THE BIOMEDICAL REVOLUTION AND ETHICS Dr. John Howie

Recent developments in biology and medicine and the interrelation of these two fields have sometimes been referred to as "the biomedical revolution." These developments include genetic testing, genetic screening, genetic manipulation and alteration, behavior control, psychosurgery, prolonging or refusing to prolong the dying process, and the development of scarce but highly technical medical resources and equipment. Some thinkers have suggested that these developments are so radical and novel that our entire ethical perspective is now archaic! If human beings can now take control of their own evolution as recent microbiologists hint, can one presume that the older ethical principles have any relevance at all?

Regardless of how one perceives these developments, there are tough questions that cannot be evaded. How can these new developments be wisely used for the good of humankind? What are the ethical issues in using this newly acquired knowledge and biomedical technology? These two recurrent questions will often provide the general focus for the discussions, readings, and audiovisual materials.

Students are expected to read the assigned material prior to the class session; they are expected to participate in the discussion of the readings and special audiovisual programs. In addition, each student is required to prepare and submit a research paper (approx. 10-14 type-written double spaced pages) on a restricted but significant topic considered in the course. The grade earned by the student will be based on participation in discussion, the research paper, a midterm test, and a comprehensive final examination.

Two paperback texts are primary reading sources: John Arras and Nancy Rhoden (editors), ETHICAL ISSUES IN MODERN MEDICINE (3rd edition, Palo Alto, Ca.: Mayfield, 1989), and Tom L. Beauchamp and James F. Childress, (co-authors), PRINCIPLES OF BIOMEDICAL ETHICS (3rd edition, New York: Oxford University Press, 1989). The book edited by Arras and Rhoden is an anthology with readings arranged under a number of topics: genetics, abortion, euthanasia, informed consent, behavior control and psychosurgery, justice, social policy, and the province of medicine. By contrast, the Beauchamp and Childress' book attempts to bring together utilitarian and deontological ethical theories and to state clearly four principles that apply to biomedical situations: autonomy, nonmaleficence, beneficence, and justice. Taken together, the two books give serious students knowledge of different perspectives on many controversial issues and a reasonable theoretical basis for further thinking.
Class Attendance:

Because of the nature of the subject-matter, the use of special audiovisual materials, and the need for thoughtful discussion, class attendance is very important. The student will benefit most by reading the assigned materials at the time the topics are considered in class. Since most of the audiovisual materials are rented, they can be shown only on the scheduled class day. And, of course, there is no substitute for the student actually thinking about the issues and discussing them.

Research Paper:

Each student will prepare a paper on a restricted but significant topic considered in the course. Prepared in consultation with the instructor the paper should reflect a thoughtful reading of five additional articles or chapters on the chosen subject. These papers give the student an opportunity to probe deeply and to think carefully about a single and limited topic. Great care should be taken in the actual writing of the paper. Poor English and any lack of clarity will result in a lower grade. Excellent bibliographies covering the entire field of medical ethics (under specific topics) have been prepared by the Hastings Center, individuals, and other organizations. Some copies of these materials will be circulated at the appropriate time.

Topical Outline

I. Moral and Conceptual Foundations
   A. Ethical Theory in Biomedical Context
   B. Criteria of An Adequate Ethical Theory

II. Professional-Patient Relationships
   A. Models of Therapeutic Relationships: Physician-Patient and Nurse-Patient
   B. Patient's Rights and Responsibilities: Autonomy, Informed Consent and Truth-Telling
   C. Professional Prerogatives and Responsibilities: Paternalism, Conflicting Responsibilities

III. Life and Death Issues
   A. Genetics
   B. Abortion
   C. Euthanasia and The Prolongation of Life
      2. Application: Involuntary and Voluntary Euthanasia
      3. Prolongation of Life
   D. The Definition and Determination of Death
IV. Experimentation, Behavior Control and Psychosurgery

A. Experimentation With Human Subjects
B. Behavior Control and Psychosurgery

V. Justice and Social Policy

READINGS:

I. Moral and Conceptual Foundations

Hunt and Arras, "Ethical Theory in the Medical Context," in Ethical Issues in Modern Medicine, 3rd edition, pages 1-34.

"Ethical Problems in Medicine" (mimeo.), Howie.

Beauchamp and Childress, Principles of Biomedical Ethics, chapters 1 and 2 (pages 3-66 give a helpful contrast between "utilitarian" and "deontological" ethics.) (Pages 14-17 contain an important discussion of the tests of an ethical theory.)

II. Professional-Patient Relationships


Taken in an inclusive sense this topical category would include most of the entire field of medical ethics. Some of the more obvious, although none-the-less difficult, issues are truth-telling, informed consent, confidentiality, voluntariness, proxy consent, paternalistic action, and self-determination. Two areas of recent concern are doctor's prerogatives and responsibilities and "patient's rights." For the latter concern see George J. Annas, The Rights of Hospital Patients (Avon Paperback, 1975).

III. Life and Death Issues

Genetics:

Ethical Issues in Modern Medicine, Part IV, pages 339-415.

Sound-Slide Set: Case Study 3 of "The Ethical Challenge. .." Three days before they are to be married Karen Stein and Joe Mayerson learn that they are both carriers for the genetic disease, Tay Sachs. This disease is always fatal for newborns within the first 3 years. What should they do? What should society do? Why?
Abortion, Prenatal Diagnosis, Maternal-Fetal Conflicts:

**Ethical Issues in Modern Medicine**, Part III, pages 255-338.
(A variety of different legal and moral views including those of John Noonan and Judith Thomson are explained.)

Euthanasia and The Prolongation of Life

**Ethical Issues in Modern Medicine**, pps. 241-250, (conceptual issues),

**Ethical Issues in Modern Medicine**, pps. 157-240 (refusing treatment, proxy consent, euthanasia).

Slide-Sound Set: Case Study 4: "When to Die." Emma Dougherty, 85 years old, has been senile for years and is now paralyzed and unable to speak. A heart specialist needs the consent of the family to install a pacemaker. Without the pacemaker she will die. What ought her relatives to do?

Allocation of Scarce Medical Resources and Organ Transplantation

**Ethical Issues in Modern Medicine**, pps 539-567. (Rescher, Annas, Caplan and others).

Sound-Slide Set: Case Study 1: "Scarce Medical Resources." Al Markey (17 years old) has lost the use of both of his kidneys. His life now depends on the hemodialysis he receives 3 times every week at the renal unit of his local hospital. Al is one of 8,000 people who each year need kidney transplants. There are more people who need the transplants than there are donated organs. Who will decide who gets the available transplants? How (on what basis) will the decision be made?

Population Growth and Control


Sound-slide presentation: "The Science and Ethics of Population Control: An Overburdened Earth." Human population growth is considered from the personal and global perspectives. How many children will you want and why? Ought one to consider family planning in relation to resources available and societal problems? From a global perspective how have medical advances accelerated population growth? Ought we to consider new patterns of living, new ways of using space, new kinds of housing, new energy sources, new patterns of diet? Do the developing countries have an obligation to promote effective
family planning programs? Do the developed countries have an obligation to the developing countries?

Death and Dying


IV. Experimentation, Behavior Control and Psychotherapy

Experimentation with Human Subjects:

Ethical Issues in Modern Medicine, pages 417-483.

Suggested readings: Tom L. Beuachmap and LeRoy Walters, Contemporary Issues in Bioethics, Chapter 9 ("General Issues in Experimentation,")) and Chapter 10 ("Experimentation With Specific Subject Groups-- Children, Fetuses, Prisoners"), pps. 399-501.

Behavior Control and Psychosurgery

Brief mimeo. material will be distributed and discussed.

Sound-slide Presentation: Behavior Control: The Case of Celia Faulkner. Celia Faulkner (a young woman) functions normally most of the time. However, two or three times a year she is seized by uncontrollable rages during which she has damaged property, attacked a policeman, and attempted to kill her young son. A judge has decided that she must be confined to a mental hospital for life. Her family has learned of an operation called stereotactic surgery that has been successful in some cases like Celia's. It usually succeeds in blocking off the rage reaction, but has unpredictable side effects. The most common of these side effects is a blunting of the personality. Celia's husband is opposed to the operation, preferring to wait for a better, less risky technique, while Celia's father favors the surgery since it will at least bring Celia home to her husband and child and keep her out of an institution. What would you decide if you were Celia? Her father? Her husband? The judge? On ethical grounds, why would you make the decision you make? Underlying this specific case is the general question: How can society insure that behavior-control techniques are used responsibly?

V. Justice and Social Policy
The Biomedical Revolution and Ethics
Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 11 A.M., Faner Hall 1230 Howie

SCHEDULE

Jan. 19, 21, *24, *26, 28    ETHICAL THEORIES IN BIOMEDICAL CONTEXT

Jan. 24                     "Tough Cases for Medical Ethicists" Morris Lib., 1st Floor, Room 103 I.

Jan. 26                     Introduction to Library Resources (relevant journals in bioethics), Prof. Angela Rubin, 2nd Floor, Morris Library.

Jan. 31, Feb. 2, 4, 7      LIFE AND DEATH ISSUES GENETICS

Feb. 9, 11, 14, *16, *18,  ABORTION

Feb. 16                     Moyers interviews Dr. Leon Kass. Videoc., Morris Library, Room 103 I.

Feb. 18                     Moyers interview (completed), Morris Lib., 103 I.


Feb. 21                     "No Heroic Measures" Color film. Morris, 103 I.

Feb. 23                     "Born Dying." Color Film. Morris Library, 103 I.

Feb. 25                     "Active Euthanasia." 103 I.

Feb. 28                     "Assisted Suicides" 103 I.

March *2, 4, *7, 9, 11     ALLOCATION OF SCARCE MEDICAL RESOURCES

Mar. 2                      Moyers' interview of Dr. Gaylin; and "Someone I Once Knew" (Alzheimer's Disease) 103 I.

Mar. 7                      Allocating Scarce Life-Saving Therapy 103 I.

March 11                    Midterm Test

March 12-20, 1994           Spring Break

March 21                    POPULATION GROWTH AND CONTROL
March 23 *25, *28, *30 | DEATH AND DYING

March 23 | "The Determination of Death" 103 I.
March 25 | "John Baker's Last Race" 103 I.
March 28 | "AIDS: A Family Experience" 103 I.
March 30 | "The DNR Dilemma: 2 Parts" 103 I.

April 1, 4, 6, 8 | EXPERIMENTATION AND BEHAVIOR CONTROL
Experimentation With Human Subjects

April 11, 13, 15, 18, *20 | Behavior Control and Psychosurgery
April 20 | "Accountability and the Right to Competent Care"
103 I.

April 22, 25, 27, 29 | JUSTICE AND SOCIAL POLICY

May 2, 4, 6

Note: The class will normally meet in Faner Hall 1230. But, for special audiovisual programs we will be meeting in Morris Library Room 103 I (1st Floor). (*) See Special Programs Schedule.

A comprehensive final examination will be given on the designated day during the examination period (May 9-13, 1994).

UHON 351 A/B/C THE BIOMEDICAL REVOLUTION AND ETHICS | John Howie
Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 11 A.M. Spring, 1994
Morris Library (First Floor), Room 103 I.

SCHEDULE OF SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Jan. 24 | "Tough Cases for Medical Ethicists" 3/4" JH
Dick Cavett questions Dr. Joseph Fletcher and Dr. James Childress about troublesome cases.

Jan. 26 | "Introduction to Library Resources," by Prof.
Angela Rubin, Morris Library, 2nd Floor.

Feb. 16 | Bill Moyers interviews scientist- bioethicist
Dr. Leon Kass, Part I, 1/2" Videocassette JH

Feb. 18 | Part II, Moyers' interview (continued) JH

Feb. 21 | "No Heroic Measures" (Color Film #6-1940, 23)
Issues in Gerontology: Who has the preroga-
tive of making a substitute judgment for an elderly incompetent patient? Are food and
hydration extraordinary treatment when mechanically delivered? How does one resolve the ethical quandry of hospital staff members who must comply with a no treatment order?

Feb. 23

"Born Dying" (Color Film # 4-2690, 20)

Agony of a couple who are parents of a dying baby and the plight of a neonatal nurse who gives direct care until a treatment decision is made. Perspectives of the pediatrician, grand parents, hospital administrator, mother of a handicapped child, right-to-life representative, and an advocate of the handicapped are presented.

Feb. 25

"Active Euthanasia" (1/2" videoc., JH)

Dr. Marvin Kohl (philosopher), Karen Metzler (health care consultant), and Dr. John Monagle (hospital administrator), discuss when (if at all) active euthanasia is morally right.

Feb. 28

"Assisted Suicides" 28 mins. (Videocas., JH)

Ethical problems posed by Dr. Jack Kevorkian's recent actions. Is it morally right for a person to assist an individual in committing suicide?

March 2

Bill Moyers interviews Dr. Willard Gaylin (psychiatrist-bioethicist). (1/2" VDC, JH, 20).

"Someone I Once Knew" (1/2" VHS, 26-2068), 30, Coronet/MTI, 1982. Documentary on Alzheimer's Disease, a progressive mental deterioration that will affect ONE in six Americans who live to the age of 65. It depicts painful changes that victims and families must endure.

March 7

"Problems of Allocating Scarce Life-saving Therapy" (1/2" Vc. JH). Dr. Richard Wasserstrom (a lawyer-philosopher) explains some issues and problems of making a fair distribution.

March 23

"The Determination of Death." (1/2" Vdc., JH)

Dr. Wasserstrom unfolds the legal, social and moral issues.

March 28  "AIDS: A Family Experience." (1/2" 33, (#261984). In this true account family members speak openly and candidly of their reactions upon learning that their Don has AIDS.

March 30  "The DNR Dilemma: Parts I and II." (1/2" VHS, 43). A variety of perspectives associated with the medical order: Do Not Resuscitate. (I, # 242748; II, # 261985).

April 22  "Accountability and the Right to Competent Care." (Vc., 1/2"JH). Dr. Robert Veatch explains some problems with professional review committees.