Modern medical and biological technology have forced new and complex personal and social problems upon modern man and reshaped older ones. Complex subjects like euthanasia, abortion, the use of humans in medical and psychological experiments, the rights of the sick, the elderly and the insane, the right to health care, biological engineering, the licit and illicit use of drugs, all have their moral and social, as well as their technological aspects. They are problems which have implications for all of us. Approaching these problems from the side of moral philosophy, the course aims at developing perspectives which will enable a layman to understand problems morally as well as technically.

The course will begin with an examination of moral problems related to the Physician-Patient Relationship: e.g., Is it ever morally right to conduct medical or psychological experiments on patients without their informed consent? Should governments and police have access to confidential medical files? Is it ever moral to lie to a dying patient? Then the course will examine problems which arise with respect to Biological Engineering: e.g., Why is it morally right to clone trees and animals but not persons? Should biologists have complete control over their research or should the community be involved? It then will deal with moral problems related to death and dying, e.g., Why is it morally right to kill in self-defense but not to end the suffering of a terminally ill patient? Is abortion a form of infanticide? Should women have the sole right to decide whether to have an abortion? Finally, the course will deal with moral problems related to Medicine in the context of society e.g., Are physical and mental health care universal rights? Should the insane be institutionalized and deprived of most of their rights? Do non-smokers have moral rights?

Required Reading

Moral Problems in Medicine, ed. by S. Gorovitz (Prentice-Hall, 1976)
Obedience to Authority, Stanley Milgram (Harper Torchbooks, 1974);
Ethics in Human Experimentation, Medical Research Council (Ottawa, Canada, 1978); An Anthology of Essays, available in the Vanier Tutor: Office, Vanier 237 (for further information, call 667-2339).

Assignments

The course will be run on a seminar basis and will require two oral reports to the seminar and two essays. There will be one test and one essay each term. Tests will each count for 15% of the final grade (total: 30%). Essays will be 2,000-4,000 words long (6-12 typewritten pages, 12-24 handwritten pages) and will each count for 30% of the final grade (total: 60%). Seminar participation will count for 10% of the grade (5% each term). Unless otherwise specified, the course will be graded on a pass/fail basis.

TIME: Tuesday, 3-5 p.m.
PLACE: 114 Vanier College
TUTOR: C.D. MacNiven
General Information (1983-84)

Course Director: Don MacNiven (670 Ross, 667-2277)
Secretary: Irena Wodzińska (237 Vanier College, 667-2339)
Philosophy Dept.: S661A Ross (667-2206)

1) Seminar: time and place
   Tuesday, 3-5 p.m. (118 Vanier College)

2) Required Texts
   S. Gorovitz, Moral Problems in Medicine (Prentice-Hall, 1976)
   T.H. Beauchamp & J.E. Childress, Principles of Biomedical Ethics
   (Oxford, 1979)
   Anthology of articles (available at 237 Vanier College)

3) Assignments
   two essays (one each term) 2400-3000 words, 8-10 typed pages or
   14-20 handwritten pages

4) Grading System
   essays: Faculty of Arts letter grade system
   tests: Faculty of Arts letter grade system, + &
   seminars: Faculty of Arts letter grade system

5) Weighting of Grades
   essays: 50% x 2 = 100%

WEEKLY SEMINAR SCHEDULE
First Term
1. 13 September: Introductory
2. 20 September: Bioethics
3. 27 September: Bioethics
4.  4 October: Experiments with Human Subjects
5. 11 October: " "
6. 18 October: " "
7. 25 October: Biological Engineering (General)
8.  1 November: " "
9.  8 November: " "
10. 15 November: " "
11. 22 November: " "
12. 29 November: Allocation of Scarce Medical Resources
13.  1 December " "

Second Term
1.  3 January: Doctor-Patient Relationship (General)
2. 10 January: " " (Patients' Rights)
3. 17 January: " " (Patients' Rights)
4. 24 January: " " (Truth-Telling)
5. 31 January: " " (Confidentiality)

* television presentation
6. 7 February: Doctor-Patient Relationship (Paternalism)
7. 14 February: READING WEEK
8. 21 February: Abortion
9. 28 February: "
10. 6 March: Abortion (Birth Defects)
11. 13 March: Euthanasia
12. 20 March: "
13. 27 March: Behaviour Control
14. 3 April: "

* television presentation