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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Judging by the comments we receive from the readers of the *Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics*, one of the most popular and important aspects of *JLME* is the great depth in which it explores a single topic. With our symposium format, we are able to investigate a single question or idea in great detail, and from a variety of different perspectives. The readers understand that it is from this strength that *JLME* provides the most important scholarly forum for academic articles in our field; but what consistently surprises our readers, as well as myself, is the sheer breadth of topics that we can cover in a single issue. Nowhere is that strength more obviously on display than in our current edition.

This issue's symposium covers the controversial and evolving topic of expert testimony by bioethicists. Edward Imwinkelried argues in the first article of the symposium that under certain circumstances bioethicists testifying as experts on ethical matters is not only appropriate, but highly desirable. The other participants respond to his unique thesis with various degrees of concurrence. In the end the reader of the symposium is left with a spirited and eloquently argued debate about the merits of the topic in question, a goal we attempt to achieve with every symposium published in *JLME*.

In this issue we are also pleased to present two articles produced in conjunction with ongoing projects sponsored by *JLME*'s publisher, the American Society of Law, Medicine & Ethics. The first is the second in a series of articles on DNA Fingerprinting and Civil Liberties, an absorbing look at California's Proposition 69, written by Barry Steinhardt and Tania Simoncelli, and generously funded by the National Institute of Health, under grant no. 1R01HG002836-01. The second article, by Diane Hoffmann and Anita Tarzian, is part of a continuing series on pain management, co-sponsored by the Mayday Foundation, that examines end-of-life care. *JLME* will continue to pursue these projects in future issues.

Finally, we also present three articles broadly related to the issues surrounding the death in Florida of Terri Schiavo. (Two of the articles can be found in our 'commentary' section, while the third is our 'Currents in Contemporary Ethics' column.) All three pieces examine questions and assumptions surrounding the controversy and come to insightful, and sometimes surprising, conclusions. They are all important 'first responses' to Schiavo's death, and provide only a glimpse of what is to come in future issues of *JLME*.

On top of all this we still present our regular assortment of independent articles and featured columns. One of our greatest pleasures in putting together each issue of *JLME* is providing an abundance of the highest quality academic articles in each issue. We want to insure that our readers get their money's worth, both in the depth and breadth of each issue, and hope that you indeed feel that you do.

Ted Hutchinson
Editor