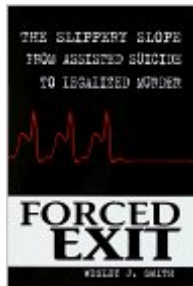




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Forced Exit: The Slippery Slope From Assisted Suicide To Legalized Murder



Synopsis

Exposing the false premise of the euthanasia movement to make a compelling case against assisted suicide, *Forced Exit* reveals the horrors of the Netherlands, where 8.5 percent of all deaths are attributed to assisted suicide and where Dutch doctors have rapidly moved from euthanizing the terminally ill to killing infants with birth defects.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I am currently investigating several different ethical/public policy issues: homosexuality (i.e. advocating the behavior in schools, marriage), abortion, and euthanasia. The author of this book is the lead lawyer of the International Task Force on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide, an organization that opposes all forms of euthanasia and assisted suicide. One of the changes that has made this discussion meaningful is the discussion between humane care and medical treatment. Humane care would include food, heat, washing etc; the basics, if you will. Medical treatment would be drugs, surgery and so on. In some recent US Supreme Court case, certain types of humane treatment has been reclassified as medical treatment (e.g. water and food). The significance of the change is this; patients cannot refuse humane treatment but they can refuse medical treatments, at a certain point (or have others refuse medical treatments on their behalf). There are sections that document the development of euthanasia in the United States through court cases and attempted legislation (in the 1930's and the present). There are sections on the Holland called, "Dutch Treat," is particularly good. Holland is the only country that where euthanasia is widely available (Holland made it totally legal on November 28, 2000). Smith shows the progression in Holland, how the

guidelines are routinely violated and so on. One of the scary problems is INvoluntary euthanasia: 1,040 people (an average of 3 per day) died from involuntary euthanasia, meaning that doctors actively killed these patients without the patients' knowledge or consent. Smith shows that the euthanasia agenda would endanger the disabled, the ill, the elderly, those with low education, minorities etc...

This is a revision and expansion of his earlier work of 1999. In it he brings up to date recent developments in the euthanasia wars. But the same concern for where society is heading, and the same call for action is found in this volume. Smith argues that modern medicine is undergoing a seismic shift, as is that of the surrounding culture. Whereas societies and their medical practitioners once believed that saving life and protecting life was our highest and most noble calling, they have now come to see that killing in the name of compassion is both justified and necessary. What has brought about such a radical shift in values and priorities? Smith argues that a number of inter-related causes can be mentioned. There is the "moral Balkanization" of Western culture, with a loss in moral absolutes and religious convictions. Then there is the elevation of personal autonomy as the highest virtue. Also there is a very sophisticated political machine pushing the euthanasia agenda. Backed with big bucks and extensive marketing research, it has become adept at selling euthanasia. With plenty of euphemisms, misinformation and scare tactics, it is managing to convince many that death is desirable, and life is not. And then there is the bottom line of money. The huge blowout in medical costs for the elderly makes the euthanasia alternative seem very tempting indeed. It is a major savings to bump off the elderly instead of treating them. The hazards of legalizing euthanasia are many. Suffering would increase, not decrease. For example, the funding and research on problems like AIDS could easily be cut, with the idea that it would be better for these people simply to die.

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