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Updates on the Project for Scholarly Integrity

COLUMBIA HOSTS SCIENCE WRITER FOR RESEARCH ETHICS FORUM

Columbia University reports that biologist and science writer Rebecca Skloot spoke at the university on February 2, 2010, on the occasion of the release of her new book, [The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks](#). The book tells the story of Lacks, a poor tobacco farmer whose life uncovers the ways in which the history of medical research involving human subjects is tainted by racism, the abuse of power, and radical inequalities in the distribution of the benefits of research. In 1951, doctors took Lacks' cells without her knowledge to develop the first "immortal" human cells, reproducing every twenty-four hours. "HeLa" cells led to countless innovations in medical research and a multimillion dollar industry.

Skloot's talk focused on the way Lacks was treated by researchers and described her family's discovery twenty years later that their mother's cells existed the world over, and were even sent into space. A particularly compelling part of her talk addressed how and when Skloot first heard about HeLa cells—as a 16-year-old in a biology class whose instructor ended his lecture about the cells with the words, "HeLa cells were one of the most important things that happened to medicine in the last hundred years; she ['HeLa'] was a black woman." Skloot spent most of her time answering questions from the audience, including questions about current practices: "Most Americans have their tissue on file somewhere," Lacks explained. A 1999 Rand Corporation report estimates that over 300 million tissues samples from 78 million people exist in research labs, with 20 million more samples being added a year. Use of these materials from diagnostic and surgical procedures and money from their sale to research labs legally do not require the owner's consent, as no case law has clarified that tissue continue to belong to its owner once it is removed from the body. Coincidentally, the day of Skloot's talk at Columbia was also the start of a trial in New York City to determine whether it should be legal for anyone to hold patents on human genes. Jan Allen, Associate Dean at Columbia and co-PI for the university's Project for Scholarly Integrity, commented, "Skloot's presentation addressed multiple issues related to our RCR discussions and activities at Columbia University, such as informed consent for research, confidentiality, and conflict of interests."

More than 150 doctoral students, post-doctoral fellows, and faculty from programs in biology, chemistry, engineering, and sociology attended the event jointly sponsored by Columbia's Department of Biological Sciences and the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences; support for the presentation came from GSAS's Project for Scholarly Integrity funds provided by the Council of Graduate Schools and USDHHS Office of Research Integrity. More information about Columbia's PSI/RCR activities is available here: <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/gsas/sub/project/research/main/index.html>.

AACN CONFERENCE FEATURES SESSIONS ON PSI

The [American Association of Colleges of Nursing](#) (AACN) featured special sessions on the Project for Scholarly Integrity at its [Doctoral Conference](#) on Captiva Island, Florida, on January 29, 2010. Julia Kent, CGS Program Manager, gave two presentations to a total audience of 100 conference participants, including Deans of Colleges of Nursing, faculty members in doctoral programs in nursing, and research nurses. The presentations gave an overview of current national trends in research compliance, including NIH's recent update on training requirements in RCR, the goals and needs that motivated CGS to develop the project in cooperation with partner institutions, and current activities of PSI awardees and affiliates.

Dr. Kent's presentation also highlighted the [PSI online resource library](#), which includes special resources for deans and faculty overseeing research in the biomedical sciences, along with resources in areas of special concern to research nursing programs: research involving human subjects, financial and personnel management, and Conflicts of Interest (COI). The library makes it possible to search for articles and resources related to nursing, including a recently added book, [Educating Nurses: A Call for Radical Transformation](#) (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2010).

The discussion periods following the sessions addressed a number of topics of special concern to deans and faculty in doctoral programs in nursing. One discussion strand focused on the relative merits of training in compliance and training in ethical deliberation, a topic that can emerge in all graduate research programs but one that is particularly relevant to programs that may train students to administer research protocols while also developing their judgment-making skills in patient care settings. Participants also discussed guidelines for authorship on publications co-authored by graduate students and their thesis and dissertation supervisors, along with the research training needs of international students and non-native English speakers. CGS has invited conference participants to submit their suggestions of resources relevant to the ethics of nursing research to the growing PSI library.

Recent and Upcoming Events

COSEPUP MEETING ADDRESSES PRIORITIES IN RESEARCH ETHICS AND RCR

On February 18-19, 2009, the Committee on Science, Engineering, and Public Policy (COSEPUP) met in Irvine, California. COSEPUP is a committee of the National Academies of Sciences and Engineering and the Institute of Medicine that addresses important policy issues facing the research enterprise. The meeting [agenda](#) focused on challenges to public trust in science, and approaches that researchers, institutions, federal agencies, and others might consider to sustain and strengthen public trust. The opening session explored the possibility of revising the report [Responsible Science: Ensuring the Integrity of the](#)

Research Process (National Academies Press, 1992), which underlies current federal policies on research misconduct. Peggy Fischer, Associate Inspector General for Investigations at the National Science Foundation, John Dahlberg, the Director of Investigative Oversight at the Office of Research Integrity, and Daniel Denecke, Director of Best Practices at the Council of Graduate Schools, contributed to a panel discussion that outlined the questions and topics that might inform a revised edition of *Responsible Science*.

SECOND WORLD CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH INTEGRITY

Registration is now open for the [Second World Conference on Research Integrity](#), to be held in Singapore from July 21-24, 2010, adjacent to the [10th World Congress on Bioethics](#) (July 28-31, 2010). Following an earlier global forum in Lisbon, Portugal, in September 2007, co-sponsored by the Office of Research Integrity (ORI) and the European Science Foundation (ESF), the Singapore conference seeks to build on priorities outlined in the Lisbon conference and further explore a range of key issues in global research integrity.

The conference will be hosted by the major research organizations in Singapore, and supported by a number of major organizations, including ORI, the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). In addition to providing a forum for specific topics and issues in research integrity, the conference will seek to develop global networks that support public confidence in the research enterprise and to "demonstrate the global research community's commitment to the highest standards of behaviour in research." The deadline for early bird [registration](#) is March 31, 2010; the deadline for regular registration is after March 31 and prior to July 21, after which onsite pricing will be available.

POYNTER CENTER TO HOST ANNUAL TEACHING RESEARCH ETHICS WORKSHOP

Indiana University's Poynter Center for the Study of Ethics and American Institutions will host the [17th Annual Teaching Research Ethics Workshop](#) (TRE) from May 18-21, 2010 in Bloomington, Indiana. The workshop aims to providing training in teaching research ethics for faculty and research administrators. Workshops sessions will cover pedagogies and topics such as ethical theory, research ethics, trainee and authorship issues, assessment and evaluation, responsible data management, integrity in research, conflicts of interest, and international research.

The conference will also feature the following plenary sessions:

Research Integrity: Peggy Fischer, Associate Inspector General for Investigations at the National Science Foundation

Conflicts of Interest: Edward Goldman, Associate Professor at the University of Michigan Medical School

Ethical Issues in International Research: Eric M. Meslin, Director of the Indiana University Center for Bioethics and Associate Dean at the Indiana School of Medicine

Ethical Theory: Richard Miller, Director of the Poynter Center

An Overview of Research Ethics, and Assessing Student Learning and Evaluating Courses and Programs in Research Ethics: Kenneth Pimple, Director of Teaching Research Ethics Programs, Poynter Center

Workshop participants will participate in an intensive track group that will include 10-20 members and a facilitator, as well as two breakout session groups. The [registration](#) deadline for the conference is March 31, 2010.

If you would like to suggest an event, activity, or news item for inclusion in the PSI Newsletter, please contact Julia Kent at the address below. For more information about the Project for Scholarly Integrity, please contact:

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