

JANUARY 1987

CONVERSATIONS UNLIMITED - Tuesday, Jan. 6, 1987

INTRO UP AND UNDER

Hi, everybody. This is a new year, and my best wishes go out to all of you for a happy 1987. Don't let me spoil the plans you are making for this bright new year. But I do hope you'll stay with us today as we talk about a subject very much in the news lately. The subject is: our right to die. Even as we begin this new year of 1987, we know that some of us won't be around for new year 1988. Some of those who will die in 1987 will do so because they have elected not to undergo extraordinary medical treatment in order to stay alive. That decision is open to all of us, of course. But having the decision carried out isn't always easy. You've probably been reading and hearing about cases in which the patient's wishes have taken families and physicians into court.

Peter Williams has been studying some of these cases. He has two doctorates, in philosophy and the law, and he teaches a course on medical ethics at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. Society may never come up with a universally accepted solution to the right-to-die issue but it seems safe to say we've made progress since the Karen Quinlan case of nearly 20 years ago, wouldn't you say, Dr. Williams?

INTERVIEW PETER WILLIAMS

- Trace history of the public issue
- Brother Fox, Massachusetts' ~~Sinkiewicz~~ *Salkowitz*
- Recent cases
- Changes in law
- Changes in attitudes: religion, law, medicine
- Best way to prepare for potential need for decision
- "Living will"

14:00

We'll take a short break now. When we return, we'll be talking with Peter Williams about some other issues involving ethics in medicine. I hope you'll stay tuned.

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BRIDGE MUSIC UP AND UNDER

Hi, everybody. I'm Al Oickle. I'm talking with Dr. Peter Williams about the right to die -- that is, the right that a patient has to make a decision that is expected to lead to that patient's death. Dr. Williams is associate professor in the Department of Community and ~~Family~~ ^{Geriatrics} Medicine at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. His courses cover medical ethics. Your students, Dr. Williams, are for the most part young people who are preparing for careers in health care, is that correct?

INTERVIEW DR. WILLIAMS

- Outline areas of medical ethics covered in course
- New doctor-patient partnership concept and what effect it has on tough decisions involving ethics in medicine
- Touch on:
 - * Hospices
 - * Transplantation (deciding who? donor vs recipient; religious reservations)
 - * Equal care for poor and rich
 - * Socialized or nationalized insurance
 - * Spread of HMOs
- What lies ahead?

29:00

OUTRO

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PROMO - For use no later than 5:55 p.m. Jan. 6, 1987

Hi, everybody. This is Al Oickle. You can hear me on Conversations Unlimited every Tuesday evening at 6, here on WUSB. This week, I'll be talking with Peter Williams about the right to die. The subject is much in the news these days. Who decides? The doctor? The family? A court? Dr. Williams will tell us about some interesting cases, on Conversations Unlimited, Tuesday evening at 6 o'clock. That's WUSB 90.1 FM.