



Plunkett Centre

Annual Report 2015





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Mission

The Mission of the 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 allocation of health care. The Centre expresses this commitment through research, teaching and community engagement, as these are informed by the Catholic tradition.

Objectives

- ◆ 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 practices, and the allocation of healthcare resources.
- ◆ To offer courses in philosophical ethics and in the ethics of healthcare provision, medical research and healthcare resource allocation.
- ◆ To engage and where appropriate to collaborate with local, national and international bodies as they seek to respond to their intellectual and ethical needs.
- ◆ To foster collaboration on ethical matters between Australian Catholic University and St Vincent's Health Australia, Sydney.

Functions

- Conducting and promoting research.
- Providing research training and supervision.
- Developing and teaching courses.
- Conducting reviews of professional practice.
- Providing an ethics consultation service.
- Participating in public discussions.

John Hubert Plunkett



John Hubert Plunkett was the first Catholic Solicitor-General and then the first Catholic Attorney-General of New South Wales. He was, at various times, a member of both the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly. He was a member of the first Senate of the University of Sydney and an early Vice-Chancellor of that University. He was the first Chairman of the Board of Education of New South Wales and a founding Fellow of St. John's College at the University of Sydney. He was a great friend and benefactor of the Sisters of Charity in Australia.

Plunkett was born in Roscommon in Ireland in June, 1802. He studied Arts at Trinity College in Dublin and, in 1823, went to the Irish Bar. In 1830 he was appointed Solicitor-General in New South Wales. In 1836, he became Attorney-General, a remarkable achievement for an Irishman and Catholic. As chief law officer, Plunkett made an important contribution to the slow and difficult process by which the penal colony of New South Wales developed the institutions of a free society.

Plunkett was a leader in establishing civil rights in Australia. He drafted the Magistrate's Act, which abolished summary punishment, the administration of justice by private householders and the excessive use of the lash. He argued successfully for the abolition of convict assignment. He secured jury rights for emancipists. He extended the protection of the law to convicts and assigned servants and, after securing the conviction of seven white men for the killing of an Aborigine at Myall Creek in 1838 (in a massacre in which a whole tribe was killed), he extended the protection of the law for the first time to Aborigines. But as a Catholic who knew what emancipation meant, Plunkett himself considered the Church Act of 1836, which disestablished the Church of England, his most important single achievement.

When the Sisters of Charity arrived in Sydney from Ireland in 1838, John Plunkett's special interest in their affairs led him to organise a public appeal to establish their first hospital in Sydney. He then helped the Sisters to acquire the narrow strip of land along Victoria Street in Darlinghurst to which the first St. Vincent's Hospital, which had opened its doors in Potts Point, was relocated in 1870.

Plunkett's two great recreations were the violin and Irish folk music. He died in May 1869 and was buried in Sydney's Devonshire Street cemetery. Thousands of Australians, of every religious belief and of none, have experienced the first-class health care that is inspired by the Sisters of Charity. Others have been educated by the Sisters. There are, thus, many Australians with reason to be grateful for the kind and practical help which John Hubert Plunkett gave to the women who founded the Sisters of Charity in Australia.

Foreword from the Hospital



Our collaboration with the Plunkett Centre for Ethics is very important to St Vincent's Private Hospital and our partners on the Darlinghurst Campus. The Centre provides a great resource for the Hospital and its staff. This is highlighted particularly in terms of assisting healthcare professionals to meet the challenges of providing effective, compassionate and efficient healthcare in the circumstances of the 21st Century where the issues are becoming increasingly complex.

This year a number of sessions have been provided by the Plunkett Centre for our management committee on various relevant topics creating both interesting and stimulating discussion. We are truly lucky to have such expertise through Bernadette Tobin and her team so readily available. It is also pleasing to see other Catholic providers benefiting from the expertise provided by the Plunkett Centre. Calvary Health Care is one of these providers and amongst other areas of advice was able to obtain the expertise of the Plunkett Centre this year on the matter of co-locating Catholic and non-Catholic Service. It was encouraging to see a number of other establishments utilizing the consultation services offered by the Plunkett Centre.

The Annual Plunkett Lecture series was delivered this year by Associate Professor Justin Oakley of Monash University who discussed the value and limits of medical transparency particularly in relation to what surgical patients should be told. This is an important issue in an environment of informed consent and open disclosure.

Robert Cusack
May 2016

From the University



As Dean of the Faculty of Theology and Philosophy and thus as Chair of the Management Committee for the Plunkett Centre, I would like to add my words of introduction to the Centre's Annual Report, and to acknowledge the work of its two Academic staff, Dr Bernadette Tobin and Dr Steve Matthews.

The Plunkett Centre is the oldest centre in the Faculty, and indeed in the University itself. Established in 1989, its purpose is to deepen and advance knowledge and understanding of ethical issues in health care – by research, by teaching, by consulting with practitioners and by making a contribution to public discussion of emerging issues.

Just as I write this short introduction, I find that Steve Matthews' article on "Dementia and the Power of Music Therapy", originally given as the Plunkett Centre's Annual Lecture in 2014, was second only to one article in the number of people who accessed it on-line in 2015 in the prestigious journal *Bioethics*. Congratulations to Steve.

I commend the work of the Plunkett Centre, and join with Bernadette and Steve in expressing my gratitude to Yvette Zuidema and to Derryn Goodman who has taken her place.

Dermot Nestor
May 2016

Management Committee

Professor Dermot Nestor, Dean, Faculty of Theology & Philosophy, ACU

Professor Anthony Schembri, Chief Executive Officer, St Vincent's Health Network Sydney

Mr Robert Cusack, Chief Executive Officer, St Vincent's Private Hospital, Sydney

Dr Richard Colledge, Head, School of Philosophy, ACU

Dr Bernadette Tobin, Director

Academic Staff

Steve Matthews BA (Hons) (Monash), PhD (Monash)
Senior Lecturer in Philosophy, Australian Catholic University
Senior Research Fellow, Full time



Bernadette Tobin MA MEd (Melb), PhD (Cantab)
Reader in Philosophy, Australian Catholic University
Director, Full time



Honorary Staff

Gerald Gleeson STB (CIS), MA (Cantab), PhD (Leuven)
Associate Professor of Philosophy, Sydney College of Divinity
Honorary Fellow



Jonathan Gillis MB BS, PhD, GradDipPallMed, FRACP, FJFICM, FACHRM
Clinical Associate Professor, University of Sydney
Honorary Fellow, Australian Catholic University
Conjoint Associate Professor, University of Western Sydney
Part-time Member Administrative Appeals Tribunal
Deputy Convenor and Consultant to NSW Child Death Review Team
Honorary Fellow



Administrative Assistant

Yvette Zuidema



Research

The Plunkett Centre conducts research in the following areas:

- **Contemporary normative theory**, in particular virtue theory, and its relation to Kant's ethics and consequentialism.
- **Clinical ethics**, in particular the goals of medicine, the canons of therapeutic responsiveness; competence, consent and decision-making about sick children; end-of-life decision-making; advance care planning; assisted reproductive technologies; organ and tissue donation; professional role ethics, the law and clinical ethics; regenerative medicine; public health ethics.
- **Psychiatric ethics**, in particular the threat of psychopathology to moral identity and moral agency, respect for autonomy, competence and coercion, moral responsibility of impaired persons, law and psychiatry, and the ethical challenges posed by developments in neuroscience.
- **Bioethics**, in particular the Catholic Christian contribution and its debates with and relationships to contemporary secular bioethics; the Metaphysics of the Incarnation; Human Sexuality and Procreation; the history of parental involvement at the end of life; concepts employed in end of life discussions; the meaning of suffering in the Intensive Care Unit; the history of organ donation.
- **Research Ethics**, in particular traditional debates about ethical standards with respect to research involving human participants and research involving animals; contemporary debates about genetic technologies, biotechnologies, stem cells, biobanking, etc.
- **Resource allocation**, in particular debates about the roles of the individual, the family, the market and the state in the provision of health care.
- **Computer ethics (in medical contexts)**, in particular the role online therapies play in treatment, reduction in costs, effectiveness and in threatening the clinician-patient relationship.

Teaching

- Weekly meetings with medical students from UNSW and UNDA undertaking Palliative Care Round: Bernadette Tobin
- PHIL 517 Guided Research Report. Ethical issues in justice health: Bernadette Tobin
- HUMA 410 Honours. Meta-ethics and moral psychology: Steve Matthews
- PHIL 506 Ethics in a faith-based context: Steve Matthews (One week intensive held in Melbourne 11 – 15 May, 2015)



Professor Terry Campbell
Chair of Bioethics Committee
St Vincent's Hospital, Sydney

Clinical Ethics

St Vincent's Health Network Sydney

- **St Vincent's Ethics Journal Club**
 - Posthumous collection and use of gametes: what should the law permit?
 - Is capital punishment ever consistent with the 6th Commandment?
 - 'Avoidable' death of a pregnant Jehovah's Witness with acute promyelocytic leukaemia: ethical considerations and the internal conflicts and challenges encountered by practitioners.

- **St Vincent's Public Executive:**
 - Ethical Issues in end of life care.
 - Ethical issues at the beginning of life.
 - Ethical issues in resource allocation.

- **St Vincent's Private Executive:**
 - Accepting a donation from makers of gambling machines: the ethics of cooperation.
 - Cosmetic v reconstructive surgery: ethics of reinforcing excessive interest in appearance.

- **St Vincent's Public Social Workers:**
 - Facilitating placement of patients when they leave hospital: the role of the Social Worker (with Clare Bailey)
 - Placement after hospital: ethical challenges for the Social Worker (with Clare Bailey)

- **St Vincent's Public General Staff:**
 - Ethical ideas from Christian tradition; forgoing of futile treatment
 - End of life cases; truth telling
 - Respect for conscientious objection: proper role, proper limits

Medical Students University of Notre Dame Australia:

- Posthumous collection and use of gametes: what should the law permit?
- Capital punishment and the 6th Commandment
- Avoidable death of a pregnant Jehovah's Witness with acute leukaemia: ethical considerations.

NSW Institute of Psychiatry Ethics Committee

- Parramatta: Chair Judy Angela Karpin

Children's Hospital at Westmead

- The moral dilemmas of interesting cases: Is my curiosity more important than your dignity? (with Dr Nadia Badawi and Ms Angela Casey)
- What is it to honour thy father and thy mother in specific circumstances? (with Dr Kenneth Nunn)



Bernadette Tobin meets Pope Francis
on the occasion of her appointment to the Pontifical Academy for Life, March 2015

Publications

Chapters in books

Matthews, S. 'Bio-technological challenges to autonomy', in Jai Gallott, Mianna Lotz (eds). *Super Soldiers: The Ethical, Legal and Social Consequences*. Ashgate, 2015, pp 109-119

Tobin, B. 'Just Health Care at the End of life' in *Foundations of Healthcare Ethics: Theory to Practice*, edited by John Ozolins & Joanne Grainger, Cambridge University Press, 2015

Tobin, B. 'MacIntyre's Paradox' in *The Ethics of Human Enhancement: Understanding the Debate* edited by Steve Clarke & CAJ Coady, Cambridge University Press, forthcoming, 2016.

Tobin, B. 'I hope I believe in God' in *Religion and Cultures in Dialogue: East and West Perspectives*, edited by John Ozolins, Springer, forthcoming 2016

Peer-reviewed articles

Matthews, S. "Music therapy and Dementia: rethinking the debate over Advance Directives", *Res Disputandae*, December 2015.

Tobin, B., Gray, K. Isaacs, D. Kilham, H. Waters. K. "A girl with severe congenital myopathy", *Journal of Paediatrics & Child Health*, forthcoming

Matthews, S. "Dementia and the Power of Music Therapy", *Bioethics*, 29, 573-9, 2015

Other articles

Matthews, S. "Addiction as Habit", *Bioethics Outlook*, Vol 26, No 1, March 2015, 1-10.

Matthews, S. "Addiction, Narrative, and Identity", *Bioethics Outlook*, 26,3, Sept 2015

Tobin, B. 'Catholicism and Capital Punishment: how is capital punishment evaluated?' *Bioethics Outlook*, 26.2; 2015: 1-8

Tobin, B. 'The truly seminal work of Edmund Pellegrino: Daniel Sulmasy's synthesis', *Bioethics Outlook*, 26.3; 2015: 1-4

Tobin, B. 'Voluntary' euthanasia: why it will be a way station', *Bioethics Outlook*, 26.4; 2015:1-3

Tobin, B. Review of John Hacker-Wright's Philippa Foot's Moral Thought (Bloomsbury, 2013) in *Philosophical Investigations*, Vol 38, No1/2, January-April 2015: 159-162.

Tobin, B. 'Voluntary Euthanasia: it can only be a way station to the non-voluntary', *Opinion*, ABC Religion and Ethics, <http://www.abc.net.au/religion/articles/2015/11/13/4351675htm>,



The Monday Reading Group:
Philippa Byers, Steve Buckle, Steve Matthews, Bernadette Tobin, Garry Nieuwkcamp

Consultancies

A selection of ethical issues addressed:

- Commercial agreements
- Patient information for a peritonectomy service
- HIV status and family requests for information
- Donation after circulatory death: the location of death
- Paediatricians' attitudes to parental decisions
- Who can reasonably be said to be part of the clinical team?
- Counselling for genetic conditions

Summary by source:

Year	St Vincent's Health Australia, Sydney	Other Institutions	Total
2015	16	22	38
2014	18	23	41
2013	14	16	30
2012	17	44	61
2011	15	18	33
2010	34	20	64
2009	26	38	64
2008	15	22	37
2007	14	13	27
2006	9	19	28
2005	12	20	32

Summary by profession:

Year	Administrators	Doctors	Nurses	Allied Practitioners	Others	Total
2015	3	13	6	2	14	38
2014	6	17	4	2	12	41
2013	7	12	2	1	8	30
2012	4	11	6	10	30	61
2011	9	11	3	1	9	33
2010	31	7	3	3	10	54
2009	24	17	4	1	18	64
2008	15	7	7	3	5	37
2007	8	8	5	1	5	27
2006	4	7	2	3	12	28
2005	6	6	1	7	12	32

2015 Annual Plunkett Lecture

In 2015, the Annual Plunkett Lecture was given by Associate Professor Justin Oakley on the subject: *What should surgical patients be told? The value and limits of medical transparency*. Dr Tony Grabs responded.

Professor Oakley is a member of the Monash University Centre for Human Bioethics and part of the Monash University School of Philosophical, Historical & International Studies.

Dr Grabs is a Vascular Surgeon at St Vincent's Hospital.



Bernadette Tobin introducing Professor Justin Oakley (left) and Dr Tony Grabs (right).

Coverage of the lecture is available on YouTube and can be accessed at:
www.plunkettcentre.acu.edu.au

Media

20 April 2015

Surrogacy laws may be a bridge too far for Australia. The Age, The Canberra Times, The Sydney Morning Herald, The Western Australian, The Brisbane Times, online editions, <http://www.theage.com.au/comment/surrogacy-laws-may-be-a-bridge-too-far-for-australia-20150420-1mosw7.html> (BT).

15 May 2015

Should commercial surrogacy be legalized? The case against, *The Sydney Morning Herald* (BT).

25 June 2015

Will recent surrogacy scandals lead to a crackdown on Australians using international 'rent a womb' services? Interview with Stuart Bocking, Morning Program, 2UE Radio (BT).

11 August 2015

Interviewed by Ellie Laning on SBS World News re 'karyomapping', a genetic test used to screen embryos to detect defective gene which causes congenital myasthenic syndrome. (BT).

21 August 2015

Interviewed by Robby Buck on ABC 702 Breakfast program re the meaning of forgiveness, the ways in which it benefits us, together with the ways in which it can be associated with moral weakness (BT).

Submissions to Public Inquiries

- Submission to NSW Ministry of Health: re posthumous collection and use of gametes (February).
- Submission to National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC): re Draft Ethical guidelines for organ and transplantation from deceased donors (February).
- Submission to National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC): re Clinical Practice in Assisted Reproductive Technology (August).
- Submission to Victorian Parliament: re legalization of physician assisted suicide (August).
- Submission to Victorian Parliament: re policy framework for end-of-life care (December).

Presentations

Steve Matthews

Ethics and Practice, ACU Institutes Conference, Feb, 2015

Oakley's remote scenarios: a comment, Reason and Virtue Conference, ACU, May 2015

Advance Care Planning, St Vincent's Hospital, May 2015

Habit and Addiction, CSU/CAPPE Seminar Series, June, 2015

Good and bad habits, AAP Conference, July, 2015

Bernadette Tobin

Equality in worth and dignity: why gender imbalance matters, Meeting of Regents of Bethlehem University, Rome, January.

Introduction to Bioethics, First Year Medical Students, University of Notre Dame Australia, February,

Revisiting Advance Care Planning: Ethics Forum, Catholic Health Australia, Sydney, May

Respondent to paper by CAJ Coady at Reason and Virtues Conference, ACU Melbourne, May

Young people addicted to injecting substances: how can we best help to reduce the additional associated harms? Invited presentation, International Association of Catholic Bioethicists, Montreal, July.

Appointments

Gerald Gleeson

Deputy Chair and Acting Chair, Academic Board, Sydney College of Divinity
Member of Council, St John's College (University of Sydney)
Reviewer for Journal *Sophia*.
Director of Mission, CatholicCare Sydney
Associate Professor, Sydney College of Divinity, Catholic Institute of Sydney.

Jonathan Gillis

Senior Staff Specialist NSW, Organ and Tissue Donation Service
Honorary Fellow, Australian Catholic University
Clinical Associate Professor, University of Sydney
Conjoint Associate Professor, University of Western Sydney
Deputy Convenor and Consultant to NSW Child Death Review Team
Member, Certification Assessor Review Panel of ethical review processes for
National Health and Medical Research Council

Steve Matthews

Member, NSW Institute of Psychiatry Ethics Committee
Member, ACU School of Philosophy Committee
Member, Organising Committee, Reasons and Virtues conference
Reader, Australian Research Council
Fellow, Centre for Moral Philosophy and Applied Ethics
Member, Institute of Religion and Critical Inquiry
Referee: *Neuroethics*, *Bioethics*, *American Philosophical Quarterly*, Springer
Handbook
Appointee, ACU Human Research Ethics Committee

Bernadette Tobin

Bioethics Committee, St Vincent's Health Australia, Sydney
Mission, Advocacy and Ethics Sub-Committee, St Vincent's Health Australia
Advisory Board, Anatomy Bequest Program, University of Technology Sydney
Clinical Ethics Advisory Panel, New South Wales Ministry of Health
Blood Borne Virus Advisory Panel, New South Wales Ministry of Health
Clinical Advisory Committee, NSW Organ and Tissue Donation Authority
Editorial Board of *Theoretical Medicine and Bioethics*
Director, Garvan Institute of Medical Research
Director, Scalabrinian Villages
Member of Council, St John's College Sydney
Founder, Mary Philippa Brazill Foundation
Member, Enhanced Multi-Disciplinary Peritonectomy Unit, St George's Hospital
Member, Governing Council, International Association of Catholic Bioethicists
Chair, Independent Panel of Assessors, Archdiocesan Grant Stem Cell Research for
2015

Bioethics Outlook Volume 26, 2015

No 1

Addiction as Habit. Steve Matthews

What does 'Je suis Charlie' mean? Gerald Gleeson

No 2

Catholicism and Capital Punishment. How is capital punishment to be evaluated?

Bernadette Tobin

Canada Opens the Door to Physician Assisted Suicide. Frank Brennan SJ

No 3

The 'truly seminal' work of Edmund Pellegrino: a synthesis by Daniel Sulmasy.

Bernadette Tobin

Addiction, narrative and identity. Steve Matthews

No 4

'Voluntary' euthanasia: why it will be a way station. Bernadette Tobin

Pathographies: Suffering and the patient's perspective. Garry Nieuwkamp

Surgical Reports Cards: a desirable development? Bernadette Tobin

Financial Report 2014/2015

		2014	2015
Carried Forward		140,732	144,093
Income			
	St Vincent's Health Australia, Sydney	175,888	184,683
	Australian Catholic University	175,888	184,683
	Consultancies	45,000	-
	Teaching	2,150	-
	Other Income	2,413	3770
Total Income		542,071	517,229
Expenditure			
	Salaries	342,435	335,593
	Non-Salary Items		
	Equipment purchase	-	
	Equipment maintenance	10,245	11,887
	Leasing	3,518	2,890
	Library	3,591	3,676
	Internet	981	989
	Other	3,531	4,481
	Rent	29,699	35,812
	Stationery	1,007	1,014
	Travel	2,971	9,960
Total Expenditure		397,978	406,302
Carried Forward		144,092	110,927

Plunkett Centre for Ethics
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