



PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY

Paul Formosa and Catriona Mackenzie raise an important question: to what degree are Kant's and Aristotle's ethics compatible with each other? To answer this question, they examine the synthesis of Kantian and Aristotelian insights offered by Martha Nussbaum:

Nussbaum attempts to integrate distinct and seemingly opposed Aristotelian and Kantian elements into her conception of human dignity. The Aristotelian elements involve linking dignity to species specific norms of flourishing and to the neediness and vulnerability of our embodied animal lives. The Kantian element involves the idea of each person as an end in themselves. Although Nussbaum draws on the Kantian conception of dignity, she also characterises her conception of dignity in contrast to what she refers to as the Kantian conception of the person. But does Nussbaum successfully integrate these two seemingly opposed conceptions of dignity into one coherent account and is her representation of the Kantian conception of dignity accurate?¹

On the nature of dignity, Formosa and Mackenzie may overstate the contrast or tension between Aristotle and Kant. After all, are not the species-specific norms of flourishing for human beings inextricably tied to our rationality and freedom, in other words, to what makes us beings who are ends-in-themselves? Is not one of our fundamental needs as human beings to develop our rational faculties and our potential for moral virtue, so that we can do our duty and live in accordance with reason? No human being can fully flourish unless he lives a life that expresses both rationality and freedom by respecting other human beings and reciprocally being respected by other human beings as an end-in-himself.

1. Paul Formosa and Catriona Mackenzie, "Nussbaum, Kant, and the Capabilities Approach to Dignity," *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 17.5 (November 2014): 876, doi: 10.1007/s10677-014-9487-y.

A greater tension between the Kantian and Aristotelian accounts lies in their answers to the question, who has dignity? Both Kant and Aristotle can be interpreted as advocating an ethics of exclusion, which holds that not all but only some human beings have dignity. However, both philosophers may also be interpreted as expressing a more inclusive and universalist view that all human beings have basic dignity. These interpretations are not equally plausible. Considered as a historical figure, Aristotle does not ascribe equal dignity to all human beings, because slaves and women did not have equal dignity with free men. However, a neo-Aristotelian like Alasdair MacIntyre can justify the dignity of each human being.² Kant ascribes dignity to all human beings because all human beings have a rational nature, which characteristically develops into an immediately exercisable capacity for rational activity and free choice.³ However, neo-Kantians like Mary Anne Warren deny the equal dignity of all human beings.⁴

Formosa and Mackenzie call attention to an important distinction between what they call status dignity and achievement dignity. Status dignity belongs to the class of individuals who are due respect, have basic rights, and are part of the moral community. An individual either has or does not have this status. On the other hand, achievement dignity is measured by degrees. An individual might have achievement dignity while riding a ski lift, have less achievement dignity while struggling awkwardly to get off the lift, and have still less achievement dignity when losing control on the ski slope and crashing face-first into a snow drift:

I might have a high degree of achievement dignity when I do something dignified, such as respond with fortitude to a heavy loss, but lose (or lose a degree of) my achievement dignity when I do something undignified, such as make a fool of myself in public by losing my cool and unjustifiably abusing someone. In contrast, I don't lose my status dignity when I make a fool of myself in public (even if doing so is undignified), and my status dignity attaches itself primarily to me rather than to my beings and doings, such as my responding with fortitude to a heavy loss.⁵

Their last point is crucial. Status dignity is an essential trait of an individual rather than a trait linked to his actions. Put in metaphysical terms, status dignity is not an accidental characteristic, such as what I happen to be doing right now or what I have done in the past. Status dignity is an essential characteristic like being alive or being a human being, something that I do not lose until I lose my very existence. To have status dignity is akin to being the son of a king and queen. Nothing can reverse royal lineage, for the son always has regal status by virtue of his royal

2. Alasdair MacIntyre, *Dependent Rational Animals: Why Human Beings Need the Virtues* (Peru, IL: Open Court, 1999).

3. Patrick Kain, "Kant's Defense of Human Moral Status," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 47.1 (January 2009): 59–101, doi: 10.1353/hph.0.0083.

4. Mary Anne Warren, "On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion," *Monist* 57.1 (December 19, 2014) 43–61, doi: 10.5840/monist197357133.

5. Formosa and Mackenzie, "Nussbaum, Kant, and the Capabilities Approach," 877.

parents. However, if a prince acts in foolish, dishonorable, and demeaning ways, he lacks regal behavior, or achievement dignity.

In her article “Respect for Human Dignity as ‘Substantive Basic Norm,’” Mary Neal takes up a different aspect of the debate and challenges the claim that dignity can be reduced to autonomy: “First, if autonomy and dignity *were* essentially synonymous, then logically, only autonomous individuals could be said to possess dignity.”⁶ No one holds that an individual must actually be exercising autonomy to deserve respect—think, for example, of a sleeping doctor, a dead-drunk lawyer, or a politician undergoing surgery. Moreover, small children and mentally handicapped adults lack autonomy in its Kantian sense of a self-given rational law yet are respected by every sound legal system.

Neal’s challenge critiques a straw man inasmuch as no one thinks it is necessary to actually exercise autonomy to have either status or achievement dignity. The current discussion is between those who think that dignity depends on having the capability to immediately exercise autonomy, or a related characteristic, and those who hold that status dignity is enjoyed by anyone with a root capacity or nature oriented toward reason. Neal leaves both these views unaddressed.

Second, Neal writes,

I can violate your autonomy without violating my own, and fail to respect your autonomy while my own autonomy remains completely unaffected. By contrast, if we understand dignity as a moral relationship (*per* Maier) and the community as a party to that relationship (*per* Oliver) we can then understand dignity as attaching to human beings and their communities in a reflexive way, so that when I violate your dignity, I am simultaneously failing to respect my own dignity *and* offending against the “community of dignity.”⁷

This contrast does not really work, however, because it uses dignity ambiguously. When someone violates another person’s dignity, the perpetrator’s achievement dignity is degraded because he makes himself less worthy of moral praise from others. Yet the perpetrator retains his status dignity as a being who deserves fundamental respect. For this reason, even the most horrible mass murderers are due fair trials and legal representation as well as humane treatment after conviction, because their status dignity remains intact, an intrinsic characteristic lost only in death.

At another point in her essay, Neal turns to the topic of human dignity and rights:

In international human rights discourse and jurisprudence, “human dignity” is conceived of as inherent and inalienable: we are all born with dignity, and no-one and nothing can remove it from us. But if dignity is inherent, I do not need to acquire it; and if it is inalienable, I need no protection against its loss. If a “right to dignity” is a right to something everybody already has and cannot lose, it makes no sense.⁸

6. Mary Neal, “Respect for Human Dignity as ‘Substantive Basic Norm,’” *International Journal of Law in Context* 10.1 (March 2014): 28, doi: 10.1017/S1744552313000359, original emphasis.

7. *Ibid.*, 29, original emphasis.

8. *Ibid.*, 32.

This passage misinterprets the meaning of an inalienable right, at least as it is classically understood. When the authors of the *Declaration of Independence* spoke of the inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, they did not mean to imply that murder, enslavement, and oppression are impossible. Rather, an inalienable right is one that cannot be renounced. I cannot change murder and slavery into permissible acts by authorizing another person to murder or enslave me. I cannot waive my right to equal protection under the law and make my legal status like that of a plant. Because status dignity is inherent, human beings cannot relinquish their basic human rights and degrade themselves to mere things to be used. Status dignity is the basis for inalienable rights, which can be violated but not voluntarily given up.

But what exactly is the relationship between rights and dignity? Peter Schaber's article "Human Rights and Human Dignity: A Reply to Doris Schroeder" critically evaluates arguments that claim human rights cannot be derived from human dignity. One such argument is that dignity is an inherently religious concept and, therefore, cannot justify human rights in a secular society. Schaber points out that "non-believers might disagree with this justification; but if the relevant religious beliefs were true, they would simply be wrong. The fact that the non-believers were not convinced would be no reason to reject dignity as a justificatory basis for human rights. It would only reveal the cognitive limits of the non-believers."⁹ A disagreement between persons of faith and persons of no faith cannot be adjudicated by a simple supposition that in such cases the views of nonbelievers are to be adopted. Why should a believer accept atheism by default any more than an atheist should unequivocally accept theism? If it is true that every human being has inherent worth regardless of age, disability, or health condition, then a denial of this belief is untrue. Belief in an untruth reveals cognitive limitations, as Schaber points out. Some religious convictions cannot be justified by philosophical arguments or scientific evidence. The doctrine that God is three divine Persons is a classic example. Other religious beliefs can be justified through philosophy and science. For example, recent psychological studies confirm the value of forgiveness.¹⁰

Is the inherent dignity of all human beings a distinctly religious belief like the Trinity, or is it akin to believing that forgiveness helps human flourishing? The affirmation of human dignity is found clearly in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures. The creation story in Genesis teaches that each human being is a member of God's royal family. Ancient pagan creation accounts suggest that only the king's family was made in the image and likeness of the gods. Genesis, by contrast, affirms that Adam and Eve were both made in God's image and became the origin of the human family. Genesis articulates in narrative form the insight that all human beings have royal lineage and thus have status dignity.

9. Peter Schaber "Human Rights and Human Dignity: A Reply to Doris Schroeder," *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 17.1 (February 2014): 156, doi 10.1007/s10677-013-9427-2.

10. See Christopher Kaczor, *The Gospel of Happiness* (New York: Image Books, 2015), 115–132.

Of course, universal status dignity does not need to rest on the text of Genesis, and can be defended without appealing to revelation of any kind, much less sectarian religious beliefs.¹¹ Only Roman Catholics believe in the infallibility of the Pope as defined by the First Vatican Council. By contrast, the principle that “all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness” is espoused by people of many different faiths. A “recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family” was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 10, 1948.¹² This proposition finds acceptance among atheists, agnostics, Muslims, Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Buddhists, and followers of innumerable other religions. If dignity as understood by the United Nations somehow counts a religious belief, it is hard to see what kind of ethical or political principles could count as nonreligious. Obviously, the fact that belief in human status dignity is found in the Bible should not count against its truth or its enforcement in a legal system any more than the Biblical passage “You shall not steal” delegitimizes laws prohibiting theft.

It appears that Schaber rejects the proposition that all human beings have basic rights: “I think that people in a permanent vegetative state should be cared about. But do they have the rights which adults have? They might have a moral status which does not give rise to rights; and this might be due simply to the fact that it would make no sense to ascribe rights to beings who are in principle unable to exercise them.”¹³ Indeed, people in a PVS entirely lose their right to drive a car because of the limitations of their cognitive state. Similarly, such people cannot exercise their right to vote. Even if a proxy were to vote for him, the person in a PVS would not be the one actually exercising his right to vote. However, other rights surely are maintained even by people in a PVS. Rape is intrinsically evil, and everyone has a right not to be raped. If a woman in a PVS maintains the right not to be raped by virtue of the value of her bodily integrity, then *a fortiori* she also maintains the right not to be intentionally killed, the most serious violation of her bodily integrity possible. To exercise some rights, like voting or driving, an agent must knowingly and willingly do something. Other rights, such as the right not to be raped or the right not to be murdered, do not require that the one having the right do anything consciously and knowingly.

At times, Schaber’s article reflects a lack of familiarity with recent research about human dignity:

One can only justify the rights humans have as humans by referring to properties which are essential properties of human beings; it is not enough,

11. See Patrick Lee, “Moral Status and the Margins of Human Life,” *American Journal of Jurisprudence* 60.1 (May 2015) 105–120, doi: 10.1093/ajj/auv008; and S. Matthew Liao, “The Basis of Human Moral Status,” *Journal of Moral Philosophy* 7.2 (2010): 159–179, doi: 10.1163/174552409X12567397529106.

12. UN General Assembly, “Universal Declaration of Human Rights,” December 10, 1948, preamble.

13. Schaber, “Human Rights and Human Dignity,” 158.

simply to refer to the fact that they are human beings. But then it is unlikely that the justificatory work will be done by properties shared by all beings who are human in a biological sense. It might be the case that we all share certain genes. But do we have a right not to be degraded, because we have these genes? This is highly implausible. The property we need to share has to be relevant for the justification of human rights. This property has, however, not yet been identified. And this is the reason why all justifications of human rights which refer to our humanity are unable to account for the idea that all humans have certain rights.¹⁴

One can claim that no successful justification for universal human rights has been given. But it is inaccurate to claim that no justification has been offered at all. In recent years, numerous accounts have been proposed. For example, Matthew Liao claims that all human beings have basic dignity and human rights because they have the genetic basis for moral agency.¹⁵ Robert George, Christopher Tollefsen, Patrick Lee, and many others in the natural law tradition defend the same view on the basis of the shared rational nature of all human beings.¹⁶ This inclusive view also has distinguished historical proponents, including Immanuel Kant.¹⁷ In 1776, the founders held these truths to be self-evident truths that all human beings are created equal and have inalienable rights. They asserted, in other words, that the inherent dignity of every human being is a first principle, a foundation not in need of further justification, but rather a beginning point of reasoning in the moral and political order. Perhaps these or other attempts fail, but Schaber provides no reason for us to think so.

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14. Ibid.

15. Liao, "Basis of Human Moral Status," 159–179; and S. Matthew Liao, "The Genetic Account of Moral Status: A Defense," *Journal of Moral Philosophy* 9.2 (2012): 265–277, doi: 10.1163/174552412X625718.

16. Robert P. George and Christopher Tollefsen, *Embryo: A Defense of Human Life* (New York: Doubleday, 2008); and Lee, "Moral Status and the Margins of Human Life."

17. Kain, "Kant's Defense of Human Moral Status."

PHILOSOPHY ABSTRACTS

*American Catholic
Philosophical Quarterly*

P. Reed, How to gerrymander intention, Am Cathol Philos Q 89.3 (Summer 2015): 441–460: doi: 10.5840/acpq201561557 • Essential to the doctrine of double effect is the idea that agents are prohibited from intending evil as a means to a good end. I argue in this paper that some recent accounts of intention from proponents of double effect (such as by Michael Bratman and John Finnis) cannot sustain this prohibition on harmful means. I outline two ways to gerrymander intention that mark these accounts. First, intention is construed in such a way that an agent intends only those states of affairs that she cares about or finds motivating for their own sake. Second, intention is construed in such a way that what counts as intended is determined sufficiently by the agent's beliefs.

J. Shaw, Death and other harms: intention and the problem of closeness, Am Cathol Philos Q 89.3 (Summer 2015): 421–439 doi: 10.5840/acpq201561762 • This paper considers the problem of closeness in the ethical use of intention. In section I, attempts inspired by Anscombe to use a “coarse grained” understanding of intention, to deal with certain difficult cases, are rejected. In section II it is argued that the difficult cases can be addressed using other moral principles. In section III a more detailed account of intention is set out, analysing intention as a reason for action, and in section IV two paradoxes apparently created by this account are addressed: on the contrast between intentions and intentional action, and the difference between killing a group of people together or individually. In section V another set of cases is considered, to test how this account of intention handles the intention of harm. Section VI considers the objection that an agent may cause what is a harm without intending it as a harm.

*American Journal
of Jurisprudence*

P. Lee, Moral status and the margins of human life, Am J Jurisprud 60.1 (June 2015): 105–120: doi: 10.1093/ajj/auv008 • What is the basis for being a subject of rights? And what beings possess that moral-status conferring property? In particular, are all human beings subjects of basic rights? I argue that the basis for being a subject of rights is a substantial nature—as opposed to an accidental attribute or set of accidental attributes—specifically, rational nature, that is, a nature oriented to conceptual thought and deliberate choice. I answer the objection that some beings are human beings and yet lack a rational nature, such as brain-dead bodies and radically cognitively impaired human beings.

Bioethics

J. Beverley, The ties that undermine, Bioethics, 22.18 *Bioethics* (June 2015): doi: 10.1111/bioe.12213 • Do biological relations ground responsibilities between biological fathers and their offspring? Few think biological relations ground either necessary or sufficient conditions for responsibility. Nevertheless, many think biological relations ground responsibility at least partially. Various scenarios, such as cases concerning the responsibilities of sperm donors, have been used to argue in favor of biological relations as partially grounding responsibilities. In this article, I seek to undermine the temptation to explain sperm donor scenarios via biological relations by appealing to an overlooked feature of such scenarios. More specifically, I argue that sperm donor scenarios may be better explained by considering the unique abilities of agents involved. Appealing to unique ability does not eliminate the possibility of biological relations providing some explanation for perceived responsibilities

on the part of biological fathers. However, since it is unclear exactly why biological relations are supposed to ground responsibility in the first place, and rather clear why unique ability grounds responsibility in those scenarios where it is exhibited, the burden of proof seems shifted to those advocating biological relations as grounds of responsibility to provide an explanation. Since this seems unlikely, I conclude it is best to avoid appealing to biological relations as providing grounds for responsibility.

D. K. Chan, The concept of human dignity in the ethics of genetic research, *Bioethics* 29.4 (May 2015): 274–282; doi: 10.1111/bioe.12102 • Despite criticism that dignity is a vague and slippery concept, a number of international guidelines on bioethics have cautioned against research that is contrary to human dignity, with reference specifically to genetic technology. What is the connection between genetic research and human dignity? In this article, I investigate the concept of human dignity in its various historical forms, and examine its status as a moral concept. Unlike Kant's ideal concept of human dignity, the empirical or relational concept takes human dignity as something that is affected by one's circumstances and what others do. I argue that the dignity objection to some forms of genetic research rests on a view of human nature that gives humans a special status in nature – one that is threatened by the potential of genetic research to reduce individuals to their genetic endowment. I distinguish two main philosophical accounts of human nature. One of these, the Aristotelian view, is compatible with the use of genetic technology to help humans realize their inherent potential to a fuller extent.

Ethical Theory and Moral Practice

P. Formosa and C. Mackenzie, Nussbaum, Kant, and the capabilities approach to dignity, *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 17.5 (November 2014): 875–892; doi: 10.1007/s10677-014-9487-y • The concept of dignity plays a foundational role in the more recent versions of Martha Nussbaum's

capabilities theory. However, despite its centrality to her theory, Nussbaum's conception of dignity remains under-theorised. In this paper we critically examine the role that dignity plays in Nussbaum's theory by, first, developing an account of the concept of dignity and introducing a distinction between two types of dignity, status dignity and achievement dignity. Next, drawing on this account, we analyse Nussbaum's conception of dignity and contrast it with Kant's conception of dignity. On the basis of this comparison between Nussbaum and Kant, we highlight tensions between Nussbaum's Aristotelianism, which is central to her conception of dignity, and her commitment to political liberalism. This leads us to conclude that Nussbaum's claim that her conception of dignity is only a partial political conception is implausible and that her conception of dignity seems to commit her to a satisficing form of perfectionist liberalism.

Health and Human Rights

A. Chapman, The foundations of a human right to health: human rights and bioethics in dialogue, *Health Hum Rights* 17.1 (June 2015): E6–E18 • Human rights, including the right to health, are grounded in protecting and promoting human dignity. Although commitment to human dignity is a widely shared value, the precise meaning and requirements behind the term are elusive. It is also unclear as to how a commitment to human dignity translates into specific human rights, such as the right to the highest attainable standard of health, and delineates their scope and obligations. The resulting lack of clarity about the foundations of and justification for the right to health has been problematic in a number of ways. This article identifies the strengths of and some of the issues with the grounding of the right to health in human dignity. It then examines ethical and philosophical expositions of human dignity and several alternative foundations proposed for the right to health, including capability theory and the work of Norman Daniels, to assess whether any offer a richer

and more adequate conceptual grounding for the right to health.

Health Care Analysis

A. Smajdor and D. Cutas, Will artificial gametes end infertility?, Health Care Anal 23.2 (June 2015): 134–147: doi: 10.1007/s10728-013-0268-x • In this paper we will look at the various ways in which infertility can be understood and at how need for reproductive therapies can be construed. We will do this against the background of research with artificial gametes (AGs). Having explored these questions we will attempt to establish the degree to which technologies such as AGs could expand the array of choices that people have to reproduce and/or become parents. Finally, we will examine whether and in what ways the most promising developments of such technologies are likely to bring about the “end of infertility”.

HEC Forum

S. Floyd, Substantial goodness and nascent human life, HEC Forum 27.3 (September 2015): 229–248 doi: 10.1007/s10730-015-9265-9 • Many believe that moral value is—at least to some extent—dependent on the developmental states necessary for supporting rational activity. My paper rejects this view, but does not aim simply to register objections to it. Rather, my essay aims to answer the following question: if a human being’s developmental state and occurrent capacities do not bequeath moral standing, what does? The question is intended to prompt careful consideration of what makes human beings objects of moral value, dignity, or (to employ my preferred term) goodness. Not only do I think we can answer this question, I think we can show that nascent human life possesses goodness of precisely this sort. I appeal to Aquinas’s metaethics to establish the conclusion that the goodness of a human being—even if that being is an embryo or fetus—resides at the substratum of her existence. If she possesses goodness, it is because human existence is good.

H. Watt, Life and health: a value in itself for human beings?, HEC Forum 27.3

(September 2015): 207–228 doi: 10.1007/s10730-015-9288-2 • The presence of a human being/organism—a living human “whole,” with the defining tendency to promote its own welfare—has value in itself, as do the functions which compose it. Life is inseparable from health, since without some degree of healthy functionality (if not in all cases active functioning) the living whole would not exist. The value of life differs both within a single life (in different periods or possible situations) and between lives (lives that vary in length, health or even physical maturity are not all equally fulfilled). As with any other form of human flourishing, the value of life-and-health must be distinguished from the moral importance of human beings: less fulfilled means not less important morally, but more in need of being fulfilled. That said, to say that life and health has value is not to say exactly what—if anything—that value requires by way of active promotion at a given time. Many factors must be taken into account in making health care decisions, even if the worth of all lives, and the dignity of all human beings, must in every case be acknowledged.

International Journal of Law in Context

M. Neal, Respect for human dignity as “substantive basic norm,” Int J Law Context 10.1 (March 2014): 26–46: doi: 10.1017/S1744552313000359 • The idea of “human dignity” is, notoriously, as ambiguous as it is compelling. Notwithstanding the absence of any clear or settled definition of human dignity, either in the abstract or in terms of what it means in practice, it is an idea which takes pride of place in international legal documents, in judicial reasoning, and in scholarship across a range of disciplines, where it seems, particularly in recent years, to have become the focus for an explosion of academic interest and an accompanying proliferation of literature. Much of the existing literature attempts to uncover the meaning, or multiple meanings, of “human dignity,” focusing on the uncertainty surrounding the substance or content of the idea and trying

to compose a catalogue of use-types. In this paper, my primary aim will be to address another type of uncertainty, namely uncertainty about the role, function or status within legal frameworks of the “dignity norm”—the norm requiring respect for human dignity. I want to explore several possibilities: first, that the dignity norm is simply a proxy for respect for autonomy; second, that it is a right in the sense that we can speak of a specific “right to have dignity respected”; and third, that it is a legal principle. Having problematised each of these in turn, I will contend that the function of the dignity norm is best captured by describing it as the “substantive basic norm” of the legal systems wherein it appears.

Journal of Applied Philosophy

A.J. Roberts, Pessimism about motivating modal personism, J Appl Philos, e-pub July 3, 2016, doi: 10.1111/japp.12235 • In “What’s Wrong with Speciesism?,” Shelly Kagan sketches an account on which both actually being a person and possibly being a person are relevant to one’s moral status, labelling this view “modal personism” and supporting its conclusions with appeals to intuitions about a range of marginal cases. I tender a pessimistic response to Kagan’s concern about motivating modal personism: that is, of being able to “go beyond the mere appeal to brute intuition, eventually offering an account of why modal personhood should matter in the ways we may intuitively think that it does.”

Journal of Medical Ethics

N. Biggar, Why religion deserves a place in secular medicine, J Med Ethics 41.3 (March 2015): 229–233: 10.1136/medethics-2013-101776 • As a science and practice transcending metaphysical and ethical disagreements, “secular” medicine should not exist. “Secularity” should be understood in an Augustinian sense, not a secularist one: not as a space that is universally rational because it is religion-free, but as a forum for the negotiation of rival reasonings. Religion deserves a place here, because it is not simply or uniquely irrational. However, in assuming his rightful

place, the religious believer commits himself to eschewing sheer appeals to religious authorities, and to adopting reasonable means of persuasion. This can come quite naturally. For example, Christianity (theo)logically obliges liberal manners in negotiating ethical controversies in medicine. It also offers reasoned views of human being and ethics that bear upon medicine and are not universally held—for example, a humanist view of human dignity, the bounding of individual autonomy by social obligation, and a special concern for the weak.

Linacre Quarterly

K.E. Feeney and K.M. Kampman, Adverse effects of marijuana use, Linacre Q 83.2 (May 2016): 174–178: doi: 10.1080/00243639.2016.1175707 • Marijuana has consistently been reported as the most commonly used illicit substance in the United States each year. Currently, the legalization of marijuana is up for debate across the nation. While marijuana use is prevalent among the adolescent population, research has shown that there can be devastating effects on health and well-being. A review of the literature shows that marijuana use can have a negative impact on physical health, psychological well-being, and multiple psychosocial outcomes. Adolescents who used marijuana more frequently and began using marijuana at an earlier age experienced worse outcomes and long-lasting effects.

E. Sullivan and N. Austriaco, A virtue analysis of recreational marijuana use, Linacre Q 83.2 (May 2016): 158–173, doi: 10.1080/00243639.2015.1125083 • Several empirical studies suggest that recreational marijuana is popularly perceived as an essentially harmless rite of passage that ends as young people settle into their careers and their adult intimate relationships. Is this perception accurate? To answer this question, we evaluate the morality of recreational marijuana use from a virtue perspective guided by the theological synthesis of St. Thomas Aquinas. Since the medical data reveal that recreational marijuana use is detrimental to the well-being of the user, we conclude that it is a vicious activity, an instance of the vice of intoxication, and as such would be morally illicit.