



Building the Case for Human Dignity

Michigan Osteopathic Spring Conference

KRISTIN M. COLLIER, M.D.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

#goals



Are human beings valuable?

Why are they valuable?

Do all human beings have equal value? Why or why not?

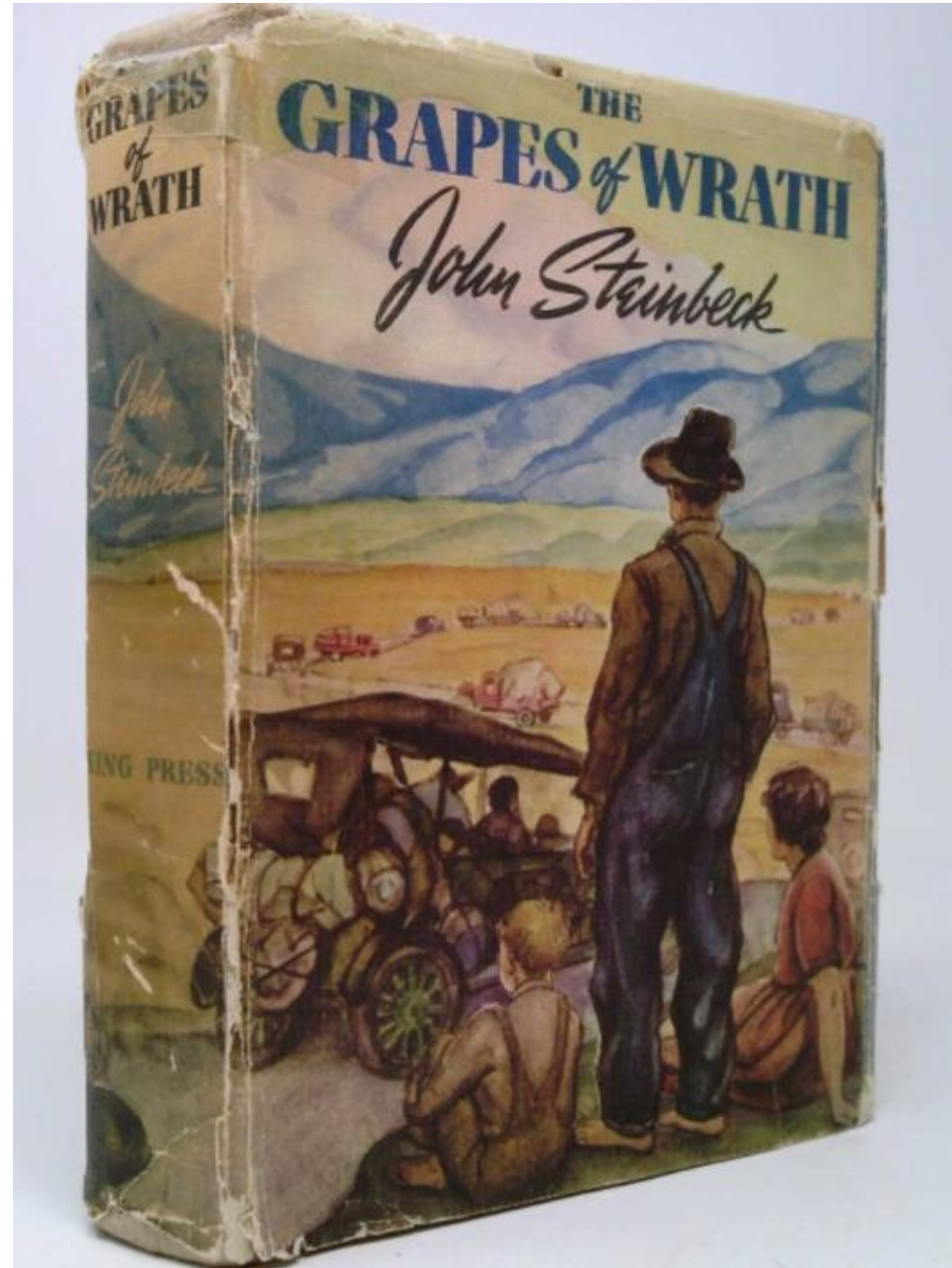












“Carbon is not a man, nor salt nor water, nor calcium. He is all these, but he is much more, much more; and the land is so much more than its analysis. That man who is more than his chemistry . . . that man who is more than his elements knows the land that is more than its analysis. But the machine man, driving a dead tractor on land he does not know and love, understands only chemistry; and he is contemptuous of the land and of himself” -Steinbeck, Grapes of Wrath



“breathing masses of flesh, fashioned in the shape of men, but shorn of all other human attributes....mere organisms, masses of flesh and bone in human shape.”
--- *American physician Samuel Gridley Howe*

“Race Dehumanization, and Disability,” Dehumanization Matters Substack, October 26, 2022 David Livingstone Smith



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Why I Hope to Die at 75

An argument that society and families—and you—will be better off if nature takes its course swiftly and promptly

Jake Chessum

But here is a simple truth that many of us seem to resist: living too long is also a loss. It renders many of us, if not disabled, then faltering and declining, a state that may not be worse than death but is nonetheless deprived. It robs us of our creativity and ability to contribute to work, society, the world. It transforms how people experience us, relate to us, and, most important, remember us. We are no longer remembered as vibrant and engaged but as feeble, ineffectual, even pathetic.


By Lisa I. Iezzoni, Sowmya R. Rao, Julie Ressler, Dragana Bolcic-Jankovic, Nicole D. Agaronnik, Karen Donelan, Tara Lagu, and Eric G. Campbell

Physicians' Perceptions Of People With Disability And Their Health Care

ABSTRACT More than sixty-one million Americans have disabilities, and increasing evidence documents that they experience health care disparities. Although many factors likely contribute to these disparities, one little-studied but potential cause involves physicians' perceptions of people with disability. In our survey of 714 practicing US physicians nationwide, 82.4 percent reported that people with significant disability have worse quality of life than nondisabled people. Only 40.7 percent of physicians were very confident about their ability to provide the same quality of care to patients with disability, just 56.5 percent strongly agreed that they welcomed patients with disability into their practices, and 18.1 percent strongly agreed that the health care system often treats these patients unfairly. More than thirty years after the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 was enacted, these findings about physicians' perceptions of this population raise questions about ensuring equitable care to people with disability. Potentially biased views among physicians could contribute to persistent health care disparities affecting people with disability.

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SOCIAL DEATH AS SELF-FULFILLING PROPHECY: David Sudnow's *Passing On* Revisited

Stefan Timmermans
Brandeis University

In his classic *Passing On*, David Sudnow described how the presumed social value of patients affects whether the staff will attempt to revive them. Since this study was published, the health care field has undergone dramatic changes and commentators have questioned whether the social rationing described by Sudnow is still relevant. Specifically, critics point to the increased rationalization of medical practice via protocols, a widely accepted resuscitation theory, and legal initiatives to promote resuscitative efforts and protect patient autonomy. Based on observations of 112 resuscitative efforts and interviews with forty-two health care workers, I demonstrate that the recent changes in the health care system did not weaken but instead fostered social inequality in death and dying.








“Human Non-Person”

- *How does our current conception of health reflect our vision of human dignity?*
- *How does our current definition of healthcare reflect our thinking about human dignity?*

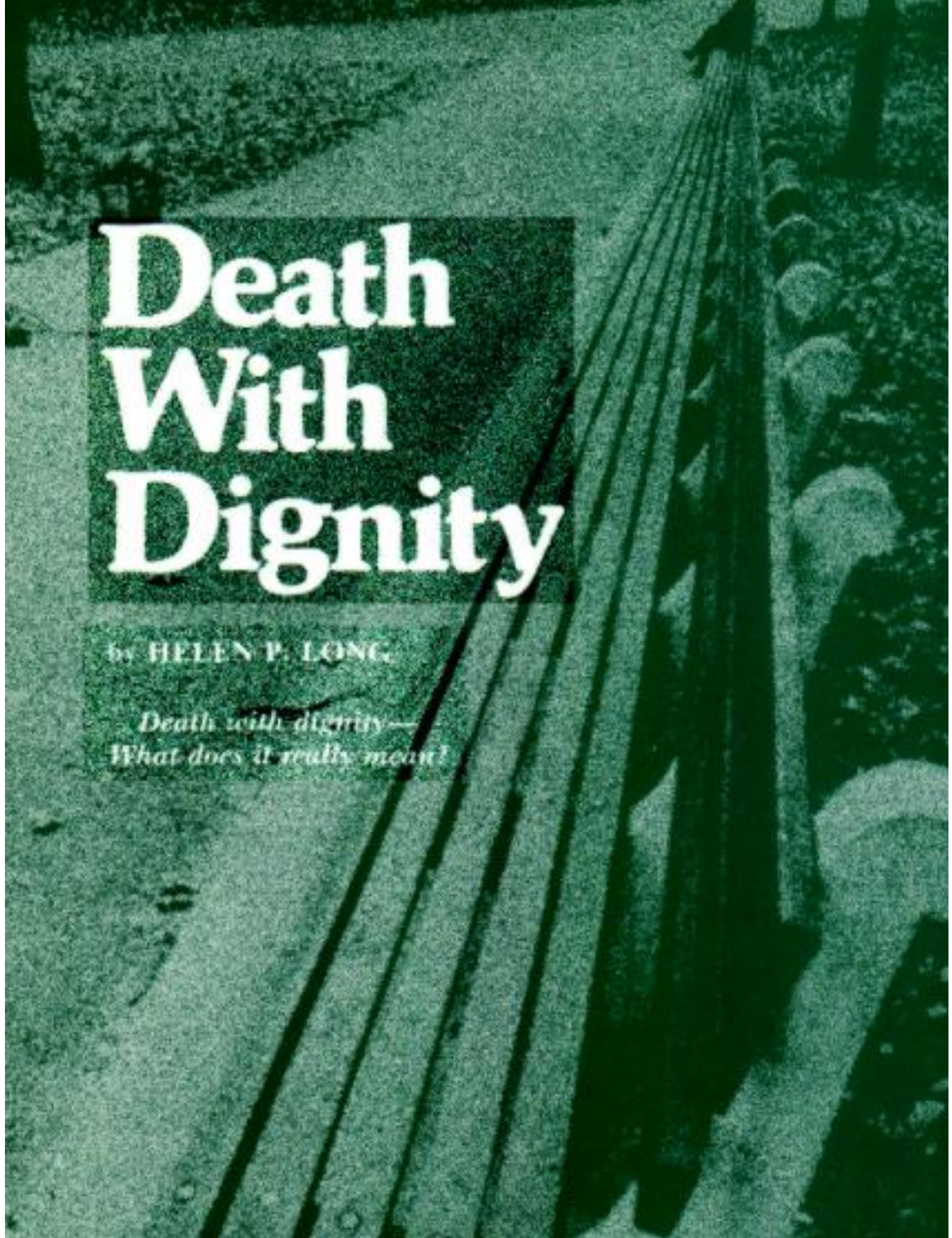
health noun, often attributive



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**Abortion
is Health Care**



Death With Dignity

by HELEN P. LONG

*Death with dignity—
What does it really mean?*

LIVING



The strange condition that has people hacking off healthy limbs

Rectangular Si

By [Susannah Cahalan](#)

September 6, 2015 | 6:00am







 MARCH 27, 2023

 Editors' notes

Research suggests social isolation may be as bad for our health as hypertension, obesity

by Suzanne Leigh, University of California, San Francisco

Marital Status and Survival in Patients With Cancer

Ayal A. Aizer, Ming-Hui Chen, Ellen P. McCarthy, Mallika L. Mendu, Sophia Koo, Tyler J. Wilhite, Powell L. Graham, Toni K. Choueiri, Karen E. Hoffman, Neil E. Martin, Jim C. Hu, and Paul L. Nguyen

Conclusion


Even after adjusting for known confounders, unmarried patients are at significantly higher risk of presentation with metastatic cancer, undertreatment, and death resulting from their cancer. This study highlights the potentially significant impact that social support can have on cancer detection, treatment, and survival.

J Clin Oncol 31:3869-3876. © 2013 by American Society of Clinical Oncology

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J Clin Oncol 31:3869-3876. © 2013 by American Society of Clinical Oncology

Prevalence and risk factors for delirium in critically ill patients with COVID-19 (COVID-D): a multicentre cohort study



Brenda T Pun*, Rafael Badenes*, Gabriel Heras La Calle, Onur M Orun, Wencong Chen, Rameela Raman, Beata-Gabriela K Simpson, Stephanie Wilson-Linville, Borja Hinojal Olmedillo, Ana Vallejo de la Cueva, Mathieu van der Jagt, Rosalía Navarro Casado, Pilar Leal Sanz, Günseli Orhun, Carolina Ferrer Gómez, Karla Núñez Vázquez, Patricia Piñeiro Otero, Fabio Silvio Taccone, Elena Gallego Curto, Anselmo Caricato, Hilde Woiën, Guillaume Lacave, Hollis R O'Neal Jr, Sarah J Peterson, Nathan E Brummel, Timothy D Girard, E Wesley Ely, Pratik P Pandharipande, for the COVID-19 Intensive Care International Study Group†

Summary

Background To date, 750 000 patients with COVID-19 worldwide have required mechanical ventilation and thus are at high risk of acute brain dysfunction (coma and delirium). We aimed to investigate the prevalence of delirium and coma, and risk factors for delirium in critically ill patients with COVID-19, to aid the development of strategies to mitigate delirium and associated sequelae.

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9: 239–50

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LEAH LIBRESCO SARGEANT



The Dignity of Dependence

A FEMINIST MANIFESTO

We honor the dignity of our patients by talking about them truthfully



Language
Matters



Animal, vegetable, mineral

Cruel and unscientific, the 'vegetative state' diagnosis stems from a hierarchical and bigoted view of all living things

Do Words Matter? Stigmatizing Language and the Transmission of Bias in the Medical Record

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Mustapha O. Saheed, MD³, Somnath Saha, MD, MPH^{4,5}, Monica E. Peek, MD, MPH, MSc⁶,
Carlton Haywood, Jr., PhD, MA², and Mary Catherine Beach, MD, MPH¹*

¹Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Baltimore, MD, USA; ²Division of Hematology, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Baltimore, MD, USA; ³Department of Emergency Medicine, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Baltimore, MD, USA; ⁴Section of General Internal Medicine, VA Portland Health Care System, Portland, OR, USA; ⁵Division of General Internal Medicine and Geriatrics, Oregon Health and Science University, Portland, OR, USA; ⁶Section of General Internal Medicine, The University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, USA.

~~CLUMP OF CELLS~~

~~NONVIABLE~~


~~BODY PARTS~~

HUMAN CHILD



ARTICLE | SEPTEMBER 01 2015

The Impact of Rudeness on Medical Team Performance: A Randomized Trial

Arieh Riskin, MD ; Amir Erez, PhD; Trevor A. Foulk, BBA; Amir Kugelman, MD; Ayala Gover, MD; Irit Shoris, RN; Kinneret S. Riskin; Peter A. Bamberger, PhD

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RESEARCH

Open Access

Motivating change in resident language use through narrative medicine workshops



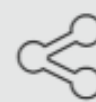
Kristin Collier^{1*}, Amit Gupta² and Alexandra Vinson¹

WE SHOULD ALL HAVE THE RIGHT TO DIE **WITH DIGNITY**

Take the pledge

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Americans suffering with a terminal illness deserve better choices. We all do. Pledge to help!

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Is pregnancy a disease? A normative approach

 Anna Smajdor ¹,  Joonas Räsänen ²Correspondence to Dr Anna Smajdor, IFIKK, University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway; anna.smajdor@ifikk.uio.no

Abstract

In this paper, we identify some key features of what makes something a disease, and consider whether these apply to pregnancy. We argue that there are some compelling grounds for regarding pregnancy as a disease. Like a disease, pregnancy affects the health of the pregnant person, causing a range of symptoms from discomfort to death. Like a disease, pregnancy can be treated medically. Like a disease, pregnancy is caused by a pathogen, an external organism invading the host's body. Like a disease, the risk of getting pregnant can be reduced by using prophylactic measures. We address the question of whether the 'normality' of pregnancy, its current necessity for human survival, or the value often attached to it are reasons to reject the view that pregnancy is a disease. We point out that applying theories of disease to the case of pregnancy, can in many cases illuminate inconsistencies



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Is pregnancy a disease? A normative approach

 Anna Smajdor ¹,  Joonas Räsänen ²Correspondence to Dr Anna Smajdor, IFIKK, University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway; anna.smajdor@ifikk.uio.no

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Featured article

After-birth abortion: why should
the baby live? **FREE**



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Supplementary
Material

[Alberto Giubilini](#)¹, [Francesca Minerva](#)²

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Abstract

Abortion is largely accepted even for reasons that do not have anything to do with the fetus' health. By showing that (1) both fetuses and newborns do not have the same moral status as actual persons, (2) the fact that both are potential persons is morally irrelevant and (3) adoption is not always in the best interest of actual people, the

authors argue that what we call 'after-birth abortion' (killing a newborn) should be permissible in all the cases where abortion is, including cases where the newborn is not disabled.



“At the trial of God, we will ask: why did you allow all this? / And the answer will be an echo: why did you allow all this?”

— Ilya Kaminsky, from “A City Like a Guillotine Shivers on Its Way to the Neck,”
Deaf Republic



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