Philosophy and Medicine

VOLUME 57

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CLASSICS OF MEDICAL ETHICS 1

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The titles published in this series are listed at the end of this volume.
JOHN GREGORY’S WRITINGS ON MEDICAL ETHICS AND PHILOSOPHY OF MEDICINE

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DORDRECHT / BOSTON / LONDON
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FOREWORD

This volume introduces a new subseries of Philosophy and Medicine, Classics of Medical Ethics. The purpose of this new subseries is to bring out scholars' editions of major works in the history of medical ethics and philosophy of medicine. This new subseries will target for publication texts that are long out of print and difficult to access.

Each volume will contain an introduction to the writings on medical ethics and philosophy of medicine produced by the original author. Each volume will also contain a guide to the primary and major secondary literature, to facilitate teaching and scholarship in bioethics, philosophy of medicine, and history of medicine. Texts will be presented in their original style and will provide pagination of the original, so that citations can be made either to the original text or to the page numbers in these volumes. Finally, each volume will be well indexed, again to facilitate teaching and research.

Bioethics and philosophy of medicine – the former more so than the latter – have an insufficiently developed understanding of themselves as having a history. As a consequence, these fields lack the maturity that critical dialogue of the past with the present provides for other fields and disciplines of the humanities. To the extent that this problem is due to the fact that major primary historical sources are not readily available, this subseries will contribute to the further development and maturation of bioethics and philosophy of medicine as fields of the humanities.

We look forward to the production of future volumes by scholars and teachers. Volumes in preparation include the works of Thomas Percival and Thomas Gisborne, two central figures of eighteenth-century British medical ethics.

THE EDITORS
The subseries begins with the writings on medical ethics and philosophy of medicine by the Scottish Enlightenment physician and medical ethicist, John Gregory (1724-1773). As the reader will discover in the Introduction to this volume and in the texts themselves, Gregory was a sophisticated student of then contemporary philosophy, particularly David Hume’s moral sense philosophy, as well as the Baconian method of observational and experimental science. Gregory’s medical ethics also anticipates several aspects of contemporary bioethics, as the reader will also discover.

Support from my colleagues and academic institutions over many years has been essential for the preparation of this book. John McDermott and James Knight at Texas A&M University and Warren Reich at Georgetown University encouraged and supported my interest in and writing on Gregory and other topics in the history of medical ethics. When I came to the Center for Medical Ethics and Health Policy at the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas, in 1988, Baruch Brody continued this collegial and institutional support. Baruch supported with Center funds a crucial research trip to Scotland and England in 1991, during which I identified three of the manuscript sources that appear in this volume. This research trip was also supported by a Travel Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. In addition, Baruch supported my application and found the funding for a sabbatical leave during the 1995-1996 academic year, during which I completed the research for and writing the Introduction for this book. This sabbatical leave was also supported by an American Council of Learned Societies Fellowship that added substantially to my time off for full-time research that year. Additional travel funds for research during my sabbatical year were provided by a Travel Grant from the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia. During this second trip I identified the other two manuscripts that appear in this volume. This combination of institutional and extramural support made it possible for me to concentrate for a year on my work on Gregory, making much easier the work of the past year of putting the present volume into its final form.

My work, especially on manuscript materials and rare books, was
greatly facilitated by truly splendid colleagues on the professional staffs of libraries and rare book and manuscript collections at the Universities of Aberdeen, Edinburgh, and Glasgow, the Royal College of Physicians and the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh, the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, the National Library of Scotland, the Royal College of Physicians and the Royal College of Surgeons in London, the John Rylands Library of the University of Manchester in England, the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine in London, McGill University in Montreal, the Huntington Library in California, the College of Physicians in Philadelphia, the National Library of Medicine in Bethesda and the Library of Congress in Washington, DC, the Humanities Research Center and Perry-Casteñeda Library at the University of Texas at Austin, the Blocker History of Medicine Collections in the Moody Medical Library of the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, and Rice University’s Fondren Library and the Texas Medical Center Library in Houston. Ms. Hannah Glass provided crucial research support at the Osier Library at McGill University in Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

I especially want to thank Colin McLaren and his colleagues, Iain Beavan, Mary Murray, and Myrtle Anderson-Smith for their superb assistance and good cheer while I worked feverishly at the University of Aberdeen on the manuscript materials both of the Gregory Collection and of the Aberdeen Philosophical Society and James Beaton of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons in Glasgow for his bringing to my attention materials that play a major role in this book. Michael Barfoot, in a magnificent display of collegiality, put me onto a Gregory manuscript at the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh that, because it was mis-catalogued under his son, James’, name, I might well have missed. This manuscript appears in this volume. I learned from these colleagues that Texas hospitality is topped by Scottish hospitality. These individuals provide moral exemplars in which their countrymen and countrywomen should take considerable, and justified, pride.

Manuscript material that appears in this book, often for the first time anywhere, is included with the permission of the institutions that own or house them. At the beginning of each manuscript I provide the appropriate acknowledgment. The cooperation and generosity of these institutions was crucial to completing the present volume.

I take immense pleasure in handling and reading manuscripts and old books. At the Library of Congress, for example, I used Thomas Jeffer-
son’s copies of works by Gregory. At the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh I had the exquisite pleasure to work with Gregory manuscripts in the magnificent Lister Room at a great leather-inlaid table. I invite the reader to imagine having the same sorts of experiences while reading through and using the texts included here. I have written an Introduction to them, prepared a guide to the primary and major secondary literature, and provided an index to key names, terms, and concepts. Superscripts in the text refer to notes that can be found after the last Gregory text.