

Dr. Death sways the right to live or die

"I follow the dictates of the Nuremberg Court: Any immoral law must be disobeyed. If society obeys it society is immoral," said Dr. Jack Kevorkian.

Although Dr. Jack Kevorkian, perhaps better known as Dr. Death, has been spending some time behind bars surely contemplating such issues as the right to live, he has, with a bit of a "God complex," aided in suicides across the country. To many he is doing a service to people on their death bed, with little will left to live and a terminal illness that unless cured by a miracle is, without a doubt, going to take away what life is left.

Miracles are an alternative to suicide for the terminally ill. We don't hear much about those miracles anymore, especially ones like this:

"With no sign of recovery they decided to switch off the machines.

That's when it happened.

Within 35 minutes, the patient began to respond. Over the next few hours his vital signs gradually strengthened. Three miraculous days later, he walked out of the hospital under his own power." (*The Oregonian*, Sept. 13, 1993)

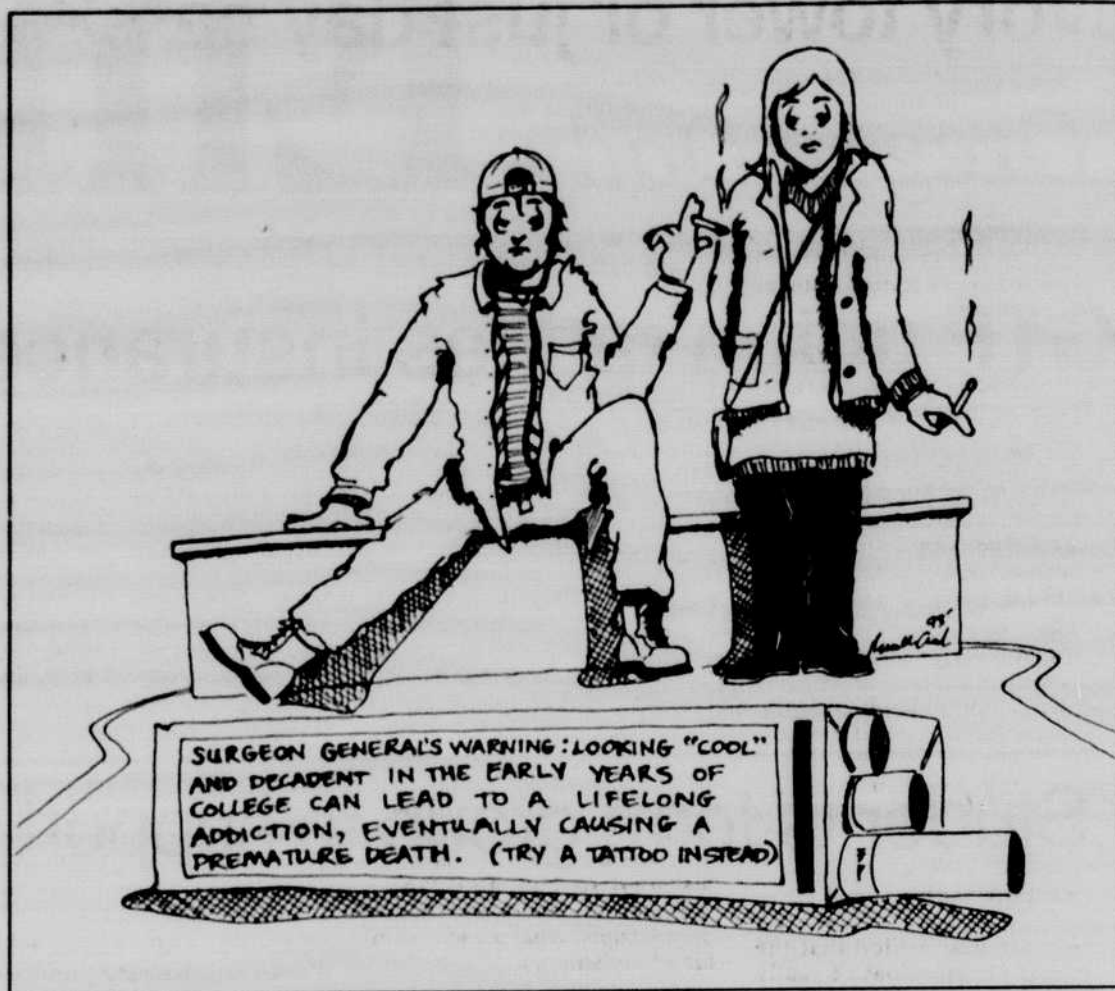
But let's paint a different picture. Let's say this "miracle" was happening under a different set of circumstances. Let's say instead of the man's family members standing by to unplug his life support system, Dr. Death was standing by waiting to inject his lethal potion that will send the terminally ill into sleep that can never be disturbed. There doesn't really seem to be much difference, but society weighs heavily on the two; yet miracles are still seen as an important factor.

Though Dr. Death may at times seem to be a person that is not in society's best interest to be walking around with lethal drugs, he does stand for a cause that is very personal to many. A cause that Oregon voters are likely to face in the next year.

The right-to-die groups have begun drafting an initiative aimed for the 1994 ballot that goes beyond that of passive euthanasia by allowing doctors to participate in the suicides of terminally ill patients. There are many powerful arguments to this sensitive discussion. Euthanasia is a personal choice that under many circumstances is not left up to the individual simply because he or she is in a state where a decision cannot be made.

Whether we agree or not, surely Dr. Death's belief and cause will influence society to the possibility that desired suicide is a very real alternative. It is the person's life and not society's after all. With the option of going to the polls in 1994 there seems to be too personal of an issue to let society sway individual opinion.

The issue should not be tagged suicide but instead an answer to a terminal illness where there is no will to live. It is an ethical issue where the ones deciding the outcome, if it is not their own, will have the responsibility to shoulder for the rest of their lives.



LETTERS

Hello!?!

Can anybody track down the lad in charge of layouts? For some odd reason, I've not seen a crossword in the *Emerald* on a regular basis for the past couple of weeks. In case it is not common knowledge, I have lectures five times a week. This means I need a crossword to work on five times a week. So then, do we understand the need? It's just plain negligence. I've only four words for y'all: "Dude! You're killing me!" Please remedy the situation.

Billy Peffley
Psychology

Mobilize

By the time this letter is published, the sales tax measure will have been defeated for the ninth time. I would like to encourage both sides of the measure to write the governor and Legislature to express their ideas and concerns in regard to what they believe would be an appropriate way to face Oregon's school funding problem.

It is time Oregonians mobilize to face this crisis. If the state is to be competitive in the future, we cannot afford a second-rate education system. (Since when has average been acceptable?) Our decision will not only affect us and our children, but generations to come as well.

Ron MacKenzie
Eugene

Democracy

When will we have the next riots in the United States? All we really hear is "crime is up," "out of hand," "build more prisons," "enforce the death penalty without appeal..." No one asks why all this is happening across the United States and why we have become the most violent country in the world.

People are fed up! They were under Reagan and Bush and even now, under Clinton, they see no hope for real change. The appalling abyss between rich and

poor persists, chances of better education and jobs have evaporated, and hopes for changes in the system have dried up. Ghettos have not improved; in L.A., nothing much has changed since the riots.

How long can we continue to ignore poverty and homelessness and feel safe? Crime is not up — profits are up. All the wealth, iron bars and gated communities will be no match for the people's fury. The myth of "democracy" goes on.

NAFTA is a joke. The rich made their pile because of the crass tax-breaks under Reagan and Bush, not because they worked harder. As long as that tax gap continues, America will languish in decay while a handful enriches itself. Will they enjoy this world? Not much longer. It may explode!

Hilde K. Cherry
Eugene

KWhat?

From what I've heard of KWVA, it seems like a basic college station, playing mostly unheard-of alternative bands the majority of the time. Understandably, the purpose of a college radio station is to break in new bands (where would R.E.M. be now if it weren't for college radio in the early to mid-1980s?), but I wonder if that is KWVA's main purpose. Because if it is, I think there could be room for improvement.

Most of the time I listen to KWVA, I end up changing stations after awhile because I barely ever recognize a song that the station plays. I like all kinds of music, including college/alternative, but I just can't get into listening to song after song I've never heard before. Most people I talk to agree with this and don't listen to the station because of it.

And so, if indeed KWVA is interested in its audience, or potential audience, I would suggest that it intermix more recognizable songs into the play list. I understand the station doesn't want to play "music that can be

heard elsewhere for free," but a couple of recognizable songs by respectable (former college-only) artists like The Cure, U2, Living Colour, Depeche Mode, etc., couldn't hurt. That way the station could further appeal to the average college student without selling out its alternative sound. This would also help the station to reach its purpose of bringing new bands to larger audiences.

Philip Abraham
Journalism

Strength

We should first strengthen our own social structure, which is the root of gangs and even violence. Individuals are distantly separated, apart from others and the earth — due in part to the capitalistic system.

Because of this same capital benefit, it was in the best interest of the American hierarchy to send its children off to the pleasurable death of warfare, so that sheiks (and those who they give kick-backs to), despite not being directly involved in the possible loss of their own lives, could gain extra advantageous dollar-billed statistics. It allows them to continue to be above and to not face what they can so quickly order of lessers: to create bloodshed and death for their equal mortal brothers.

The United States shouldn't tell other countries how to run things, nor should they step into war-provoking situations like aiding both Iran and Iraq at intervals, or walking unheeded into foreign conflicts and problems when the problems in our own country should already have been dealt with by such energetic altruism. Our main concern should be for ourselves, not for foreign expeditionary involvements. With our own problems stabilized, other countries would be given greater aid. For the more important need of nature and human welfare, the capitalistic system should also be questioned.

Solomon Ludwig
English

Oregon Daily Emerald

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