We have dedicated this month’s issue to ethics and I am pleased to have some of the
top people in the field discussing issues relevant to emergency medicine. Ethics can be
a part of practice if we give it thought, but often we don’t. Even simple issues such as
tying down children for suturing and not telling patients about their illness as per the
request of the family are profound ethical questions. IJEM supports the creation of
ethics panels consisting of clergy, interested physicians, lawmakers and
laymen—including patients themselves. We also encourage ethics awareness among the
diverse populations that we serve, which includes people of religious, Russian,
Ethiopian, and Arab extraction, not to mention awareness of the needs of foreign
workers and their diverse religious and cultural needs. IJEM also recognizes that
bigotry and discrimination can invade the halls of science and with this in mind, the
world association of medical editors has requested we print the following, which will
become part of IJEM’s official policy:

The following position statement was distributed by the World Association of
Medical Editors. As a member of the world community - IJEM endorses this
statement and pledges to abide by its contents

Geopolitical Intrusion on Editorial Decisions
Posted March 23, 2004

Decisions to edit and publish manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals should be
based on characteristics of the manuscript themselves and how they relate to the
journal's purposes and readers. Among these characteristics are importance of the topic,
originality, scientific strength, clarity and completeness of written expression
and potential interest to readers. Editors should also take into account whether studies
are ethical and whether their publication might cause harm to readers or to the public
interest. Editorial decisions should not be affected by the origins of the manuscript,
including the nationality, ethnicity, political beliefs, race, or religion of the authors.
Decisions to edit and publish should not be determined by the policies of governments
or other agencies outside of the journal itself. Editors should defend this principle, as
they do other principles of sound editorial practice, and enlist their colleagues’ support
in this effort if necessary.

We hope you find the issue stimulating

Sincerely Yours,

Joseph B. Leibman, MD
Editor in Chief