

DRAWING ON THE WISDOM OF HANS JONAS: ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE NANOTECHNOLOGY.

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Abstract: Han Jonas wrote in *The Imperative of Responsibility: In Search of an Ethics for the Technological Age* (1984) that “new kinds and dimensions of action require a commensurate ethic of foresight and responsibility which is as novel as the eventualities that arise out of the works of *homo faber* in the era of technology” (18). Jonas feared “an apocalypse threatening from the nature of the unintended dynamics of technical civilization” (202), leading to the desolation of the planet. To the objects of technology Jonas included man himself, having turned on himself and imposed himself on nature in such a way that “calls upon the utter resources of ethical thought, which never before has been faced with elective alternatives to what we considered the definite terms of the human condition” (18). The emergence and current development of nanotechnology is a clear indication that we are living in the very era that was of concern to Jonas. As such, his call for “a new ethics” was prescient in his time. Now it is essential

Bio: Rosalyn W. Berne, Ph.D. is the Olsson Professor of Applied Ethics in the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences at the University of Virginia, and Chair of the Department of Engineering and Society. She also directs the Online Ethics Center for Engineering and Science (OEC). As a scholar, Berne explores the intersecting realms of emerging technologies, science, fiction, and myth, and the links between the human and non-human worlds. Published under her name are two academic books; a science fiction novel; two award-winning books in the genre of body-mind-spirit, and numerous papers and articles. On leave from UVA from 2009 to 2011, she served as Vice President for Academic Affairs for the Institute for Shipboard Education. On leave from 2018 to 2020, she served as Director of the Center for Engineering Ethics and Society at the National Academy of Engineering. Professor Berne received an NSF Career Award for her research in nanotechnology ethics. She is an emerita advisor to the “Engineering One Planet” project of the Lemelson Foundation and emerita advisor to the Kern Family Foundation KEEN project: “Educating the Whole Engineer.” She is currently a Standing Council Member of the Engineering Research Visioning Alliance (ERVA); a member the NASEM Committee on

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