Philosophy & Medicine: Annual report 2014-5

Nir Eyal, Chair of the APA Committee on Philosophy and Medicine

Let me start by describing briefly our Committee-sponsored sessions.

The Committee-sponsored session for the APA Eastern Division meeting, titled “Child Euthanasia,” was put together by Sarah Conly (Bowdoin College), who chaired it. This panel looked at recent legislation from Belgium allowing the euthanasia of children. The speakers were David Wendler (National Institutes of Health), on “The Practice and Policy of Pediatric Euthanasia”; Dominic Sisti (University of Pennsylvania), on “Nascent Values, Questionable Capacity, and Dying Well: Pediatric Euthanasia in Belgium and Beyond”; and Luc Bovens (London School of Economics), on “Child Euthanasia: Should We Just Not Talk About It?”.

For the APA Central Division meeting, we planned two sessions:

1. A joint APA Committee Session on “Long-Term Care for the Elderly:”, arranged by the APA Committee on Philosophy and Medicine and co-sponsored by the APA Committee on the Status of Women. The original organizer was Rosie Tong, but she had to step down from Committee service because of ill health, and the Committee Chair (Nir Eyal) stood in. The speakers were planned to be Lisa Eckenwiler (George Mason University), on “Long-Term Care, Global Markets, and the Ethics of Displacement”; Eva Feder Kittay (Stony Brook University), on “Long Term Care and the Problem of Patient Autonomy”; Jeremy Snyder (Simon Fraser University), on “Can We Care for the Elderly without Worsening Global Inequity? The Case of Nurse Migration from the Caribbean”; and Hilde Lindemann (Michigan State University), on “Families and Professionals: Who Is Responsible?”. However, due to inclement weather, too many speakers canceled and we had to cancel this event.

2. A panel on “Moral Enhancement: A Critical Assessment”, arranged and chaired by Fabrice Jotterand (Regis University). The speakers were: James Giordano (Georgetown University Medical Center), on “Cognitive and Moral Enhancement: Realities, Risks—and Opportunities”, Jeffrey P. Bishop (Albert Gnaegi Center for
Health Care Ethics, Saint Louis University), on “Neuroscience and Other Political Schemes”, Nicole Vincent (Georgia State University), on “Moral Enhancement: 60 Years On”, and Veljko Dubljevic (Institut de Recherches Cliniques de Montréal and McGill University), on “Implications of the ADC Model Judgment for the Theoretical Feasibility of Moral Enhancement”.

The APA Pacific Division included a Committee-sponsored panel on “Justice and Risk-distribution”, organized and chaired by Johann Frick (Princeton). The speakers were Colleen Murphy (University of Illinois at Urbana- Champaign), on “Choosing Risks in Public Policy”; John Oberdiek (Rutgers University), on “Risk and the Distribution of Options”; Paul Kelleher (University of Wisconsin–Madison), on “Risk and the Distribution of Options”; and Rahul Kumar (Queen’s University), on “What We Owe to (Statistical) Others”.

Our other activities included:

- new Committee newsletters
- transitioning to the new APA website
- Presenting our work and challenges to the APA leadership
- Training an incoming Associate Chair.