

Editorial

We are very pleased with the way the journal's transition to a different model of publication has progressed. The publication of individual papers and their retrospective collation within whole issues maximizes the benefits for an online open access journal avoiding the often tortuous wait for publication in solely paper journals without compromising on the quality of peer review.

I am delighted to now present volume 5, issue 2 which is non-themed and comprises five articles and three book reviews. Commencing with Vandenberg & Boon's paper entitled *Anticipating emerging genomics technologies: The role of patents and publication for research and policy strategies*, we begin with the methodological problems of explicating and anticipating the emergence of new areas in the biosciences. More specifically the authors are concerned to identify hot spots in pharmacogenomics and nutrigenomics. Drawing upon patent and publication search strategies to discover such hot spots – methods familiar to several of us in the ESRC genomics network – the authors are able to characterize where and in which substantive domains such research is emerging. A discussion on the benefits and limitations of their methods and their impact on policy strategies concludes the paper. The second paper by Thomas Lemke, entitled "*A slap in the face*": *An exploratory study of genetic discrimination in Germany*, contributes to ongoing debates around understandings and experiences of genetic discrimination. The focus is on those affected by (the risk of) Huntington's Disease (HD). Lemke chooses to focus on HD due to the uncertainty around those 'persons at risk', (every child of a person bearing the mutation has a 50 per cent probability of receiving the allele in question), the availability of a predictive genetic test for the condition, and already established evidence for discrimination against carriers or potential carriers of the condition. Lemke draws upon cases from his own research to illustrate the complex dimensions of what we refer to as 'discrimination' and to argue specifically for the importance of interactional as well as institutionalized structural discrimination to be recognized by such research and policy. The third paper in this issue by Theo Papaioannou, entitled *The impact of new life sciences innovation on political theories of justice*, makes the argument that new life sciences innovation and their impact on understandings of 'human nature' call into question the adequacy of liberal theories of justice. Papaioannou critically engages with the work of Rawls, Nozick and Sen to stake a claim over how understandings of justice could, according to his argument, be better conceptualized to address the way the life sciences alter our exposure to both chance and choice.

Lyn Turney's *Understanding the genetically at risk: clinical, psychological and social approaches* explores the way in which genetic tests for a wide range of cancers have opened up the possibility for various prophylactic treatments in order to address risk. Turney explores the complex situation in which the 'genetically at risk' are placed, due not only to the uncertainty of whether they might develop a particular cancer but also that of the prophylactic treatment itself that may include surgery to remove at-risk body parts,

treatment with cancer drugs, medical surveillance strategies, self-surveillance and changes in lifestyle. She concludes with an argument for policy reflexivity linked to social science research embedded in an exploration of the cultural, personal, historical and social factors that contribute to the ways in which the genetically at risk negotiate knowledge about genetic risk

The final paper of the issue by Elina Hemminki and colleagues looks at *Finnish people's attitudes towards biomedical research and its sponsorship*. This paper reports on a survey in Finland that explores various orientations toward blood sample donation, willingness to take part in Finnish versus international research and degrees of trust in public versus privately conducted clinical research.

The issue is completed by three review essays of *The Art and Politics of Science*, by Harold Varmus, *When Experiments Travel*, by Adriana Petryna, and *Leonardo's Choice - Genetic Technologies and Animals*, edited by Carol Gigliotti. We thank all our contributors, reviewers and, of course, our managing editor Claire Packman.

Richard Twine
Cesagen, Lancaster University, UK
Associate Editor.