

THE JOURNAL OF
**LAW, MEDICINE
& ETHICS**

VOLUME 34:1 • SPRING 2006

EDITORIAL STAFF

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Kathleen M. Boozang, J.D., LL.M.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Benjamin W. Moulton, J.D.,
M.P.H.**

EDITOR

Edward J. Hutchinson

EDITORIAL ASSISTANTS

**Rebecca K. Mitcheson
Elizabeth L. Rosenthal**

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
LAW, MEDICINE & ETHICS

CONFERENCE DIRECTOR

Katie Kenney Johnson

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR

Danielle M. Dombkowski

DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY

Christopher L. Firth

DIRECTOR OF GRANT DEVELOPMENT

Alice A. Noble, J.D., M.P.H.

SENIOR RESEARCHER

Theresa Montini, Ph.D., M.S.W.

The Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics
is owned and published by
The American Society of Law,
Medicine & Ethics, Inc.

The views and opinions expressed
in the *Journal* are those of the authors
and do not necessarily represent
the views or opinions of the publisher
or the *Journal's* editorial staff.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

The very title of this publication, *The Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics*, implies that we examine certain divisive questions at the heart of American life. They are questions that can be asked and interpreted in hundreds of ways, but that can perhaps best be understood through the multidisciplinary prisms of Law, Medicine and Philosophy. None of these important questions are more vital than those asked about the beginning and the end of human life.

When I tell someone unfamiliar with my work that I am the editor of *JLME*, they almost immediately begin to ask questions about the journal, and to guess what kind of subjects such a publication might cover. To the average American the words “Law,” “Medicine,” and “Ethics” lead them almost immediately to think of abortion, euthanasia, and other issues surrounding the beginning and end of life. Our regular readers know *JLME* is so much more than that; but with this edition we turn our focus to what are, perhaps, the most debated topics in our fields among the general public.

The symposium, formally titled “Defining the Beginning and the End of Human Life: Implications for Ethics, Policy, and Law,” is guest-edited by Robert Sade of the Medical University of South Carolina. Dr. Sade has put together an outstanding group of contributors who investigate these two areas with probing questions and thoughtful, carefully reasoned ideas. What struck me most profoundly as I first read these essays were their notable lack of anger, righteousness, and certainty that marks so much of the debate about questions at the beginning and end of life. They suggest to me that while we may never be able to provide answers to these questions that satisfy everyone, we can, at least, have an intelligent and informed discussion.

As always, I also strongly encourage our readers to look at a few of our independent articles. Among others, David Fidler and Larry Gostin weigh in on new international health regulations, and Peter Clark examines the difficult ethical question of American doctors participating in state-sponsored executions. All in all, it is another fascinating edition of the *Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics*.

Ted Hutchinson
Editor