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[Book Review of] *Ethical Issues in Modern Medicine* edited by Robert Hunt and John Arras

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mental patients, and fetuses. The special area of psychosurgery, long a particular interest of Annas, is well presented. The final chapter deals with compensation of research subjects for injury sustained in the course of experimentation. Although some limitation is obviously necessary in a volume such as this, I should still like to see even a brief discussion of physician-autoexperimentation, hardly the exotic practice suggested by its exclusion from this book. Of special interest is an appendix containing many of the codes and federal regulations concerned with human experimentation. I am certain that Annas and his colleagues have produced a work that will remain the definitive reference in the area until replaced, I suspect, by its second edition.

1. Auerbach, J., "A plague of lawyers," *Harper's*, October, 1976, pp. 37-44.
2. Black, Donald, *The Behavior of Law* (New York: Academic Press, 1976).

— Eugene G. Laforet, M.D.
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Ethical Issues in Modern Medicine

Robert Hunt and John Arras, Editors

Mayfield Publishing Co., 285 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto, Calif. 94301, 1977, xi + 524 pp., no price given.

This collection was edited with a view to classroom use. It is no simplified or purely elementary presentation, but a selection of representative or standard articles by experts. Thus it makes an equally good introduction for professionals interested in or actually involved in the ethics of medical practice and research. Authors' fields include medicine and philosophy, in particular, and also Christian ethics, ministry, law, psychiatry, psychology, dentistry, biology, genetics, and clinical research. The categories by which their contributions are grouped are 1) Genetics, 2) Abortion, 3) Euthanasia, 4) Informed Consent, 5) Behavior Control and Psychosurgery, and 6) Justice, Social Policy and the Province of Medicine.

The editors aim for a variety of perspectives and, in general, they are successful. The reader is encouraged to ponder the two or more sides to every question. If there is any bias, it is toward a "mainstream liberal" consensus. This is to say that most authors propose a re-examination of the values and moral norms which have traditionally governed health care. While they contemplate revisions as probably necessary, they do so with awareness of the difficulties and dangers involved. Shifts in medical-moral analysis are indicated on, for instance, the genetic alteration or "improvement" of the human species, and permitting some congenitally defective infants to die.

Perhaps the most useful feature of this book is the ethical framework supplied by the editors for the interpretation of the contributions. The first chapter is designed as a "mini-course" in ethics. Each section is also preceded by an introduction which relates selections to the ethical perspectives outlined in Chapter One, and lifts out a few decisive issues, such as the status of fetal life in abortion. In their explication of ethical principles, the editors helpfully refer to medical examples, and each grouping contains descriptions of actual cases. The leading chapter's explication of alternative ethical theories is relatively clear, accurate, and fair, though deliberately limited to utilitarianism, Kantianism, and Roman Catholic "natural law" ethics. The presentation of the latter is somewhat narrow, if not outdated. The authors seem to have the moral manuals in mind when they

describe a method characterized by "uncompromising rationalism" and "deductive reasoning." Modern developments regarding natural law "metaphysical pre-suppositions" or other revisions of Catholic theological ethics by its more recent proponents pass by unremarked.

The final selection of the book deserves special note. By dealing with the role of medicine in society and with the effective and equitable distribution of medical resources, it raises social justice issues which have become particularly acute for Western medicine. Two authors, Charles Fried and Garvan Kuskey, take up the question of whether there exists a "right to health care." In so doing they address explicitly and commendably the problematic concept of a "right" itself, a concept which has been crucial but submerged in other chapters, e.g., abortion and informed consent.

This collection is a useful one in that it directs our attention to a variety of well-informed and articulate discussions of medical ethics. Its particular value lies in the fact that it educates the reader to examine these discussions critically.

— Lisa Sowle Cahill

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Death, Dying and the Biological Revolution: Our Last Quest for Responsibility

Robert M. Veatch

Yale University Press, 92A Yale Station, New Haven Conn. 06520, 1976. ix + 323 pp., \$12.95.

As the director of the research group on death and dying at the Hastings Center, Robert Veatch has gained immense knowledge and perspective on the topic of this book. The result has been this enormously valuable publication. Broad in scope, direct and stimulating in style, the book surveys the definition and technology of death, the refusal of treatment, truth-telling, organ donation, and several related issues. Each is presented in depth, with the end result being Veatch's conception of a Public Policy based on philosophical, social, and legal parameters that are easily understood, although undoubtedly debatable.

After a brief synopsis of the statistical data on dying and related costs, he analyzes four levels in the definition of death debate: the formal analysis of the term 'death,' then the concept, locus, and criteria of death. He calls for "a public policy . . . that will enable us to know who should be treated as alive and who should be treated as dead." (p. 55) He then compares four such policy proposals presently receiving consideration. On p. 76 he presents a valuable insight into the statutory difficulties, by formulating his own stature; the emphasis is on the patient's pre-stated opinions, or those of nearest relatives. Veatch is consistently cautious to protect the individual's rights and wishes.

The book is well documented with legal case histories, including a complete analysis of the Karen Ann Quinlan case. He presents a thorough analysis of the 'Living Will,' pointing out deficiencies which few care to admit. He then presents his own guidelines toward the development of such a document.

Perhaps the most valuable asset of this book is its lack of reluctance to offer precise positions on issues, most of which may polarize its readership. 1) "Terms