

Professional Ethics Report



ADVANCING SCIENCE, SERVING SOCIETY

Publication of the American Association for the
Advancement of Science (AAAS),
Scientific Responsibility, Human Rights & Law Program,
in collaboration with the AAAS Committee on Scientific
Freedom & Responsibility

VOLUME XXIV

NUMBER 2

SPRING 2011

MAKING PUBLIC COMMUNICATION PART OF RESEARCH RESPONSIBILITY: WHAT SCIENTISTS CAN AND SHOULD DO

By Denise Graveline

Denise Graveline is a communications consultant in Washington, DC. She has served as communications director for AAAS and the American Chemical Society, and as the Deputy Associate Administrator for Communications, Education and Public Affairs at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. She can be reached at info@dontgetcaught.biz

From my perspective as a communicator working within scientific organizations and now as a consultant and trainer, scientists sometimes view public communication not as part of their routine research responsibilities, but more as a choice between the devil and the deep blue sea. Consider these two encounters in which scientists communicated through journalists to public audiences about research findings:

- A scientist was being interviewed by host Ira Flatow on National Public Radio's *Talk of the Nation: Science Friday* program. Flatow asked him "about why one alternative energy source is better than another, and he launched back into the history of civilization and how cavemen used fire. When we got to the discovery of oil in Pennsylvania, I stopped him." (1)

- A thoracic surgery journal recently [issued a retraction for a hypertension study](#). (2) The retraction notice referenced an investigation by the authors' university, but was unclear about the nature of the problem prompting the retraction. A journalist asked for more details to clarify the reasons behind the retraction and the language in it. The journal editor responded, ["It's none of your damn business."](#) (3)

Call it the "all or nothing" approach: In one extreme, the scientist answers a question in a narrative that begins with the research question, assembles the background, shares the supporting details, then arrives at the conclusion in chronological order. (4) In the other extreme, little to no information is shared, on the grounds that a journalist (and by extension, the public audience he represents) has no need to know, right to know or ability to know. Neither approach works, for the audience or for the scientist.

That same "all or nothing" construct is sometimes applied to public audiences, when scientists assume that non-scientists must know all that a scientist knows in order to understand science, and the related assumption that non-scientists know nothing about scientific topics. The view of the public as deficient in scientific knowledge--the so-called "deficit model" in science communication studies--is seen again and again. When a scientist refers to the need to "dumb down" content for

public audience or a journalist, or chooses to withhold information rather than have to explain it, that model is in play. Even the idea that there is one monolithic "general public" that thinks and acts the same way is an all-or-nothing approach.

Yet there's a practical mid-ground between the devil of "no comment" and tossing citizens into the deep blue sea of your entire dataset without so much as a life preserver. As AAAS chief executive officer Alan Leshner has noted, "the problem is not merely a lack of scientific comprehension. In some cases, the public generally does understand scientific content in a fundamental way but still doesn't like it... We must have a genuine dialogue with our fellow citizens about how we can approach their concerns and what specific scientific findings mean." (5)

Such a dialogue requires an understanding—and use—of the communication style that non-scientists employ, one that focuses on results first, then looks for persuasive supporting facts, and perhaps later, all the details if more are wanted. It's the reverse of the communication path scientists traditionally take when communicating with scientists. Below is a useful depiction of these opposing modes of communication, used in the *Communicating Science: Tools for Scientists and Engineers* workshops that AAAS developed through its Center for Public Engagement with Science and Technology, and for which I serve as facilitator:

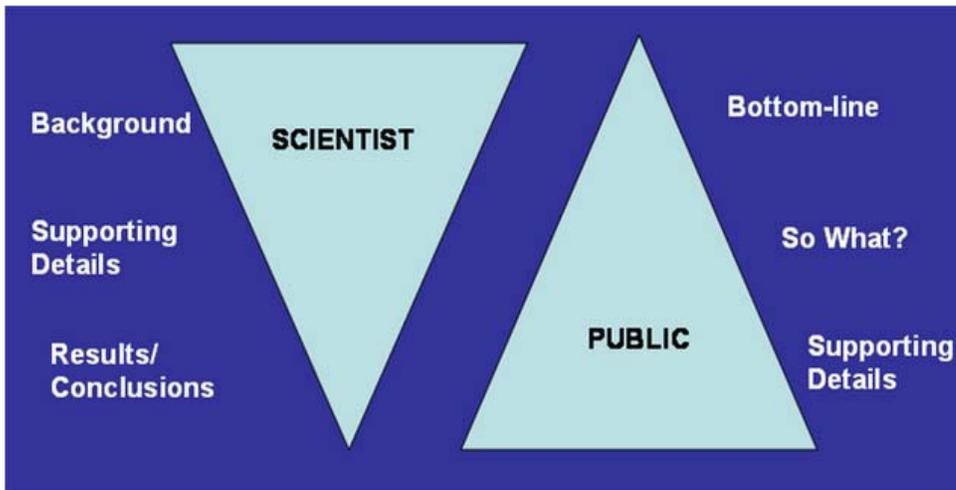


Figure courtesy of [AAAS Communicating Science workshops](#)

Where, then, does the scientist's responsibility lie in communicating science to public and media audiences? Stephen Jay Gould put it this way: "So many scientists think that once they figure it out, that's all they have to do, and writing it up is just a chore. I never saw it that way. Part of the art of any kind of total scholarship is to say it well." (6) The AAAS Communicating Science workshops begin with the premise that responsible conduct of research includes engagement and multidirectional communication with

public audiences, from citizens and journalists to policymakers and skeptics. Some 1,471 scientists have been trained in the workshops to date at scientific society meetings and on campuses around the U.S., building communication skills that include defining public audiences and targeting information to them, as well as developing messages and delivery skills effective with public audiences. Participants also are encouraged to find and develop new ways to engage public audiences, using social media, events and other types of outreach opportunities to both listen to and converse with non-scientists.

It would be equally wrong to create another deficit model suggesting that scientists have no wish to communicate with public audiences. Scientists participating in the AAAS workshops express and demonstrate a willingness and enthusiasm for communicating with public audiences, while acknowledging frankly their need for training, practice and encouragement to do so. But many of them report challenges to incorporating public engagement into their research responsibilities on a regular basis. Here are options for doing so that are more practical and effective than a "no

comment" or giving a non-scientist the same explanation you would to a colleague:

1. **Understand the public before you seek the public's understanding:** Scientists who would otherwise be horrified at generalizations often make them when speaking about what "the general public" knows or thinks. Starting with the useful longitudinal data in the National Science Foundation's Science and Engineering Indicators is a good first step. (7) As journalist Cornelia Dean points out, "No one over thirty today learned about stem cells in high school or college--the field was too new. Similarly, antimissile defense, privatizing fisheries, and even climate change were not in the curriculum when most American adults were in high school." (8) Target your communications accordingly.

2. **Don't seek world domination or universal love:** Rather than insist—as many scientists do—that we need to make sure every citizen supports science and appreciates it, listen to what different public audiences seek, if anything, from scientists. Start a conversation from that point. Anything else is talking past your intended audience.

3. **Welcome questions:** Public audiences demonstrate a consistently high level of interest in science overall (7), and they've learned the scientist's method of asking questions and looking skeptically at new information for which they have no evidence. So have reporters. Rather than react to questions as challenges or disputes, scientists should respond to them—and encourage more of them. How else will we learn for ourselves?

4. **Explore new tools for enabling conversations and empowering public audiences:** Just as they

(Graveline continued on page 3)

Editor: Mark S. Frankel
Deputy Editor: Rebecca Carlson
Contributing Authors: Rebecca Carlson, Rebecca Friedman, Elizabeth Dervan, Brent Hagen, Meghan McCabe

The *Professional Ethics Report* is published quarterly by the Scientific Responsibility, Human Rights & Law Program in collaboration with the Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility.

American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1200 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20005 (202) 326-6217; Fax (202) 289-4950; Email: Rebecca.Carlson@srhrl.aas.org
<http://srhrl.aas.org/newsletter/per/index.shtml>

Back issues of *Professional Ethics Report* are on-line at <http://srhrl.aas.org/newsletter/per/archive.shtml>

This newsletter may be reproduced without permission as long as proper acknowledgement is given.
 ISSN: 1045-8808

Letters to the Editor: The editors welcome comments from our readers. We reserve the right to edit and abridge the letter as space permits. Please address all correspondence to the deputy editor.

(Graveline continued from page 2)

have done with citizens, blogs, Facebook, Twitter, online video and other social media options offer scientists expanded opportunities to engage with citizens in a conversational way, both by listening and by answering questions and discussing.

5. Aim for transparency: Far from being “none of your damn business,” the business of research affects citizens directly. We fund it with taxpayer dollars, authorize it through our legislative representatives, and are affected by its results, whether positive or negative. Scientists can move toward transparency by approaching citizens and journalists as shareholders in the scientific enterprise, with a right to know, a need to know and, more often than you may think, a desire to know. Whether they agree with you will vary, but that’s not a reason to hide your information.

6. Take responsibility for clarity and accuracy: Scientists often ask me whether I see the high level of inaccuracy that they see in science journalism. I don’t—but I do see lots of scientists accusing reporters of inaccuracy when, in fact, they have misspoken or spoken out of turn. Instead, researchers can follow reporter Andrew Revkin’s useful suggestion: “For the scientist’s sake, end the interview with the journalist by saying ‘Let’s review,’ just as you would with a class of graduate students...It’s helpful to the scientist and helpful to the journalist.” (9)

7. Share your process, and discuss risks as well as benefits: Citizens rely on scientists to tell them about risks, about the limits of our knowledge on a given topic, and about problems they foresee. Saying “I don’t know” or sharing difficult news might be the scientist’s most important

communication responsibility. Sharing your process helps us learn how you reach those conclusions or understand whether more research is needed.

- 8. Get training and support:** Most organizations with researchers offer some form of staffing and training to help scientists connect with public and media audiences, whether industrial, governmental or nonprofit. Asking for help from professional communicators and seeking training opportunities, perhaps through your professional society, can build skills and confidence and make you an effective communicator. Your communications colleagues also can provide useful context and advice on your public interactions.
- 9. Encourage, don’t discourage, communication with audiences beyond the lab:** From the most senior scientists to the newest postdoc, I’ve heard researchers at every level of experience describe being actively discouraged or even shunned for participating in media interviews or public talks and communications training. Here, the scientific professions do themselves the greatest disservice of all, in my view. Not every scientist will wish to engage public audiences, but those who are so inclined should not be discouraged. Remember, someday, you may be funded by the research grants they bring in or gain a favorable policy decision in your favor because of their efforts.

Notes:

1. Interview, Ira Flatow. Communicating Science: Tools for Scientists and Engineers. <http://communicatingscience.aaas.org/WorkingWithReporters/Pages/IraFlatow.aspx>
2. "Thoracic surgery journal retracts hypertension study marred by troubled data,"

A. Marcus, *Retraction Watch*, 4 January 2011. <http://retractionwatch.wordpress.com/2011/01/04/thoracic-surgery-journal-retracts-hypertension-study-marred-by-troubled-data/>

3. "Why was that paper retracted? Editor to Retraction Watch: 'It's none of your damn business'," A. Marcus, *Retraction Watch*, 5 January 2011. <http://retractionwatch.wordpress.com/2011/01/05/why-was-that-paper-retracted-editor-to-retraction-watch-its-none-of-your-damn-business/>.
4. "What's the difference when scientists present to other scientists, and to the public?" *The Eloquent Woman*, 19 July 2010. <http://eloquentwoman.blogspot.com/2010/07/whats-difference-when-scientists.html>
5. "Outreach Training Needed," A. I. Leshner, *Science*, 12 January 2007: 161. <http://www.sciencemag.org/content/315/5809/161.full?sid=b192d9a8-1af3-4e66-9cae-c55b59b262bf>
6. "Stephen Jay Gould; driven by a hunger to learn and to write what he knows, an outspoken scientist fight back from life-threatening illness." Michele Green, *People* **25** (June 2, 1986): 109-114. <http://www.people.com/people/archive/article/0,,20093775,00.html>
7. "Science and Technology: Public Attitudes and Understanding," Science and Engineering Indicators: 2010, National Science Foundation. <http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/seind10/c7/c7h.htm>
8. *Am I making myself clear? A scientist's guide to talking to the public*, Cornelia Dean. Harvard University Press, 2009: 22.
9. Interview, Andrew Revkin. Communicating Science: Tools for Scientists and Engineers. <http://communicatingscience.aaas.org/WorkingWithReporters/Pages/AndrewRevkin.aspx>

Announcing New Program at AAAS

As part of a review of science and policy activities at AAAS, two of the Association's programs are merging into a new Program on Scientific Responsibility, Human Rights and Law (SRHRL). The new Program will build on the highly successful work of the former programs on Scientific Freedom, Responsibility and Law and Science and Human Rights, both of which have produced a rich history of accomplishments since their beginnings in the 1970's.

SRHRL will continue many of the core activities of the two programs, such as those related to defending the freedom to engage in scientific inquiry, pioneering the application of science and technology to document human rights violations, promoting responsible research practices, and engaging policy makers and the larger public on the social, ethical and legal implications of advances in science and technology. We will retain many of the approaches that have served us well in the past, but will also be open to new ones.

With the formation of SRHRL comes a commitment to exploring new areas of synergy between science, ethics, law and human rights. The historical relationship among them has always existed, but the merger offers real opportunities to look at them through a more contemporary lens. To do this, we will benefit from integrating the expertise of staff and resources from the previous programs.

The new Program will benefit from the advice of two current AAAS standing committees - the Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility and the National Conference of Lawyers and Scientists, a joint committee with the American Bar Association. As always, we welcome partnerships with others in performing our work in ways that advance the mission of AAAS "to advance science, engineering, and innovation throughout the world for the benefit of all people." Please join us.

Visit the Program website at <http://srhrl.aaas.org>

Read the AAAS news release about the Program merger, <http://www.aaas.org/news/releases/2011/0609humanrights.shtml>

In the News

FDA GUIDANCE ON FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE BY CLINICAL INVESTIGATORS

In May 2011, the Food and Drug Administration, issued a draft *Guidance for Clinical Investigators, Industry, and FDA Staff: Financial Disclosure by Clinical Investigators*. This guidance is a revised version of the previous *Guidance for Industry: Financial Disclosure by Clinical Investigators* [1], and is based on recommendations by the Office of the Inspector General at the Department of Health and Human Services. Both versions are intended to clarify regulations about financial disclosure for clinical investigators and related FDA staff.

Before explaining the "Financial Disclosure by Clinical Investigators"

regulation, the guidance defines the following key terms:

- clinical investigator: any investigators or sub investigators involved in the research, as well as any spouse or dependent child of the investigators
- covered clinical study: the study of any drug or product that the FDA must approve for marketing use.

The guidance further explained the regulation stating that any person submitting a drug for marketing uses should note any financial conflicts of investigators working on the drug trials. The explanation also highlighted that the financial interests needing to be disclosed includes the following:

- Compensation to the investigator from a sponsor, in a large enough amount to affect the results of the study.

- A personal financial interest in the product, such as a patent or trademark.
- Any interest, stock, or other financial interest in the sponsor held during the time of the study, or for a year after the completion of the study. This only applies to interests with a value of above \$50,000 or whose value cannot be determined by public prices.
- Any significant payments of other sorts (SPOOS) that value more than \$25,000, made during the study or for a year after the completion of the study.

Also noted in the guidance are steps the FDA could take if the disclosures raised any issues about the reliability and integrity of the data. Some of these steps include: auditing the data, requesting further analyses of the data, requesting additional independent

(News continued on page 5)

(News continued from page 4)

studies, and refusing to use the data for agency action. The guidance includes a range of questions that might be asked regarding the regulation. The draft makes clear that it is intended to represent the FDA's "current thinking on this topic," and "should be viewed only as recommendations."

[1]<http://www.fda.gov/RegulatoryInformation/Guidances/ucm126832.htm>

The FDA is accepting comments and suggestions about this draft guidance through July 25, 2011. Details for submitting comments can be found at: <http://www.setonresourcecenter.com/register/2011/may/24/2011-12623.pdf>.

A copy of the guidance can be viewed here: <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/regulatoryinformation/guidances/ucm256525.pdf>

*RF

DEATH THREATS CAUSE RELOCATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCHERS IN AUSTRALIA

Nine faculty members working in climate change at the Australian National University have been secluded in secure locations after receiving escalating email threats of violence, sexual assault, and death. The University has removed their names and personal information from telephone and online directories as well as relocated them to protected offices in accordance with recommendations made by the Australian Federal Police.

The relocated researchers are only a sample of the many Australians working in climate change who have been the targets of recent threats. In fact, Rosyln Beeby described in an article in *The Canberra Times* on June 4 how thirty Australian policy experts, economists, and scientists have received similar emails over the last three years threatening their safety and family members.

According to *Science*, these threats come as a response to the recent political and social fixation on the issue of climate change in the nation. This past February, Prime Minister Julia Gillard ordered the government's Climate Commission to produce a report on the state of climate change after proposing a carbon tax to the nation's Parliament. On May 23, the Commission published its report, *The Critical Decade*, describing the urgent state of global warming and steps the government should take to counteract the effects of climate change. Public controversy surrounding the carbon tax intensified when environmental groups released a pro-tax commercial featuring Australian actress Cate Blanchett several days later.

The resulting public antagonism has affected scientists from universities across the country. Sophie Mirabella, a shadow science minister and a member of the Liberal Party in Parliament, has questioned the timing of these emails in light of the recent political environment. A critic of climate change, she has argued that scientists are using these emails to generate support for the carbon tax. In a media release on her website, Mirabella cited the fact that two scientists who reported receiving threatening emails received them one to five years ago.

Despite this skepticism, supporters and critics of climate change activism have condemned the emails as an insult to academic and intellectual freedom. According to *The Chronicle of Higher Education* on June 9, American scientists have expressed sympathy and concern for their Australian colleagues. Professor James W.C. White at the University of Colorado at Boulder noted how a fear of public hostility sometimes prevents scientists from entering public dialogues on issues like climate change. He explained in the article, "It doesn't stop me, because I think it's very important for climate scientists to speak out. Academic freedom is something we need to take very, very seriously and it's not freedom unless we are speaking out."

For more information, see the following articles:

Beeby, Rosyln. "Climate of fear: scientists face death threats," *The Canberra Times*, (4 June 2011): <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/news/local/news/general/climate-of-fear-scientists-face-death-threats/2185089.aspx>

Finkel, Elizabeth. "Threats Sent to Australian Climate Scientists Fuel a Debate," *Science – Science Insider* (10 June 2011): <http://news.sciencemag.org/scienceinsider/2011/06/threats-sent-to-australian-climate.html>

Woodard, Colin. "After Death Threats to Climate Researchers, Australian Universities Take Tough Protection Measures," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (9 June 2011): <http://chronicle.com/article/After-Death-Threats-to-Climate/127870/>

For more information on Sophie Mirabella, see her website at www.sophiemirabella.com.au/

*ED

UK GOVERNMENT CONSULTS PUBLIC ON SPERM AND EGG DONATION POLICIES

On January 17, 2011, a public consultation on sperm and egg donation policies was begun by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) [1], a United Kingdom regulatory body that oversees assisted reproductive technology research and treatment. The HFEA sought feedback in three areas: donor compensation, the limit on families assisted per donor, and family donation.

HFEA policy on sperm and egg donor compensation is intended to permit reimbursement for legitimate donor expenses, but not to create a financial incentive to donate, as UK law prohibits payment for gamete donation. Current HFEA policy compensates

(News continued on page 6)

(News continued from page 5)

donors for expenses and loss of earnings but not for “inconvenience.” UK law does, however, allow further compensation for inconvenience, so the HFEA is considering changing their policy to match that of other European countries that compensate for inconvenience. Alternatively, some European countries, including Denmark and Spain, offer a “blanket fee” intended to cover all costs associated with donation of sperm or eggs. The public consultation is intended to inform possible changes in HFEA policy, as UK fertility clinics have indicated that the current system of reimbursement is overly complex and occasionally results in donors not receiving full coverage of their expenses. Another alternate form of compensation under review is egg sharing, whereby patients undergoing assisted reproduction treatment may have their costs reduced by donating some of their eggs.

In considering the number of sperm or egg donations allowed per donor, the HFEA has conflicting needs to increase the supply of donor sperm and eggs and to respect the rights of persons conceived by donation. Since a single donor may contribute his or her sperm or eggs to several different families, a donor-conceived person may end up with an unusually large number of genetic siblings, and may possibly unknowingly enter into a relationship with a genetic sibling. To minimize this possibility, the HFEA currently allows a maximum of ten different families to use the eggs or sperm of a single donor, but wishes to ensure that any numerical limit appropriately balances concerns.

Family donation is the donation of sperm or eggs from one relative to another to treat infertility, which “maintains a genetic link between the recipient and any resulting child.” Family donation may occur between siblings, cousins, or even parent and child. Thus, a donor may serve different social and genetic roles, such as genetic father and social uncle. As a

policy option, the HFEA is considering banning the mixing of genetically-related sperm and eggs. They are also thinking of issuing “best practice guidance” regarding family donation, or requesting a “strategy” be in place for when such situations arise in the clinic.

Public consultation ended on April 8, 2011. About 1100 people responded by survey, and results will be reviewed in a public meeting on July 13, 2011 [2].

[1] <http://www.hfea.gov.uk/6285.html>

[2] For more information, see: <http://www.hfea.gov.uk/donationreview>

*BH

NSF PROPOSES MODIFIED MERIT REVIEW CRITERIA

Over the past year, the National Science Board’s Task Force on Merit Review has been reviewing the two merit criteria by which all NSF proposals are evaluated: intellectual merit and broader impacts. The purpose of the review was to clarify the intent of the criteria, to better articulate how the criteria are used in the review process, and to communicate the underlying principles that motivate the criteria.

To conduct the analysis of merit review criteria, the Task Force solicited material from a variety of sources. It analyzed over 190 Committee of Visitor Reports to various NSF divisions, conducted interviews and surveys with an array of NSF staff, and sought feedback from over 8000 NSF Principal Investigators (PIs) and reviewers. All told, the Task Force considered about 5100 individual responses, and found a surprising amount of consistency in the commentary. The general indication seemed to be intellectual merit and broader impacts were the right principles by which to evaluate proposals, but clarification was needed on the intent of the principles, especially their relationship to the core

tenets which drive NSF more generally. The Task Force’s work culminated in proposed changes to the merit review criteria presented at the May 2011 meeting of the National Science Board [1].

There are four newly articulated principles which serve to link the merit review criteria with NSF’s broader mission [2]. The first principle relates to intellectual merit, in that all NSF funded projects should serve to “advance the frontiers of knowledge.” The next principle states that NSF funded projects should advance a set of nine listed “national goals.” These national goals include things like “increased economic competitiveness of the United States” and “increased partnerships between academia and industry.” The third principle acknowledges a variety of ways broader impacts of research may be achieved, and the fourth principle supports the elasticity of the merit review criteria as assessment becomes necessary over time.

Currently, the NSF and the NSB are soliciting public feedback on the criteria changes, as well as the principles on which they are based. The comment period runs through July 14, 2011, and comments may be submitted to meritreview@nsf.gov.

[1] http://www.nsf.gov/nsb/meetings/event_summ.jsp?cntn_id=117627

[2] http://www.nsf.gov/nsb/publications/2011/06_mrtf.jsp

*MM

IPCC ADOPTS NEW CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

At a meeting of the 33rd session on May 10-13, 2011, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) issued a summary, *Decisions Taken with Respect to the Review of IPCC Processes and Procedures*. This summary addressed the development of

(News continued on page 7)

(News continued from page 6)

the IPCC's conflict of interest policy, particularly with respect to the recommendations of the InterAcademy Council (IAC), from the previous session in October 2010. Several key suggestions were made for implementing the policy, such as prolonging the length of the Task Group on Conflict of Interest Policy's in order to draw up implementation proposals.

The appendix of the summary detailed the adopted IPCC *Conflict of Interest Policy*, including several of the following provisions:

- Reports by the IPCC should be neutral in terms of policy, although discussion and factors within the report may be applied to some policies.
- To enforce the independent nature of the IPCC, its reports must be free of bias, and independent of any other interests.
- The purpose of the policy is to preserve the legitimacy of the IPCC and the integrity of its output, without creating any significant reporting burden.
- The policy will help prevent conflicts of interest from threatening the neutrality of the IPCC.
- The policy will only ensure that potential conflicts of interest can be evaluated; it does not presume that there is a conflict.
- The policy will apply to any senior IPCC leader, as well as any authors with reporting responsibilities.
- The policy applies to a variety of reports, including technical papers and descriptions of methodology.

The IPCC policy also noted what would constitute a potential conflict of interest. A variety of factors and considerations were discussed:

- A potential conflict of interest is considered to be any circumstance that would cause a question in a

participant's objectivity or any circumstance where an advantage is created for one side of thought.

- Bias is not the same as a conflict of interest and should be handled differently, primarily through balancing the perspectives on a project, rather than exclusion from the project.
- Only current conflicts of interest that could affect behavior during the course of the project should be considered.
- Non-financial interests only need to be disclosed if they are especially relevant, such as being an affiliated leader of another organization that holds a specific view on the project at hand.
- All relevant financial interests should be disclosed if they are significant.

By the next session, the IPCC expects to develop and adopt an implementation plan and a disclosure form. The policy is expected to be fully implemented by the 35th session.

A copy of the summary and policy can be viewed here:
http://www.ipcc.ch/meetings/session33/ipcc_p33_decisions_taken_conflict_of_interest.pdf

*RF

INJUNCTION ON HUMAN EMBRYONIC STEM CELL RESEARCH OVERTURNED, FOR NOW

On April 29, 2011 a highly anticipated decision regarding an ongoing dispute over human embryonic stem cell research (hESC) was handed down by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit [1]. In the 2-1 decision in *Sherley v. Sebelius*, the Court overturned District Court Judge Royce Lamberth's preliminary injunction [2], which temporarily halted all federally funded research involving the use of human embryonic stem cell lines in 2010.

Under President George W. Bush,

research using hESC was permitted, but it was restricted to the 82 existing embryonic stem cell lines. The 2009 NIH Guidelines on Human Stem Cell Research [3], which were issued by the NIH in response to President Obama's Executive Order 13505, allow for the creation of new cell lines from embryos during in vitro fertilization - specifically for reproductive purposes. Additionally, donors must give consent to the use of their embryos for research.

In his decision, Judge Lamberth argued that the use of hESC for research, as outlined by the 2009 Guidelines, violate the text of the 1996 Dickey-Wicker Amendment, which prohibits the use of Federal funds for:

(1) the creation of a human embryo or embryos for research purposes; or (2) **research** in which a human embryo or embryos are destroyed, discarded, or knowingly subjected to risk of injury or death greater than that allowed for research on fetuses *in utero* under [4].

For the Court to issue a preliminary injunction, a plaintiff must establish, "(1) that he is likely to succeed on the merits, (2) he is likely to suffer irreparable harm in the absence of preliminary relief, (3) that the balance of equities tips in his favor, and (4) that an injunction is in the public interest [5]."

The Appeals Court's opinion rested on an interpretation of the word "research" as used within the Amendment and the Guidelines. In his majority opinion, Judge Douglas H. Ginsburg reasoned that the plaintiffs would be unlikely to succeed because the "Dickey-Wicker is ambiguous and the NIH seems reasonably to have concluded that, although Dickey-Wicker bars funding for the destructive act of deriving an ECS from an embryo, it does not prohibit funding a research project in which an ESC will be used. We therefore vacate the preliminary injunction."

(News continued on page 8)

(News continued from page 7)

[1] SHERLEY V. SEBELIUS, United States Court of Appeals, District of Columbia Circuit, Argued December 6, 2010, Decided April 29, 2011.

[http://www.cadc.uscourts.gov/internet/opinions.nsf/DF210F382F98EBAC852578810051B18C/\\$file/10-5287-1305585.pdf](http://www.cadc.uscourts.gov/internet/opinions.nsf/DF210F382F98EBAC852578810051B18C/$file/10-5287-1305585.pdf)

[2] SHERLEY V. SEBELIUS, 704 F. Supp.2d 63(2010), United States District Court, District of Columbia, August 23, 2010.

[3]<http://stemcells.nih.gov/policy/2009guidelines.htm>

[4] SHERLEY V. SEBELIUS, 704 F. Supp.2d 63(2010), United States District Court, District of Columbia, August 23, 2010.

[5] WINTER V. NATURAL RES. DEF COUNCIL, INC., 129 S. Ct. 365, 374 (2008) quoted in SHERLEY V. SEBELIUS, p.8, United States Court of Appeals, District of Columbia Circuit, Argued December 6, 2010, Decided April 29, 2011.

*RC

In the Societies

UNESCO PRESENTS GLOBAL PLATFORM FOR ETHICS EDUCATION: THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR EDUCATION IN ETHICS

In April 2011, the International Association for Education in Ethics (IAEE) emerged in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania as a new platform for the discussion and teaching of global perspectives on ethics. The Center for Healthcare Ethics in Duquesne University will host the association and serve as the home of the IAEE Secretariat and Treasury.

The establishment of IAEE follows a long-standing initiative begun by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to facilitate a global dialogue on the ethical implications of science and technology. UNESCO brought together experts in ethics from around the world in March 2010 to share

Spring 2011

experiences and opinions on the teaching of ethics. That meeting eventually laid the foundations for what emerged as IAEE.

The Center for Healthcare Ethics at Duquesne University outlines the four goals of IAEE: “(1) to exchange and analyze experiences with the teaching of ethics in various educational settings; (2) to promote the development of knowledge and methods of ethics education; (3) to function as a global center of contacts for experts in the field, and promote contacts between the members from countries around the world; and (4) to enhance and expand the teaching of ethics at national, regional and international levels.”

In order to accomplish these objectives, members of IAEE will discuss and teach ethics in areas including but not limited to medicine, nursing, pharmaceuticals, animals, business, education, and the law. IAEE will arrange international conferences and meetings featuring professionals in ethics from around the world to provide a forum for these discussions. IAEE has announced that Duquesne University will host the first International Conference on Education in Ethics in May 2012. IAEE plans to publish a report of the meeting, which will address professional, philosophical, and religious ethics in medicine, science, technology, and engineering.

To learn more about IAEE as well as to register to become a member, visit <http://www.duq.edu/chce>.

*ED

Announcements

Call for Papers – The Center for Applied Ethics and Philosophy at Hokkaido University invites the submission of papers for its Sixth International Conference on Applied Ethics. Submissions are welcome on topics including, but not limited to, engineering ethics, biomedical ethics, information ethics, environmental ethics, global ethics, and business ethics. The conference will be held in Sapporo, Japan on October 28-30, 2011. The deadline for

submissions is July 17, 2011. For further details, visit: <http://ethics.let.hokudai.ac.jp>

Call for Papers – ETHICOMP seeks papers for its Latin America Workshop which will take place at the October 10-14 meeting of the Argentine Congress on Computer Sciences (CACIC). The purpose of the workshop is to discuss the ethical issues surrounding the use of information and communication technologies from a South American perspective. For more information, see: <http://cacic.info.unlp.edu.ar/ethicomp.php>

Call for Proposals – The International Center for Academic Integrity is seeking proposals for its 2011 Annual International Conference. This year’s theme is, *Thinking Globally, Acting Locally: Revisiting & Reviving the Fundamental Values of Integrity*. A range of proposals are welcome; however, topics of particular interest include plagiarism, cultures of integrity, integrity in education, and academic integrity. The deadline for proposal submission is June 30, 2011. The proposal submission form can be accessed, here:

http://www.academicintegrity.org/conferences/2011_Conference/proposal_form.php. For more information about the conference, see: http://www.academicintegrity.org/news_and_notices/call_for_papers_2011.php

Conference – The International Neuroethics Conference on "Neuroenhancement" will be held July 7-9, 2011 at the University of Mainz in Germany. It marks the final conference of the Canadian-German research project "Normality, Normalization and Enhancement in the Neurosciences: Ethical, Sociocultural and Neuropsychiatric Aspects of Cognitive Enhancement." The conference will focus on the medical, ethical, social, and legal aspects of neuroenhancement. For additional details, visit: http://www.philosophie.uni-mainz.de/1889_ENG_HTML.php

Conference – The U.S. Office of Research Integrity Quest for Research Excellence 2011 conference will take place August 29-30, 2011 at the Georgetown University Hotel and Conference Center in Washington, DC. The conference will bring together educators of responsible conduct of research and researchers of research integrity with representatives from professional societies, funding agencies and regulators. To register for the conference, go to: <http://regonline.com/questconference>. More information is available at <http://ori.dhhs.gov/>.

Symposium – On October 10-12, 2011 the Janet Prindle Institute for Ethics at DePauw University will hold a symposium titled “Ethical Inquiry through Video Game Play and Design.” The symposium will address such questions as can video games serve as a platform for ethical inquiry? Can and how do video games promote ethical positions? Proposals for the symposium are welcome, and are due by August 1, 2011. Proposals for presentations may address any ethical dimensions of video games. Contact: Harry Brown at hbrown@depauw.edu