

RELG 2650 THEOLOGY, ETHICS & HEALTH CARE

Fall Semester, 2015
MWF 1100-1150
Wilson 402

University of Virginia
Instructors:
James F. Childress & Nichole Flores

Description: This course examines the ethical principles that commonly guide decisions in health care. It focuses on ethical principles accepted by many Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, and humanistic traditions, and embedded in a liberal, pluralistic society, and it examines debates about the implications of these principles for suicide and assisted suicide; terminating life-sustaining treatment; abortion and maternal-fetal relations; artificial reproduction, including human cloning; using human subjects in research; genetic counseling, screening, and engineering; health-care reform; allocating life-saving medical resources; obtaining and distributing organs for transplantation; and public health issues surrounding AIDS, pandemic influenza, Ebola, & possible bioterrorist attacks. We will use numerous actual and hypothetical cases to highlight moral issues.

Prerequisites: None

Requirements:

1. Mid-term examination, Friday, 09 October [40% of grade]
2. Final examination, Friday, 11 December, 0900-1200 [40% of grade],
3. Participation in discussion section, including the preparation of three (3) short papers (maximum length: 2 pages each) for discussion section. Details will be provided in discussion section. One paper may be on a tradition not covered in the readings. [20% of grade]
4. You are required to attend at least two outside programs in bioethics (TBA)

Required Book & Packet:

Tom L. Beauchamp and James F. Childress, *Principles of Biomedical Ethics* 7th ed. (2013)
[Available for purchase, guaranteed buy-back, or rent at the UVA Bookstore—no royalties for the instructor!]
Packet: N.K. Print & Design (formerly Brillig Books) 7 Elliewood Ave. (296-9669)].

Films and Videotapes:

Several films and videotapes will be used in the course—e.g., *Please Let Me Die*, *Who's My Mommy?* *The Lynchburg Story*, & *Fortitude* (from Kurt Vonnegut's *In the Monkey House*). Each one raises important ethical issues often through a dramatic concrete case.

Format:

1. Usually there will be two lectures and one film/videotape each week, M, W, F 1100-1200 in Wilson 402. Most films and videotapes are also available for individual viewing in Clemons as well.
2. Each student *must* participate in a weekly discussion section, which will focus on case studies (frequently drawn from the films and videotapes but also from cases we place on Collab) in light of the readings and the lectures. *All sections meet the first week.*

Use of Laptops, Etc., in Lecture: policy and expectations will be discussed in class.

Honor: All work should be pledged.

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Topics & Reading Assignments: [Note: The dates given below are usually (but not always) for the dates (Monday & Wednesday) when the lectures will cover related topics. Films and videotapes for particular topics will be shown in advance of discussion sections. Further information will be provided throughout the course. B&C= Beauchamp and Childress, *Principles of Biomedical Ethics*, 7th edition 2013); the other readings are in the packet or, in a few cases, on Collab.]

Introduction: Principles, Metaphors & Narratives in Biomedical Ethics with Particular Attention to Debates about Paternalism

08/31, 9/02 B & C, pp. 101-114 (autonomy), 214-225 (paternalism), 302-311 (veracity)
Childress & Siegler, "Metaphors and Models..."

Forgoing and Demanding Life-Prolonging Treatment

9/07, 09 A. **Religious and other perspectives**

B & C, Chap. 5, pp. 150-193
Walter, "Historical & Cultural Variants on the Good Death"
Hauerwas, "Rational Suicide and Reasons for Living"
Meilaender, "Euthanasia and the Christian Vision" [excerpt]
Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, "Declaration on Euthanasia"
U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, "Ethical & Religious Directives for
Catholic Health Care Services," 5th ed. (excerpts)
Harakas, "Death, Dying, and Euthanasia" (Orthodox Christian Tradition)
Dorff, "The Jewish Tradition: Religious Beliefs & Health Care Decisions"

9/14, 16 B. **Termination of Life-Sustaining Treatment,
Active Euthanasia, and Assisted Suicide**

1. Introduction

Gawande, "Letting Go: What should medicine do when it can't save your life"

2. Decisions about Incompetent Patients (including PVS)

B&C, review Chap. 5, pp. 188-193
Gillick, "Artificial Nutrition and Hydration..."
Address of Pope John Paul II (20 March, 2004)
President's Council on Bioethics, *Taking Care*, excerpts on advance directives

3. Debates about Professional, Social and Legal Rules against Active Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide

Quill, "Doctor, I Want to Die. Will You Help Me?"
Pellegrino, "Compassion Needs Reason Too"
Callahan, "When Self-Determination Runs Amok"
Arras, "Physician-Assisted Suicide: A Tragic View"
Oregon Death With Dignity Act (2014 report)

C. **Requests for “Futile” Treatment**

B&C, Chap. 6, 225-226; Chap. 5, 169-171 (review)

D. **Determining Death**

President's Commission, *Defining Death*, pp. 31-43

Obtaining Organs and Tissues for Transplantation

9/21, 23
Feinberg, “The Mistreatment of Dead Bodies”
May, “Religious Justifications for Donating Body Parts”
Cohen, “An Options Market in Cadaveric Organs”
Sandel, “Moral Objections to Markets”
Satel, “An Internet Lifeline, in Search of a Kidney”
Satel, “Why People Don’t Donate Their Kidneys”
Caplan, “The Ethics of Living Organ Donation”
B&C, pp. 54-55

Abortion and Maternal-Fetal Relations

9/28, 30, 10/12
Rosner, “Pregnancy Reduction in Jewish Law”
Declaration of the Pontificate Council for the Family regarding ‘Embryonic Reduction’
Callahan, “The Roman Catholic Position”
B & C, pp. 164-168 (review)
Roe v. Wade, and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* (excerpts)
Asch, “Can Aborting ‘Imperfect’ Children Be Immoral?”
ACOG Committee Opinion, “The Limits of Conscientious Refusal in Reproductive Medicine”
Dresser, “Professionals, Conformity, and Conscience”
Cantor, “Court-Ordered Care—A Complication of Pregnancy to Avoid”

10/05
Reading Day

10/07
Review Session

10/09
Mid-term Exam

Reproductive Technologies, including Cloning & Use of Embryos in Stem Cell Research

10/14, 19, 21
Lauritzen, “What Price Parenthood?”
Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, “Instruction on Respect for Human Life....”
Cahill & McCormick, “Vatican Document on Bioethics: Two Responses”
Mackler, “An Expanded Partnership with God? IVF in Jewish Ethics”
Gurmankin, et al., “Screening Practices and Beliefs of Assisted Reproductive Technology Programs”
Testimony of Cahill, Moraczewski, Meilaender, & Dorff on Religion-based Perspectives on Human Cloning, NBAC
Murray, “Even If It Worked, Cloning Wouldn’t Bring Her Back”
Testimony of Dorff, Pellegrino, Farley, & Meilaender on human embryonic stem cell research, NBAC
Hyun, “Stem Cells”

Applied Human Genetics/Genomics: Genetic Counseling, Testing, & Engineering

10/26, 28

U.S. Supreme Court, *Buck v. Bell* (1927)
Gould, "Carrie Buck's Daughter"
Nance, "Parables"
Lisa Mundy, "A World of Their Own"
John Kilner, "The Ends Don't Justify the Genes"
Towner and Loewy, "Ethics of Preimplantation Diagnosis..."
Mitchell, "Hurling Toward Eugenics...Again"
Robertson, "Extending PGD: the ethical debate"
Kilner, "Poor Prognosis for Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis"
Rob Stein, "Sickle Cell Testing of Athletes Stirs Discrimination Fears"
Parker & Lucassen, "Genetic Information: A Joint Account?"
B&C, Chap. 8, pp. 312-324 (on privacy and confidentiality)
[Another reading will be posted on the so-called "three parent babies"]

Research Involving Human Subjects/Participants

1102, 04

B & C, 114-141 (informed consent), 331-340 (clinical investigation)
The Nuremberg Code
Rothman, "Ethics and Human Experimentation"
Emanuel, Wendler, & Grady, "What Makes Clinical Research Ethical?"

Justice and Access to Health Care

11/09, 11

A. **Injustice in Health Care: Minorities and Women
Theories of Justice: A Right to Health Care?**

B & C, Chap. 7, pp. 249-267, 270-279
[Other readings will be posted on Collab later]

11/16, 18, 23

B. **Rationing Health Care: Who Should Receive Scarce Resources?**

B&C, Chap. 7, pp. 279-293; review 274-276 (forfeiting a right...); Chap. 6, 229-232, 237-241
Callahan, "Aging and the Ends of Medicine"
Levinsky, "Age as a Criterion for Rationing Health Care"
Boyle, "Should Age Make a Difference in Health Care Entitlement?"
Moss & Siegler, "Should Alcoholics Compete Equally for Liver Transplantation?"
Brudney, "Are Alcoholics Less Deserving of Liver Transplants?"
Emanuel & Wertheimer, "Who Should Get Influenza Vaccine...?"

Public Health: Personal, Professional, and Societal Rights & Responsibilities

11/30, 12/02 & 07

B&C, Chap. 8, pp. 311-324
Childress & Bernheim, "Public Health Ethics: Public Justification and Public Trust"
Mill, *On Liberty*, one-page excerpt
Salmon, "Mandatory Immunization Laws and the Role of Medical, Religious and Philosophical Exemptions"
Upshur, "The Ethics of Quarantine"