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179-408-01 The Ethics of Terminal Care

The ethical problems of the care of the terminally ill have been among the most controversial issues in medical ethics over the past decade. This course will explore those issues combining lecture, discussion, film, and (subject to availability) clinical contact. The course will not emphasize the sociological and psychological aspects of death and dying, concentrating instead on philosophical, ethical, and public policy issues.

There will be a mid-term March 20 during the first hour of class and a final exam.

Primary texts for the course will be:


For reference you may want to consult:


Aries, Philippe. Western Attitudes Toward Death from the Middle Ages to the Present. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1974.


Many readings can be found in the following anthologies. In the reading list they are identified by the editors' names in brackets.

Wier, Robert F. (editor). Ethical Issues in Death and Dying.  
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Phil. 179-408-01 The Ethics of Terminal Care

Jan 24 Introduction: Film "Who Shall Survive?"
Jan 31 Definition of Death: Technical
Feb 7 Definition of Death: Ethics and Policy
Feb 14 What to Tell the Dying Patient (+ informed consent)
Feb 21 Suicide
Feb 28 The Ethics of Decisions for Competent Patients: Videotape "Please Let Me Die."

1. Active killing and letting die//Direct/indirect

Mar 6 2. Ordinary and Extraordinary Means (DNR, IVs)

Mar 20 Formerly Competent Patients: Living Wills/Powers of Attorney/Natural Death Acts

MID-TERM EXAM

Mar 27 The Role of Guardians
Apr 3 Hospital Ethics Committees
Apr 10 Neonates and the Baby Doe Rule
Apr 17 The Social Ethics of Terminal Care (Burden to Others)
Apr 24 Age, Prognosis, and Resource Allocation
May 1 Life Span Extension
Reading List

Jan 31: Definition of Death: Diagnosing the Death of the Brain

Reading


Additional Reading


Feb 7: Definition of Death: Conceptual, Ethical and Policy Issues

Reading


Additional Reading

Feb 14: What to Tell the Dying Patient

Reading


Additional Reading


Feb 21: Suicide

Reading


Additional Reading


Feb 28: Ethics of Decisions for Competent Patients:
1. Active Killing and Letting Die

**Reading**


**Additional Reading**


Mar 6: The Ethics of Decisions for Competent Patients
2. Ordinary and Extraordinary Means

**Reading**


Additional Reading


Mar 20: Formerly Competent Patients: Living Wills, Powers of Attorney, and Natural Death Acts

Reading


In the Matter of Eichner v. Dillon. 426: NYS 2d 517.


Concern for Dying. "A Living Will." No date. [Beauchamp and Walters]


Additional Reading


Mar 27: The Role of Guardians

Readings


In re Phillip B. California Court of Appeal, First District, 1979. 92 Cal. App. 3d 796, 156 Cal. Rptr. 48.


Additional Reading


Apr 3: Hospital Ethics Committees

Readings


New Jersey Guidelines for Prognosis Committees. "Guidelines for Health Care Facilities to Implement Procedures Concerning the Care of Comatose Non-Cognitive Patients." No date

Additional Readings


Apr 10: Neonates and the Baby Doe Rule

Readings


Additional Readings


Apr 17: The Social Ethics of Terminal Care

Readings


Additional Readings

Apr 24: Age, Prognosis, and Resource Allocation

Readings


Additional Readings

Engelhardt, H. Tristram. "Is Aging a Disease?"


May 1: Life-Span Extension

Readings


Additional Readings

