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Ethical Behavior: Care or Knowledge

In this issue, six articles from four different countries challenge our ethical reasoning. Extrapolating from the egregious bioethical violations exacted in the Nazi experiments, the Tuskegee experiments, and the Guatemala Syphilis experiment, Aggarwal concludes that researchers “throw away the concept of equality in the value of human life among vulnerable populations.” Hence, Aggarwal affirms in the commentary: *Differential Human Life Valuation, Guatemala Syphilis Trial and Health Research*, that it is not lack of knowledge that accounts for bioethical violations, but lack of care. In contrast, Kong shares a heart wrenching case study of a beautiful young model doused with a flammable liquid and set on fire by an intimate partner. In their zeal to *care* for her, extreme measures were undertaken by the team of health care professionals, which resulted in the prolongation of her suffering. From Nigeria, Okeke and Akpan pose a unique moral question regarding use of xeno-transplantation and its possible ethical implications, especially in diverse cultures. They remind readers of the enormous controversies inherent in the practice of cross species transplantation. The question is asked: does your leader who has been transplanted with a non-human animal’s organ speak as the man or the non-human animal? Clearly, knowledge of the transplant would influence behaviors toward the individual. On the practitioner side, Dr. Devadiga of India challenges dentists to secure informed consent from patients for whom they are performing procedures. The author contends that consent should not be secured just to minimize the possibility of a legal action; but that obtainment of consent communicates respect for the patient and that it is an ethical and moral obligation. Can ethical behaviors be taught? Pope and Hendricks share how ethics is taught through service learning at their university. Nursing students exposed to a vulnerable population of children in their clinical practice responded by providing clothing items for the children. This drive was so successful that it has now extended to other areas. Quite the opposite from the conclusion that vulnerable people will be exploited because people do not care, these nursing students who were privileged economically, demonstrated that their care transcended social class. Last, Boykins and Gilmore present a significant challenge regarding ethics in the academic setting. Due to the proliferation of online learning opportunities, academic dishonesty is escalating due to digital cheating. They contend that this behavior is particularly problematic in healthcare professions where high ethical standards are expected in professional practice. Is it

that students don't know they are cheating or they don't see any harm in it? Is it lack of care or lack of knowledge?

To conclude, each of the articles present a different ethical dilemma for which the question can be applied, is it lack of care or lack of knowledge? Whereas, one group exploited vulnerable populations, another group bought diapers and underpants for disadvantaged children. One team of health professionals appear to 'over care' in their attempts to save a badly burned young model, conversely, dentists are urged to respect patients enough to get informed consents. Will knowledge of one's cross species transplantation repel care and will lack of knowledge, which results in cheating among graduate nurses, affect their care? Surely, factors contributing to ethical behaviors are far more complex than lack of knowledge or failure to care. We cordially invite you to read the articles and join us on our Facebook page to discuss your opinion. The Editor extends special thanks to the Online Journal of Health Ethics reviewers for this issue and to our management team of Mrs. Laura Hudson, Mrs. Jillian Wright and our newest team member, Ms. Latessa Minor.

Let us hear from you! To all authors, we extend heartfelt thanks for sharing your scholarly works with us

Last, our exciting announcement is that the Online Journal of Health Ethics, Inc., is now officially registered with EBSCO.

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Editor-in-Chief