

Rational suicide, irrational laws: examining current approaches to suicide in policy and law

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Abstrak

This book is for policymakers, lawyers, doctors, mental health professionals, hospice workers, and for anyone who has thought about suicide or has lost someone to suicide. Based on surveys and interviews of more than 300 suicide attempt survivors, doctors, lawyers, and mental health professionals, it painstakingly exposes the irrationality of current policies and laws about suicide, including assisted suicide. The author suggests specific reforms, including increased protection of mental health professionals from liability, increased protection of suicidal people from coercive interventions, reframing medical involvement in assisted suicide, encouraging universities to stop forcing suicidal students to leave, and focusing on approaches to suicidal people that have helped them rather than assuming suicidality is always a symptom of an underlying mental illness. The book includes a comparison of our own policies with those of countries in Europe, Asia, and Central America, and covers the 2015 legalization of assisted suicide in Canada. The book includes a model statute, seven in-depth studies of people whose cases presented profound ethical, legal, and policy dilemmas, and more than a thousand cases interpreting rights and responsibilities relating to suicide, especially in the area of psychiatric malpractice.