

For the lecture series, the Martin Institute picked 6 issues that its members believed are the most important for study at this time: (1) tomorrow's technologies, (2) governance of technological change, (3) tomorrow's planet, (4) technology and inequality, (5) tomorrow's civilization, and (6) tomorrow's people. The Princeton University Press then invited the members of the institute to propose a series of lectures on a topic with which the members of the institute were particularly concerned. They quickly picked the sixth theme, "tomorrow's people." All members of the Martin Institute felt that it was imperative to explore all aspects of radical changes in health technology and the potential for radical extension of life and enhancement of human capacities. There was unanimous agreement among the institute's members on the person to be invited to give the lectures on 3 successive evenings in March 2006, when the first James Martin Institute World Forum on Science and Civilization was meeting simultaneously in Oxford to also explore "tomorrow's people." Philosopher John Harris was invited to present these lectures. Harris, a fine academic, is the Lord David Alliance Professor of Bioethics in the University of Manchester, England. He also is a popular and well-liked radio and television commentator on public policies. He promptly accepted the tendered invitation, for (as he readily confessed) he was quite excited about the subjects to be explored. Harris is a brilliant and engaging philosopher, whose basic principle underlying all his bioethical opinions is a combination of libertarianism and utilitarianism.

"Enhancement" of a living organism is understood by most bioethicists as "genetic engineering," a process of manipulating a certain specific gene or genes in the 1-cell stage of a multicellular organism by various means so that an unwanted anatomical or physiological characteristic is eliminated from—or a wanted anatomical or physiological change is produced within—the mature organism. Most bioethicists feel that only the genes of somatic cells should be manipulated. They likewise feel strongly that the genes of germ cells should never be manipulated, because any changes brought about will be transmitted to all the progeny of those cells ad infinitum. Thus, if the manipulation produced deleterious anatomical or physiological effects, these "evils" would be introduced into the world and occur repeatedly, ie, "forever," or at least until the process of replication of these organisms stopped for some reason or another.

At present, Harris has a much wider understanding of enhancement than most bioethicists. His thesis in this book is that enhancements are not only permissible but that in some cases there is a positive moral imperative to bring about such changes. This thesis derives from his understanding, contingent on philosophies espoused by Plato, Locke, Rousseau, Bentham, and Russell, "that the responsibility of all moral agents is to make this world a better place" (p 3). Harris suggests that to make the world a better place requires not only changes in the world but also changes in humanity. As a consequence, he calls attention to the idea that there

must be a new phase in human evolution so that darwinian evolution is replaced by a deliberately chosen process of selection—namely, enhancement.

The first chapters discuss the possible techniques to use for human enhancement as well as present a new understanding of health and disease. In chapter 5, Harris discusses extension of human life by an enhancement process so that individuals created by such a process would for all practical purposes really be immortal. He then discusses in depth human disability in relation to enhancement and correctly raises the questions of fairness to disabled individuals engendered by the enhancement process. He proceeds to examine in depth the objections to human enhancement made by 3 of the world's foremost deontologists—Leon Kass, Michael Sandel, and Jürgen Habermas.

Harris ends the book with a look at "elective" enhancements, the research required to develop new kinds of enhancement, the moral status of human life, and the role of science research in the world as it is now known. Despite the enticing prose and the wit with which Harris writes, I believe that most bioethicists except those who are utilitarians will think his suggestions questionable.

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THE ETHICS OF BIOETHICS: MAPPING THE MORAL LANDSCAPE

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WITHOUT QUESTION, *THE ETHICS OF BIOETHICS* IS A MUST-READ for all persons involved with bioethics. This well-written, well-organized paperback seeks to analyze the many facets of ethics in the field of bioethics. Several authors discuss the issue of a code of ethics for bioethics, provide the reader with insight and background on the debate, and explain the rationale that has led to a lack of any such code. Furthermore, authors discuss many important considerations for those who "practice bioethics" or who lead institutions that employ bioethicists. Topics range from the obligations of hospital-based clinical ethics consultants and those of research ethics consultants employed by private industry to issues of mentorship and obligations to society. The chapters provide a clear background to help the reader understand the current status of the field, wherein the authors criticize bioethicists, institutions, and organizations when appropriate.

Perhaps what makes this volume so important and unusual is the evenhandedness of the text. Readers are given

point-counterpoint arguments for several key concepts. Tris Engelhardt provides an eloquent argument as to why bioethics should not, and indeed cannot, adopt a uniform code of ethics, while in the following chapter Mary Faith Marshall demonstrates why developing and implementing such a code is essential. Similarly, Alta Charo provides a scathing analysis of the current rise of neoconservative ethics, while Griffin Trotter discusses his perspectives and concerns regarding various academic bioethicists. It is this back-and-forth between experts that makes *The Ethics of Bioethics* particularly fascinating and informative.

To Eckenwiler and Cohn's credit, they have managed to compile chapters written by preeminent leaders in the field. Often, when one amasses such an esteemed assembly of experts, the outcome leaves one feeling that many have based their contribution on their prestige rather than their contribution to the text. I commend the editors and the authors of all chapters because they clearly have delved deeply into their own experiences and thoughts and have produced chapters rich in content and analysis. Indeed, I found

that I was simply unable to put this book down. No other work has so centrally confronted the issues of ethics in the field of bioethics, and clearly the field is in need of such a critical assessment. Readers are unlikely to find many "here is what you should do" answers; rather, like most good clinical ethics consultations, one will walk away from the experience with greater insight, recommendations on how one might proceed, and likely more questions than when one began. *The Ethics of Bioethics* should be at the top of the reading list for everyone currently training in bioethics, involved with clinical and/or research ethics consultation, pursuing an academic career in bioethics, or running institutions employing bioethicists, as well as others interested in this growing and fascinating field.

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