

Editorial

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With this issue my time as Editor-in-Chief comes to an end and from next year Christopher Coenen of Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) will take over. I have enjoyed these last six years, the first six for the journal, having met and made contact with many interesting people and have learnt a lot about what individual researchers and teams are doing. A journal can to some extent define a field but for a new journal it is more the other way around; what people in the field are doing dictates the content of the journal. *NanoEthics* is strongly interdisciplinary. Much of the material published would not count as ethics for a purist, not a purist philosopher anyway. My approach has been that anything that contributes meaningfully to ethical discussions is legitimate subject matter. It didn't bother me too much if in some papers mention of ethics was scant providing that a careful reader could see how they contributed to that discussion. Some papers too were not focussed specifically on nanoscience or nanotechnology. The subtitle of *NanoEthics* is *Ethics for Technologies that Converge at the Nanoscale*. It is somewhat artificial to draw sharp boundaries between different new technologies just as strict divisions between disciplines are not defensible. Certainly most of us come to problems from one, or at most two, disciplines. Few people have the capacity to be expert in much more than that. But progress in solving most real world problems

can only come from the collaboration and cooperation of people with differing backgrounds approaching different aspects of the problems or approaching them from different perspectives. Unfortunately this is not always easy to achieve. Universities tend to be organised around traditional disciplines and many academics still see interdisciplinary research, which is commonly applied research, as non-core and therefore inferior. This is at least true in the English-speaking world (for useful discussions of the situation in philosophy, see [1,2]). Hopefully *NanoEthics* is playing some small part in changing this situation by providing a forum for interdisciplinary research and thereby helping to influence policies on new technologies so that benefits are maximised, harms minimised and these benefits and harms are fairly distributed.

I wish to thank all who have contributed to *NanoEthics* over the past 6 years; the editors and the members of the editorial board, all of the people at Springer who have been involved with the journal, and of course the authors and reviewers. Without papers and people to review then, there would be no journal. I wish Christopher every success as the new Editor-in-Chief and look forward to working with him as part of his team for the next year or two.

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