BIOETHICS CHALLENGES IN TODAY’S SOCIETY

Mini Bioethics Academy is a three-evening series held on campus to help the public understand bioethical challenges in today’s society.

Tuesdays: January 24, 31 & February 7, 2017
2-520 Moos Tower, U of M East Bank, 6:30-8 pm
Advance registration: $10/session or $25/3 sessions
Student rate: $5/session or $10/3 sessions

For more information and to register: visit www.bioethics.umn.edu

SESSION 1: TUESDAY, JANUARY 24

Pharmaceutical Monopolization

Stephen Schondelmeyer, PharmD, PhD
Professor of Pharmaceutical Economics, UMN College of Pharmacy; Director, PRIME Institute; Department Head, Pharmaceutical Care & Health Systems

Recent months have brought examples of extraordinary increases in pharmaceutical products, with Mylan Pharmaceutical’s increase in an epipen two-pack from $100 to $600, following on the heels of Turing Pharmaceutical’s repricing of Daraprim from $13.50 per tablet to $750 after acquiring the drug. These examples caught the media’s attention, but in fact many drugs these days are increasing exponentially in price, even if they are older. In this talk, the reasons behind these price hikes are explored, along with why pharmaceutical companies continue to get away with exorbitant drug prices even in the face of severe public and congressional criticism.

SESSION 2: TUESDAY, JANUARY 31

Justice and Bioethics: Is Care the Cure?

Joan Tronto, PhD
Professor, Political Science, UMN College of Liberal Arts

Justice is one of the four cardinal ethical principles of bioethics. But what does it mean to act justly in medical settings? How can medical settings lend themselves to recognizing problems as problems of justice and to act accordingly to address them? This session explores the value of a care-ethics approach in addressing problems of justice. The session will begin by describing ethics of care, address the critiques that care ethics is weakest in dealing with problems of justice, and outline how care ethics can, by changing our focus on justice, dramatically improve our abilities to identify and deal with problems of injustice.

SESSION 3: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7

Bioethics and the Crisis of Global Ecology

Steven Miles, MD
Professor and Maas Family Endowed Chair in Bioethics, Center for Bioethics; and Department of Medicine, University of Minnesota Medical School

A disappearing arctic ice cap. Rising oceans. Once in a century floods are occurring annually, even as deserts expand. Plastic and chemicals cover the seas and lands. Pollinating bees are disappearing as agriculture defends the chemicals that kill them. Tropical diseases are migrating north into temperate zones that are warming to greet new species of mosquitoes. Some say we are living in an “Anthropocene Epoch” where humans rather than natural forces are transforming the planet. Does bioethics have anything useful to say? Dr. Miles will explore the history and future directions for bioethics. This talk is based on a collaboration with Susan Craddock, PhD.