walles, S Hoffmann. …, *Animals-ATLA* 30 cites
22. “Ethical concerns for maternal surrogacy and reproductive tourism”. R Deonandan, S Green, A van Beinum. *Journal of Medical Ethics* 27 cites
28. “Genomic inheritances: Disclosing individual research results from whole-exome sequencing to deceased participants’ relatives”. B Chan, FM Facio, H Eidem, SC Hull. The American Journal ... 26 cites
33. “Should we allow organ donation euthanasia? Alternatives for maximizing the number and quality of organs for transplantation”. D Wilkinson, J Savulescu. Bioethics 25 cites
36. “And lead us (not) into persuasion...? Persuasive technology and the ethics of communication”. A Spahn. Science and engineering ethics 24 cites
37. “Moral distress and the contemporary plight of health professionals”. W Austin. HEC forum 24 cites
38. “Effect of financial relationships on the behaviors of health care professionals: a review of the evidence”. C Robertson, S Rose. Journal of Law, Medicine ... 24 cites
40. “Swabbing students: should universities be allowed to facilitate educational DNA testing?”. SL Callier. The American Journal of Bioethics 23 cites

2011

1. “Retractions in the scientific literature: do authors deliberately commit research fraud?”. RG Steen. Journal of medical ethics 98 cites
5. “Retractions in the medical literature: how many patients are put at risk by flawed research?”. RG Steen. Journal of medical ethics 53 cites
7. “Phenomenology and its application in medicine”. H Carel. Theoretical medicine and bioethics 50 cites
9. “What values in design? The challenge of incorporating moral values into design“. N Manders-Huits. Science and engineering ethics 44 cites
10. “Deflating the neuroenhancement bubble”. JC Lucke, S Bell, B Partridge, WD Hall. Ajob Neuroscience 43 cites
12. “Reconsidering the value of consent in biobank research”. J Allen, B McNamara. Bioethics 41 cites
17. ““Doctor, would you prescribe a pill to help me...?” A national survey of physicians on using medicine for human enhancement“. TD Hotze, K Shah, EE Anderson…. The American Journal of … 39 cites
18. “Ethical issues in human genomics research in developing countries”. J de Vries, SJ Bull, O Douombo, M Ibrahim…. medical ethics 39 cites
ethics 36 cites
24. “Defining the medical humanities: three conceptions and three narratives”. H Brody. *Journal of Medical Humanities* 35 cites
25. “Unbearable suffering: a qualitative study on the perspectives of patients who request assistance in dying”. MK Dees, MJ Vernooij-Dassen, WJ Dekkers.... *Journal of medical ...* 33 cites
27. “Why moral philosophers are not and should not be moral experts”. D Archard. *Bioethics* 33 cites
29. “Personal genome testing: test characteristics to clarify the discourse on ethical, legal and societal issues”. EM Bunnik, MHN Schermer.... *medical ethics* 32 cites
32. “An ethically justified framework for clinical investigation to benefit pregnant and fetal patients“. FA Chervenak, LB McCullough.... *American Journal of Bioethics* 31 cites
34. “Acceptability of financial incentives to improve health outcomes in UK and US samples“. M Promberger, RCH Brown, RE Ashcroft.... *Journal of medical ...* 30 cites
38. “Toward preclinical predictive drug testing for metabolism and hepatotoxicity by using in vitro models derived from human embryonic stem cells and human cell ...“. CF Mandenius, TB Andersson, PM Alves.... *Animals-ATLA* 29 cites
2010

1. “Retractions in the scientific literature: is the incidence of research fraud increasing?”. RG Steen. *Journal of medical ethics* 143 cites
4. “From evidence-based medicine to marketing-based medicine: evidence from internal industry documents“. GI Spielmans, PI Parry. *Journal of Bioethical Inquiry* 78 cites
5. “Dignity of older people in a nursing home: narratives of care providers“. R Jakobsen, V Sørlie. *Nursing Ethics* 77 cites
6. “Facebook activity of residents and fellows and its impact on the doctor–patient relationship“. G Moubarak, A Guiot, Y Benhamou.... *Journal of Medical ...* 76 cites
8. “Moral stress, moral climate and moral sensitivity among psychiatric professionals“. K Lützén, T Blom, B Ewalds-Kvist, S Winch. *Nursing Ethics* 65 cites
12. “Glad you asked: participants’ opinions of re-consent for dbGap data submission“. EJ Ludman, SM Fullerton, L Spangler....... *of Empirical Research ...* 56 cites
15. “The role of doctors’ religious faith and ethnicity in taking ethically controversial decisions during end-of-life care”. C Seale. *Journal of Medical Ethics* 50 cites
23. “Explaining health care system change: problem pressure and the emergence of “hybrid” health care systems“. A Schmid, M Cacace, R Götze.... *Journal of Health Politics, ...* 47 cites
26. “Moral distress experienced by psychiatric nurses in Japan“. K Ohnishi, Y Ohgushi, M Nakano, H Fujii.... *Nursing* 45 cites
29. “Avoiding twisted pixels: ethical guidelines for the appropriate use and manipulation of scientific digital images“. DW Cromey. *Science and engineering ethics* 41 cites
32. “Researcher perspectives on disclosure of incidental findings in genetic research“. MC Meacham, H Starks, W Burke.... *Human Research Ethics* 40 cites


35. “Patient restrictions: Are there ethical alternatives to seclusion and restraint?“. R Kontio, M Välimäki, H Putkonen, L Kuosmanen…. *Nursing* 39 cites


40. “Examining the public refusal to consent to DNA biobanking: empirical data from a Swedish population-based study“. PA Melas, LK Sjöholm, T Forsner, M Edhborg…. *Journal of medical* 38 cites

2009


4. “Medical professionalism in the age of online social networking“. JS Guseh, RW Brendel, DH Brendel. *Journal of medical ethics* 125 cites


6. “Lifeworld-led healthcare is more than patient-led care: An existential view of well-being“. K Dahlberg, L Todres, K Galvin. *Medicine, Health Care and Philosophy* 117 cites


8. “Smart drugs for cognitive enhancement: ethical and pragmatic considerations in the era of cosmetic neurology“. V Cakic. *Journal of medical ethics* 98 cites

12. “Global health ethics for students”. AD Pinto, REG Upshur. *Developing World Bioethics* 82 cites
13. “A review of the implementation of the embryonic stem cell test (EST). The report and recommendations of an ECVAM/ReProTect Workshop”. P Marx-Stoelting, E Adriaens, HJ Ahr..... *animals: ATLA* 82 cites
14. “Global health ethics for students“. AD Pinto, REG Upshur. *Developing World Bioethics* 82 cites
15. “Broadening consent—and diluting ethics?”. B Hofmann. *Journal of Medical Ethics* 76 cites
18. “Hospitalized children’s views of the good nurse”. M Brady. *Nursing ethics* 69 cites
19. “Two decades of research on euthanasia from the Netherlands. What have we learnt and what questions remain?”. JAC Rietjens, PJ Van der Maas.... *Journal of bioethical* ... 69 cites
27. “Online survey tools: Ethical and methodological concerns of human research ethics committees”. EA Buchanan, EE Hvizdak.... *Research on Human Research Ethics* 60 cites
29. “Composition, training needs and independence of ethics review committees across Africa: are the gate-keepers rising to the emerging challenges?“. A Nyika, W Kilama, R Chilengi, G Tangwa..... *Journal of Medical ...* 56 cites


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38. “Culture and organizational climate: nurses’ insights into their relationship with physicians“. DC Malloy, T Hadjistavropoulos, EF McCarthy.... *Nursing* ... 49 cites

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6 Comments

**Christian Munthe** on March 26, 2015 at 5:22 pm

How come you have excluded Health Care Analysis?

**Bioethics Research Library** on March 27, 2015 at 9:41 am

I’ll include it, the focus and top articles are clearly centered on bioethical issues. The h5-index for Health Care Analysis is 17 which will put it in the top 15.

**Arielle** on June 5, 2015 at 3:36 am

I find such statistics really helpful. Thank you for the work!

Just a minor question, I was wondering how to find out the top cited articles in a certain area (such as bioethics, or public health ethics, or informed consent), and how to acquire the data on how many times certain article being cited (I have a vague impression that Web of Science provides such data, but then I have to hand search the article first, which means I need to know the top cited article)? Thanks a lot.

**Bioethics Research Library** on June 5, 2015 at 10:10 am

The citation analysis tool I used is Harzing’s Publish or Perish software using data retrieved from Google Scholar. My approach was to retrieve the top 1,000 cited articles from bioethics-related journals using a search of the journal title. I combined the data in a spreadsheet and then used sorting to find the top cited each year. I have expanded the analysis to the top 100 journals and have a spreadsheet of 52,000 articles. This process is slow and took several days to complete due to query limiting by Google. The only caveat with this approach
is there most certainly are influential articles not published in these top 100 journals focused specifically on bioethics, such as law journals, and therefore are omitted from lists generated using this technique. However, at least the citation analysis can be done in batches of 1,000 articles and it is not required to go through each by hand.

Wendy Rogers on May 25, 2016 at 7:45 pm

This is a great resource thanks. I wondered why International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics is not in the top 50 as is has similar metrics to some others in the top 50, and some highly cited articles.

Bioethics Research Library on May 26, 2016 at 9:39 am

Hi Wendy! The updated 2016 edition, published a few days ago, includes IJFAB as #40 and an h5 index of 8. The newer version does a wider search with initially over 100 journals to select the top 50. You can see the new version here: https://bioethics.georgetown.edu/2016/05/top-50-bioethics-journals-and-top-250-most-articles-since-2011-2016-edition/

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