

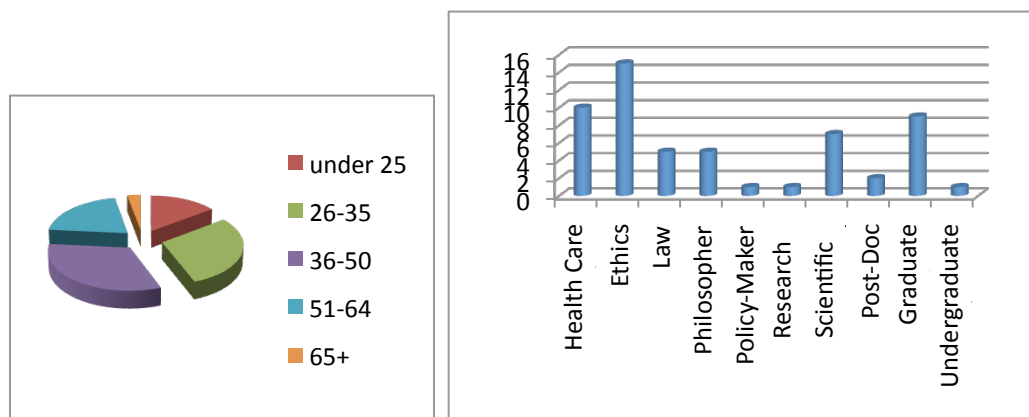
BRAIN matters

New Directions in Neuroethics

September 24-26, 2009, Halifax hosted Canada's first international conference in neuroethics, *Brain Matters: New Directions in Neuroethics*. The meeting was a resounding success.

The conference featured six plenary speakers; James L. Bernat, Walter Glannon, David Healy, Neil Levy, Jonathan H. Marks and Caroline Tait. There were 26 concurrent oral presentations, 20 posters and 2 panels. There was a strong response to the call for abstracts, and while all were chosen through peer review, the presenters represented a diverse range of expertise in ethics, philosophy of mind, medicine, science, law and health policy.

There were 104 participants at the conference from 10 countries and four continents. As with the abstract call, registrants represented a diverse range of scholars and clinicians. Over 20% were graduate and post-graduate students, many encouraged by the ten trainee awards. The total number of participants was small enough to allow an opportunity for meaningful engagement, while large enough that all concurrent sessions were well attended.



Podcasts of the six plenary talks will soon be available on www.noveltechethics.ca. As well, two of the plenary speakers, David Healy and James L. Bernat gave extensive interviews to the regional public broadcaster which will be posted to the website. Selected conference papers will be published in special issues of *Journal of Ethics in Mental Health*, *Neuroethics* and *The American Journal of Bioethics – Neuroscience*.

Evaluation forms were distributed and participants were asked to rate the conference on a scale from 1-5. On the statement, "I enjoyed this conference" one participant gave the conference a 3, with all other respondents rating it either a 4 or a 5. This high approval rating was accompanied by many statements complimenting the size of the conference and diversity of participants as key component for encouraging networking and collaboration.

The success of the conference has encouraged plans for Brain Matters II under the leadership of Eric Racine at Institut de recherches cliniques de Montréal.

The success of this conference was made by possible the sponsors: Canadian Institute of Health Research, Brain Repair Centre, Canada Research Chair in Bioethics and Philosophy, Canada Research Chair in Medical Bioethics and Ethical Theory, Dalhousie University, Greenwall Foundation, IRCM, National Research Council, and the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation.