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Book Review: A Companion to Genethics, edited by Justine Burley and John Harris

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ism” as a worthy extrapolation of the Catholic ethical tradition that will be adequate to the unprecedented challenges of the new knowledge economy. Sweeping changes in the nature of property and social relations necessitate this ambitious project of *aggiornamento* in social teaching. Other social ethicists have occasionally hinted at the need for such an agenda; this volume, for perhaps the first time, advocates it in a full-throated way as the inescapable future contribution of Catholic social teaching.

Third, B. takes up a challenge that few commentators on Vatican social documents dare to tackle. The fifth and final part of the volume proposes a “conceptual synthesis” of the principles and ethical directives contained in the dozen or so most important documents of the Catholic Church’s social teaching. B. provides a clear chart (258) of the interrelated parts of this schema and devotes his final three chapters to explaining the first-order and second-order principles he identifies. While it may not be the final word on how to organize this unwieldy body of material, B. does great service by offering us this synthetic picture. He summarizes the contents of Catholic social thought as a mosaic of six main pieces, each of them developed in service of human dignity and integral human development in tension with the multifaceted demands of the common good. These six elements are: the primacy of labor, subsidiarity, universal access, stewardship, solidarity, and socialization. The first two fall under the rubric of “gift of self,” the middle two comprise “gift of the earth,” and the final two are “gift of each other.” Despite perhaps forcing some of these concepts into these categories for the sake of symmetry, B. resists the common temptation to oversimplify this complex heritage or to twist its features in support of a rigid, predetermined agenda.

B. is not a great stylist, and theologically minded readers may find that the book suffers from overuse of the jargon of economics. The chapters are quite uneven in length and importance, giving the book a choppyness that is partially explained by the fact (mentioned in the preface) that four of the 14 chapters were originally published elsewhere. Nevertheless, in his search for intelligible patterns in the economic ethic of official Catholic social documents, B.’s work is most original, quite balanced, and very well researched.

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THOMAS MASSARO, S.J.

A COMPANION TO GENETHICS. Edited by Justine Burley and John Harris. Blackwell Companions to Philosophy. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2002. Pp. xiv + 489. \$104.95.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the discovery of the chemical structure of DNA that launched the genetics revolution. Exciting discoveries in genetics and the great promise of stem cell research may hold significant potential to expand medical knowledge and clinical therapies, and bring relief from much human suffering. Yet these revolutionary sci-

entific accomplishments also present humanity with unprecedented ethical challenges and serious dangers. Burley and Harris have edited an outstanding and timely reference collection that brings together the scholarship of 37 leading international contributors to the complex ethical debates in genetics. This comprehensive and carefully designed volume includes 34 essays that examine topics such as stem cell biology, informed consent in genetic experimentation, cloning and public policy, race and genetics, biotechnology patenting, autonomy and privacy, prenatal diagnosis, and many other important subjects. The book is organized in five major parts: an introduction to genetic science, genetic research, gene manipulation and gene selection, genotype and justice issues, and a concluding section that considers implications for ethics, law, and public policy.

The collection is multidisciplinary and wide-ranging. A number of essays effectively treat the complex and controversial subject of the moral status of the human embryo, particularly regarding the use of embryonic stem cells (ES cells) for research and potential medical therapies. The international background of the contributors sheds needed light on some of the significant legal and policy differences between the U.S. and Great Britain (where extensive genetic research is underway) and other countries. A number of authors (e.g., Søren Holm and Madison Powers) carefully address concerns about informed consent and the possible misuse of genetic information. There is also insightful consideration (e.g., by Ruch Chadwick and Adam Hedgecoe) of the serious potential for exploitation and commercialization of human genetic material. H. in his essay, "The Ethical Use of Human Embryonic Stem Cells in Research and Therapy," allows for the "use of embryonic and fetal organs and tissue including ES cells . . . if it is for a serious beneficial purpose" (170) in a way that seems to accept the moral risks too easily. Many moral thinkers continue to judge that the medical and moral complexity of such use demands further analysis and serious debate. H., a member of the United Kingdom Human Genetics Commission, describes U.S. federal laws regulating embryonic stem cell research as incoherent (166) as they place strict limits on the use of federal funds.

While there is some treatment of religious perspectives, more coverage would add to the already diverse balance of views expressed in this collection. In an excellent and thoughtful essay, "Religion and Gene Therapy: The End of One Debate, the Beginning of Another," Gerald McKenny is correct that, generally speaking, religious traditions have not forbidden *in principle* gene therapy research. Yet his judgment that this part of "the religion and gene therapy debate is over" (287) does not seem easily supportable. It is more likely that continuing discoveries and increasing religious understanding of these complex procedures will move theologians and ethicists to consider new questions about both the *means* employed in this research and also fundamental questions of moral *principle* about these prospective technologies. In "Cloning and Public Policy," Ruth Macklin's provocative critique of human dignity arguments against cloning (e.g., 212) does not convince me. According to her, human dignity is a "fuzzy con-

cept” and she suggests that there is no evidence it is “threatened by the prospect of cloning” (212).

Many ethicists and other scholars consistently maintain that moral arguments regarding human dignity are and must remain central to the cloning debate.

Overall, the volume includes a diversity of opinions and moral positions. The writing is evenly clear and direct—a notable achievement considering the size of the book and the complexity of the subject matter. Each essay is well referenced and includes a generous and current list of suggestions for further reading. The reference lists at the end of each essay direct the reader to additional leading research. The book also includes a detailed and useful index. In the Afterword, Sir David Weatherall cites the need, when studying problems of modern genetics, “to distinguish between the important questions and those that are futuristically frivolous” (466). B. and H. and the contributors to this important volume have made the distinction admirably. They have offered us a book that serves as an excellent introduction and dependable reference for students, scholars, and medical professionals alike.

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FRANCIS T. HANNAFEY, S.J.

HOLY WAR, HOLY PEACE: HOW RELIGION CAN BRING PEACE TO THE MIDDLE EAST. By Marc Gopin. New York: Oxford University, 2002. Pp. viii + 269. \$29.95.

Rabbi Marc Gopin has extensive experience in conflict resolution training. He has also anguished over the breakdown of the 1993 Oslo peace process and unrelenting violence throughout the Occupied Territories and Israel since the *intifada* of 2000. Here he argues for other initiatives to sustain a peace process. Paralleling diplomatic efforts, these initiatives would spring from the religious values of Jews and Muslims.

G. explores the religious inheritance of the Jewish and Muslim offspring of Abraham, examining the rituals, myths, and metaphors that have connected Jews and Muslims in past and present conflicts but can also further Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking. Surveying traditional Rabbinic and Islamic interpretations of the story of Hagar and Ishmael, he argues that the descendants of Isaac and Ishmael ought not to be locked in “an intense but troubled and murderous family myth” (8). While the story of the exile of Hagar and Ishmael has inspired enmity and violence, it is open to new interpretation and “pro-social development”: The Genesis record that, when Ishmael was “gathered unto his people” at his death, can be read to mean that he was reunited with his estranged family.

G. encourages more religious actors to participate at all levels of the conflict resolution process, bringing the richness of their Jewish and Islamic values with them. (He laments that Israeli reduction of value to the holi-