

Death With Dignity: A New Law Permitting Physician Aid-In-Dying

J.D. Robert L. Risley

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J.D. Robert L. Risley : Death With Dignity: A New Law Permitting Physician Aid-In-Dying before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Death With Dignity: A New Law Permitting Physician Aid-In-Dying:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The sanctity of life is enhanced when the dying are allowed to choose.By Jackie St. HilaireThe only reason that I gave it 4 stars is because it was written in 1989 and I'm sure there are more updated views on the "Death and Dignity Act".(DDA)"Whose life is it anyways?" 1981 movie starring Richard Dreyfuss, the author often gives us this quote throughout the book. When this book was written there were no states that had yet changed their laws on the acceptance of active euthanasia. 26 years later legislation has passed in several states.The author concentrates on the state of California and gives us all the mandates of a new law permitting physician aid in dying. His observation is that more than 50% of the country is in favor of changing the law. The killer is the disease not the physician.Each one of us has the absolute right to our own goals and values, as long as they don't infringe upon the rights of others. We should be given the legal right to control our own destiny, our own body.There has been a dramatic change in medical technology and the delivery of health care services in the past 75 years and the law has not kept pace. Dying is often postponed, for which we are grateful, but in some cases it is prolonged against the patient's will.When all is said and done; the patient should be the primary decision maker.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. PHYSICIAN AID-IN-DYING LEGISLATIONBy James L. ParkRobert L. RisleyDeath with Dignity:A New Law Permitting Physician Aid-in-Dying(Eugene, OR: Hemlock Society, 1989) 109 pages A presentation and explanation of a lawto allow physicians to assist a voluntary death.Basically the law calls for the

patient to make a written request for death. After the doctor has made sure that it is a valid request and that all the other options have been considered, the doctor may assist the patient in dying. The basic safeguard of this law is the doctor's participation, following the patient's fully-informed, repeated request. The doctor may grant a merciful death to someone who has previously requested death--while fully capable of making medical decisions. Only doctors may assist with a voluntary death. Anyone else who helps, commits a crime--and should be punished. This book lists all the objections to such a law--and gives good replies: 1. Doctors will use this new right to cover their mistakes. They can already do this by withdrawing further treatments and life-supports. 2. Doctors will murder their patients under the guise of "physician aid-in-dying". Doctors who kill without proper requests will be guilty of murder. And proper safeguards will make this kind of murder easy to detect. 3. Mistakes in diagnosis will lead to premature death. A second, independent medical opinion is required. Both doctors must certify in writing that the patient is terminal. 4. The right to die would become the duty to die. The physician is there to counter-balance any undue influence from greedy relatives who want to usher someone prematurely into death. 5. Physician-aid-in-dying would harm the doctor-patient relationship. Doctors have the best interests of their patients at heart. And knowing the full range of help available (including aid-in-dying) should help some doctor-patient relationships. 6. Doctors will be feared as "executioners". The rhetoric is inflammatory. Real executioners kill only condemned criminals, who are being punished by society following due process with many safeguards for capital crimes they have committed. Usually such criminals do not want to die. And they are not terminally ill. 7. Better pain control will eliminate the wish to die. Not all pain can be controlled. And sometimes the pain-medication causes such a low level of consciousness that such a life becomes meaningless to all concerned. 8. Holland. 9. Oath of Hippocrates prohibits physician aid-in-dying. It has been changed before (eg abortion, surgery for kidney stones). And it can be changed again if there are good reasons. 10. Physician-aid-in-dying would be used to kill the useless and elderly. The safeguards proposed would never permit this. And if some mistakes were made, the safeguards should be improved. 11. The Nazis used physicians to kill "useless eaters". Good safeguards would prevent any such abuses. This book is an excellent example of a good-faith attempt to write a law permitting physician-aid-in-dying. Everyone else who is trying to change the law to permit the right-to-die should read this book. This approach was finally accepted by Oregon. And it has operated for many years without problems. If you would like to read other book-reviews on this subject, search the Internet for the following bibliography: "Books on the Right-to-Die". James Leonard Park, advocate of the right-to-die with careful safeguards.

Book by Robert L. Risley, J.D.