

THE INFLUENCE OF THE CULTURE ON THE PRACTICE OF MEDICAL ETHICS

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Editor's Note: This article is the second in a series of three on the influence of culture on medical ethics. The first article, "Ethical Problems in the Practice of Medicine," was published in the January 1980 issue.

The third article, "The Influence of the Physician's Personal Life on Medical Ethics," will appear in the March 1980 issue.

It is the author's hope that these articles will stimulate discussion and further research on this important topic.

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INTRODUCTION—The study of medical ethics has been a relatively recent development in the United States. In fact, it is only during the past two decades that the field has come into its own.

During this time, there has been a significant increase in the number of books and articles published on the subject. This is due, in part, to the fact that medical ethics is now considered an important part of medical education.

However, despite the growing interest in medical ethics, there is still a lack of agreement on what constitutes good medical ethics. This is true both within the United States and between the United States and other countries.

In this article, we will discuss the influence of culture on the practice of medical ethics. We will also examine some of the ethical issues that are unique to the United States.

It is hoped that this article will stimulate further research and discussion on this important topic.

DEFINITION OF MEDICAL ETHICS—Medical ethics is the study of the moral principles that govern the practice of medicine.

It is concerned with the relationship between the physician and the patient, as well as the relationship between the physician and society.

Medical ethics is also concerned with the ethical implications of medical research and the use of medical technology.

Finally, medical ethics is concerned with the ethical implications of medical practice in different cultural settings.

It is the author's belief that medical ethics is a discipline that is essential for the proper practice of medicine.

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