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CASES



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1. CLEAN HANDS

According to Plato, Socrates spoke at his trial of an episode from the rule of the Thirty Tyrants: “When the oligarchy of the Thirty was in power, they sent for me and four others to bring Leon of Salamis... They gave this order to many others also, meaning to implicate as many as possible in their guilt. But I showed again, not in words but in deeds, that I cared not a whit for death, but only for doing no unjust or unholy thing... I went quietly home.”

This incident had taken place only four or five years before the trial.

When ordered to help carry out a purge of their enemies, Socrates simply went home. The other four men carried out the order, and Leon was presumably executed. In refusing to participate in what he saw as the murder of an innocent person, Socrates took a great personal risk. He told this story at his trial to explain why he avoided political life: It’s a dangerous career, to say the least. He may also have hoped to distance himself from Critias, a former student who had become one of the Thirty.

History is full of similar stories—governments, military commanders, and business leaders often order subordinates to do horrible things. Some people obey willingly, some reluctantly, and some refuse outright. After the Second World War, many who carried out atrocities were tried at Nuremberg, and their defense that they had “just followed orders” didn’t impress the judges.

Others responded as Socrates did. In 1933, the physicist James Franck resigned from his position at the University of Göttingen in protest of a new law forcing the dismissal of Jewish scholars and political opponents. He fled Germany and later worked on the Manhattan Project. In 1938, General Ludwig Beck resigned as Chief of the General Staff rather than support Hitler’s planned invasion of Czechoslovakia. Many others, seeing where Germany was headed, emigrated quietly while they still could.

Some people stayed and resisted from within. Worker slowdowns and acts of sabotage were common in factories vital to the German war effort, carried out by people whose names are now unknown. The efforts of others were more spectacular, though. Oskar Schindler, the industrialist portrayed in *Schindler’s List*, saved many doomed concentration-camp Jews by purchasing them to work in his factories. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the Lutheran theologian, joined an underground resistance movement and was eventually executed for his alleged involvement in a plot to assassinate Hitler.

Socrates did live to tell his tale of how he had kept his own hands clean. Luckily for him the rule of the Thirty soon ended. Too bad about Leon, though. If only someone had warned him in time.

2. CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF FALLOUT

In the summer of 2032, billionaire self-styled futurist and philanthropist Seldon Pryce shocked the world by announcing that his private foundation had successfully conducted small-scale stratospheric aerosol injections in the upper atmosphere over international waters. The initiative, part of a secretive project dubbed *Helios*, involved dispersing reflective particles designed to bounce a portion of sunlight back into space, thereby reducing global temperatures. According to Pryce, the tests yielded measurable, if modest, temperature declines—and more extensive deployments were already being planned.

Pryce, founder and CEO of the influential climate-tech startup Umbragenics, has long been a vocal critic of what he calls “climate fatalism.” He declared that geopolitical gridlock around emissions reductions left humanity no choice but to embrace bold, adaptive technologies. He called his actions an “ethical acceleration”—a necessary disruption to avert ecological collapse. For Pryce, solar radiation management (SRM) wasn’t hubris; it was good stewardship.

The announcement ignited global controversy. Though the trials took place in international airspace and technically did not violate current treaties, leaders across the Global South decried the unilateral move as a form of atmospheric colonialism. Environmental organizations warned of a dangerous precedent: that a single wealthy individual could tinker with the planetary thermostat without international consent. Critics pointed to potential ripple effects—altered monsoons, drought in vulnerable agricultural regions, or the unknown consequences of long-term atmospheric interventions.

Supporters of Pryce’s vision argued that extreme circumstances demand extraordinary action. With climate tipping points rapidly approaching and many governments failing to meet emissions targets, they saw *Project Helios* as necessary planetary triage. Some Arctic nations suffering from rapid ice melt quietly expressed interest in cooperating with Umbragenics. A few even began discussions about further experimentation wherever legally possible.

The United Nations convened an emergency session but, perhaps unsurprisingly, failed to reach consensus. Tuvalu’s delegate issued a scathing rebuke of Pryce, accusing him of treating the Earth like a sandbox for elite experimentation. Meanwhile, Pryce released a manifesto titled *The Climatarian Imperative*, in which he argued that future generations would thank him for acting where institutions had faltered. “History rarely remembers the consensus builders,” he wrote, “but it never forgets those who kept the lights on.”

Pryce’s gambit has reignited urgent debates about the ethics of geoengineering, the boundaries of private power, and the meaning of democratic accountability in a planetary crisis. Is he a rogue billionaire hijacking the climate—or a visionary forcing a reluctant world to adapt?

3. DO YOU BELIEVE IN SCIENCE?

The overwhelming majority of US medical schools report that students are tested on the generally accepted scientific understanding of vaccines, including how vaccines work, their impact on diseases, and when children and adults should receive them. The required standardized exams taken by all medical students—USMLE Step 1 and Step 2 CK (Clinical Knowledge)—also test on topics such as epidemiology, immunology, and vaccines.

However, as the 2025 measles outbreak in Texas demonstrates, the number of people who choose against vaccinating themselves or their children has been rising. Some medical schools and medical students report that there are anti-vaxxers enrolled.

One might expect a medical student who self-identifies as an anti-vaxxer to receive some backlash from fellow students and perhaps some faculty. Religious exceptions to certain procedures are sometimes permitted in medical schools, and some people cite religious objections to the use of vaccines. Many of us can probably recall learning content in school with which we didn't necessarily agree but still had to master. Is it different in medical school?

Once a physician is licensed, they may be asked to provide procedures to which they object, and in some contexts, they are allowed to refuse a patient. It may be allowable for healthcare providers to decline to provide a legally permissible service—such as an elective abortion in states where the procedure is legal—on moral or religious grounds. One might wonder whether a physician should be able to refuse to vaccinate an infant because of the physician's moral or religious objection to vaccines.

To be clear, vaccinations are typically required of medical students who engage in clinical work at healthcare facilities, both for their own protection and for the protection of patients. Some healthcare facilities may allow religious exemptions to vaccination requirements, but they are not required to do so. A medical student who objects to the vaccines and refuses vaccination would have a difficult time completing clinical rotations or securing a residency.

It would seem strange for an active member of the Flat Earth Society to pursue a PhD in geology or for a creationist to study biology, but it does happen. There are also trained nutritionists who recommend potentially dangerous products, such as raw milk, to their clients. One might wonder whether schools offering nutrition degrees should require students to commit to a minimum standard of care for their clients and avoid suggesting potentially unsafe products.

4. FACING THE NATION

In the summer of 2024, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) celebrated its 163rd anniversary by prominently displaying massive portraits of President Donald Trump and President Abraham Lincoln on its building overlooking the National Mall in Washington, D.C. According to USDA Director of Communications Seth Christensen, these banners honored the department’s history and leadership, describing Trump as “the best advocate of America’s farmers and ranchers.”

The National Mall, often described as “America’s Front Yard,” symbolizes national history, identity, and foundational ideals. Each year, the Mall attracts over twenty-five million visitors, more than the combined visitation numbers of Yellowstone, Yosemite, and Grand Canyon National Parks. It serves as a stage for presidential inaugurations, major protests, and civic celebrations, making it one of the nation’s most visible and symbolic public spaces.

Historically, presidential portraits have adorned federal building interiors to signify official recognition of leadership and authority, but we have seldom seen such large-scale displays. The public and prominent display of these enormous portraits—particularly that of a sitting president—has sparked intense reactions. Critics argue that placing an oversized portrait of President Trump alongside Lincoln, a universally respected historical figure, in such a prominent and symbolic public space dangerously blurs the line between celebrating national heritage and endorsing contemporary partisan politics. Jessica Stevens, a local Alexandria resident, voiced her displeasure clearly, stating, “They ruined my favorite building. It’s about people, not politics.”

Supporters of the display argue it represents a legitimate celebration of American leadership and pride, honoring Trump’s support of American farmers and ranchers. Some visitors enthusiastically welcomed the banners, taking selfies and openly expressing their support for Trump’s policies and leadership. Frank App, visiting from Tampa, highlighted his positive view, remarking, “I support [Trump]—foreign policy, domestic policy, stance on immigration.” Still others—even those who don’t consider themselves among Trump’s supporters—contend that we shouldn’t object to the celebration of a sitting president, even if we disagree with his policies.

However, critics express deep concern, suggesting such displays echo tactics used in authoritarian regimes, where larger-than-life images of leaders prominently displayed in public spaces reinforce cults of personality and undermine democratic principles. Bob Jones, a resident of Annapolis, reacted strongly, labeling the display as “ridiculous” and indicative of an alarming self-promotion by a sitting president. Many critics emphasize that the National Mall’s symbolic nature magnifies the implications of these images, raising questions about the subtle manipulation of public space to serve partisan interests. Others have expressed discomfort with this sort of veneration especially given the Trump administration’s drastic cuts to the federal bureaucracy.

Communication scholar Cara Finnegan stresses that presidential images have historically served to shape political narratives, influencing public perception and reinforcing power structures. Finnegan warns that while some might dismiss this debate as trivial, symbolism holds real-world implications, reflecting and reinforcing material consequences in society, governance, and political discourse.

This controversy unfolds within an already polarized national climate. The Trump administration had recently stirred further controversy through an executive order aimed at eliminating what it termed “anti-American ideology” within federally funded institutions such as the Smithsonian museums. Such actions deepen public scrutiny and debate regarding the intersection of symbolism, political ideology, and institutional neutrality in publicly funded spaces. This situation, critically, raises fundamental ethical and practical questions about the use of publicly funded and historically significant spaces to project political imagery and messages. It demands a nuanced consideration of how symbols and images shape collective memory, influence public opinion, and reflect deeper societal values and tensions.

5. FORGET ME NOT

You’ve heard of thought experiments. What about a thought experiment born out of a thought experiment? Leave it to Dr. Mierzwiak, director of Lacuna, to introduce you to one...“Mulling over unpleasant memories can be exhausting. Luckily, Lacuna has the perfect solution! The firm’s revolutionary memory-erasure technology allows one to eliminate any memory, from intense trauma experiences to difficult breakups. Best of all, the procedure offers a shortcut around all those arduous (and expensive) therapy sessions.”

In *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, Joel Barish (Jim Carrey) and Clementine Kruczynski (Kate Winslet) undergo Lacuna’s memory treatments in an attempt to find peace of mind. After a difficult breakup, Clementine elects to have all memories of Joel permanently erased. Heartbroken upon learning about his ex’s decision, Joel chooses to undergo the same procedure.

During the process, Joel relives his memories of Clementine in reverse chronological order. As he re-experiences the warmth and wonder of their early days, he begins to question his decision and considers whether his judgment when consenting to the procedure was clouded by emotion. Joel’s internal struggle casts doubt not only on his own motives but also on Lacuna’s. He questions whether Lacuna’s memory-erasure technology is genuinely designed to help patients—or if it exists primarily to profit from the emotional vulnerability of its clients.

In the film, Lacuna promotes its treatment as a quick and painless way to heal from traumatic or difficult events. However, this promise of convenience may come at a significant cost—undermining the transformative value of long-term personal growth. The film raises debate over whether erasing painful memories protects mental health or undermines the authenticity of personal identity. It invites discussion around key competing values, including autonomy versus authenticity, harm reduction versus emotional development, and privacy versus corporate profit.

After all, memory is the very foundation of individual identity. Selectively erasing certain experiences risks eroding the very traits that make a person unique.

On a broader scale, expanding such technology to society as a whole raises deeper concerns. Editing our collective past could hinder our ability to effectively confront and learn from complex challenges. As George Santayana cautioned, “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”

Although some memories may be painful to recall, the strong negative emotions they bring may provide fodder for intentional self-growth, adoption of resilient behaviors, and measured introspection. According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, extensive research on the phenomenon of posttraumatic growth supports the theory that positive psychological changes can—and often do—occur among individuals grappling with traumatic events.

The possible positive outcomes of difficult experiences extend beyond just instances of trauma. Take it from the breakup anthem queen herself, Kelly Clarkson: what doesn’t kill you, makes you stronger.

Undoubtedly, trauma events and difficult experiences can certainly lead one to experience considerable negative impacts. According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), traumatic events are associated with behavioral and chronic physical health conditions, which can adversely affect the individual for a short period of time or over the course of their lifetime. Further, trauma may erode one’s mental, emotional, and even physical well-being. These negative outcomes may be further exacerbated if the person lacks a strong support system, access to mental health services, or effective coping skills.

6. GAMIFYING CONSENT

“Consent is sexy.” This phrase has become a familiar slogan in many universities’ mandatory sexual harassment trainings and is often met with eye-rolls from students. So, why has the concept of consent—despite its importance—become reduced to something so...cringeworthy?

Interestingly, the issue isn’t a lack of awareness. Research consistently shows that a strong majority of people know what consent means and believe that it is crucial for healthy relationships and sexual interactions.

The problem lies in the packaging: cheesy dialogue, corny acting, and unrealistic portrayals of sexual encounters may lead viewers to view sexual harassment training as a pesky chore rather than an enriching educational experience. Moreover, some universities require students to repeat identical sexual harassment modules multiple times throughout their academic careers, which can foster disengagement rather than reflection.

Research suggests that traditional consent training often falls short of driving real behavioral change. Despite mandatory programs, nearly two-thirds of college students report experiencing sexual harassment, according to the National Sexual Violence Resource Center—highlighting a disconnect between education and impact. Still, these trainings offer value by helping students, faculty, and staff recognize, report, and prevent misconduct, contributing to a safer, more inclusive campus environment.

Some universities have recognized that student input is key to implementing effective sexual harassment education. Drawing from student experiences, they have designed innovative and interactive techniques to encourage students to take a more active role in preventing sexual misconduct. Furthermore, some institutions connect victims of sexual violence with specialized advocates who provide individualized resources and support.

Efforts to educate about consent are undermined by a media landscape that thrives on ambiguity. The proliferation of dating shows in the twenty-first century has blurred the boundaries around consent by presenting sexual intimacy not as a personal decision but as entertainment. Reality television programs such as *Love Island*, *Bachelor in Paradise*, and *Too Hot to Handle*, center sexual interactions as the driving force of the narrative, often sidelining nuanced conversations around consent and agency. The implicit message? Consent is not sexy.

For example, *Love Island* depicts childhood games like “Spin the Bottle” taken to the extreme. Contestants are dared to participate in raunchy scenarios such as performing intimate dares and completing kissing challenges. *Too Hot to Handle* complicates this dynamic by luring contestants into a sexually charged environment—only to reveal that abstaining from intimacy is the real challenge, all for a cash reward. In both cases, the shows manipulate consent as a game mechanic, eroding its seriousness and framing it as negotiable under the right conditions.

It would be reductive to claim that these shows are entirely devoid of consent; after all, participants agree to appear on the show, can theoretically leave at any time, and may decline to engage in sexual activity. In fact, *Love Island Australia*, implemented “consent buttons” on the beds of participants—devices that light up a heart-shaped sign when pressed, symbolizing mutual agreement to sexual intimacy.

While some praised the buttons as a symbolic step, others disagreed. In *Yahoo Lifestyle*, Dr. Erin Carlisle argued that they fail to reflect the ongoing, revocable nature of real consent. Adding to the concern, viewers weren’t informed of the buttons’ existence until former contestant Georgia Murray revealed them in a viral TikTok—underscoring how even efforts to address consent may be more about optics than meaningful communication.

The pressure to deliver entertaining content, combined with the shows' often inadequate depictions of consent, creates a troubling dynamic. In 2017, *Bachelor in Paradise* contestant Corinne Olympios alleged that she had been sexually assaulted by another cast member, stating that she was too intoxicated to recall giving consent. The incident sparked widespread outrage, with many viewers criticizing both the cast and producers—not only for failing to intervene but for allowing such a situation to unfold in the first place. For many, it served as a stark example of how reality TV can commodify contestants, prioritizing profit over their safety and autonomy.

7. GETTING INTO THE WEEDS

In June 2025, Governor Greg Abbott vetoed a bill that would have given Texas some of the strictest cannabis laws in the United States. The bill proposed criminalizing nearly all cannabis use, possession, and cultivation, except for low-THC medicinal oil. THC, or tetrahydrocannabinol, is the psychoactive component that produces a “high.” Some users rely on cannabis to self-medicate conditions such as PTSD, anxiety, cancer, or seizure disorders, though evidence on its safety and efficacy remains limited. Federal law still prohibits cannabis in all forms, preventing doctors from prescribing it, even though many states have legalized it for recreational or medical use. The federal laws are generally not enforced in states where cannabis has been legalized at the state level.

At the federal level, marijuana is currently classified as a Schedule I controlled substance, that is, a drug with no medical value and a high potential for abuse. However, this classification may soon change. In 2023, the Drug Enforcement Administration began the process of reclassifying marijuana as a Schedule III drug: a drug with moderate to low potential for abuse. While this would signal a shift in legal and scientific perceptions, other aspects of how cannabis is provided could make this new classification misleading.

Cannabis is consumed in many forms—vape pens, joints, edibles, and oils—often containing chemical derivatives such as CBD or THC. Although many cannabis products are tested, other ingredients are frequently added without consumer knowledge. For example, in 2024, Adrienne Robert of *Detroit Free Press* interviewed Josh Swider, CEO of Infinite Chemical Analysis Labs, who warned that many Michigan cannabis products contain undisclosed substances used to dilute THC. While THC potency is listed on labels, diluents often are not. The declining potency of THC in products like vape pens suggests that such additives are increasingly common, despite the fact that the health risks from the additives may not be known.

Stakeholders in Michigan’s cannabis industry have called for stronger regulation to protect consumers. They note that companies using additives can sell their products more cheaply, undercutting those who maintain higher standards for purity. Furthermore, new taxes on cannabis threaten to worsen these pressures, destabilizing the legal cannabis market. So, while stricter regulations might protect consumers, they might also drive them toward cheaper “black market” products—where contamination risks are even higher.

Despite these concerns, cannabis may offer significant medical benefits. According to *Harvard Health*, medical marijuana may relieve anxiety, insomnia, chronic pain, and muscle spasms, and may aid in treatment for certain potentially life-threatening conditions. However, limited research prevents doctors from confidently recommending it; and, since federal restrictions classify cannabis as harmful, there are constraints on studies involving human subjects. Functions of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) are meant to protect human participants from significant risk. As a result, most studies are limited to observing subjects already using cannabis. Published studies are often criticized for reinforcing negative stereotypes linking cannabis to crime or addiction, making it harder to get funding for more thorough research.

This combination of social stigma, inconsistent regulation, and limited funding makes it difficult to study cannabis comprehensively. Wide variations in products and users further complicate research. Like cosmetics or essential oils, cannabis is not subject to FDA approval before sale, and products are typically removed only after harm occurs. Without consistent standards or premarket testing, uncertainty remains about both the safety of cannabis products and the validity of their claimed medical benefits.

8. GOGUARDIAN ANGELS WATCHING OVER ME

One Thursday morning in late 2024, the director of counseling services for a small Missouri school district arrived at work to find dozens of AI-generated alerts. The messages were from GoGuardian Beacon, software installed on students' school-issued devices that analyzes their browsing behavior for risk of self-harm. Twenty-six of the alerts were false alarms prompted by a health class assignment on suicide. The last, however, was an "active planning" alert triggered by a student who searched "how to die" in her browser. Immediately, school officials prepared to remove the student from class and conduct a suicide screening evaluation.

As many as twenty-seven million students—nearly half of all American schoolchildren—from across ten thousand schools are monitored by GoGuardian software. Millions more fall under the surveillance of similar apps such as Gaggle and Bark. School officials say these products have given them an unprecedented advantage in identifying children who are struggling—especially at a time when youth suicide rates are rising. Others have turned a skeptical eye on ed-tech companies for depriving students of their privacy.

GoGuardian comes with a variety of features. The "Beacon" tool uses AI to monitor students' keystrokes for flagged terms and alerts school officials when it detects behavior that may indicate self-harm. Other tools allow teachers and administrators to view minute-by-minute records of students' screens and set alerts for "offensive content." Each of GoGuardian's features can be configured to track student behavior 24-7.

When the software detects concerning behavior after school hours, the result may be a late-night visit from police. A seventeen-year-old in Connecticut was left shaken after three armed officers arrived at her home after midnight to question her about her mental health. Police eventually realized that the alert was a false alarm triggered by a poem she had typed on her school laptop.

Sometimes, however, real-time surveillance helps first-responders reach students just in time. Late one evening in 2020, school officials were alerted that sixteen-year-old Madi Cholka had texted a friend that she planned to overdose on her anxiety medication. Cholka's mother awoke to police at her home. When officers reached her, Madi had already taken fifteen pills. She was rushed to the hospital in time to save her life.

The Electronic Frontier Foundation calls GoGuardian a "red flag machine" that delivers far more false positives than accurate self-harm assessments. By designing an algorithm that may be triggered by even benign or educational content, GoGuardian aims to detect any potential threat—and collects a vast amount of student data in the process. Researchers say GoGuardian regularly flags certain non-explicit content as harmful, including websites with information about colleges, counseling and therapy, LGBTQ issues, sexual health, gun violence, history, and political figures. Other researchers have found that student monitoring is often used primarily for disciplinary purposes rather than for safety.

For now, the cat seems to be out of the bag regarding student surveillance systems. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, GoGuardian and similar tools have skyrocketed in popularity. And despite pressure from concerned parents and students to curtail monitoring, many school districts are keen on keeping the software running. "It is hard to switch it off," one school official said. "I mean, the consequences of switching it off is that somebody can die."

9. IF LOOKS COULD KILL

Little is left to the imagination about Luigi Mangione’s personal life. Mangione grew up in a wealthy Italian family that owned country clubs, resorts, and nursing homes in the Baltimore area. He was a stellar student, graduating as valedictorian of his elite private high school and earning both his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from the University of Pennsylvania. Friends described Mangione as smart, charismatic, and compassionate—the kind of person who seemed to “have it all going for him.” He loved surfing and even moved to Hawaii to pursue the sport. He also was accused of shooting the CEO of UnitedHealthcare in what appeared to be a politically motivated assassination.

Despite allegedly having killed someone, Mangione has been positively received by a global fanbase. He became the poster child for prison reform and anti-capitalist movements. His face and alleged “defend, deny, depose” mantra are plastered on physical walls and online forums calling for the abolition of the death penalty, donations to public defense funds, and investigations into other business executives. Tickets to the opening night of *Luigi: The Musical* sold out immediately. There is even a Luigi Mangione Fan Club that sells T-shirts, mugs, and other merchandise supporting their namesake.

Nevertheless, critics have cautioned against fans’ enthusiasm for the accused. After all, a man was killed in broad daylight—someone who grew up from much humbler beginnings but also graduated at the top of his class and was admired by friends. Critics worry that fans are too quick to glorify the accused CEO slayer, sidestepping the fact that a mother is widowed and her teenage sons are fatherless. Other critics argue that these fans, though right to praise Mangione, are motivated by the wrong reasons. They commend what they perceive to be the political impetus behind the assassination, claiming that the killer heroically stood up against exploitative institutions like privatized healthcare. But focusing on Mangione’s appearance—a well-educated, attractive “bad boy”—misses the point.

This isn’t the first time a photogenic suspect has been transformed into a celebrity. In 2014, California police posted the mugshot of Jeremy Meeks, a gang member arrested on felony weapons charges, to Facebook. Meeks became an overnight sensation; within twenty-four hours, the mugshot gained thousands of comments swooning over his chiseled features and piercing gray eyes. And long before him, the public had idolized dashing and popular gangsters such as John Dillinger, Bugsy Siegal, Pretty Boy Floyd, and the romanticized couple, Bonnie and Clyde.

But some criminals gained a following from their actions. In 1973, civil rights activist Assata Shakur shot and killed the patrol officer who pulled her over for a faulty taillight. Scholars and fellow Black activists such as Angela Davis have praised Shakur for her courage and persistence in fighting police brutality and systemic racism, describing her as a “compassionate human being with an unswerving commitment to justice.”

10. AN IMPERFECT SOLUTION

The monetary costs of domestic and family violence in the United States are staggering, with current estimates close to \$6 billion a year when lost wages and associated healthcare and mental health costs are taken into account. Although domestic violence was historically viewed as a personal or family matter, it is now considered to be a significant public health problem as well as a business productivity issue, given its prevalence and the lifetime economic burden it imposes on victims, survivors, and families. There is also a clear retrospective relationship between mass murders and domestic or family violence, as the majority of perpetrators of mass murders have a history of family violence.

Rachel Louise Snyder, in *No Visible Bruises: What We Don't Know About Domestic Violence Can Kill Us*, examines the imperfect solution of domestic violence shelters as a “fix” for the multifaceted problem of domestic and family violence. Through the analysis of several cases of familicide, Snyder grapples with the question of what could have been done to prevent these seemingly preventable tragedies. She discusses decades of research on domestic violence, the devastating impact on families, and the lessons learned from fatality reviews of domestic violence murders. In a country where the first domestic violence laws didn’t appear until the 1970s, it’s still an open question how these seemingly preventable murders should be addressed within the criminal justice system.

A seemingly obvious solution to keeping victims of domestic violence safe can be found in shelters. Shelters for people victimized by domestic violence—so-called battered women's shelters—have existed in the United States for over fifty years. Although these shelters have undoubtedly saved many lives, they have also been described colloquially as a “ticket to welfare,” since shelter residents must literally walk away from their lives. Entering a shelter requires a victim or survivor to go into hiding with their children (if applicable), as residents are not allowed to tell anyone where they are and must adhere to strict curfews and other rules designed to keep everyone safe. It is very difficult for shelter residents to hold down a job; children usually must change schools; and most possessions must be left behind. Thus, a fundamental problem with domestic violence shelters is that they effectively “jail” the victim rather than the abuser.

Moreover, domestic violence shelters are, at best, an extremely short-term solution, as many allow victims or survivors to stay for only up to forty-five days. Shelter residents are typically excluded from homeless benefits because they are not technically homeless. Victims and survivors are often forced to leave their city or county if local shelters are full. When a victim of domestic violence refuses to go into shelter and is later murdered, it is all too easy to blame the victim rather than to examine why domestic violence shelters are relied upon as the sole solution for keeping victims safe from abusers. Experts claim that domestic violence can be understood as an issue of power and control. Yet domestic violence shelters may only reinforce this power differential by placing victims in a different situation where they again have little or no control over their surroundings.

11. INCLUSIVE SEGREGATION

One fictitious university found itself without a Resident Assistant (RA) for the new semester of the LGBTQ+ dorm and was forced to quickly find a replacement before the next term. University officials began looking for a new RA right away, but they were looking for one feature in particular: the new RA had to be queer. When no student with the right “qualifications” applied, officials turned to already-employed RAs. Staff began pressuring students to self-disclose whether they considered themselves part of the LGBTQ+ community, since only a queer RA was allowed to live and work in the LGBTQ+ dorm.

At a different school, all but two of the dorms are gender-inclusive—one for male students and one for female students. One student, Tam, who identifies as they/them, applied to live in the male-only dorm. Tam was assigned male at birth and feels more comfortable around men; however, since they no longer identify as “male,” the school turned down their application and moved a male-identifying student to the dorm instead.

Another university assigns dorms based on cultural backgrounds, and Radd, an albino Black student, applied to live in the African American housing community. Radd was accepted to the dorm but found that it might not be for him when the other students began to taunt him for not being “Black enough” to belong. Because of his albinism, he was often told he could “pass” as white.

These examples are just a few of the situations students are currently facing in the ever-changing climate of school and identity. College life is hard, and it is often even harder for students from marginalized groups who face an increased risk of discrimination and harassment. In an effort to help ease these challenges, colleges and universities have begun offering special housing options for marginalized communities, ranging from single-room accommodations for students with disabilities to entire halls dedicated to students with shared cultural heritage. Multiple studies, such as one published in the *Journal of LGBT Youth*, have shown that providing safe spaces and dorms exclusively for members of marginalized communities benefits both the mental and academic well-being of these students.

Echoing the concerns of others, Simon Thompson, director of a student housing website, raised questions in a 2017 *Higher Ed* article about whether these efforts to “protect” students of different backgrounds might actually amount to self-imposed segregation. Applying to such programs often requires students to disclose their affiliation with a marginalized group, and applicants might not even be allowed to join if they are not considered “marginalized enough” to truly belong. In a 2016 article in *The Guardian*, many students voiced concerns that having members of marginalized communities all living in one place might make them easier targets for hate crimes and send the wrong message—that instead of addressing discrimination, schools are choosing the easier option of separation.

However, some students argue that separate housing is still needed, but that the system of handling it could be better. Niko Powell, a college student and trans man, spoke about his experiences in a 2023 *USA Today* article. He explained that while he and many other students want to take part in special housing programs, the reality of such housing often fails to live up to schools’ promises and often comes with unexpected drawbacks, such as being relegated to off-campus or pricier dorms.

12. LESS PAY, MORE PLAY

Mixolyrica is one of the largest music streaming platforms in the world, with millions of daily users. Its advertising brags about its algorithmically generated, individualized playlists, which introduce users to new songs and new artists matching their unique listening profiles.

Mixolyrica recently launched a program, not well known to the public, called Discovery Boost. Under the program, the recommendation algorithm will aggressively push the songs of participating record labels and artists if they agree to take a 25 percent reduction of their royalty rate. Tracks favored by Discovery Boost are far more likely to appear on personalized playlists and among suggestions to users.

Luna Rivers is a twenty-three-year-old indie singer-songwriter who self-produces her music and distributes it through a small indie label. It has taken her almost two years to build a modest following through Mixolyrica. She's just produced a new single, *Hollow Skies*, which she believes is the strongest she's done so far. Her agent agrees and lets her know all about Discovery Boost, adding that he can almost certainly get her enrolled in it based on the strength of her current following. "Think about it," he says, "but don't take too long."

Luna is an artist struggling to cover rent and recording costs, and losing a quarter of her small income stream would hurt. But the promotional boost could compensate and give her just the kind of wider exposure she needs. *Hollow Skies*, after all, will be just one among the thousands of new songs uploaded each week.

Uncertain of whether the gamble is worth it, Luna does a little research, and what she discovers bothers her. The program, it seems, is not transparent to listeners, who have no way of knowing which songs are being artificially boosted. Mixolyrica simply calls the playlists "tailored to your taste," and the boosted songs are not labeled as sponsored content.

While Discovery Boost sounds like a good idea to Luna, it also strikes her as odd that she could simply cut in line ahead of the hundreds of other struggling artists. Although she knows that her work is better than average and worthy of success, the promotional boost would be unrelated to her music's merits. On the other hand, if she opts out, others will opt in, and if her music gets pushed far enough down on the lists, it might never reach a wide audience. In this business, she knows, when an opportunity like this comes up, you've got to take it.

Her research turns up other facts that worry her. Articles by industry watchdogs, journalists, and musicians compare Discovery Boost to a form of payola, a practice once common in the music industry but now illegal. In the early twentieth century, artists or their agents would bribe radio stations or DJs to play certain songs. The practice became so widespread, with larger and larger payments becoming the norm, that, in the 1950s and 1960s, Congress investigated. They argued that payola payments mislead the public into believing that the songs they hear frequently are actually popular, when in fact their promoters have simply bought a place in the rotation. US law changed, so now any sponsored work must be disclosed to listeners.

When Luna asks her agent how Discovery Boost isn't the same as payola, he points out that there is no cash payment, no bribe, it's just an agreement for her to take a lower royalties rate. "It's perfect for small artists like you, because you get more visibility without spending anything up front."

The practice may be legal, but an article that Luna finds in the *Euterpe Times* points out that it erodes listener trust in so-called personalized playlists. Maybe it should be outlawed, Luna finally decides, but that's on them, not her. She still has to publicize her works. Reaching just the right audience through these playlists can make or break her career, so she had better opt in from self-defense.

Note: This case is fictional and was written collaboratively with ChatGPT.

13. MAID TO ORDER

In 2016, Canada enacted legislation allowing mentally competent adults who qualify for government-funded healthcare and who have a “grievous and irremediable medical condition” to receive medical assistance in dying (MAID). In many respects, MAID resembles laws like Oregon’s Death with Dignity Act (DWDA), which permit physician-assisted suicide for mentally competent residents with less than six months to live. However, MAID differs from Oregon’s DWDA and similar US laws in one key respect: there is no “imminent death” criterion. A person need not be terminally ill to qualify.

By far the most controversial aspect of MAID, as amended in 2021, is that it includes severe mental illness as a type of “grievous and irremediable medical condition.” In other words, a person may qualify for MAID on the basis of mental illness alone, without an accompanying physical illness, if their condition is severe, resistant to treatment, and causes intolerable suffering.

This expansion has been highly controversial, so much so that the inclusion of severe mental illness alone as a qualifier for MAID has been delayed while practitioners grapple with its ethical implications. Even supporters of the change recognize the need for strict assessment protocols and safeguards, especially regarding the mental competence to consent.

To be clear, “severe mental illness” in this context does *not* include Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s, or dementia, which are classified as neurocognitive conditions. Individuals suffering from such conditions may already qualify for MAID if they meet other criteria, including mental competence and intolerable suffering. By contrast, conditions considered “purely” psychiatric—such as depression or certain personality disorders—fall under the category of mental illness.

Some opponents of expanding MAID to include mental illness argue that it effectively provides depressed and suicidal individuals with an easy way to end their lives. Opponents often focus on the mental competency criterion for MAID, questioning whether someone suffering from a severe mental illness can truly give informed and voluntary consent.

Those who favor including the mental illness component in MAID point out that suffering is subjective and the quality of life must be assessed individually. They note that some mental illnesses cannot be helped by current or foreseeable treatments. To take the moral right to self-determination seriously, they argue, we should allow an individual who endures intolerable suffering, whether the suffering be physical or mental, to choose a safe and humane death.

14. MUCH ADO ABOUT BLUFFING

To bluff in poker is to act as though you have a winning hand when you don't. Bluffing is intentional deception. But the rules of poker allow bluffing, and everyone who plays understands that bluffing is part of the game. There is nothing unethical about bluffing in poker. However, using a card one wasn't dealt is cheating and violates the rules of the game. Falsely claiming a win is another form of cheating, as is dealing from the bottom of the deck. Pretending to be a beginner (or sandbagging), is sometimes thought to be unethical, though within the rules. In the context of poker (or any game for that matter), there are boundaries of what is acceptable, and those boundaries are often different from the boundaries of ethics in the world outside the game.

In warfare, as in poker, information about the strengths and weaknesses of the enemy can be crucial—hence the need for reconnaissance and intelligence gathering. But since accurate and comprehensive information is so important, deception and disinformation becomes part of the standard conduct of war. Codes and codebreaking, bluff and subterfuge, spies and counterspies all exist because of the decisive role played by information in warfare. No one considers deception, in the context of warfare, to be unethical. However, there are also rules of engagement and rules of war, such as those governing the treatment of prisoners, the targeting of civilians, or the use of certain weapons.

It seems safe to say that conflicts and competitions of any sort have their own rules that govern how the participants may engage each other, and also how they may not.

In 1968, *Harvard Business Review* published an article by Albert Z. Carr entitled “Is Business Bluffing Ethical?” that has been assigned in business schools for many decades. Carr's contention was that business has its own conventions, just like a game, which determine what is legitimate and what is not. And in business, bluffing is acceptable and even required. Never start a negotiation with your final offer; never submit a budget request without slack. That's just the way business works.

“Most executives from time to time are almost compelled, in the interests of their companies or themselves, to practice some form of deception when negotiating with customers, dealers, labor unions, government officials, or even other departments of their companies. By conscious misstatements, concealment of pertinent facts, or exaggeration—in short, by bluffing—they seek to persuade others to agree with them. I think it is fair to say that if the individual executive refuses to bluff from time to time—if he feels obligated to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth—he is ignoring opportunities permitted under the rules and is at a heavy disadvantage in his business dealings.”

A little bit later, Carr adds this.

“But here and there a businessman is unable to reconcile himself to the bluff in which he plays a part. His conscience, perhaps spurred by religious idealism, troubles him. He feels guilty; he may develop an ulcer or a nervous tic. Before any executive can make profitable use of the strategy of the bluff, he needs to make sure that in bluffing he will not lose self-respect or become emotionally disturbed. If he is to reconcile personal integrity and high standards of honesty with the practical requirements of business, he must feel that his bluffs are ethically justified. The justification rests on the fact that business, as practiced by individuals as well as by corporations, has the impersonal character of a game—a game that demands both special strategy and an understanding of its special ethics.”

15. RANK AND FAIL?

As of late 2025, New York City finds itself reflecting on one of the most ideologically charged mayoral elections in decades. Zohran Mamdani, a Democratic Socialist and former state assemblyman, has now been elected mayor after building a wide grassroots coalition advocating for housing justice, transit equity, and climate action. Despite being massively outspent by former Governor Andrew Cuomo and his allies—including corporate political action committees (PACs) and billionaire donors—Mamdani ultimately overtook Cuomo in the final ranked-choice tabulation and secured a majority.

Political observers credit Mamdani’s victory not just to his platform and endorsements from popular national figures, but to the city’s ranked-choice voting (RCV) system, which allows voters to rank up to five candidates in order of preference. In this system, if no candidate secures a majority in the first round of tabulation, the last-place candidate is eliminated, and their votes are redistributed according to second-choice preferences. This process repeats until a candidate emerges with a majority. Ranked-choice voting often produces a different winner than the initial frontrunner by rewarding candidates with broad overall support, not just a strong base. A candidate who isn’t leading in first-choice votes can win if they are ranked second or third by enough voters as others are eliminated—precisely the dynamic that helped Mamdani prevail.

Advocates say RCV is a tool for political inclusion. In a recent *Guardian* op-ed, Katrina vanden Heuvel argues that RCV has “made it possible for dark-horse candidates to work together” rather than undercut each other, as happens in traditional “first-past-the-post” contests, where the candidate with the most votes wins, even if they don’t have a clear majority. This more typical approach is simple, but can allow a candidate to win with less than 50 percent support. In contrast to the fractious 2021 mayoral race with a crowded field and intense infighting prompted by confusion over the implementation of an RCV program, progressive candidates this year cross-endorsed one another and urged their supporters to rank other like-minded candidates second or third—creating a rare sense of strategic unity and ideological clarity.

Yet beneath this democratic optimism lies a quieter concern: RCV may unintentionally disenfranchise the very communities it hopes to empower. Political scientist Lindsey Cormack has studied ballot-error data from the 2021 NYC mayoral primary—the city’s first use of RCV. In her analysis, ballots from low-income and less-educated districts were much more likely to be voided due to “overvotes,” where voters mark more than one candidate for a given ranking, or otherwise fundamentally misunderstand the ballot mechanics. These errors were significantly more common in boroughs like the Bronx and eastern Brooklyn, areas with large populations of working-class Black and Latino residents. In contrast, wealthier, whiter areas with higher levels of education had far lower error rates.

While the total number of spoiled ballots may seem modest—ranging between 1 and 4 percent in many districts—the concern is that these errors are not randomly distributed. They disproportionately affect communities already underrepresented in New York’s political system—communities whose votes are now not just less influential, but potentially erased entirely due to technical errors.

Critics also point out that voter education around RCV has been patchy. While the city’s Board of Elections created explanatory mailers and ads, much of the real outreach was left to the campaigns themselves. Yet because campaigns tended to prioritize winning over education, many voters were left confused about how to rank candidates or (rightly, as it turns out) feared making mistakes that could disqualify their ballots. Language access and ballot design have also been cited as barriers for immigrant voters and those with limited English proficiency. So while RCV can empower new voices, it also risks reinforcing inequalities unless those in power take active steps to build truly inclusive infrastructure around it—not just use it as a tool to win.

Supporters of RCV respond that these implementation challenges are surmountable and that all major electoral reforms have growing pains. They argue that ranked-choice voting is still more representative, less polarizing, and more empowering in the long run, especially when paired with better civic education and improved ballot design. And for campaigns like Mamdani's—often excluded from traditional political viability—RCV may offer a rare and critical path to victory, as his election has now demonstrated.

16. THE REAL COSTS OF VIRTUAL PRODUCTS

Large Language Models (LLMs) and bitcoin are now, and will continue to be, increasingly important technological products, but they come at a high environmental price. LLMs such as GPT are trained to generate human-like language patterns by studying large bodies of texts. Their ability to generate human-like text makes LLMs useful for content creation, running chatbots for customer service, and software development. However, companies offering LLMs house their servers in data centers that require significant amounts of energy to control the climate for the machines running inside. Similarly, bitcoin is an online currency that must be mined through mathematical puzzles to keep the currency in circulation, requiring a large amount of electricity to operate. Although some argue that LLMs and bitcoin could save energy resources on a global scale by eliminating other ways humans use energy, new technological developments that create more powerful machines and programs may lead both technologies to become unsustainable.

In a January 2025 article in *MIT News*, Adam Zewe estimates that by 2026 the amount of electricity consumed by data centers may approach 1,050 terawatts-hours—a demand that cannot be met sustainably. Additionally, bitcoin’s energy costs continue to rise, reaching 14.44 terawatt-hours per month in 2024. It has been estimated that bitcoin mining requires 5 percent of global energy consumption. Servers supporting LLMs have been estimated to require 33 percent more energy than program-specific software, and the demand for generative AI is increasing. Thus, as our technologies improve, they become less sustainable and challenge ongoing efforts to minimize fossil fuel usage and slow the rate of climate change.

While LLMs and bitcoin require large amounts of energy to run, they also require large amounts of fresh water. Servers supporting LLMs and bitcoin need vast quantities of fresh water to keep data centers cool. For example, Chamanara and Madani report in an article for the *United Nations University* that from 2020 to 2021, bitcoin mining used enough water to fill over 660,000 Olympic-sized swimming pools. First, structures such as cooling towers or water loops are generally used to lower temperatures enough for these servers to operate. Second, water is used to produce the electricity that servers need. Third, manufacturing server parts also requires water. Through these three processes, millions of liters of fresh water are used in the creation and maintenance of servers running generative programming.

Fresh water is a limited global resource and, according to a 2024 *Forbes* article by Cindy Gordon, about 1.1 billion people lack access to fresh water worldwide. Only 3 percent of the world’s water is fresh, and 66 percent of this is stored in frozen glaciers and unavailable to human consumers. By 2027, projected water usage for LLMs could reach 6.6 billion cubic meters, which would place a significant burden on already limited supplies of fresh water. Several tech companies have expressed plans to replenish more water than they consume by 2030, but these efforts may not be enough.

17. TRANSITIVE LIFE SUPPORT

Adriana Smith gave birth to a baby boy, Chance, in June 2025. Though the baby was delivered by C-section several months premature, his family told reporters that he was “fighting” and was “expected to be OK.” Smith, sadly, could not celebrate the birth of her child. She had been placed on life support to gestate her fetus—irrespective of her family’s wishes—after being declared brain-dead about four months before delivery.

According to her loved ones, Smith sought help from two different Georgia hospitals in early February when she began to suffer from persistent headaches. She was sent home with medication. Days later, she was rushed to the hospital, where a CT scan revealed multiple blood clots in her brain. The thirty-year-old was eight weeks pregnant when Emory University Hospital officials determined she had lost all brain function.

Doctors told Smith’s mother, April Newkirk, that Georgia’s Living Infants Fairness and Equality (LIFE) Act created a legal duty for the hospital to keep Smith on a ventilator. The law, which took effect shortly after the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, bans abortions after a fetal heartbeat is detected at around six weeks of pregnancy. Newkirk said no one at the hospital consulted her about placing her daughter on life support.

“We didn’t have a choice or a say about it,” Newkirk said. “We want the baby—that’s a part of my daughter. But the decision should have been left to us, not the state.”

Georgia’s law is unusual in that it recognizes unborn children as “natural persons.” In granting “personhood” to fetuses, the law entitles them to the same civil rights enjoyed by adults and children already residing in the state. Scholars argue that this new legal status has broad implications for those responsible for an unborn child’s health. If a fetus has all the rights of a living person, the people around it may be liable not only when the fetus dies but also for ensuring that the fetus is born.

Not everyone agrees that the LIFE Act required the hospital to keep Smith’s heart beating. Georgia Attorney General Chris Carr said taking Smith off life support was not the same as aborting a fetus.

“There is nothing in the LIFE Act that requires medical professionals to keep a woman on life support after brain death,” he said in a statement. “Removing life support is not an action ‘with the purpose to terminate a pregnancy.’”

Others argue Georgia’s LIFE Act is motivated by factors separate from protecting vulnerable lives. Law professor Kimberly Mutcherson notes that Emory University Hospital would not be permitted to remove organs from a brain-dead person without her family’s consent (assuming she was not already registered as a donor), even if doing so could save dozens of lives. In this case, hospital officials kept Smith’s body alive knowing that the unusual pregnancy would not necessarily result in a healthy birth.

At Smith’s funeral, lawmakers voiced support for legislation that would ensure hospitals honor people’s end-of-life directives, even when they are pregnant. In an interview, Newkirk insisted that her daughter’s autonomy had been violated.

“I think all women should have a choice about their body,” she said. “I think I want people to know that.”

ABOUT THE CASE WRITERS

Payton Bucki

Payton Bucki is currently pursuing her master's degree in public administration at Oakland University, after earning bachelor's degrees in political science and social work in April, 2024, at the same institution. Payton competed with the Oakland University Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl team for two years, qualifying for IEB nationals in both 2023 and 2024.

Payton's passion for writing stems from her years of writing, research, and editorial work for *The Oakland Post* and *BeGolden* magazine. Off-campus, Payton volunteers with Michigan Youth in Government, where she serves as an Alumni Volunteer and a member of the Model Judiciary Program Committee. In these roles, Payton assists in developing civic engagement and government education programs for thousands of middle and high school students from across the state.

Payton will graduate with her master's degree in Spring 2026 and will then enter law school at the University of Michigan in the fall. In her free time, Payton enjoys reading, traveling, backpacking, hiking, and spending time with her dog, Oskey, and her cat, Scooby.

Abigail Feldman

Abigail Feldman has been involved in Ethics Bowl for more than a decade. As an undergraduate, she was a member of the first Ethics Bowl team from Tufts University to advance to the national championship competition. Following graduation, she returned to Tufts as a teaching assistant for philosophy courses there, including Introduction to Ethics and the Ethics Bowl course for undergraduates. She helped design and facilitate the first Ethics Bowl program for incarcerated students at MCI-Concord in Massachusetts. She holds an EdM from the Harvard Graduate School of Education and is currently pursuing a JD at Boston College Law School.

Cynthia Jones

Cynthia Jones, PhD, is a Professor of Philosophy and the founder and Director of the Office for Advocacy & Violence Prevention at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, where she also served for eight years as the founding director of the university's ethics center. Her research includes end-of-life issues in medicine, health disparities, moral issues in funding, trauma, and survivor advocacy, and she is the current or past PI on more than twenty grant and donor projects, including projects on forensic nursing, campus-based advocacy, and improving outcomes for foster youth. She has coached teams, served as a case writer on the national committee, and served as a judge or moderator at regional and national competitions for the Ethics Bowl for more than twenty-one years.

Sophia McWilliams

Sophia McWilliams is a December, 2022, Communications graduate from Berea College, a small liberal arts school, located in the Appalachian Mountains of Kentucky. An avid gamer, and a published fantasy author, Sophia likes to try and bring a touch of wonder to everything she works on. She has been helping with Ethics Bowl since before she was in high school; back then she would help research for other case writers and supply ideas that were more "in" or "hip with the kids." Now as an official member of the team, her cases tend to focus on animals/environmentalism, fantasy, creativity, or interpersonal connections.

Alex M. Richardson

Alex M. Richardson, PhD is Associate Director for Content Strategy and Engagement at the Janet Prindle Institute for Ethics at DePauw University, where he also teaches in the Department of Philosophy. Alex oversees the Prindle Institute's ethics education resource libraries and digital experiences, as well as various national

engagement initiatives. In addition to his work at the Institute, Alex serves on the Board of Directors of the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics (APPE), and as Chair of the American Philosophical Association's Committee on Pre-College Philosophy. Alex has been involved with the Ethics Bowl community for many years at both the High School and Intercollegiate levels. He is Organizer of the IEBOnline Regional Competition, and sits on the APPE IEB Council as a Regional Representative in this capacity.

Robert Skipper

Robert Boyd Skipper, PhD, is a professor emeritus of philosophy from St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas. While there, he taught engineering ethics and also served as director of the Texas Regional Ethics Bowl for over twenty years. He has been involved with the Ethics Bowl since 2000, and is currently the chair of the Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl's case-writing committee, which he first joined as a writer in 2009. His current philosophical interests are fictionalism, aboutness, and aesthetics. Outside of philosophy, his interests include literature and chess. He lives in the small Texas town of Wimberley, between Austin and San Antonio, where he blogs on <https://robertboydskipper.substack.com> about the latest books he's reading. On the same forum he also conducts slow-readings of major works of Western philosophy.

Mallory Wietrzykowski

Mallory Wietrzykowski is a distinguished doctoral candidate in Saint Louis University's Health Care Ethics PhD program, a clinical ethicist at Corewell Health West, and an adjunct instructor with Grand Valley State University's philosophy department. Her research interests include applied ethics and philosophy, health care ethics, clinical ethics, public health ethics, and feminist and queer philosophy. Mallory graduated with her BA in philosophy from Grand Valley State University and her MA in philosophy from Kent State University. During her time as an undergraduate student, she competed on her university's ethics bowl team. Mallory has since remained involved with the intercollegiate ethics bowl program by volunteering at competitions and has been part of the national case writing committee for three years.

Jenna Wong

Jenna Wong has been heavily involved with the Ethics Bowl since she competed on her high school's team in her home state of California. Since then, she founded the University of Chicago's Ethics Bowl team, helped organize the University's first campus-wide Ethics Bowl competition, and has judged for IEB Nationals and NHSEB Chicago Regionals.

Jenna earned her Master's in Bioethics and Science Policy with a concentration in Technology Ethics and Policy from Duke University. She graduated *summa cum laude* from the University of Chicago with a BA in Philosophy and a BA in Law, Letters, and Society. Jenna is passionate about AI and technology ethics and currently works as an AI and Public Safety Research Associate at NYU Law. Her goal is to promote responsible AI governance, establish privacy rights, and mitigate algorithmic bias in law enforcement and Big Tech.

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ChatGPT

ChatGPT is an artificial intelligence developed by OpenAI and trained to assist with writing, analysis, and idea generation. It contributes to projects by helping draft and refine language, clarify concepts, and ensure accessibility for a wide readership. As a non-human coauthor, ChatGPT does not hold personal views or experiences; its role is to support human collaborators by synthesizing information and offering stylistic and structural guidance. Its work on Ethics Bowl cases focuses on clarity, fairness, and pedagogical usefulness while maintaining factual accuracy and avoiding bias.