

replace or supplement practical confusion, which scarcely seems an advance. The residual possibilities of conceptual analysis will then look rather disappointing to those who had hoped for more from philosophy. My sense is, happily but vaguely, that moral philosophy can do more for medical ethics than Raphael supposes, though to render that sense less inchoate than it presently is would be at the same time to come to understand moral philosophy more than I presently do.

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## **AIDS: a Guide to the Law (2nd ed)**

Edited by Richard Haigh and Dai Harris for the Terrence Higgins Trust, London and New York, Routledge, 1995, 185 pages, £40.00 hb, £14.99 sb.

The Terrence Higgins Trust, the United Kingdom's largest AIDS charity, is to be commended for producing this compact introduction to the legal issues surrounding the AIDS crisis. The book is a collaborative effort and is divided into ten chapters of approximately twenty pages. As such, it is clearly not intended to be an all-embracing detailed examination of the subject. What it does cover, it covers accurately and authoritatively. The chapters range from prisoners' rights, to insurance, children and powers of attorney. Consequently, the book addresses a number of ethical issues relevant to several aspects of HIV management. Each chapter is concisely written by a practitioner with experience in his/her chosen field. The majority of the contributors are either paid staff or volunteers at the trust.

A whole chapter by the late Colin A M E d'Eca (revised and updated by Timothy Costello) is devoted to medico-legal aspects of HIV infection, drawing attention to the relationship between statutory intervention and the management of a public health crisis. The questions addressed include consent, particularly in relation to HIV testing, and also the minefield of confidentiality is examined. This brief chapter gives the bare bones of the principles involved and lays down the legal framework. It does not aim to provide a detailed analysis of

the concerns surrounding medical ethics and AIDS, rather, it pinpoints the key issues. One of the chapter's particularly useful aspects is that it includes all HIV-specific legislation or regulations introduced in the United Kingdom. That said, anyone already familiar with the problems surrounding medical ethics is not necessarily going to be enlightened by this chapter. However, it is of great help to be able to find all of the relevant law in one easily accessible place.

Nevertheless, issues around medical ethics and HIV do run concurrently throughout the text. Angus Hamilton, in his chapter on "The Criminal Law and HIV Infection" gives a wise precis of the present legal and ethical position regarding the transmission of HIV and whether or not this could constitute a criminal offence. Similarly, Simmy Viinikka's chapter on "Children, Young People and HIV Infection" provides an excellent review of the law in relation to children and AIDS, and therefore tackles questions such as local authority responsibility, children's access to information and confidentiality, the role of social services and when parental control can be superseded by the state. Throughout Ms Viinikka pays attention to the emotive ethical issues confronting the impact of HIV and AIDS on children. Nigel Clarke's chapter on "Powers of Attorney, Wills and Probate" is a sound and thorough examination of an extremely complicated and delicate area of law. The chapter on insurance by Peter Roth and Wesley Gryk is authoritative and full of useful advice and information. Bernard Richmond's chapter on "employment" gives a clear guide to one of the most important issues facing people with AIDS.

What is not clear from the publication is for whom this book is intended. Certain aspects of it suggest that it is written for people living with AIDS, to help them understand their rights. However, there is no particular consistency in this approach, and some chapters are focused towards the reader who, it seems, is envisaged in most cases as an advisor who already has some background knowledge of the issues. On balance I would say it is a book for the advisor rather than the "consumer". Anyone who is in the position of advising people with, or affected by, AIDS, on the law, should use this book as a primary source.

Having said that, what is missing from the publication is the inclusion of case studies and/or how the authors

have dealt with actual cases, which would allow the reader to assess how well the existing legal framework is coping with the epidemic. To this extent the book comes across as being a little academic, which is ironic when it is considered that all of those writing for it have extensive day-to-day experience of dealing with legal issues affecting people with AIDS. Also there is not sufficient criticism of the legal system and how it has failed to respond to the challenge of HIV and AIDS.

At the same time, one of the more unexpected aspects of the book is that it highlights the very minimal impact HIV and AIDS have had on the law in the United Kingdom. Unlike the United States, where a body of law has been developed around the AIDS crisis, there have been barely thirty reported cases involving AIDS in the UK. This might be because litigation issues are not emerging within the UK epidemic to the extent to which they have in the United States (certainly our health care system means that treatment and care are more widely available). However, other aspects of the AIDS crisis must be following a similar pattern to that found in the USA. Maybe the reason for the dearth of litigation is that organisations such as the Terrence Higgins Trust are not actually taking the initiative to promote test cases, whereby those living with the virus could seek to control the consequences of their infection.

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## **Community Ethics and Health Care Research**

Edited by I C Henry and G Pashley, Dinton, Wiltshire, Mark Allen Publishing, 1995, 193 pages, £12.95.

This text is described by the editors as a "reference and teaching aid". It is divided into two sections: the first deals with professional ethics, management and research issues, and the second debates aspects of applied research within health and social care. Although the volume is designed to stand alone, it forms the fourth in a series on ethical and research issues.

The authors are a professor of applied ethics and a curriculum