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Canadian Journal of Practical Philosophy Vol. 6, 2021: Practical Ethics: Issues and Perspectives

Sep 2nd, 12:00 AM

Preface to Volume 6, 2021: Living with COVID-19: Issues and Perspectives

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MacEwan, Philip and Tomsons, Sandra, "Preface to Volume 6, 2021: Living with COVID-19: Issues and Perspectives" (2021). *The Canadian Society for Study of Practical Ethics / Société Canadienne Pour L'étude De L'éthique Appliquée – SCEEA*. 6.

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The *Canadian Journal of Practical Philosophy* (CJPP) is an on-line, open access publication. It was founded by the editors, Philip MacEwen (Departments of Philosophy and Humanities, York University) and Sandra Tomsons (Research Affiliate: Centre for Health Care Ethics, Lakehead University), in 2017 and is published by the University of Windsor through its Leddy Library on-line, open access publishing unit.

Preface

In this Volume, we are pleased to present papers on the theme, “Living with COVID-19: Issues and Perspectives.” COVID-19 made its first appearance in December 2019 and has since transformed the world. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared it a pandemic on March 11, 2020. Hundreds of millions of people have been infected by the virus and many millions have died from it. Not only does this make it one of the deadliest pandemics in history but one that has made its mark in a very short time.

The papers in this volume present cutting-edge research, as well as testimonials, on living with COVID-19.

The first contribution, “A Little Shelter from the Storm: COVID-19 and the ‘Atlantic Bubble’,” is by Dylan MacKenzie, an independent scholar and permanent resident of the area concerned. MacKenzie explains why the Atlantic Provinces (New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island) have experienced relatively minor COVID-19 infection and mortality rates compared to much of the rest of Canada (hence the ‘Atlantic Bubble’

or AB). Not only is this region somewhat geographically isolated and not heavily populated but it has a certain sense of community, largely missing from many other areas of Canada, which has helped it resist the onslaught of COVID-19. The paper considers some of the practical implications of this for future political planning in Canada, particularly *per* epidemiological risk assessment, and concludes with a consideration of some of the lessons to be learned from AB.

The second contribution, “The Pandemic, Sociability, and Citizenship,” is by Ronda Martens, Associate Professor of Philosophy, University of Manitoba. Martens argues that the COVID-19 pandemic has been especially hard on ‘weak ties’ which we need, not only for our well-being, but in order to practice social citizenship. This is particularly important in democracies which function, or should function, only as well as social citizenship permits. The paper concludes with a reflection on how the research can help us develop resilience as a way of redressing some of what we have lost during the pandemic.

The third contribution, “Evidence, Testimony, and Trust: How the COVID-19 Pandemic is Exacerbating the Crisis of Trust in Science,” is by Clarisse Paron, a PhD student in philosophy at Dalhousie University. Paron argues that the pressures of ‘fast science’, i.e., science driven by exterior motives like commercial and personal interests, and the pandemic itself to develop research on COVID-19 quickly have not only yielded results which sometimes fail to meet rigorous scientific standards, but have contributed to the conflicting nature of the messages of many health care policies and recommendations, thereby creating a crisis of trust in science. Thus, the pandemic presents a pivotal moment for science to get its house in order and show how socially responsible science is consistent with the values of the people it is trying to help.

The fourth contribution, “Ethics, Justice, and the Impact of COVID-19 on the Courts in Canada,” is by Bruce Preston, Adjunct Professor, School of Public Policy and Administration, York University. The COVID-19 pandemic has further contributed to the perennial problem of delay in Canadian courts. While the courts have faced a lot of criticism in this regard, Preston argues that it is not warranted. Indeed, it pertains more to the perception of the courts’ past practice than to the way the courts have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, the systemic delay in Canadian courts has become an ethical issue which obscures any success they have had in the current situation. The paper concludes with some reflections on what the ultimate impact of the pandemic will be on the Canadian courts.

The CJPP plans to publish a second volume on moral and justice issues pertaining to COVID-19 in 2022. Papers examining the following practical questions are welcome: pandemic and emergency declarations; freedom of choice during a pandemic; value hierarchies during COVID-19; central vs. local political decision-making in a pandemic; the Zoom classroom and

Canadian Journal of Practical Philosophy

Volume 6, 2021: Living with COVID-19: Issues and Perspectives

university teaching: student and faculty perspectives; COVID-19 and Canadians' right to travel within Canada, and COVID-19 and the distribution of political decision-making power.