

GE M71CW
Instructor: Jenna Donohue

Biotechnology and Moral Complicity

Spring 2018
F 12-2:50 PM, Covell Commons 210
Office Hours: Thursdays 1-3 pm, Dodd 317

Course Description:

What responsibilities do researchers have for how their technologies are used? Does their responsibility end at the lab's door? Or are they responsible for the way that governments, universities, hospitals, businesses, and other institutions utilize the technology they develop? Does it make a difference whether the use of their technology is predictable? Or that another lab may simply have created the same technology if they hadn't? What responsibilities does the public have for how researchers' technologies are used? This course will investigate some of the philosophical implications of biotechnology with a special but not exclusive focus on moral complicity. Along the way, we will practice philosophy and work to improve philosophical skills such as asking good questions, explaining philosophical arguments, and criticizing arguments. Students will be expected to engage with these issues by participating in the seminar, by leading class discussions once during the quarter, and by completing writing exercises throughout the session.

Texts: All course readings will be posted to the course website.

Course Website: <https://ccle.ucla.edu/course/view/18S-CLUSTERM71CW-8>

Graded Course Assignments:

- 15% Weekly Reading Responses
- 5% Timely Extras
- 15% Leading Class Discussion
- 15% Class Participation
- 5% Presentation of the Project of the Final Paper
- 10% Rough Draft of Final Paper
- 5% Peer Review Assignment
- 30% Final Paper (12-15 pages)

Weekly Reading Responses: Each week you have the opportunity to write a $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 page (double-spaced) response to one of the week's readings. A hard copy of your response should be turned in at the beginning of Friday's class meeting, and your response should also be submitted before class to turnitin via the relevant link on the course website. In your response, you can raise a question, contribute a thought, agree or disagree with the author's argument, etc. The response is NOT a summary of the reading. The response should show that you have critically engaged with the reading. The responses will be graded on a pass/fail basis. [8 pass: A, 7 pass: A-, 6 pass: B+, 5 pass: B, 4 pass: B-, 3 or fewer pass: no credit.]

Timely Extras: There are three "**Timely Extras**" assignments. The first is due before class on the Friday of week 2, the second before class on the Friday of week 4, and the third before class on the Friday of week 6. You are encouraged to submit them whenever they occur to you. A Timely Extra might be a news story, a scene from a novel, or even a conversation you had with

someone outside the course—anything relevant to the material we are studying. To submit it, go to the course website, find the topic entitled “Timely Extra 1” (or 2 or 3 if relevant), and post your Timely Extra as a comment. Write a description of your “Timely Extra” and explain how it relates to what we have studied. They should be short: $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 page (double-spaced). (Only Timely Extras with complete descriptions and compelling explanations will receive credit.) Provide links, where possible. Timely Extras will be graded pass/fail and are worth 5% of the overall course grade.

Leading Class Discussion: You will get the opportunity to lead class discussion once during the term. This will involve a written assignment as well. For the written assignment, you should:

(i) Briefly state the main claims and argument of the article. Note that this is not a summary. You are required to try to formulate the author’s argument, which will require you to do some work to figure it out and how to present is succinctly. You should begin by stating the conclusion(s) that author is trying to establish, in one or two sentences. You should then detail the steps in the reasoning the author uses to try to establish that conclusion. You should be able to do this in 1-2 paragraphs.

(ii) Pose two discussion questions. Through these questions, you can talk about what you found interesting and thought-provoking about the article, what you disagreed with / would object to, or what you found puzzling or ambiguous and would like to figure out in more detail. These questions can take any two of the following forms (i.e. they shouldn’t both be of the same form):

- Objection: Formulate an objection to one of the author’s main points, explain why you think the objection is important, suggest a way the author might respond to the objection, and explain whether you are satisfied with the response.
- Interpretation: Identify a point in the text that you do not understand or that seems ambiguous and in need of clarification, explain why it is important / why you want to figure out its meaning, and offer one or two hypotheses about what you think the author might mean (including how those interpretations would fit in with the rest of the argument).
- What you learned or found thought-provoking: Explain why you think the author’s argument is a powerful one (e.g. by explaining why you think it provides an illuminating answer to a hard question, how it changed your thinking on the topic it addressed, how you might use the argument to make sense of your own convictions about that topic or a related issue, etc.) Feel free to invoke outside sources or experiences but make sure to tie them back to the themes from the reading.

A draft of your written comments is due to me by email on Tuesday at 5pm the week you are scheduled to present. You must also schedule a meeting with me for the Thursday before your presentation to review your comments.

You should then distribute your comments in class when you make your presentation (in hard copy or by posting to the discussion board) and read them in class. Students should respond to your comments and then you can lead discussion by responding to them and building on their comments.

Drafts of Papers: You will write a draft of the paper which is due *both* in class *and* through turnitin on Friday of week 8. This must be a complete draft of the paper.

There is an important difference between a first draft and a rough draft. A rough draft is your first pass at writing, before you have edited it yourself. A first draft should represent the best you can do by yourself. Showing it to another person gives you an opportunity to improve it *beyond* what you can do on your own. So make the best effort you can to turn in your best work when it comes time to hand in a draft. If you turn in something that is less than your best, then when we work to improve it we may improve it to a level you could have achieved on your own rather than beyond.

I encourage you to get an early start on your papers. You are welcome to write a rough draft or an outline earlier than the due date and to submit it to me for additional feedback (which I can provide at a scheduled office hours appointment). Writing philosophy papers is an acquired skill, but you will have ample opportunity to receive extensive feedback on your paper.

Peer Review Assignment: After submitting a draft of his or her paper, each student will review his or her own paper and two other papers, using the PeerMark function of turnitin. Reviews will not affect paper grades but will be graded pass/fail. Students who do not complete their three reviews (or who do not do so in good faith) will earn 0%. Students who do complete their three reviews in good faith will earn the full 5%.

Final Paper Assignment: Final drafts of papers are due *both* in class *and* through turnitin, on the day specified. It is the student's responsibility *both* to upload an electronic copy to turnitin before lecture *and* to bring a hard copy to lecture. Papers that are late *in either format* are considered to have been turned in on the next day and will be penalized 1/3 of a grade for each day late (including weekend days). The same late policy applies to the drafts. Email submissions will not be accepted. Under appropriate circumstances, extensions may be granted, if arranged 48 hours or more in advance of the time the paper is due. Contact me via email or in person to arrange such an extension. Extensions will not be granted within 48 hours, short of a documented medical or family emergency.

Schedule of Classes, Readings, and Assignments:

(Week 1) Friday, April 6: Introduction to the Course: What is Moral Complicity?

Required Reading: Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Second Part of the Second Part, Question 62. (The entire question is required. Please focus especially on article 7.)

“Ethics of Stem Cell Research,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. (The entire article is required. Please focus especially on section 2, “The Ethics of Using Human Embryonic Stem Cells in Research.”)

(Week 2) Friday, April 13: Ethical Theories: An Introduction

Required Reading: Mill, *Utilitarianism* (Selections)

Kant, *The Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (Selections)

Optional Reading: “Consequentialism,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

“Deontological Ethics,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

(Week 3) Friday, April 20: Abortion

Required Reading: Thomson, Judith Jarvis, “A Defense of Abortion”

Marquis, John, “Why Abortion is Immoral”

Optional Reading: Davis, “Abortion and Self-Defense”

(Week 4) Friday, April 27: Abortion, Biotechnology, and Moral Complicity

Required Reading: Brock, Dan, “Conscientious Refusal by Physicians and Pharmacists: Who is Obligated to do What, and Why?”

McLeod, Carolyn, “Referral in the Wake of Conscientious Objection to Abortion”

(Week 5) Friday, May 4: Exploitation and Research

Required Reading: Kirkwood, Ken, “On the Exploitation of Research Subjects”
Wendler, Dan, “Informed Consent, Exploitation, and Whether it is Possible to Conduct Human Subjects Research Without Either One
Phillips, Trisha, “Exploitation in Payments to Research Subjects”
Optional Reading: “Exploitation,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

(Week 6) Friday, May 11: Exploitation and Complicity

Required Reading: Malmqvist, Erik, “Better to Exploit than to Neglect?”
International Clinical Research and the Non-Worseness Claim
Christopher, Paul, et. al. “Exploitation of Prisoners in Clinical Research: Perceptions of Study Participants”

PROPOSAL OF PAPER TOPIC DUE IN CLASS

(Week 7) Friday, May 18: Considering Moral Complicity Claims: The Importance of Third Parties

Required Reading: Sepinwall, Amy J., “Conscience and Complicity: Assessing Pleas for Religious Exemptions in *Hobby Lobby’s* Wake”

(Week 8) Friday, May 25: Physician-Assisted Suicide

Required Reading: Dworkin, Ronald, Thomas Nagel, Robert Nozick, John Rawls, and Judith Jarvis Thomson, “Assisted Suicide: The Philosophers’ Brief”

Velleman, David, “A Right to Self-Termination?”

Optional Reading: Vacco v. Quill 521 US 793 (1997) and Washington v. Glucksberg 521 US 702 (1997) – Supreme Court cases on the right to die

DRAFT OF PAPER DUE BOTH IN CLASS AND ON TURNITIN

(Week 9) Friday, June 1: Complicity In Wider Contexts

Beatty, Jack, "Hitler's Willing Business Partners," *The Atlantic*, April 2001 (**TRIGGER WARNING**)

Garber, Megan, "*Saturday Night Live* Makes the Case that Ivanka Trump is 'Complicit'," *The Atlantic*, March 12, 2017

And other articles to be decided on at a later date. (Student suggestions welcomed and encouraged.)

(Week 10) Friday, June 8: Student Presentations and Discussion

FINAL PAPER DUE TO TURNITIN AND IN CLASS BY 3 PM ON 6/13/18 (WED OF FINALS WEEK)