



# INDIANA UNIVERSITY

## POYNTER CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF ETHICS AND AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS

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## IU Team Wins National Ethics Bowl Competition

The Ethics Bowl team sponsored by the Poynter Center won the national Ethics Bowl Competition at the annual meeting of the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics on March 5, 2009 in Cincinnati, Ohio.

The team included senior Neil Shah, the only returning member, who was on the team all four years of his college career. Neil was joined by Devin Carpenter, a junior; and three sophomores, Laura Goins, Rachel Morris, and Dylan Pittman. The coach was Shana Bergen, who has an MA from IU in Philosophy. Sandy Shapshay from Philosophy was faculty advisor, and Richard Miller was the sponsor.

The team placed second in the fall regional in Indianapolis. In January the team started studying the fifteen new



Dylan Pittman, Devin Carpenter, Laura Goins, Rachel Morris and Neil Shah with the trophy.

cases for the national competition, meeting weekly to hone their arguments on the moral issues and choices involved.

The team lost the first match in the three morning rounds, but they scored high enough to advance to the quarter-finals, where they beat the University of

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Workshop on Empathy

The Indiana University Institute for Advanced Study and the Poynter Center will collaborate in the 2009-10 academic year on a multidisciplinary workshop on empathy. A group of fifteen IU Bloomington scholars, including Richard Miller, director of the Poynter Center and John Bodnar, director of the Institute for Advanced Study, will meet regularly throughout the year to discuss

the latest research and insights on empathy and their implications for various areas and disciplines.

Fritz Breithaupt of Germanic Studies will present the Branigan Lecture October 2, 2009 on his new book, *Cultures of Empathy*. The workshop participants will also be reading selections from the book.

## Matthew Vandivier Sims Memorial Lecture

Margaret Mohrmann, who teaches in the departments of biomedical ethics, medical education, and religious studies at the University of Virginia, presented the eighth annual Matthew Vandivier Sims Memorial Lecture April 16, 2009. In her lecture, "Bioethics for Babies: Are There Guides for the Perplexed?," Professor Mohrmann touched on both facets of the Lecture's mission: to address issues in responsible communication among patients, families and professionals and issues in biomedical ethics.

Mohrmann explored the

reliance in bioethics on the "best interest" standard for decisions about the care of infants and its virtual silence on how parents, the usual designated decision

makers, are to go about their deliberations with medical professionals.

Dr. Mohrmann holds a medical degree from the University of South Carolina and a doctorate in Religious Studies from the University of Virginia. Recent publications include *Attending Children: A Doctor's Education and Medicine as Ministry: Reflections on Suffering, Ethics, and Hope*.

Matthew died in infancy, and the lecture was established in his memory in 2002. The lecture is audio-streamed: <http://indiana.edu/simslec.shtml>.



Damon Sims, Margaret Mohrmann, and Richard Miller

## Neuroethics: Ethical and Social Implications

Neuroethics is a new area of scholarly activity, looking at ethical and social issues raised by the research and clinical applications of new technologies that deliver increasingly detailed information about brains and their activities.

Colin Allen, from the Cognitive Science Program and the History and Philosophy of Science Department, and Brian Schrag, the executive secretary of the

Association for Practical and Professional Ethics, have received a New Frontiers in Arts and Humanities grant from the IU Office of the Vice Provost for Research to explore the ethical issues raised by the new research.

The grant provides funding for four speakers for half-day workshops over the coming year. The first will be Dr. Lida Anestidou, DVM, PhD, from the Institute for Laboratory Animal

Research, The National Academies, who will speak June 10 at IU. The lecture will be in conjunction with the Animal Neuroethics pre-conference workshop sponsored by the Society for Philosophy and Psychology on June 11. Indiana University will host the annual meeting for the Society on June 12-14. Colin Allen is president this year.

See the Poynter Center website for further information about the coming workshops.

## Ethics Bowl Team Wins National (continued from page 1)

North Carolina Chapel Hill in a narrowly contested race. The IU team bested the University of Miami in the semifinals and beat Clemson University, the defending champions, in the final round.

Richard Miller, speaking on the team's style and command of the material, noted "The most striking aspect of the team's performance is

the fact that each team member weighed in with a supporting comment or argument during the portion of the competition devoted to on-the-spot critique and response. They showed collective command of the ideas, concepts, and relevant facts regarding each case under review. On several occasions judges assigned IU a perfect 10 for this component of the competition. At

the conclusion of the competition, a large audience of scholars in ethics from around the country rose to give the IU team a standing ovation, richly deserved."

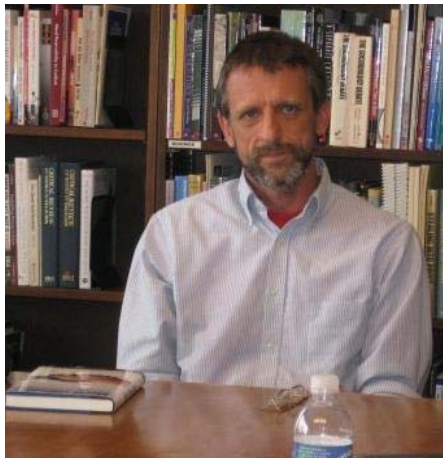
The students attended the APPE annual meeting, giving them experience in international professional meetings.

## Poynter Center Roundtables, Spring 2009

The Poynter Center Roundtables for Spring 2009 featured faculty who have studied ethics and the movies, robotics, and photographs.

We began the semester with Sandy Shapshay from Philosophy, who spoke February 12 about her new book, *Bioethics at the Movies*. Shapshay showed clips from movies that invite ethical discussions, such as *Million Dollar Baby* and *Gattaca*. Shapshay noted that talking about a movie character or plot can sometimes help people consider ethical dilemmas and discuss various ethical approaches to the situation, starting with the fictional and moving toward actual situations.

Colin Allen, from the department of History and Philosophy of Science and the Cognitive Science Program, spoke April 2 on his recent book with Wendell Wallach, *Moral Machines: Teaching Robots Right From Wrong*. Allen noted some of the areas of current development, including



machines that remind people to take their medicine. The branches of the military are each trying to think through issues raised by drones and other remotely controlled devices, in addition to devices or robots that could make decisions autonomously. Allen, pictured above, noted that we can learn about moral cognition by studying the computational work needed to tell a robot how to respect ethical boundaries.

*No Caption Needed: Iconic Photographs, Public Culture, and Liberal Democracy* is John Lucaites and Robert Hariman's recent book on photos that a large number of Americans recognize without a caption or explanation. Examples include a sailor kissing a nurse in Times Square at the end of World War II, Dorothea Lange's photo of the gaunt mother in the Depression, and the naked Vietnamese girl running in terror from a napalm attack.

In the various examples, Lucaites and Hariman looked at the larger culture and the way the photo has been used since its first release. At the Roundtable on April 30, Lucaites talked about the case of the sailor kissing the nurse in Times Square. There were a number of similar photos at the end of the war, but this is the one that became famous and which has been used in many ways by many groups.

## Healthcare Ethics Seminars

The spring Healthcare Ethics seminar series included faculty and staff from IU Bloomington and Indianapolis.

Professor Nicole Quon, Assistant Professor at the School of Public and Environmental Affairs, spoke January 22 on "Do Changes in NIH Grant Priorities Match the Women's Health Agenda? The Role of Advocacy and Public Health Needs." She examined the impact of the women's health movement and public health needs on NIH grant funding for key diseases on the women's health agenda.

Professor Kimberly Quaid from the IU School of Medicine, spoke

February 19 on "Should We Test Children for Late-Onset Genetic Disease?"

Professor Quaid specializes in research with Huntington's Disease. The group discussed ethical and psychological issues involved in knowing you have inherited a disease with no known cure. Many people do not want to know, and others may regret being tested once the results are available.

On March 26 David Craig, from the IUPUI Religious Studies Department, spoke on "Making Religious Values Count: Health Care Mission as Participatory Discourse." Craig looked at

religiously affiliated hospitals and whether they see their mission differently than non-profit secular hospitals because of a different focus.

Robert Crouch, research assistant at the Poynter Center, closed out the spring on April 9 by talking about "Hope in the Healthcare Context." Crouch spelled out the tension between the value of sustaining one's hopes in the face of illness and the need to attend to the facts (which may extinguish hope). Crouch offered preliminary conclusions that people need broad space to hope or not, as they see fit, especially near the end of life, and regardless of the facts.



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## Ethical Guidance for Research and Application of Pervasive and Autonomous Information Technology

Technologies are being developed and implemented today using very small, relatively inexpensive, wireless-enabled computers and autonomous robots that will probably result in the near-omnipresence of information gathering and processing devices embedded in clothing, appliances, carpets, and other everyday items to gather data about when and how an item is used.

The history of information technology suggests that long-standing issues including privacy, usability, and security, among others, are best addressed early enough to become part of the culture of researchers and engineers responsible for identifying needs and designing solutions.

The Poynter Center and the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics wish to address some of these issues in Pervasive and Autonomous Information Technology (PAIT). The Poynter Center and the Association have received a National Science Foundation grant (SES-0848097) to develop a two-day workshop which will be held March 3-4, 2010 in Cincinnati, Ohio.

The workshop will be a culmination following a year-long process of planning, case development and analysis, and networking among information technology engineers and researchers, ethicists, and other interested persons.

The project will create a firm

ethical foundation for this nascent field by convening an international meeting of experts in PAIT, ethicists well versed in practical ethics, and other stakeholders. The meeting will feature discussions of previously-prepared case studies describing actual and anticipated uses of PAIT.

The participants will form the core of a new interdisciplinary subfield of value-centered PAIT. They will develop guidelines and conceptual tools for the field.

For more information about the workshop, see <http://indiana.edu/pait> or contact Ken Pimple at the Poynter Center.