



The Bioethics Bulletin

Oct. 23, 2025

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Update for Our Supporters

Dear CPB Friend:

As we head into November, excitement is building for the 31st annual [Rosemary Flanigan Lecture](#) on November 12 exploring the relationship between jazz, bioethics and the moral practice of medicine.

Although our dynamic speaker and live jazz will heighten the pleasure of attending this event – free to all – you are the reason we are able to fulfill one of the primary purposes of the Center. Your donations are what make it possible to bring medical ethics education like this lecture to communities. Communities made up of people who themselves may someday need an ethics consultation in a healthcare crisis.

We value your support because that's what ultimately makes clinical ethics consultations accessible to a greater number of patients and families. Truly, the lecture is the tip of a mountain of [resources](#) and [services](#) that the Center provides.

I urge you to check out the resources in this *Bioethics Bulletin*, including links to this month's *Ethics Dispatch* newsletter on the [ethical implications of misinformation](#), and *Clinical Ethics Corner*, featuring Ryan Pferdehirt presenting a case study on the meaning of expertise.

If you value resources and events like the Flanigan Lecture, we encourage you to attend and donate.

With gratitude,

James Stowe, PhD
CPB President and CEO

Francis Co-Chairs Join the Center [Parsi and Elster Bring Transformation](#)

The Center is thrilled to announce the

appointment of [Kayhan Parsi, JD, PhD, HEC-C](#), and [Nanette Elster, JD, MPH](#), as our next John B. Francis Co-Chairs in Bioethics. Nanette and Kayhan will continue both as professors at the Neiswanger Institute for Bioethics, [Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine](#). They were selected for this part-time, co-chair position following a comprehensive national search. They bring excellence in bioethics research, teaching, productive scholarship, and alignment with clinical ethics — a core area of the Center's work and impact — necessary for this prestigious appointment.

We look forward to building practical programming and interventions related to their areas of interest, including supported decision making, ethics education, pediatric ethics, neurodiversity, disability, and enhancements in organizational and clinical ethics.



You can read how our Vice President of Ethics Services, Ryan Pferdehirt, came to be one of Kayhan and Nanette's students and how working directly with them he learned new ways to apply his clinical ethics skills, expand his knowledge of pediatric ethics, and cultivate his bioethics scholarship.

And, you have the opportunity to meet Nanette and Kayhan in person at the Flanigan Lecture on November 12! See below for details.

[READ RYAN'S BLOG](#)

31st Annual Rosemary Flanigan Lecture [Jazz, Bioethics, and the Moral Practice of Medicine](#)

Jazz – understood as more than music – offers powerful insights for rethinking ethics in medicine. Join Patrick T. Smith, PhD, in exploring how jazz music concepts might inform our approaches to professional ethics and our common life together.

Another reason to join us...you'll have the chance to meet our newly appointed John B. Francis Co-Chairs in Bioethics, Professor Nanette Elster and Dr. Kayhan Parsi. Dr. Parsi, the outgoing president of the American Society of Bioethics and Humanities, will be succeeded by Dr. Smith, our guest speaker!



[REGISTER](#)

[Dr. Smith](#) is an Associate Research Professor of Theological Ethics and Bioethics at Duke University Divinity School, an Associate Professor in Population Health Sciences at Duke University School of Medicine, and

31st ANNUAL FLANIGAN LECTURE

November 12, 2025
GEM Theater KCMO

Reception with Live Jazz at 6:00 PM
Lecture Begins at 7:00 PM

Free and Open to the Public | Donations Welcome

Vision to Action Award – Edwin Kraemer, MD

Accidental Activist Gets Stuff Done

Ed Kraemer's formula for a life of meaning has four parts: Pick your passion. Show up. Hang around. Do what needs to be done. He calls it the "Accidental Activist Algorithm."

It's a formula that helps to explain why the Center will honor Ed with the 2025 Vision to Action Award at the Flanigan Lecture on November 12.

[READ ED'S STORY](#)



From Ethics to Practice with i.c. stars AI Ethics Finds a Home in Workforce Development

In September 2024, Lindsey Jarrett, Vice President of Ethical AI, was invited to be on a panel for a new (to Kansas City) organization, [i.c.stars](#), an immersive technology workforce training and placement program for young adults.

"I finally felt like when I talked about ethics in AI, I was no longer speaking to people that were oddly forced to be curious about the topic," said Lindsey, "but I was now able to fuel a room full of people already charged by inequities and harmful systems."



[READ LINDSEY'S BLOG](#)

For our blog, Lindsey writes about the process that led to an award this summer by the Kauffman Foundation to support the Ethical AI Capacity Building and Residency Support Program for i.c.stars Kansas City staff and participants.

Digital Healthcare Center Perspectives on Ethical AI

For those of you curious about how the Center approaches ethical AI in healthcare, take some time to listen to this interview with Dr. Lindsey Jarrett, Vice President of Ethical AI, scheduled for release on October 29 on the [Digital Healthcare Experience podcast](#), which bills itself as a hub for healthcare leaders and tech enthusiasts to connect on the latest trends and breakthroughs in digital health.

Among the topics they address:

- The past decade of tech evolution
- Ethical concerns today
- Effective approaches to ethical AI (hint: educate your people, be transparent, take action)
- Examples of effective ethical AI policies
- Balancing innovation and safety
- Reasons to be hopeful



[LISTEN HERE](#)

Clinical Ethics Resources

You can use these free resources to educate your ethics committee and increase anyone's ability to respond to complex ethical issues.

Justice in the Age of Misinformation: Why Bioethics Must Defend the Independence of Science

In the October Dispatch, we explore the impact of misinformation on justice in health and healthcare. Cassie argues that open-access publishing has created a market for **predatory journals** that charge for publication without meaningful peer review, leaving the public to sort out truth from noise, and that **political interference** causes communities to lose the chance to benefit from research most relevant to their lives.

The case study introduces a smoker who says, "I'm going to believe what

New Ethics Dispatch Ethics Committee Meeting in a Box

Monthly hot topic
New clinical ethics case study
Today's bioethics news stories
Ethical musing essay



I'm going to believe" about her habit. In Ethical Musings, if we are ever to repair trust in science, Ryan urges a return to the foundational virtues of science: honesty and humility.

[READ THE DISPATCH](#)

Clinical Ethics Corner Video Case Study

What Does It Mean to Be an Expert? Perception, Reality and Practical Implications

What does it mean to be an expert? What does it take? And when does someone's expertise become beneficial to others?

Ryan Pferdehirt, D.Bioethics, HEC-C, thinks about these ideas, particularly in today's world, as he works as a professional ethicist. He wonders: do I understand morality more than others, and if so, what is my role to others as an expert? These thoughts remind him of a patient encounter he had a few years back involving an 84-year-old female actively dying whose son believed removing the ventilator would be murder.

The case illustrates how bioethics expertise enabled the son to feel understood and supported in allowing his mother to pass.



[WATCH THE SHORT VIDEO](#)

[READ THE CASE](#)

Speakers for Your Event Call Us to Discuss Your Needs

Clinicians, case managers and caregivers can find it challenging when seeking to avoid interventions that are medically futile while also respecting patient autonomy and family wishes.

When they gathered on October 8 in Kansas City for the American Case Management Association's 20th annual Case Management and Transitions of Care Conference/Missouri-Kansas Chapter, they asked Ryan Pferdehirt to present the keynote address on that topic.

Ryan's presentation – *Decision Making in Healthcare: Medical Ineffective Therapy* – included examples how to navigate futility and resolve issues, balancing the principles of beneficence, non-maleficence, and respect for patient autonomy.



Email Cassandra Johnson Shaffer at cshafferjohnson@PracticalBioethics.org to discuss CPB speakers and topics for your workshop, conference or event.

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