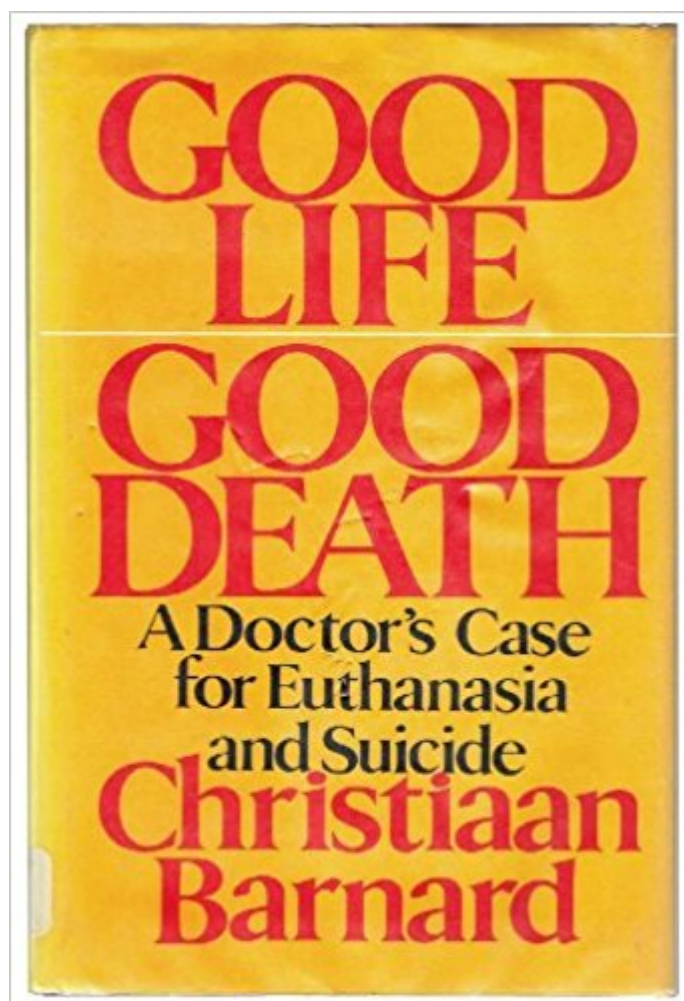


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Good Life Good Death: A Doctor's Case For Euthanasia And Suicide



Synopsis

From the Jacket: In his boldest, most provocative work to date, world famous heart surgeon Dr. Christiaan Barnard forthrightly states his case for two of the most controversial issues confronting modern medical practice today: euthanasia and suicide. Strongly believing that the doctor's main role and the primary goal of medicine is to alleviate suffering-not merely to prolong life-he argues that advances in modern medical technology demand that we reevaluate our view of death and the handling of terminal illness. In GOOD LIFE/GOOD DEATH Dr. Barnard faces these sensitive issues squarely, speaking openly and compellingly of the patient's right to die, the family's right to "turn off" the machines, and the doctor's right to participate in euthanasia-as a humane and compassionate end to human suffering. Dr. Barnard brings his years of medical experience and expertise to his argument. He explores the whole controversy surrounding the definition of death, explains the difference between active and passive euthanasia (one being the ending of a life by direct means, the other by an indirect method such as the withdrawal of life-support systems), and carefully evaluates the ethical, moral, and legal ramifications of both euthanasia and suicide. In what are certain to be the most controversial passages of the book, Dr. Barnard admits that he has practiced passive euthanasia for years-on his own mother, in fact-and states that there is only one reason why he has not practiced active euthanasia: it is illegal. He candidly discusses the euthanasia/suicide pact he has signed with his brother Marius (also a cardiac surgeon), and argues forcefully that it is the right of every individual to end his or her own life, if that life has lost its quality or meaning. A profoundly human document, Dr. Barnard's courageous personal statement offers a reasoned, eloquent plea for the right of each individual to a GOOD LIFE/GOOD DEATH. His views cannot fail to arouse and provoke you.

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