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The Sanctity-of-Life Doctrine in Medicine: A Critique

Helga Kuhse

Oxford University Press (1987)

Abstract

According to the "sanctity-of-life" view, all human lives are equally valuable and inviolable, and it would be wrong to base life-and-death medical decisions on the quality of the patient's life. Examining the ideas and assumptions behind the sanctity-of-life view, Kuhse argues against the traditional view that allowing someone to die is morally different from killing, and shows that quality-of-life judgments are ubiquitous. Refuting the sanctity-of-life view, she provides a sketch of a quality-of-life ethics based on the belief that there is a profound difference between merely being alive and life being in the patient's interest.

Keywords

[Medical ethics](#) [Life and death, Power over](#) [Quality of life](#) [Ethics, Medical](#) [Euthanasia](#)
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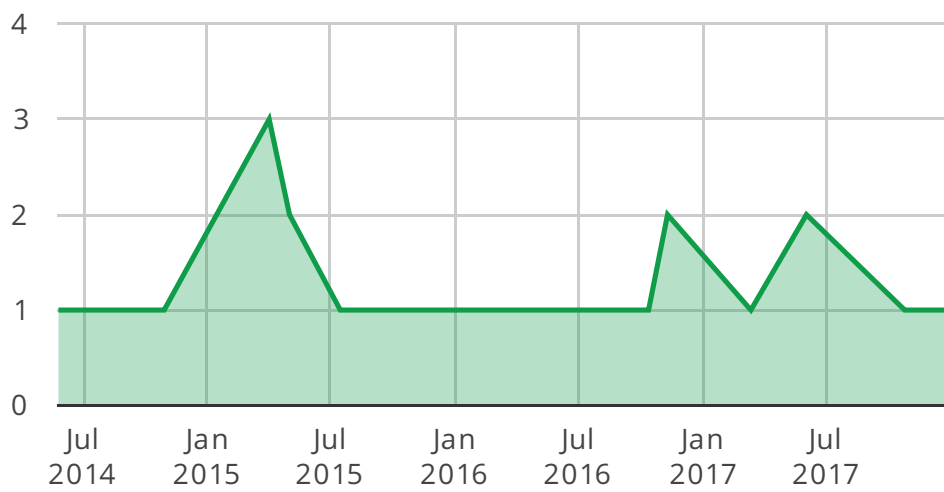
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