

BOOK REVIEW

Between technology and humanity: the impact of technology on health care ethics

Edited by C Gastmans. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2002, pp 259. ISBN 9058672514

The main interest of this book is to raise the very difficult question of the interrelation between technology and care. Its ambitious

aim is to interpret technology and care as “two dimensions of health care possessing equal merit”. It is done in an interesting way, from a fundamental philosophical analysis on the place of technology and care in healthcare (particularly the very good chapters by De Dijn and Widdershoven) to “the attention paid to how integration between technology and care take shape in clinical practice and to what extent this integration can contribute to increase human dignity in health care”. The choice of clinical fields (prenatal diagnosis, genetic screening, digital imaging in psychiatry, tube feeding in elderly care, and palliative sedation) concerns technologies that “currently have a significant

impact on the treatment of patients in everyday clinical practice”. This preference allows a very concrete ethical reflection on the different issues concerned in these fields, introduced each time from an up to date clinical perspective.

Even if the initial question is not really explicitly treated in each contribution, this is a stimulating book. Ethical reflection in clinical practice is a positive development which will help the harmonious integration of technology and care in daily practice.

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