

funding. A survey of 86 medical experts who had written on the use of calcium-channel blockers — controversial drugs used to treat patients suffering from high blood pressure and heart disease — found that 96 per cent of those in favour of the drugs had financial relationships with the manufacturers; 37 per cent against the drugs had links to the companies; and 60 percent of those neutral had links. For its part, the *NEJM* carried an attack on Sandra Steingraber's book *Living Downstream: an Ecologist Looks at Cancer*. The book had otherwise received positive reviews for its "clear discussion of environmental contaminants and their links to cancers". The reviewer: the director of toxicology for WR Grace, a major

chemical manufacturer. The journal did not the reviewer's affiliations, though he did so to the journal.

The cost of objectivity. *The Ecologist*. 1998; 28 (2). Campaign and news.

Role of medical ethics in torture cases

■ This article reviews the medical ethics issues concerning torture with special reference to declarations, principles and guidelines applicable to medical professionals. Two illustrative cases brought for autopsy are cited.

Kohli A, Aggarwal N, Murty OP. Role of medical ethics in torture cases with two illustrations, *Journal of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology*, 1997,14:41-46.

Via the internet:

The Council of Europe's case-study-based review of the human rights, ethical and moral dimensions of health care with examples relating to genocide, torture, inhuman treatment, abusive psychiatry and application of penalties by doctors. 500 pp. 240 French Francs/ US\$ 60. Contact: <mailto:publishing@coe.fr> or visit: <http://book.coe.fr>

The WHO Report of the Informal Consultation on Health and Human Rights which took place on December 4-5, 1997 (WHO/HPD/98.1) is uncatalogued but available from the Office of Health Policy in Development at WHO, Geneva. <http://www.who.int>

The American Association for the Advancement of Science issues actions on behalf of imprisoned scientists via a listserver. To subscribe, e-mail <mailto:majordomo@aaas.org> with the message subscribe aaashran <your name> An archive: <http://shr.aaas.org/aaashran.htm>

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies weekly newsletter mail to: <listproc@ifrc.org> putting the following text in the body of the message: subscribe wne-dist YOUR NAME

The Mail and Guardian (Johannesburg) reported on March 30, 1998 that the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) would name 35 doctors accused of human rights violations during the apartheid era. The story can be found at: <http://www.mg.co.za/news/98mar2/30mar-trc_doctors.htm> The TRC website: <http://www.truth.org.za/>. Register on-line to receive regular e-mailed bulletins and press statements from the TRC.

The Geneva Initiative on Psychiatry announced on April 3, 1998 the formation an Association of Reformers in Psychiatry (ARP). This followed a meeting in the Netherlands on April 2 of the Network of Reformers in Psychiatry. See: <http://www.colorsoflife.nl/geneva-initiative/visitors.htm>

Issues in Medical Ethics can also be seen on the internet, at:
<http://www.helplibrary.com/reading/ethics/index.htm>.

CALENDAR

November 4-7, 1998. Tokyo, Japan: Fourth world congress of bioethics. International Association of Bioethics (IAB4) in conjunction with the Asian Bioethics Association. Global bioethics. East and West, South and North. with satellite meetings from October 31. Applications for fee waivers or grants will be considered.

E-mail: kasamatu@chs.nihon-u.ac.jp. <http://www.biol.tsukuba.ac.jp/macer/IAB4.html>

November 7-10, 1998. San Diego, CA, USA: meetings of the Public Responsibility In Medicine and Research (PRIM&R) and Applied Research Ethics National Association (ARENA). Nov 7: 'IRB 101'. An overview of IRB regulations and policies. Nov 8-9: 'IRBs in the shifting sands of public opinion.' Annual IRB meeting of PRIM&R. November 10: IRBs: motivating for change. Annual IRB meeting of ARENA, focusing on practical and innovative solutions for institutional review boards. Contact: (617) 423-4112. E-mail prmr@aol.com. Internet: <http://www.aamc.org/research/primr>

November 28-30, 1998. Mumbai, India: Preventing violence, caring for survivors: The role of the health profession and health services in violence. Centre for Enquiry into Health and Allied Themes. Contact: CEHAT (91 22) 625 0363. Fax: (91 22) 620 9203. E-mail : admin@cehat.ilbom.ernet.in

December 3-4, 1998. Hertogenbosch/Vught, Netherlands: Psychotrauma/ asylum seekers/refugees: pitfalls in treatment, political and judicial context". Contact: Nicole van de Gevel, Secretary. Fax: +31 73 658 5502

June 5-6, 1999. Istanbul, Turkey: The European Society for Traumatic Stress Studies 6th European Conference on Traumatic Stress "Psychotraumatology: Clinical Practice and Human Rights". Contact: Interium, Birlik Sokak, Akyildiz Sitesi, No. 24/B D7, 1 Levent, Istanbul, Turkey, Tel: +90 212 264 3770, Fax: +90 212 280 3961, E-mail: interium@turk.net