Editorial

Atwood D. Gaines

Published online: 8 February 2014
© Springer Science+Business Media New York 2014

Honoring the Life and Work of Robert Edgerton

This volume of *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry* honors psychological/psychiatric anthropologist extraordinaire, Robert Edgerton, PhD, Emeritus Professor of Anthropology, Department of Anthropology, University of California at Los Angeles, USA. Dr. Edgerton was a pioneer and a major force in psychological and psychiatric anthropologies. He produced a very large body of work in his career on subjects that ranged from disability (*The Cloak of Competence*) to violence and colonialism in Africa (*Mau Mau*), racism in the US military and military history (*Hidden Heroism*), deviance (*Deviance: a Cross-Cultural Perspective*; *Drunken Comportment* with MacAndrew), African warfare (*Like Lions They Fought, Warrior Women*) as well as warfare elsewhere (*The Legacy of the Crimean War*) and, of course, mental illness (*Changing Perspectives in Mental Illness*, with Plog) as well as many articles of note on psychiatric phenomena. He frequently challenged received wisdom in academia, including anthropology (e.g., in *Drunken Comportment* and in *Sick Societies*). A much fuller accounting of his sterling record will be provided in Number 4 of the present Volume year of CMP. We are pleased to honor this lion of psychological/psychiatric anthropology in *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry* for 2014.

Vulnerability in France: The Special Section

In this number of CMP, we present a suite of articles on vulnerability from French bioethicists.

A. D. Gaines (✉)
Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH, USA
e-mail: atwood.gaines@case.edu

The *chargé* for this section is the well-known bioethicist (and physician), Christian Hervé. Dr. Hervé is the Director of the Laboratory of Medical Ethics and Legal Medicine [and President of the French and Francophone Society of Medical Ethics (SFFEM)] at the University of Paris 5-René Descartes School of Medicine. His Laboratory (aka Department) was the first to train PhD bioethicists in France. There are now several such departments there.

The reader will note several distinctions about the selections presented here. First, as is apparent, many of the authors presented here are physicians or clinicians. In France, until Dr. Hervé's Laboratory, virtually all bioethicists in France were practicing physicians; this is very unlike the US where many, if not most, bioethicists are not physicians. Thus it was, in the 5 years that the Editor-in-Chief taught a bioethics course in France with Dr. Hervé on issues of birth and death, bioethicists secured by Dr. Hervé and from his Laboratory discussed issues of life and death from the perspective of a physicians who made the difficult decisions about early termination of pregnancy, withdrawal of life support, assisted reproduction, surrogacy, disability, organ donation, transplantation, medical education, and professional ethics. The Laboratory has faculty and students from the social sciences of health and from philosophy as well as medicine.

A second difference is the approach taken by the contributors. They tend to see "cases" in the abstract rather than the concrete and to refer to philosophical and or theoretical tenets that the authors hold to be true and or indisputable. These cases, abstract, and concrete, illuminate cases or their elements and are seen as clarified by such tenets. There are also differences in notions of the appropriate order and or organization of materials for presentation. We hope at CMP that the flavor of the originals (translated, then retranslated) remains, and we are pleased to present our French bioethical colleagues.

Atwood D. Gaines,
Editor-in-Chief