

(Read now) Unplugged: Reclaiming Our Right to Die in America

Unplugged: Reclaiming Our Right to Die in America

William H. Colby

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William H. Colby : Unplugged: Reclaiming Our Right to Die in America before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Unplugged: Reclaiming Our Right to Die in America:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good summary of topicBy Bronx Book GuyI was impressed by the author's account of the Cruzan case -- he was the family lawyer who "lost" in front of the Supreme Court but not quite -- and was led to purchase this broader study of the "right to die." As he notes in the conclusion, this 200 or so page work does not cover everything, but it does a very good job, in down to earth prose, to cover most of the bases. And, do so in a balanced fashion that states his views while not trying to provide all the answers. He starts with an

extended look at the tragic Schiavo case.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. preparing for deathBy EHTunerWilliam Colby has provided a volume of information needed by people dying and by those caring for them. There are many choices for both and this book provides them. Read in your leisure or when you need to make difficult decisions. It will help you.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. GoodBy Eleanor CassonIt was a good book for its need, and though it is a bit dry, it isnt nearly as bad as I had expected.

"Unplugged" addresses the fundamental questions of the right-to-die debate, and discusses how the medical advances that bring so much hope and healing have also helped to create today's dilemma. This compelling book explores recent high-profile cases, including that of Terry Schiavo, and illuminates the complex legal, ethical, medical and deeply personal issues of a debate that ultimately affects us all.

From Publishers WeeklyIn 2005, the Terri Schiavo case galvanized millions to think about end-of-life decision making and question when life ends and how to define a good death. Colby, the lawyer for Nancy Cruzan, whose 1988 case was one of the first to raise such questions, writes elegantly about these issues. He reminds us that the right to die is a new subject because the technology that allows us to keep patients alive is recent. Cardiac defibrillators, as he points out, were first used to resuscitate patients in 1959. The term "persistent vegetative state" was defined only in 1972, as a result of the Cruzan case. Colby discusses briefly the major issues in three high-profile right-to-die casesCruzan, Schiavo and the first, that of Karen Ann Quinlan in 1976to highlight the difficult medical and legal questions surrounding the end of life, including the advantages and disadvantages of a living will, appointing a legal guardian and "do not resuscitate" orders. He takes no ethical position regarding the removal of feeding tubes or respirators but urges us to talk to our families about our wishes in this regard. Although many other books have covered these topics, few possess Colby's engaging style and judicious insights. (June) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "... a timely, comprehensive book exploring the legal, medical and ethical questions surrounding this complex issue...In a surprisingly personal narrative voice." -Lancet [Colby] conveys a sensitivity and compassion about a subject that many patients, families, doctors, and lawyers alike find extremely difficult to discuss.a fascinating and well-written book. -Health Progress, November 2007 Given our continuing denial of death in the United States and the pervasiveness of the illusion of medical immortality Unplugged is a necessary book.Unplugged is clearly written, engrossing, and understandable by all, yet at the same time well researched and replete with scholarly referencesno mean feat.Unplugged is warmly recommended. -Journal of the American Medical Association Many books have been written about right-to-die issues, but this one stands out for its reasoned, accessible approach.Essential reading for anyone who wants to leave loved ones with the ability to make informed right-to-die decisions, this book is very highly recommended for all libraries. -Library Journal This is an important book. Read it. Give it to your family members and colleagues. Recommend it to clients dealing with end-of-life issues, for themselves or with their friends or family members.The entire book is sprinkled with specific examples of individuals and cases that make the writing and delivery of information sparkling and vibrant, and deceptively easy reading, for a complex and difficult topic.Books such as Colbys Unplugged raise important questions for us, as individuals and as a profession. This book can also help us negotiate the complexities associated with these critical and timely issues. -PsycCRITIQUES: Contemporary Psychology "Unplugged is an insightful and unsentimental examination of the Terri Schiavo case. Bill Colby, who represented Nancy Cruzans family, explains why it is so hard for our physicians and families to stop using medical technology (especially feeding tubes) when we are near the end of our lives, and tells us what we can do to improve our lives and the lives of our family members." -- George J. Annas, Chair of the Department of Health Law, Bioethics Human Rights at Boston University School of Public Health, and author of The Rights of Patients