

Plunkett Centre



Annual Report 2005



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY



St Vincents
& Mater Health
Sydney

Mission Statement

The Mission of the Plunkett Centre is to promote the values of compassion and fellowship, intellectual and professional excellence, and fairness and justice. Its primary focus is on the realisation of these values in the provision and the allocation of health care. The Centre expresses this commitment through research, teaching and community engagement, and by bringing a Catholic perspective to all its endeavours.

The objectives of the Centre are

- to deepen and advance knowledge and understanding of the ethical standards relevant to human health and well-being, and in particular to clinical practice, medical research, business and management practice, and the allocation of healthcare resources;
- to offer courses in philosophical ethics and in the ethics of health care provision, medical research and health care resource allocation; and
- to engage and where appropriate to collaborate with local, national and international bodies as they seek to respond to their intellectual and ethical needs.

The Centre realises these objectives by

- conducting and promoting research;
- providing research training and supervision;
- developing and teaching courses;
- conducting ethical reviews of professional practice;
- offering an ethics consultation service; and
- participating in public discussion.

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Management Committee

From the University:

Professor John Coll, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and International), Chairman
Dr John Ozolins, Head, School of Philosophy

From the Hospital:

Ms. Mary Foley, Chief Executive Officer, St. Vincents & Mater Health
Mr. Mark Hales, Director of Mission, St. Vincents & Mater Health

From the Centre:

Associate Professor Bernadette Tobin, Director

In attendance:

Mrs Linda Purves, Administrative Officer (Minutes Secretary)
Dr Stephen Buckle, Senior Lecturer in Philosophy



Ms. Mary Foley CEO, St. Vincents & Mater Health, Sydney (Member of the Plunkett Centre Management Committee) and Mr. Francis Sullivan, CEO, Catholic Health Australia at the Seminar “Helping the Needy Stranger” held at the Justice and Police Museum, Sydney

Staffing

Director

Bernadette Tobin MA Med (Melb), PhD (Cantab)
Associate Professor and Reader in Philosophy,
School of Philosophy, Australian Catholic University

Academic Staff

Gerald Gleeson STB (CIS) MA (Cantab) PhD (Leuven)
Associate Professor of Philosophy, Catholic Institute of Sydney

Stephen Buckle MA Hons (MaqU), PhD (ANU)
Senior Lecturer in Philosophy, School of Philosophy,
Australian Catholic University

Helen McCabe RN BHA (UNSW) MA (ACU) PhD (ACU)
Research Associate, Plunkett Centre for Ethics

Visiting

Warren Reich BA (St. Joseph's College, Alabama), STB
(Catholic University of America), STL (Catholic University of
America), STD (Gregorian University, Rome), Distinguished
Professor of Religion and Ethics, Professor Emeritus of
Bioethics, Georgetown University.

Research Student

Mary Self MBBS Hons (Qld) MA (ACU) FRACS

Administrative Staff

Linda Purves JP

From the Director



Not everything that happens in a small research centre can be conveyed in its Annual Report. For instance, there is little mention within this report of the matters discussed at our annual seminar which, in 2005, was titled “*Helping the Needy Stranger*”. Let me mention the subject matter of each of the three talks given on that occasion.

Raimond Gaita contrasted two conceptions of the ‘ethical’, one which focuses on justice, respect for autonomy, integrity, courage and the other virtues of character, the other which following Socrates focuses on personal goodness. Raimond Gaita argued that only the second conception can give us reasons for ‘keeping the stranger among us’, not only the ‘stranger’ who has lost everything that gives meaning to his life but also the ‘stranger’ whose life is marked by wickedness.

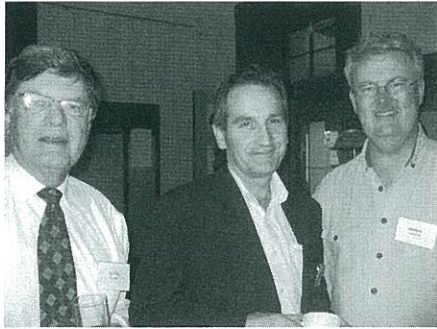
John Quilter teased out some political consequences of what he saw as the current conservative conception of international relations which, though it does not make reference to the ‘stranger’, nonetheless insists on a sharp contrast between resident citizens (who are taken to be individually self-assertive and economically independent) and political strangers (who are portrayed as invading the privacy of ‘our’ national space).

Warren Reich argued that the narrative of the Good Samaritan provides us with the best way of understanding our responsibilities to care for the needy stranger. The story does not portray the stranger as one who deserves to be well-treated. Rather it is a story about someone who, in acting as a neighbour, helps himself too: after all, it is a parable about what one must do to gain eternal life! Modern society’s tendency to see helping others as a suppression of the self is, to that extent, heretical.

There is much else in the following pages which record the activities of the Centre’s staff during the last year. However readers will notice that these same themes found their way not only into the presentations at our Annual Seminar but also into our daily work.

On behalf of the staff of the Plunkett Centre, Gerald Gleeson, Stephen Buckle, Helen McCabe, Warren Reich and Linda Purves, I have pleasure in presenting the Annual Report for 2005.

A/Professor Bernadette Tobin
Director
12th May, 2006



Seminar at the Justice and Police Museum
"Helping the Needy Stranger"

Speakers and Attendees pictured clockwise:

Professor Peter Sheehan, Mr. Francis Sullivan and Mr. Simon Longstaff

Mr. John Lawrence and Professor Warren Reich

Mr. John Quilter and Professor John Coll

Professor John Coll and Sr. Elizabeth Dodds

Ms. Jean Curthoys and Dr. Stephen Buckle

Professor Raimond Gaita, Professor Norelle Lickiss and Professor Genevieve Lloyd

Financial Report for 2005

	Operating Account	Research Infrastructure Block Grant	Consolidated
Income			
C/Forward	44,658		
Vice-Chancellor SPF	4,070		
SV&MH	128,125		
ACU	119,474	18,202	
Non-Award C/Fees	-66		
Subscriptions	4,314		
Seminars	3,310		
Other	2,000		
Total Income	305,885	18,202	324,087
Expenditure			
Salaries	214,282		214,282
Rent	25,575		25,575
Running Costs			
Computer Maintenance	8,912	8,377	17,289
Other	3,132		3,132
General Costs			
Stationery & Furniture	5,289	604	5,893
Other	2,467	-82	2,385
Other			
Internet Access	1,590		1,590
Books	2,190	1,736	3,926
Journals	1,883	7,649	9,532
Photocopier/lease	3,960		3,960
Printing	4,492		4,492
Travel	3,865		3,865
O/Spend VCSPF	-832		-832
Total Expenditure	276,805	18,284	295,089
Carried Forward	29,080	- 82	28,998



Helen McCabe, PhD, and Kristine Morrison, M.Phil,
at the ceremony to mark their graduation from Australian Catholic University,
Sydney Town Hall, March, 2005.

Research Projects

Stephen Buckle

David Hume's philosophy

Utilitarian and related trends in modern moral thought.

Gerald Gleeson

The soul as principle of life and human personhood.

Helen McCabe

Changes in health policy and their implications for the Catholic health care sector

Bernadette Tobin

Ethical issues in the use of new genetic technologies

Ethical issues in the medical treatment and nursing care of children

Clinical Ethics In-Service Program

- Scope of, and limits, to the ethical obligation to provide medical treatment for a child from overseas:
 - With Dr. Scott Dunlop, Medical Director, Dr. Andrew Rosenberg, Nephrologist and Dr. Michael Brydon, Executive Director, Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick
- End stage ovarian cancer: who is responsible for the patient?
 - With Dr. Neil Cooney, Sacred Heart Hospice
- Gastrostomy for Baby N who has Spinal Muscular Atrophy Type 1:
 - With Dr. Monique Ryan, Children's Hospital, Westmead
- Withdrawing life-sustaining treatment against the wishes of the parents:
 - With Dr. William Tarnow-Mordi and Dr. Adrienne Gordon, Children's Hospital, Westmead
- Foreseeable harm in patient with alcoholism:
 - With Ms Micky Segal, Clinical Psychologist, Sacred Heart Hospice
- Conflict with family over end of life care:
 - With Dr. Sue Gordon and Dr. Gary West, Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick

Publications

Book Chapters

Tobin B.M. "John Hubert Plunkett" in *Passing the Torch*, edited by Peter Gray, The Aisling Society of Sydney 1955-2005, (2005) pp 150-152.

Peer Reviewed Publications

Buckle S. "Peter Singer's Argument for Utilitarianism", *Theoretical Medicine and Bioethics*, Springer, Dordrecht, The Netherlands, (2005), Vol.26:3, 175-194.

McCabe H.M. "Financial Incentives, Cross Purposes, and Moral Motivation in Health Care Provision", *Monash Bioethics Review*, Centre for Human Bioethics, Monash University, (2005) Vol.24:3, 20-35.

Tobin B.M. "Rebecca's Story", *Journal of Paediatric and Child Health* (with Peter Cooper, John Collins, Viviane Leveaux, David Isaacs, Henry Kilham, Blackwell Publishing), (2005) Vol.41:8, 453-455.

Tobin B.M. "Australian Consequentialism: An Australian Critique", *Theoretical Medicine and Bioethics*, Springer, Dordrecht, The Netherlands, (2005) Vol.26:3, 165-173.

Other Publications

Buckle S. "Understanding Utilitarianism", *Bioethics Outlook*, Plunkett Centre for Ethics, (2005) Vol.16:3, 1-6.

McCabe H.M. "Science with Humanity", *Bioethics Outlook*, Plunkett Centre for Ethics, (2005) Vol.16:2, 7-12.

Tobin B.M. "The fine line on humane life support", *Sydney Morning Herald*, John Fairfax Ltd, (2005), 22nd March 2005, pp 13.

Tobin B.M. "Submission to Lockhart Enquiry", *Bioethics Outlook*, Plunkett Centre for Ethics, (2005) Vol.16:3, 7-11.

Tobin B.M. "Exploring life, self, others: some philosophical preliminaries", *Bioethics Outlook*, Plunkett Centre for Ethics, (2005) Vol.16:4, 7-12.

Tobin B.M. "Stem-Cells: Some Ethical Issues", *Proceedings, St. Vincent's Clinic, Sydney*. The Sandra David Oration, St. Vincent's Campus Adult Stem-Cell Research, (2005) Vol.13:1, 6-7.

Tobin B.M. "A gifted teacher and philosopher: an obituary of Eric D'Arcy" in *The Courier Mail*, 20th December, 2005, p18.

Online Opinion

Tobin B.M. "When to withhold treatment – Terry Schiavo", <http://www.onlineopinion.com.au>, Sydney, Australia (2005).

Book Reviews

Buckle S. "Bioethics as Dispute Resolution", *Bioethics Outlook*, Plunkett Centre for Ethics, (2005) Vol.16: 1, 3-6.

McCabe H.M. "Review of Margaret Somerville's Death Talk: The Case against Euthanasia", *Bioethics Outlook*, Plunkett Centre for Ethics, (2005) Vol.16: 4, 1-6.

Consultancies

Total number of consultations undertaken by staff of the Centre:

- from within St Vincents & Mater Health : 12
- from other healthcare practitioners/institutions : 20

Selection of issues addressed:

- ‘Maternal foetal conflicts’, ‘foetal twin conflicts’: religious perspectives
- Patient’s family requesting doctor to convince patient to go into nursing home
- Ethics of paternity testing
- Confidentiality of psychologist-patient relationship
- Unreasonable demands for tests and treatments from the patient’s family-member
- Provision of gender reassignment surgery
- Continuation of pregnancy where foetus has severe genetic abnormality.
- Ethical issues in palliative care at the end of life
- Material cooperation in provision of IVF
- Wording of oath taken by medical students on graduation
- Presymptomatic testing for Juvenile Huntingdon’s Disease
- Ethical and legal guidelines on care at the end of life
- Ethical guidelines on ‘not for resuscitation’ protocols.
- Ethical issues related to request to produce client’s clinical notes
- Definitions of death: ‘brain death’, ‘cardiac death’, ‘non beating heart death’, etc.
- Advice re institution of a national bioethics committee
- Ethical issues to be addressed in notifying patients at risk of contracting infectious disease
- Ethical issues for pharmacy students
- Withdrawal of ‘life support’ from patient with hypoxic brain damage
- The ‘right’ to pain relief.
- Artificial nutrition and hydration for an elderly patient

- Judgments of futility and burdensomeness in elderly patients
- Conflicts of interest: judging a national competition
- Sterilisation in the course of unrelated surgery

Year	Total number	Source by Location		Source by professional group				
		SV&MH	Other	Administrators	Doctors	Nurses	Allied health practitioners	Others
1997	34	11	23	4	5	7	4	14
1998	38	14	24	5	6	8	3	16
1999	39	15	24	6	9	9	4	13
2000	54	34	20	18	6	6	4	22
2001	64	35	29	22	12	6	2	22
2002	38	24	14	10	6	4	7	11
2003	17	9	9	8	9	8	1	5
2004	27	15	12	7	7	1	4	8
2005	32	12	20	6	6	1	7	14

Presentations

Gerald Gleeson

“Christian perspectives of Marriage and Divorce: framework for considering ethical issues”: *Seminar for teachers of Religion Yr.6*, Catholic Education Office, Lidcombe, NSW.

“The relevance of *Gaudium et Spes* in Catholic moral theology”: *ACTA Conference*, Sydney, NSW.

“Ethics of stem cell research”: *Presentation to Ethics Committee*, Mater Hospital, Newcastle, NSW.

“Ethics and the human person”: *Presentation*, Pennant Hills parish, NSW.

“Response to David Hollenbach on ‘the Global Common Good in a Divided World’”: *ACU Forum*, Sydney, NSW.

“Conscience”: *Presentation*, Spirituality in the Pub, Campbelltown, NSW.

“Ethical Issues in Midwifery”: *In-service for midwives*, Mater Hospital, North Sydney, NSW.

“The human person and ethics”: *Conference on Faith and Credibility*, Palmerston North, New Zealand.

“Marriage and Divorce”: *Spirituality in the Pub*, Rose Hill, Sydney, NSW.

Helen McCabe

“Science with Humanity”: *Catalyst for Renewal Dinner*

“Managed Care”: *Presentation to Senior Leadership Team*, St. Vincents & Mater Health

“Bioethics: end-of-life decision-making, cloning and reproductive technology”: *Seminar for teachers of Religion Yr.6*, Catholic Education Office, Lidcombe, NSW.

“Principles of ethical decision-making at the end of life”: *Palliative Care Perspectives Workshop*, Sacred Heart Palliative Care and Rehabilitation Service

“An ethical evaluation of managed care: a beginning”: *2nd International Colloquium of the International Association of Catholic Bioethics*, Melbourne, Victoria

Bernadette Tobin

“Setting the balance: ethical issues in the development of a consensus on perinatal treatments at the borderlines of viability”: *NSW & ACT Consensus Workshop on Perinatal Care at the Borderline of Viability*, Sydney Children’s Hospital, Randwick, NSW

“Ethical Decision Making”: *Sacred Heart Hospice Seminar Series*, St. Vincent’s Hospital, Darlinghurst, NSW

“Sex, Marriage and Divorce; Violence, War and Peace; End of Life Decision-Making; Cloning”: *Seminar for Teachers of Religion Year 6*, Catholic Education Office, Lidcombe, NSW

“The Terry Schiavo Case: Catholic Perspectives”: *Meeting of Bishops and Rabbis*, Sydney, NSW

“Controversies in perinatal care: Should mechanical ventilation ever be withdrawn against the parents’ wishes?”: *Grand Rounds*, Children’s Hospital, Westmead, NSW

“Exploring life, self and others: some preliminary debates”: *The Vincent Fairfax Fellowship Symposium 2005*, Sydney, NSW

“Advance Care Planning”: *Annual Conference, Catholic Health Australia*, Perth, W.A.

“Advance Care Planning”: *Surgical Grand Rounds*, St. Vincent’s Hospital, Sydney, NSW

“Pleminary Draft Declaration on Universal Norms on Bioethics”, with J. Fleming, *Dignity in Illness, Disability and Dying*, International Association of Catholic Bioethicists.

Bioethics Outlook

Volume 16

Number 1

A missed opportunity: new guidelines avoid the central issue

by Bernadette Tobin

Bioethics as Dispute Resolution: Bioethics Mediation by Nancy Dubler and Carol Liebman (New York: United Hospital Fund, 2004)

Review by Stephen Buckle

Medical Error: Some Ethical Concerns

by Fr. Kevin O'Rourke, OP

Number 2

The ethics of care for those with post-coma unresponsiveness and related conditions

by Bishop Anthony Fisher

Science with humanity

by Helen McCabe

Number 3

Understanding Utilitarianism

by Stephen Buckle

Submission to Lockhart Inquiry

by Bernadette Tobin

Number 4

Death Talk: The Case Against Euthanasia and Physician-Assisted Suicide

by Margaret Somerville: Review by Helen McCabe

Exploring life, self, others: some preliminary questions

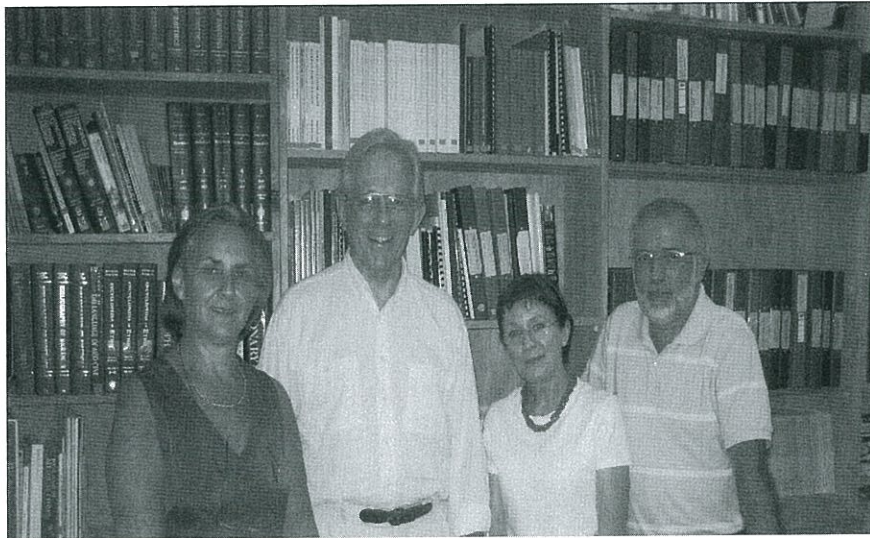
by Bernadette Tobin

Submissions

To the Legislation Review Committee on the *Prohibition of Human Cloning Act 2002* and the *Research on Human Embryos Act 2002* (the Lockhart Inquiry): Gerald Gleeson

To the Legislation Review Committee on the *Prohibition of Human Cloning Act 2002* and the *Research on Human Embryos Act 2002* (the Lockhart Inquiry): Bernadette Tobin

To the Centre for Health Advice, Policy and Ethics of the National Health and Medical Research Council on its *Recommendations for the donation of cadaveric organs and tissue for transplantation*: Bernadette Tobin



Farewell Morning Tea for Professor Warren Reich
Pictured left to right: Dr. Bernadette Tobin, Professor Warren Reich, Dr. Helen McCabe
and Dr. Stephen Buckle

Media

Bernadette Tobin

Christian Science Monitor: Terry Schiavo Case: Interviewed by Janaki Kremmer

Radio National's Breakfast Programme: Terry Schiavo Case: Interviewed by Fran Kelly

Australia Talks Back: Terry Schiavo Case: decision-making in case of incompetents: Background briefing for producer

Radio 2CH, Sunday Night Show: Terry Schiavo and Catholic Code: Sunday night show

QUT Radio: AHEC's prohibition of sex selection: Interviewed by Bronwyn Rees

Radio 2CH, Sunday Night Show: Blood transfusion for a young person who is a Jehovah's Witness: Interviewed by Ross Clifford

ABC Radio National: The Religion Report: Ethical and legal issues in research on stem cells, adult or embryonic: Background briefing for producer

Teaching

Stephen Buckle

Supervisor, PhD. Thesis, Surgical practice in a changing health system: resolving the ethical questions (with Bernadette Tobin)

Supervisor, PhD. Thesis, Informed Consent and Evidence Based Medicine.

Senior Lecturer in Philosophy, Bachelor of Arts, Australian Catholic University

Presenter, Philosophy Seminar for postgraduate students, Plunkett Centre for Ethics, St. Vincent's Hospital, Sydney

Gerald Gleeson

Presenter, *Intensive Bioethics Seminar*, Sydney

Helen McCabe

Lecturer, Master of Arts in Applied Ethics (Health Care)

Presenter, Clinical ethics for medical students (fourth year) St. Vincent's Hospital

Presenter, *Intensive Bioethics Seminar*, Sydney

Bernadette Tobin

Presenter, Clinical ethics for medical students (fourth and sixth years) St. Vincent's Hospital

Presenter, Clinical ethics for health care practitioners (Social Work, Palliative Care, Mental Health) St. Vincent's Hospital

Presenter, *Intensive Bioethics Seminar*, Sydney

Co-Supervisor, PhD. Thesis, On the distinction between killing and letting die from a medical perspective, University of Melbourne

Other Appointments

Stephen Buckle

Member, British Society for the History of Philosophy

Gerald Gleeson

Member, Bioethics Committee, St. Vincents & Mater Health, Sydney

Member, Bioethics Committee, Calvary Hurstville Community Hospital, Sydney

Member of Council, St John's College, University of Sydney

Bernadette Tobin

Member, Bioethics Committee, St. Vincents & Mater Health, Sydney

Founder & Trustee, Mary Philippa Brazill Trust

Member of Council, Guild of St. Luke

Member, Mission and Values Committee, St. Vincent's Health Care Campus, Sydney

Director, Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation

Member, Clinical Ethics Advisory Panel, NSW Department of Health

Member of Editorial Board, *Theoretical Medicine and Bioethics*

Director, Garvan Institute of Medical Research



Mrs Linda Purves,
Administrative Officer of the Plunkett Centre.

Become an Associate Member of the Centre

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Return to: Administrative Officer
Plunkett Centre for Ethics
St Vincent's Hospital
Darlinghurst NSW 2010
Email: plunkett@plunkett.acu.edu.au
Telephone: (02) 8382 2869
Fax: (02) 9361 0975