

BRAINSTORM

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Brainstorm Newsletter

An Interdisciplinary and Bilingual Newsletter about Advances in Health Ethics Theory and Practice - November 2019

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Editorial Team

- Ariane Quintal
- Eric Racine



Profile of the Month

John R. Shook, Ph.D.

Dr. Shook teaches philosophy at Bowie State University in Maryland, and Georgetown University in Washington DC. He also teaches research ethics and science education for the University at Buffalo's online Science and the Public EdM program. He has been a visiting fellow at the Institute for Philosophy and Public Policy at George Mason University in Virginia, and the Center for Neurotechnology Studies of the Potomac Institute for Public Policy in Virginia. At Georgetown University, he works with James Giordano of the Pellegrino Center for Clinical Bioethics. Shook's research encompasses philosophy of science, pragmatism, philosophical psychology, neurophilosophy, social neuroscience, moral psychology, neuroethics, and science-religion dialogue. He co-edited *Neuroscience, Neurophilosophy, and Pragmatism* (2014), and *American Philosophy and the Brain: Pragmatist Neurophilosophy*,



Old and New (2014). His articles have appeared in *Cortex*, *Neuroethics*, *AJOB-Neuroscience*, *Cambridge Quarterly of Health Care Ethics*, *Philosophy*, *Ethics*, and *Humanities in Medicine*, and *Journal of Cognition and Neuroethics*.

Statement on pragmatism and bioethics

Pragmatism is easily confused with relativism, from a stance upholding absolutes. Independent from concrete contexts or changing times, some special values appear immune from compromise. If there are such absolutes, situations needing principled guidance may be resolved: only one course of action is acceptable, or at least some options are ruled out. However, absolutes can only apply so straightforwardly to unambiguous situations: cases having a unique and simple description of factors. Such cases are rare in the real world of complex factors to unfamiliar situations.

In a medical setting, for example, never deceiving patients and always benefitting patients sound like absolutes upon which one may take a principled stand. The first stance forbids misleading a patient in order to not deceive them, while the second allows misleading patients in order to benefit them. Intelligence can reconcile this contradiction between moral priorities, yet absolutism is abandoned in the process, an event unsurprising to pragmatism. For example, what specifically counts as “a deception” or “a benefit” can be re-described in a particular case. Alternatively, “never deceiving” can be ranked as a higher moral priority over “always benefitting” (or the reverse). However, when some sort of reconciliation is envisioned, absolutes get compromised. One or another “absolute” proves to not be so absolute: it does not uniquely describe a situation’s morally relevant factors, nor can it always outrank every other applicable “absolute”. No absolute proves to be able to do so, except in the narrow mind of a fanatic.

Intelligence must take responsibility for determining what values are wisely applicable in arenas of human activity, discriminating genuinely moral factors from case to case, and deciding which principle takes precedence depending on the type of case. Taking a principled stand upon one moral absolute across all real-world cases is unintelligent and irresponsible – in short, unethical. Empirical ethics – observant attention to multi-factorial cases where moral perspectives are consulted and consequences to decisions are learning opportunities – is not relativism, but intelligence in action. It is pragmatism, not absolutism, that explains what ethical intelligence may and must practically do in order to reasonably apply important values to complex and novel situations. The arena of medical technoscience, where morally confusing cases emerge with accelerating rapidity, is just one arena where pragmatism is necessary, and already at work.

Selected publications

Shook, J. R. (2018). Is Moral Enhancement a Right, or a Threat to Civil Rights? In M. Hauskeller and L. Coyne (Eds.), *Moral Enhancement: Critical Perspectives* (pp. 209-231). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Shook, J. R. (2016). My Brain Made Me Moral: Moral Performance Enhancement for Realists. *Neuroethics*, 9(3), 199-211.

Shook, J. R., & Giordano, J. (2016). Neuroethics beyond normal: Performance enablement

and self-transformative technologies. *Cambridge Quarterly of Healthcare Ethics*, 25(1), 121-140.

Academia.edu profile

<https://buffalo.academia.edu/JohnShook>

Events and Announcements

The Montreal Health Ethics Conference Series

This bilingual monthly conference/webinar series aims to bring people together to think about and discuss issues in health ethics. Our aim is to promote health ethics through conferences that foster dialogue between groups of participants with different perspectives (e.g., academics, clinicians, patients, community members). These seminars appeal to audiences both within and outside of academia and healthcare settings with the goal of increasing mutual awareness about health ethics and promote interdisciplinary and community reflections on various cross-cutting health ethics topics.

The theme of our series for the year 2019-2020 is: ***The role of dialogue in care and in the healthcare system***. How can our health system and health professionals be more attentive to patients? Should they be and why? Which changes are needed in healthcare and in the health system? What are the challenges of dialogue and deliberation for patients or between team members, or even within a single institution or network of care? Our guests will address these questions (amongst others) while sharing their vision regarding the issues surrounding ethical deliberation in health and taking particular interest in decision-making processes, relationships between patients and health professionals, caring for marginalized populations, and more.

Notre prochaine conférence (ou webinaire):

**14
NOV.**

**12^H
P.M.**

Auditorium Jacques-Genest
Institut de recherches cliniques de Montréal
110, avenue des Pins Ouest

SÉRIE DE CONFÉRENCES DE MONTRÉAL
EN ÉTHIQUE DE LA SANTÉ

2019-2020

MONTREAL HEALTH ETHICS
CONFERENCE SERIES

**Quelle place pour le dialogue dans les soins
et le système de santé?**

**Is there a place for dialogue in healthcare and health
systems?**

Le dialogue bioéthique : humaniser les soins de santé dans le contexte du progrès technoscientifique, dont l'intelligence artificielle



**Une conférence d'Hubert Doucet,
professeur honoraire de bioéthique à l'Institut
d'études religieuses de l'Université de
Montréal, consultant en éthique clinique du
CHUM et membre du Comité national d'éthique
sur le vieillissement ainsi que de l'Observatoire
Vieillesse et Société.**

*A lecture by Hubert Doucet, visiting Professor of Bioethics
at l'Institut d'études religieuses de l'Université de Montréal,
consultant in clinical ethics at the CHUM and member of
the National Committee on Ethics on Aging and of the
Observatoire Vieillesse et Société.*

La conférence sera aussi diffusée en direct sur notre page YouTube: [Pragmatic Health Ethics](#).

Voici l'horaire complet des conférences de l'année 2019-2020:

14 NOVEMBRE 2019 – NOVEMBER 14, 2019

HUBERT DOUCET

Le dialogue bioéthique : humaniser les soins de santé dans le contexte du progrès technoscientifique dont l'intelligence artificielle.

13 FÉVRIER 2020 – FEBRUARY 13, 2020

CAROLINE TAIT

Ethical considerations of inadequate access to health services for Canadian Indigenous populations. How can dialogue play a determining role?

26 MARS 2020 – MARCH 26, 2020

JOCELYNE SAINT-ARNAUD

Le dialogue, l'advocacy et la détresse morale des soignants

9 AVRIL 2020 – APRIL 9, 2020

**JEAN ROCHON
MICHEL CLAIR**

Panel de discussion où deux anciens ministres québécois s'entreprendront sur les valeurs au cœur de notre système de santé et sur l'importance du dialogue public pour l'avenir de notre système de santé au Québec.

1ER JUIN 2020 – JUNE 1ST, 2020*

ALBERT CHRISTIAAN MOLEWIJK

Reflections on ethical deliberation and the dialogical approach at the heart of healthcare.

*Exceptionnellement à 11 h 30 / Exceptionally at 11:30 A.M.

[Call for Applications: Sherwin B. Nuland Summer Institute in Bioethics](#)

Yale Interdisciplinary Center for Bioethics, Yale University

New Haven, CT, United States

The Summer Institute offers a 7-week intensive program from June 8 - July 25, 2019 (with limited seats for the 4 week option). Now in its 15th year, and intended for undergrads through professionals, the Summer Institute is known for its engaging and approachable faculty, enthusiastic alumni network, & opportunities to network with faculty and participants from all over the globe. Choose from over twenty small, intensive seminars (on topics including neuroethics, law, moral reasoning, technology, social justice, global health, end-of-life care, and animal ethics), bioethics movie nights, and selected events in Spanish or French for native speakers. Visit the esteemed Hastings Center & present a poster at the Yale School of Medicine. This program may serve as the launching ground to a rewarding career in bioethics: recent alumni of the Summer Institute have presented their

work at bioethics and philosophy conferences at Oxford, the American Society of Bioethics, UNESCO, and many other locations, and have published in top medical and bioethics journals. More information about the application process can be found [here](#).

Deadline for early bird rate: November 15, 2019

Deadline for remaining applications: December 15, 2019, although rolling admissions will continue through the spring as space allows.

[Appel de candidatures: Bourse de recherche postdoctorale ou d'études supérieures](#)

**Unité de recherche en éthique pragmatique de la santé,
Institut de recherches cliniques de Montréal
Montréal, QC, Canada**

L'Unité de recherche en éthique pragmatique de la santé est le seul groupe de recherche au monde qui tente explicitement de puiser dans le pragmatisme philosophique pour développer les aspects théoriques, méthodologiques et pratiques d'une éthique de la santé. L'Unité est présentement à la recherche d'un(e) stagiaire postdoctoral(e) ou d'étudiants aux cycles supérieurs souhaitant contribuer au développement d'une éthique pragmatique. L'étudiant ou les étudiants prendront part au développement de nouvelles théories et méthodologies au cœur de notre programme de recherche ou travaillera sur l'un des nombreux projets plus appliqués mobilisant des approches pragmatiques. Ce poste est d'une durée de 12 mois avec possibilité de renouvellement. Les candidats ou candidates ayant une expertise autre que celle de la bioéthique, mais tout de même connexe (par ex. : sciences de l'implémentation, recherche-action, psychologie, travail social, philosophie) sont aussi invités à soumettre leur candidature. Pour plus d'informations, cliquez [ici](#).

Date limite: Le poste demeure ouvert jusqu'à ce qu'il soit comblé.

Date de début du poste: Dès janvier 2020.

[Appel de candidatures: Bourse de recherche postdoctorale ou d'études supérieures](#)

**Unité de recherche en éthique pragmatique de la santé,
Institut de recherches cliniques de Montréal
Montréal, QC, Canada**

L'Unité de recherche en éthique pragmatique de la santé souhaite recruter un stagiaire postdoctoral ou un étudiant aux cycles supérieurs souhaitant collaborer au projet BETTER (BEhaviors, Therapies, TEchnologies, and hypoglycemic Risks), subventionné par les Instituts de recherche en santé du Canada et la Fondation FRDJ. L'étudiant sélectionné rejoindra une équipe interdisciplinaire pour développer un programme de recherche orienté vers les dimensions éthiques de la recherche sur le diabète de type 1, notamment sur l'hypoglycémie, les nouvelles thérapies et technologies et les principales implications psychosociales. Ce stage est d'une durée de douze mois avec une possibilité de renouvellement. Les candidats ayant une expertise autre que celle de la bioéthique (ex. : sciences de l'implémentation ou recherche-action) sont invités à soumettre leur

candidature. Pour plus d'informations, cliquez [ici](#).

Date limite: Le poste demeure ouvert jusqu'à ce qu'il soit comblé.

Date de début du poste: Dès janvier 2020.

[Call for Applications: Rice Family Postdoctoral Fellowship in Bioethics and the Humanities](#)

The Hastings Center
Garrison, NY, United States

The Hastings Center seeks applications for a 2-year, full-time fellowship position, within the Center's new Bioethics and the Humanities Initiative. Approximately half of the Rice Family Fellow's time will be devoted to their own scholarship, and the other half to advancing the work of The Hastings Center. Optimally, those two lines of work will be intimately related and mutually reinforcing. The Rice Family Fellow will work closely with Erik Parens, who is Director of the Bioethics and the Humanities Initiative. The successful candidate will have a strong background in the humanities and a keen interest in bioethics and benefit from a salary of \$ 55,000, plus health insurance, generous vacation, sick leave and holiday schedules. Candidates must already have the right to work in the U.S. (e.g. they must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents). Applications for the fellowship can be done [through this website](#). Questions sent to fellowship@thehastingscenter.org will be answered promptly.

Deadline: December 31, 2019. Applications will be reviewed as they are received.

Start date: September 2020

[Call for Applications: Faculty Position in the Division of Ethics, Columbia University](#)

**Division of Ethics, Department of Medical Humanities and Ethics
Vagelos College of Physicians & Surgeons, Columbia University
New York, NY, United States**

The Division of Ethics within the Department of Medical Humanities and Ethics invites applications for a tenure track faculty position to begin in the fall of 2020. The Division seeks candidates who will contribute to its expanding research program in bioethics and teaching across the health sciences. Candidates should have a strong record of scholarship and funded research, a passion for teaching and mentoring and demonstrated skills in collaborating across disciplines. We welcome applications from scholars trained in the social sciences, law, humanities and other related disciplines. While areas of specialization and methodologies are open, we encourage applicants with scholarly interests in artificial intelligence, neuroscience, clinical translational medicine, and/or health disparities to apply. To apply, please submit a cover letter explaining your interest, a statement of your research and teaching experience, CV, writing sample (not more than 25 pages) and a list of three references through [this website](#).

Deadline: Review of applications will begin December 1, 2019 and will continue until the

position is filled.

[Call for Applications: Bioethics and Health Policy Faculty Positions, John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and Berman Institute of Bioethics](#)

**Department of Health Policy and Management
Baltimore, Maryland, USA**

The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and the Johns Hopkins Berman Institute of Bioethics invite applications for 1 to 2 full-time positions with a focus on bioethics and health policy. These are 12 month faculty positions with tenure or on the tenure track with an appointment in the Department of Health Policy and Management and a core faculty affiliation in the JHU Berman Institute of Bioethics. We encourage faculty at all career stages to apply including senior, mid-level and junior faculty members.

Applicants should have a PhD, JD, MD or equivalent graduate degree with the potential for or a demonstrated record of distinguished scholarship at the intersection of bioethics and health policy. An interest in graduate-level mentoring and teaching in foundational and applied bioethics in a health policy context is required. Successful applicants will have a role in advising doctoral students in the bioethics concentration of the health policy PhD program. Ideal candidates will have a track record of peer-reviewed publication and demonstrated capabilities and/or potential in developing an externally-funded research program. Applicants for the position should submit a cover letter and current CV [through this link](#). Please direct all questions about this search to Ms. Michelle Ward at 410-955-3625 or mward39@jhu.edu.

Deadline: December 1, 2019. The position(s) will remain open until the appropriate candidates are identified.

**[Call for Applications: Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies, Master of Science Program in Bioethics and Medical Humanities](#)
**Program in Medical Ethics and Human Values, Tulane University School of Medicine
New Orleans, LA, United States****

The Program in Medical Ethics and Human Values at the Tulane University School of Medicine is seeking a Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), at the rank of Associate Professor, for its Master of Science in Bioethics and Medical Humanities program. This position will begin in Spring 2020. The DGS will serve as the administrative supervisor and coordinator of graduate studies within the MS program, overseeing all components of graduate education and promoting academic quality and integrity. The DGS will teach in the MS and is expected to have a past body of work in either normative or empirical bioethics or in medical humanities. Past and current funding on NIH (or similar)-funded projects preferred. The DGS will be responsible for quality improvement in the MS program, graduate student mentorship and post-graduate placement, and collaboration with program faculty. The DGS will report to the Executive Director of the MS Degree, and Director of the Program in Medical Ethics and Human Values, Professor David J. Doukas, with queries sent to david.doukas@tulane.edu. Applications can be done through [this website](#).

Deadline: Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

[Call for Abstracts: The Pediatric Academic Societies 2020 Meeting](#)

Philadelphia, PA, United States

The Call for Original Science Abstracts is now open for the PAS 2020 Meeting in Philadelphia. The meeting will be taking place from April 29 to May 6, 2020. With its combination of cutting-edge original research, world-renowned experts in basic and clinical sciences, and network of cross-disciplinary colleagues, the PAS Meeting is the premier North American scholarly child health meeting. For abstract submission instructions, click [here](#). Abstracts can be submitted through [this website](#).

Deadline for abstract submission: January 6, 2020.

Literature

Interdisciplinary Foundations of Health Ethics

[Progress bias versus status quo bias in the ethics of emerging science and technology](#)

Hofmann B. *Bioethics*. 2019 Oct. [Epub ahead of print]

[Helping clinicians and patients navigate electronic patient portals: ethical and legal principles](#)

Mehta S, Jamieson T, Ackery AD. *CMAJ*. 2019 Oct;191(40):E1100-E1104.

[Multibiologism: An anthropological and bioethical framework for moving beyond medicalization](#)

Wolf-Meyer M. *Bioethics*. 2019 Oct;00:1-7.

[Two ethical concerns about the use of persuasive technology for vulnerable people](#)

Jacobs N. *Bioethics*. 2019 Oct. [Epub ahead of print]

[Daniel Callahan and the vocation of bioethics](#)

Jennings B. *Hastings Cent Rep*. 2019 Sep;49(5):13-14.

Methodologies and Practices in Health Ethics

[Instrumentalist analyses of the functions of ethics concept-principles: a proposal for synergetic empirical and conceptual enrichment](#)

Racine E, Cascio MA, Montreuil M, Bogossian A. *Theor Med Bioeth*. 2019 Oct. [Epub ahead of print]

[Making sense with numbers. Unravelling ethico-psychological subjects in practices of self-quantification](#)

Pols J, Willems D, Aanestad M. *Sociol Health Illn*. 2019 Oct;41 Suppl 1:98-115.

[Democratic Governance of Human Germline Genome Editing](#)

Jasanoff S, Hurlbut JB, Saha K. *CRISPR J*. 2019 Oct;2(5):266-271.

[Comprehensive Quality Assessment in Clinical Ethics](#)

Cunningham TV, Chatburn A, Coleman C, DeRenzo EG, Furfari K, Frye J, Glover AC, Kenney M, Nortjé N, Malek J, Repenshek M, Sheppard F, Crites JS. *J Clin Ethics*. 2019 Fall;30(3):284-296.

[Pediatric Ethics Consultation: Practical Considerations for the Clinical Ethics Consultant](#)

Buchanan CA, Bester JC, Bruno B, Delany C, Kennedy KO, Koogler T, Sederstrom NO, Moore JA, Weise KL. *J Clin Ethics*. 2019 Fall;30(3):270-283.

News and Social Media

[Research Involving Participants with Cognitive Disability and Differences](#)

Cascio A, Racine E. *The Neuroethics Blog*. October 22, 2019.

[What Is Death, Exactly?](#)

Montoya R. *Scientific American*. October 18, 2019.

[The Need for Ethical Expertise in Animal Research Assessment](#)

Vardigans C. *Impact Ethics*. October 16, 2019.

[Can you be an ethical biohacker?](#)

Paunescu D. *Vox*. October 15, 2019.

[China Needs Stronger Ethical Safeguards in Biomedicine](#)

Editorial team. *Scientific American*. October 1, 2019.

[La prise de décision partagée: une approche gagnante \(capsule vidéo éducative\)](#)

Boutin C, Freitas A, Nadeau CL, Cartier C, Guimond C, Labrecque M, Leblanc A, Lewis K, Quintal A, Latulippe R. *Institut national d'excellence en santé et services sociaux*. September 27, 2019.

Other resources

For more resources on pragmatic health ethics theory and practice, visit our website at <http://www.pragmatichealthethics.ca>.



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