

Editorial Observations

Guest Editors:

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This issue and the next issue of *Global Virtue Ethics Review* will feature papers presented at a peer-reviewed international conference on intelligence and immigration ethics held at The University of Texas – Pan American in November of 2008. This conference, “Ethics in Intelligence, Security and Immigration: The Moral and Social Significance of Gathering and Managing Information and Borders in the Global Community,” included speakers from the United States and Mexico and was co-sponsored by PACE (Pan American Collaboration for Ethics in the Professions) and IGkNU (Integrated Global Knowledge & Understanding Collaboration). We have selected articles that represent a diversity of views on the moral significance of these timely topics. This issue contains articles by philosophers and a biologist, an excellent representation of the interdisciplinary focus of this journal.

The first article in this issue, by Jill Graper Hernandez, explores the moral permissibility of the U.S. Mexico border wall from the “second-person” standpoint recently popularized by philosopher Stephen Darwall.

The US Border Wall as a Failed Moral Project from a Second Person Standpoint offers compelling and unique arguments against this wall and questions the moral legitimacy of the United States in acting without concern for the individuals most directly affected by the wall. Graper Hernandez further discusses the moral authority and intent of the U.S., utilizing the examples of *maquiladoras* and *colonias*.

Building on the topic of the moral legitimacy of the border wall, Alistair Welchman's *Unacknowledged Harms: Justifying the Texas-Mexico Border Wall* questions the actual intent behind the construction of the Texas portions of the border wall. Welchman's article further questions whether the clearly-expected harms resulting from the wall are intentional or accidental, but concludes that in either case, they are morally relevant and thus ignoring them is problematic. As the conference from which these articles were drawn is situated quite literally on the border, being just a few miles north of the line between Southern Texas and Mexico, the discussion of the border wall is particularly poignant.

The third article in this issue shifts focus to intelligence ethics and interrogation tactics. *Can Brain Imaging Replace Interrogation and Torture?* by Zen Faulkes proposes fMRI (functional magnetic resonance imaging) as a plausible, albeit future, possible alternative to torture. Faulkes reviews the relevant scientific literature and finds that, although fMRI is a promising alternative to torture, its reliability needs further scientific support to demonstrate its efficacy. He also recognizes that fMRI can raise

other ethical concerns, like privacy, but he finds these concerns to be less significant in the case of interrogation when the alternative is torture.

This issue concludes with the Book Marks section. The book review for this issue was chosen for its relevance to the topics of the conference from which the issue is drawn. Mayy Avila and Christopher Davis review Davis L. Perry's Partly Cloudy: Ethics in War, Espionage, Covert Action, and Interrogation, published in 2009 by The Scarecrow Press. Perry's book is actually a collection of essays from his work on related topics like just war theory, espionage and intelligence ethics, social contract theory, and interrogation.