a reversion to consequentialist thinking: which seems to be just what the authors give us at this point, despite their own avowed caution about consequentialism.

Here I have briefly touched on some points of criticism of this splendid book; but despite these possibly minor problems, no one should be in any doubt about what a splendid and useful volume it is. I recommend it to anyone seeking a way into the subject.

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Ethical Issues in Pharmacy

Edited by Bruce D Weinstein,
Washington, Applied Therapeutics
Inc, 1996, 323 pages, US\$29.95.

Ethical Issues in Pharmacy is the first publication to appear dealing specifically with ethical issues from the pharmacy perspective and comes from a publisher with an established reputation in the area of clinical pharmacy. It has been produced as a resource for pharmacists working within the American health care system and indeed refers to the American Pharmaceutical Association's Code of Ethics for Pharmacists. The book can, however, still provide a useful resource for practising pharmacists within the UK dealing with ethical issues that arise as part of their daily practice.

The book brings together both an understanding of clinical pharmacy and philosophical ethics in suggesting possible resolutions for moral problems in pharmacy and each chapter is written and reviewed collaboratively by experts in these disciplines. The topics covered are those identified as most important by the ethics course content committee of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy.

The first part of the book deals with the basic principles involved in ethical issues in pharmacy, each chapter dealing with a different issue, as described below. Each issue is illustrated by reference to hypothetical cases and each chapter ends with a series of discussion questions and references for further reading.

"Is pharmacy a profession?" debates the difference between a profession and a business, how the two are compatible within the role of a pharmacist, and suggests how a pharmacist can develop

his/her professional character and remain ethical in today's complex practice environment.

"The normative principles of pharmacy ethics" are identified as non-maleficence, beneficence, respect for persons, loyalty and distributive justice. This chapter explains and examines the relevance of each principle and discusses how a pharmacist can approach apparent conflict between these principles and between these principles and self-interested inclinations.

"The relationship between ethics and the law" recognises that pharmacists often face situations that raise both ethical and legal considerations and teases out the relationship between the two.

"Ethical decision-making" systematically looks at moral problems using a four-stage approach of gathering facts, identifying values, generating options and finally selecting and justifying an option.

"The counterside conversation" discusses the practical application of a principle-based approach to ethical issues in pharmacy through a "narrative" technique, involving discussion with the patient, rather than a formal or intellectual method. This accords well with the purposes and goals of pharmaceutical care.

Each chapter in the second part of the book deals with practical situations which may raise ethical issues for pharmacists in their daily practice, including: the relationship between patients and physicians; relationships with the pharmaceutical industry; the right to medication; the right to refuse to fill a prescription on moral or religious grounds; professional responsibilities to incompetent fellow professionals; the impact of the media, and involvement in clinical trials. Again discussion questions and further references are provided for each issue.

Here the differences in how health care is provided in the United States and the United Kingdom become particularly relevant. The different legal and funding situations in each country mean the practical options for action may differ, though the basic ethical considerations will be the same within each system. However, this section still provides useful concepts which must be adapted by the reader to meet the actual situation being considered.

Of particular interest is the chapter entitled "Power and professional responsibility; the social context of pharmacy". It discusses the pharmacist's changing role, recognising the concepts of pharmaceutical care and

emphasising the importance of communication and mediation rather than the practical provision of medicines. Harmonising of pharmacists' ideals and values with their role and with the expectations of others are important if pharmacists are to be empowered in their relationships with fellow professionals and patients.

For pharmacists used to dealing with facts this book is not, at first attempt, easy reading, dealing with concepts and principles which are not easily defined and which take some time to assimilate and understand. Rather than reading it from cover to cover at one sitting, pharmacists should select those areas of particular interest or relevance.

Initially it can be used by pharmacists as a practical resource for issues arising in daily practice, but as the pharmacist develops more familiarity with consideration of ethical issues it will support a deeper consideration of the ethical and moral responsibilities involved in being a pharmacist and what this means for each pharmacist as a member of society and of the health care team.

Clinical ethics is a fast developing, though still immature discipline in this country and pharmacists within primary and secondary care have an important role to play within it. This book will support the debate within the profession which is needed for that involvement to occur. I hope that it will not be so long before a similar work written from the British perspective becomes available.

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Protection of the Human Genome and Scientific Responsibility

Proceedings of the 1995 MURS-Japan/UNESCO IBC Seminars.
Edited by M Okamoto, N Fujiki and D Macer, Tsukuba, Japan, Eubios Ethics Institute, 1996, 107 pages (+101 pages in Japanese), £15.

This book contains thirty-one papers from the series of seminars organised by the Japanese branch of the Mouvement Universale de la Responsabilité Scientifiques (MURS) and the International Bioethics Committee of

UNESCO (IBC), which took place in various Japanese cities during 1995. As one would expect from a collection like this, the quality of the content varies from the extremely interesting to the dully platitudinous. Also, as one would expect from a publication coming from the Eubios Ethics Institute, it provides a fascinating glimpse of the position of medical ethics in Japanese society. For someone such as myself, with a very "Western" background in philosophy, such glimpses are extremely valuable.

The first high spot of this book is the insight into the foundation, background and development of the UNESCO IBC, presented by its president, Noelle Lenoir (pages 12–22). As well as reviewing the historical events leading up to the foundation of the IBC in 1993, this presentation also outlines a particular attitude towards the role of ethics committees and the development of the Declaration of the Protection of the Human Genome.

One of the presentations to involve itself in serious ethical analysis is that by Professor Sakamoto (pages 30–31), which in a very short space raises important questions for Western bioethicists concerning the relevance of such terms as: "human rights" in relation to genetic manipulation, and the role Asian values (such as the relatively weak conception of human dignity) might play in reformulating our normal ethical standpoints. This is the value of this sort of publication, which raises questions for Western bioethicists, not from within our own culture, but from a completely different tradition, forcing us to question our beliefs.

Many other articles though, are disappointing in their unquestioning attitude towards the current regulations regarding the human genome. One gets the impression that if their authors were asked about the title of this book: "What *are* the responsibilities of scientists with regard to the human genome?", the reply would come back: "To do what they're told, and stick to the letter of the regulations". I am not suggesting that scientists should not obey regulations concerning human genetics; I am more concerned that there was not more questioning amongst such distinguished participants of the basis for the received wisdom behind such regulations. For example, one paper states that "Since the cosmetic medicine is practised widely we have to be very careful not to introduce the gene therapy in the area of cosmetic medicine" (page 26); but why is this distinction

drawn between "normal" cosmetic medicine (which is presumably ethical, since it is "practised widely"), and "genetic" cosmetic medicine? There may be very good reasons for not introducing gene therapy for cosmetic reasons, but they are not presented in any way other than "concern not to inherit the genetic changes induced by gene therapy to the next generation" (page 26). The reasons behind this concern are not enunciated. For a philosopher, it is frustrating to read of ethical positions being presented as *a priori* facts, with little or no discussion of the implications and the basis for such positions. To be fair, it appears that the structure of the seminars gave little opportunity for lengthy discussion after papers were presented, so it may be harsh to complain of the lack of fuller discussions.

The two quotations may suggest the grounds for my complaint with this book. With so many articles by non-native English speakers, it really does require careful copy-editing and proof-reading to render the articles into easily understandable English. This is not linguistic bias, but a necessary requirement for any publication which is trying to deal with a topic such as ethics, where the precise meaning of words is vital. For example, in one of the panel discussions Noelle Lenoir of the IBC states that with international conventions "we can reach a consensus, and pacify a subject" (page 39). Now if this actually means "pacify" in the same way this word is usually used in English, then such a statement requires considerable debate; would we ever really want consensus to "pacify" a topic of discussion, to silence all dissenting voices? But I suspect that if this was the word used in the discussion, it was intended to mean something rather different. The true, intended meaning should have been brought out in the editing process. Since this book is full of many such linguistic ambiguities I would not feel comfortable citing articles from it; I would be afraid of unintentionally misattributing certain positions to authors because of the lack of linguistic clarity of the text.

This book is an interesting and valuable read, but it is also frustratingly full of translation errors which inhibit full confidence in the reader as regards the authors' intended meanings.

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Reproducing Persons: Issues in Feminist Bioethics

Laura M Purdy, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1996, 245 pages £33.50 hb, £13.50 pb.

The essays contained in this collection represent previously published work spanning both Purdy's career and what she calls the twenty-year period of intense growth and specialisation in the discipline of bioethics (page vii). They are linked by a new introduction, exploring the "relatively uncharted" connections between bioethics and a feminist ethics, which seeks to document how existing practices harm women unjustifiably and focuses on how to avoid such outcomes (page 19). In this volume bioethics is castigated both for its preoccupation with arcane metaethical questions (page 3) and its tendency to launch from one crisis issue to the next without addressing underlying issues (page 236). Bioethicists are accused of being entrenched in a technological wonderland which promises a quick fix to reproductive problems (page 237). Purdy's overarching thesis is that there is insufficient dialogue between "even a relatively moderate feminist stance, and what she refers to as the 'bioethics establishment'". This she attacks for its systematic marginalisation of feminist concerns (page 233), which is particularly unjustifiable given that:

"[W]omen are especially at risk in the medical establishment: erroneous or self-interested assumptions about our bodies and minds are close to the surface here, and the delivery of care is so value laden that it cannot help but reflect them . . . there is no 'safe' neutral territory between biased bioethics and feminist bioethics" (page 18).

She argues that bioethics has much to gain from a more fruitful engagement with feminism, emphasising that feminist concerns are not partisan and that gender is not just about women. She is, however, also critical of many feminist positions. For instance, she accuses radical feminists of inconsistency in regarding contraception and abortion as innocuous but conceptive technologies as dangerous (page 206). In her view, their hostility to assisted conception fails to take account of the needs of women who are infertile, single or gay; and replicates traditional sexist attitudes by rejecting women's desires as