

Introduction for the Piedmont Project. Thanks to the Piedmont Project, an undergraduate course in religious bioethics has been modified to address sustainability issues, primarily the ethics of environmental health. The course would give students an opportunity to apply ethical reasoning and comparative analysis to a series of timely topics in medical ethics and environmental health. Accordingly, the religious bioethics syllabus was expanded to cover several aspects of sustainability. Students in the course would learn about the meaning of sustainability, the connections between medical ethics and sustainability, and the reasons and mechanisms for making health care institutions more sustainable. In addition, through the Piedmont workshop and subsequent research, I have been able to appreciate and utilize religious writings on specific sustainability topics. I had originally planned for the syllabus to consider several environmental health (e.g., endocrine-disrupting chemicals) and comparative methodology (e.g., informed consent and environmental right-to-know) topics that are relevant to both medical ethics and sustainability. However, since several topics lack high-quality religious writings to support stand-alone curricular modules, such topics will be covered by lectures and class exercises. Nonetheless, the syllabus has been expanded significantly to cover sustainability at several levels. To exemplify the relationship between medical ethics and sustainability, the course shows how religious thought struggles with both individual health risks and institutional management of environmental health risks. To demonstrate the diversity of religious thinking on sustainability at the global level, the course will also focus on religious thought and programming on climate change. The course will conclude with topics in biomedical technologies (i.e., reproductive technologies and organ transplantation) that have unexplored implications for sustainability. Finally, students will be encouraged to integrate medical ethics and sustainability in their seminar papers.

Bioethics, Sustainability, and Religious Thought

Fall 2010

Prof. Hillel Gray

Course Description

Students in this course will analyze and critique religious approaches to contemporary problems in bioethics and sustainable environmental health. The course tackles problems in medical ethics that focus on individuals, such as reproductive technologies, controversial surgeries, and end-of-life care. The course also examines broader issues of bioethics and sustainability, including distributive justice, prevention-oriented policies, global climate change, and environmental health.

This course will concentrate on methodologies and texts in the application of Jewish law to medical and environmental ethics. Jewish bioethics will be compared with Catholic moral theology and mainstream U.S. bioethics. We will consider the theories of these ethical discourses, their presuppositions, sociopolitical context, and reasoning.

Objectives

Through this course, students will:

- Understand Jewish and Catholic approaches to a range of key problems in bioethics
- Develop academic writing and argumentation skills, with an emphasis on ethics
- Improve analytical and critical skills for reading texts in religious bioethics

Required Readings

Please obtain the following books. Other required and optional readings will be available as handouts or through the course's Blackboard site. Please bring the pertinent readings to class sessions.

Freedman, Benjamin. *Duty and healing: Foundations of a Jewish Bioethic*. 1999

Kelly, David F. *Medical Care at the End of Life: A Catholic Perspective*. 2006

Mackler, Aaron. *Introduction to Jewish and Catholic Bioethics*. 2003

Zohar, Noam. *Alternatives to Jewish Bioethics*. 1997

Requirements and Assessment

Active engagement with course readings: To succeed as an ethics seminar, students will need to contribute thoughtfully to our deliberations over the readings. Accordingly, each student is asked to carefully read and analyze the texts for each class and come prepared to discuss the readings. For instance, for each session, bring at least one pointed question or insight. Since we will focus on academic writing, students will write throughout the semester and give each other feedback on assignments. In brief exercises, students may be asked to interpret primary and secondary sources, take into account socio-cultural and historical developments, formulate intellectual arguments on practical ethics, or otherwise respond to the course texts and topics. Overall, class participation will account for 20% of the grade.

Short papers. This writing intensive seminar will enable students to fulfill the post-freshman writing requirement, which includes a minimum of 20 pages of *polished writing*. Two short papers will be graded, the first after a thorough revision. Each short paper should consist of three (3) pages of critical analysis and argumentation for an academic readership/audience. The analysis would interpret and reflect upon the course readings and an important bioethics question; the argument would marshal evidence and reasoning so as to persuade academic readers about a narrow and contestable claim (thesis). The short papers will comprise 30% of the grade.

Although course topics have received much scientific analysis, the papers and class discussions should NOT rely heavily on scientific findings nor argue toward a scientific claim.

Final paper. The pivotal assignment for the course will be a seminar paper, which would typically advance a comparative, historical or analytical critique of Jewish and/or Catholic thought on bioethics. In developing the paper topic, students are encouraged to analyze religious and ethical concerns that impinge on patients, health care institutions, and local and global sustainability. Students are expected to develop their paper topic and bibliography during the early stages of the course, ideally after consultation with the instructor. Students will present their work-in-progress around the time that a draft is due. The paper *must* be submitted as a draft and then revised thoroughly for at least style and well-reasoned argumentation. The final version should be 15-18 pages, per format instructions. Student work on the final paper will amount to 50% of the grade.

Academic honesty. Each of us has an inexhaustible capacity for critical thinking and originality. This course is designed to enable you to express and expand your own thinking. Unfortunately, some students submit other people's work and leave the false impression that it is their own original writing. *Please familiarize yourself with Emory's policies and consequences for plagiarism.* No violation of the [Honor Code](#) for academic integrity will be tolerated. Suspected violations will be reported.

You can avoid plagiarism by properly taking notes and citing your sources when you write assignments. Proper citations will enable you to get your best possible grade and avoid the suspicion of plagiarism. *Do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.*

Course schedule. A schedule of class sessions is attached. The topics, readings, and assignments are *subject to change*. Updates will be discussed in class and/or posted on Blackboard, which should be consulted regularly. If absent from class, each student is expected to rely on other students for discussion notes, information on writing exercises, and so on.

Schedule of Course Sessions (Subject to Change)

Week 1	Introduction Religion, bioethics, sustainability Reproductive cloning and genetic modification	
Week 2	Aesthetic surgery	
Week 3	Gender (re)assignment	
Week 4	Abortion	First paper due
Week 5	End-of-life choices: A Catholic view	
Week 6	End-of-life choices: Comparative analysis	Revised first paper due
Week 7	Family, Consent and Competency (Freedman)	
Week 8	Medical and Environmental Health Risk	Second paper due
<i>Spring break</i>		
Week 9	Environmental health: Personal ethics of sustainability	
Week 10	Environmental health: Institutional sustainability	

Week 11	Environmental health: Global ethics and climate change	Draft of final paper due
Week 12	Assisted reproductive technologies	
Week 13	Distributive justice in health care	
Week 14	Live organ donations	
	(Reading period)	Final paper due

List of Topics and Readings

A) Introduction to bioethics, sustainability, and religion

Mackler, 1-63

Freedman, 16-28

Jenkins, Willis, "Global Ethics, Christian Theology, and the Challenge of Sustainability" in *Worldviews: Global Religions, Culture, and Ecology*, 12:2-3, 2008. 197-217(21)

Jonsen, Albert R. "A History of Religion and Bioethics" in David E. Guinn, ed. *Handbook of Bioethics and Religion*, Oxford UP, 2006. 23-36

Palmer, Clare. "Some Problems With Sustainability" in *Studies in Christian Ethics* 7, 2004. 52-62.

Smith, J. Z. "Religion, Religions, Religious," in *Critical Terms for Religious Studies*, University of Chicago Press, 1998. 269-284

B) Cloning

Pontificia Academia Pro Vita. "Reflections On Cloning," Libreria Editrice Vaticana 1997 in O'Rourke and Boyle, 172-178. Online:
http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_academies/acdlife/documents/rc_pa_acdlife_doc_30091997_clon_en.html

Sacks, Jonathan. "Tampering With Destiny is a Dangerous Path to Tread" in *The Times*, January 24, 1998. See: <http://www.chief Rabbi.org/ReadArtical.aspx?id=1204> accessed January 6, 2010

Sherwin, Byron L. "Cloning and Reproductive Biotechnology" in *Jewish Ethics for the Twenty-First Century*. Syracuse University Press, 2000. 110-126

*Broyde, Michael. "Cloning People: A Jewish Law Analysis of the Issues" in *Connecticut Law Review* v.30, Winter 1998, 503-535

*Childress, James F. "Religion, morality, and public policy: The controversy about human cloning" in Davis and Zoloth, *Notes from a narrow ridge: Religion and bioethics*, 1999.

C) Aesthetic surgery

Breisch, Mordechai Jacob. *Helkat Ya'akov* HM 31 (Translation for course use only, not for distribution.)

- Gilman, Sander. "God's Aesthetic Surgery" in *Creating Beauty to Cure the Soul: Race and Psychology in the Shaping of Aesthetic Surgery*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998, 130-134. Also recommended: "Preface" and "Reconstructing What?"
- O'Leary, Charles G. "Catholic Views on Cosmetic Surgery," in *Eye, Ear, Nose, and Throat Monthly* 41, 1962
- Waldenberg, Eliezer. *Tzitz Eliezer* XI 41.8-9 (Translation for course use only, not for distribution.)

D) Gender (re)assignment surgery

- Broyde, Michael. "Appendix: Sex Change Operations and Their Effect on Marital Status: A Brief Comparison" in "The Establishment of Maternity & Paternity in Jewish and American Law" in *Nat'l Jewish Law Review* v.3. http://jlaw.com/Articles/maternity_appendix.html
- Draper, Heather and Neil Evans. "Transsexualism and Gender Reassignment Surgery" in *Cutting to the Core: Exploring the Ethics of Contested Surgeries*, David Benatar, ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006. 97-110
- Guevin, Benedict M. "Sex Reassignment Surgery for Transsexuals: An Ethical Conundrum?" in *National Catholic Bioethics Quarterly*, 5:4, Winter 2005. 719 - 734
- Rabinowitz, Mayer E. "Status of Transsexuals" *Committee on Jewish Law and Standards of the Rabbinical Assembly*, YD 336, Dec. 3, 2003. Website access: http://www.rabbinicalassembly.org/teshuvot/docs/20012004/rabinowitz_transsexuals.pdf
- Spriggs, Merle and Julian Savulescu. "The Ethics of Surgically Assigning Sex for Intersex Children" in *Cutting to the Core: Exploring the Ethics of Contested Surgeries*, David Benatar, ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006. 79-96
- Waldenberg, Eliezer. *Tzitz Eliezer* XI:78. (Translation for course use only, not for distribution.)

E) Abortion

- * Cahill, Lisa Sowell. "Abortion Pill' RU 486: Ethics, Rhetoric, and Social Practice" in *The Hastings Center Report*, 17:5 (Oct. - Nov., 1987), 5-8
- Mackler, ch. 5, 120-155
- Jotkowitz, Alan and Aviad Raz, Shimon Glick, and Ari Z. Zivotofsky. "Abortions for fetuses with mild abnormalities" in *IMAJ* 12, Jan. 2010
- Kelly, David F. *Contemporary Catholic Health Care Ethics*, Georgetown University Press, 2004, 34-37, 108-116
- Noonan, John. "Abortion and the Catholic Church: A summary history" *Natural Law Forum* 12, 1967. 85; 113-131.

F) End-of-life choices: A Catholic view

- Declaration on Euthanasia. *Congregation for the doctrine of the faith*. 1980
- Kelly, ch.1-5, 1-86. (His view of the consensus on forgoing treatment.)
- Kelly, ch.6-8, 87-154. (On feeding tubes, euthanasia, and medical futility.)

G) End-of-life choices: Comparative analysis

- Mackler: ch.3, "Euthanasia and assisted suicide" (64-84)
- Mackler, ch.4, "Treatment decisions near the end of life" (85-119)
- Feinstein, Moshe. *Igrot Moshe* HM II:73-74 (excerpts) in Feinstein, Moses, and Moshe David Tendler. *Responsa of Rav Moshe Feinstein: Translation and Commentary: Care of the Critically Ill*. Hoboken, N.J.: KTAV Pub. House, 1996.

*Newman, Louis. "Woodchoppers and Respirators: The Problem of Interpretation in Contemporary Jewish Ethics" in *Past Imperatives: Studies in the History and Theory of Jewish Ethics*. SUNY, 1998, 161-183

H) Freedman's approach: Family, Consent and Competency

Freedman, sections 1-3, pp. 69-241.

I) Risk decisions in medical and environmental health

Bleich, J. David. "Hazardous Medical Procedures" in *Tradition* 37:3, Fall 2003.

Freedman, section 4, "Risk: Principles of judgment in health care decisions," 255-322

Hans Jonas. "Contemporary Problems in Ethics from a Jewish Perspective" in *Judaism and Environmental Ethics: a Reader*. Martin D. Yaffe ed., 2001. 50-266

J) Environmental health: Personal ethics of sustainability

Bleich, J. David. Two articles on cigarette smoking, *Tradition*, 1977 and 1983

Feinstein, Moshe. *Igrot Moshe*, New York. Three responsa, 1963, 1980, 1981. (Translation for course use only, not for distribution.)

Rabbinical Council of America, "The Prohibition on Smoking in Halacha," New York, 2006

Lannan, "Catholic tradition, and the new Catholic theology and social teaching on the environment" in *Catholic Law Journal*, 1999, 353-388

K) Environmental health: Institutional sustainability

Diamond, Eliezer. "How Much is Too Much? Conventional versus Personal Definitions of Pollutions in Rabbinic Sources" in *Judaism and Ecology: Created World and Revealed World*, ed. Hava Tirosh-Samuelson. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002. 61-80

Jameton, Andrew and Jessice Pierce. "Environmental aspects of health care" and "The green health center" in *The ethics of environmentally responsible health care*, Oxford University Press, 2004

Levine, Aaron. "External Costs" in *Free Enterprise and Jewish Law: Aspects of Jewish Business Ethics*. New York, NY: Ktav Publ., 1980. Focus on pp. 62-77

Swartz, Daniel. "Religious approaches to environmental health" in Howard Frumkin, ed., *Environmental Health: From Global to Local*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005. 197-218

L) Environmental health: Global ethics and climate change

Grazer, Walter. "Environmental Justice: A Catholic Voice" in *Health Progress: Journal of the Catholic Health Association of the United States*, Nov.-Dec., 2003. 39-41

Hess, Jeremy J., Katherine L. Heilpern, Timothy E. Davis, and Howard Frumkin. "Climate Change and Emergency Medicine: Impacts and Opportunities" in *Academic Emergency Medicine* 16:8, 2009. 782 - 794

Jameton, Andrew and Jessice Pierce. "Global bioethics and justice" in *The ethics of environmentally responsible health care*, Oxford University Press, 2004

McCammack, Brian. "Hot Damned America: Evangelicalism and the Climate Change Policy Debate" in *American Quarterly*, 59:3, September 2007, 645-668

McMichael, A. J., et al., eds. *Climate change and human health: risks and responses*. Geneva: World Health Organization, 2004. <http://www.who.int/entity/globalchange/publications/climchange.pdf>

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. "Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good," 2001

Wenski, Thomas G. "The challenge of climate change and environmental justice: A distinctive Catholic contribution," *Notre Dame Journal of Law, Ethics & Public Policy* v.23 2009. 497-514

M) Assisted reproductive technologies

- Cahill, Lisa Sowell. "Moral Traditions, Ethical Language, and Reproductive Technologies" in *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy*, 14, 1989. 497-522
- Mackler, ch.6, "In vitro fertilization," 156-169
- O'Rourke and Boyle, chs. 8-9, "Artificial insemination" and "Artificial reproduction" 62-69
- Sherwin, Byron L. "Corporate Golems: The Supreme Court Creates an Artificial Person" in *Golems Among Us: How A Jewish Legend Can Help Us Navigate the Biotech Century*. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2004. ch.9, 156-191
- Zohar, ch.3, "Parenthood: Natural fact and human society," 69-84

N) Distributive justice in health care

- Kelly, chs.25-26, "Allocating health care resources" and "The use and misuse of the allocation argument" in *Contemporary Catholic Health Care Ethics*, 270-296
- Mackler, ch. 7, "Access to health care and rationing," 190-211
- Novak, David. "A Jewish Argument for Socialized Medicine," *The Sanctity of Human Life*, 2007. 91-110
- Zohar, ch.6, "Allocating medical resources: Global planning and immediate obligations," 143-152
- *Zoloth, Laurie. "Community and Conscience: Public Choices and Private Acts" in *Health Care and the Ethics of Encounter: A Jewish Discussion of Social Justice*. UNC Press, 1999. 221-245.

O) Organ Transplantation with Live Donors

- Hamdy, Sherine. "Rethinking Islamic Legal Ethics in Egypt's Organ Transplant Debate" 78-93, in *Muslim Medical Ethics: From Theory to Practice*, 2008
- Hippen, Benjamin, Lainie Friedman Ross, and Robert M. Sade. "Saving Lives Is More Important Than Abstract Moral Concerns: Financial Incentives Should Be Used to Increase Organ Donation" in *Annals of Thoracic Surgery*, 88:4, October 2009. 1053-1061
- Nakasone, Ronald Y. "Ethics of ambiguity: A Buddhist reflection on the Japanese organ transplant law" in David E. Guinn, ed. *Handbook of Bioethics and Religion*, Oxford UP, 2006. 293-302
- Stempsey, W. 'Organ markets and human dignity: On selling your body and soul,' *Christian Bioethics* 6:2, 2000. 195-204.
- Warburg, Ronnie. "Renal Transplantation: Living Donors and Markets for Body Parts - Halakha in Concert with Halakhic Policy or Public Policy?" in *Tradition* 40:2, 2007. 14-35 (-48)

Readings may be changed and/or supplemented with short primary texts.