

Ethics & Medical Research

Responsiveness of Research to Health Needs and Priorities

As you read the material for the next class, keep the questions below in mind. To answer these questions you will have to reflect critically on what you have read and possibly re-read important passages. Keep in mind that there are two basic kinds of information that you need to look for in the readings:

1. What are the main points or conclusions that an author accepts with respect to a particular issue?
2. What are the reasons, important considerations, and evidence that lead the author to accept that conclusion?

For our purposes, *it is information of the second sort that will be our primary concern* since our most basic task is to *evaluate the reasons and evidence* that are offered to support accepting one possible conclusion about an issue, rather than another.

Although I strongly suggest that you write out brief answers to these questions, you do not have to turn in written responses. You do, however, need to be prepared to speak intelligently to these issues in the next class meeting.

Readings

- Alex London, "Responsiveness to Host Community Health Needs", pp. 737–744.

Questions

1. What are the two goals that London claims cross-national collaborative research ought to facilitate? How is responsiveness to the health needs and priorities of the host community supposed to facilitate those goals?
2. How can responsiveness be understood either more restrictive or more liberal? What exactly is the difference and how can these two views come into conflict with each other?
3. What is the human development model, how does it understand the role of international research, and how is it supposed to help resolve the tension between the fair benefits approach and reasonable availability?
4. What is London's argument for rejecting a more permissive approach to the fair benefits approach? How does this argument appeal to the "true social value" of biomedical research?