



Debating Euthanasia (Debating Law)

By Emily Jackson, John Keown

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In this new addition to the Debating Law series, Emily Jackson and John Keown re-examine the legal and ethical parameters of the debate about euthanasia and assistance-in-death. Emily Jackson argues that we owe it to everyone in society to do all that we can to ensure that terminally-ill patients experience a 'good death.' For a small minority of patients who experience intolerable and unrelievable suffering, this may mean helping them to have an assisted death. In a liberal society, where people's moral views differ, we should not force individuals to experience death in an unbearable manner. This is not an argument in favor of dying. On the contrary, Jackson argues that legalization could extend and enhance the lives of people whose present fear-of-the-dying process causes them overwhelming distress. In contrast, John Keown argues that voluntary euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide are gravely unethical, and he defends their continued prohibition by law. Keown analyzes the main arguments for relaxation of the law - including those which invoke the experience in jurisdictions that permit these practices - and finds them wanting. Relaxing the law, he concludes, would be both wrong in principle and dangerous in practice, not least for the dying, the disabled, and the disadvantaged. *Debating Euthanasia* will be an excellent resource for provoking classroom discussion and is a useful introduction to the subject. It covers a highly topical subject and will be of interest to a wide readership, including medical lawyers, legal philosophers, and criminal lawyers. The clear and accessible style also makes it suitable for the lay reader who is interested in the debate surrounding euthanasia. (Series: Debating Law - Vol. 3)

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Editorial Review

Review

Both Jackson and Keown are recognized experts in the field, and their positions are well known: thus the book contains (with merit) a wide variety of arguments and perspectives. And, although each author's presentation is different in his or her own way, the way in which each of them confront identical problems is one of the greatest values of the book. (Ricardo Chueca *Law and Politics Book Review*, Volume 23(2))

This highly accessible book reveals and critiques the flawed logic of the utilitarian mind with its view that human life has but instrumental value to be discarded when no longer of use, justifiable on the grounds that autonomy is to be respected even more than life. With echoes of the tactics used to force the decriminalisation of abortion, this book is a must read for anyone interested in deepening their understanding of the hotly disputed issue of assisted dying. (unknown *LIFE Magazine*)

Both Jackson and Keown have put forward accessible and well-argued cases for their respective views. (Alex Carlile *The Tablet*)

A concise and excellent summary of the current state of play in the debate about assisted dying. (Roger Woodruff *International Association for Hospice and Palliative Care e-Newsletter*)

Both Jackson's and Keown's contributions are clearly presented and succinct, and provide learned representations of the polarised perspectives taken in the euthanasia debate.

... as a supplementary text, one which is used in conjunction with others to flesh out an area of study, it is invaluable. (Jennifer Edwards *Medical Law Review*, Volume 21)

About the Author

Emily Jackson is a Professor of Law at the London School of Economics. John Keown holds the Rose F Kennedy Chair in Christian Ethics in the Kennedy Institute of Ethics at Georgetown University. Formerly, he taught the law and ethics of medicine in the Faculty of Law at Cambridge, where he was a Fellow of Queens' College and of Churchill College

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