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The Least Worst Death: Essays In Bioethics On The End Of Life



Synopsis

A collection of the author's essays on death and dying, which specifically explores the dilemmas raised by contemporary medicine, such as the withdrawal of medical care, euthanasia and suicide. The author also surveys the current political and social ferment over the right-to-die movement.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"There is no one more qualified to serve as a guide to the assessment of the moral issues raised by this turn in the debate than Margaret Pabst Battin. She is surely one of the most erudite and articulate scholars pondering questions of euthanasia, suicide, and the withdrawal of medical treatment in the Western world. Battin's extremely useful and impressive book ought to remain the subject of the classroom and not the legislative hearing room."--Ethics

"Battin's essays are thoughtful, pertinent, detailed, and well-written. She has made a solid contribution to the growing field of bioethics. I recommend her book to anyone who is a serious student of right-to-die questions in their various forms."--Disability Studies Quarterly

"...a great deal of useful information and analysis...Margaret Pabst Battin has been an important contributor to the academic and professional debate about bioethical issues in death and dying."--Death Studies

"Margaret Battin shows a tremendous grasp of the issues at stake...The Least Worst Death is written clearly and concisely....Many could stand to benefit from the thorough consideration Battin gives to so many aspects of how we die today."--Last Rights

"Battin does an exemplary job... The combination of command of the facts, philosophical reasoning, and outspoken advocacy makes for lively and engaging writing from which the reader emerges always better informed, intellectually challenged,

and not infrequently perturbed."--Medical HumanitiesReview"A very useful book for an elective course on options at the end of life. Chapters on suicide are particularly useful."--Joy Skeel, Medical College of Ohio"A very interesting volume."--Robert P. Tucker, Florida Southern College"An important collection of essays."--Michael A. Grodin, Boston University"Exploring the dilemmas raised by contemporary medicine concerning the way we die, it presents a philosophical analysis for anyone interested in bioethics or medical and applied ethics."--Issues in Law and Medicine"Margaret Pabst Battin is one of the most intelligent of writers on medical ethics, and this collection of her essays proves a provocative pleasure to read."--Studies in Christian Ethics --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Engagingly written by one of the foremost experts on issues involving death and dying, this book offers insight into the controversial and often difficult topics of withdrawing and withholding care, euthanasia, and suicide. An extensive introduction identifies the principal ethical issues, and the book explores such dilemmas as rationing health care for the elderly, whether there is a "duty to die", counseling in rational suicide, the risks of abuse with active euthanasia, religious views about suicide, whether suicide can be understood as a fundamental human right, and others. It also examines the differing practices of Holland and Germany in ending life. Exploring the dilemmas raised by contemporary medicine concerning the way we die, and collecting under one cover a myriad of crucial elements involving one of the most inflammatory issues of our time, *The Least Worst Death* presents a timely, international analysis for anyone interested in bioethics or medical and applied ethics. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Margaret Battin is a philosopher who has brought more clarity to thinking about the different ways cultures deal with death than anyone in the field. Not only this, she has taken the trouble to look at the actual processes of dying with a clear view of the issues at stake both for populations and for individuals. Once one realizes that many deaths won't be "cakewalks" (excuse the expression), one can see why she chose the title "*The Least Worst Death*" for her book. Actually a huge proportion of deaths are from long-term degenerative diseases; an equally large proportion occur in hospitals or long-term care facilities; and dignified is perhaps the last word one would use to describe the "exit strategy" most Americans will be forced to choose from unless the medical profession and state laws change. With a great sensitivity to the cultural factors that ought to shape choices governing public policy in the area of death and dying, she argues for a "cultural fit" between public policy and historical and social practices. If one plans to read only a few books on the topic of death and dying,

this one would have to be among the top 2-3 books on one's list.

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