

Guest Editorial

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We live in an anything-goes society where standards of morality are lax and in some cases nonexistent. As physicians we are frequently expected to reflect this philosophy under the guise of objectivity. WE are taught that we should never impose our own moral opinion on our patients, that all decisions are their own. Indeed, all decisions are their own. However, this may at times place the physician in conflict with his own conscience. This is especially true when we are expected to discuss abortion as a valid option.

I believe that most physicians have a personal ethical code. IT may be conscious, it may be subconscious, but it is present. Frequently, however, this moral code has been smothered by societal expectation and seared by peer rhetoric. Such rhetoric teams with compassionate catch words such as reproductive freedom and constitutional rights.

The medical profession no longer has an unchangeable standard. Gullible professionals seem to like whatever lollipop is dangled before them. Physicians have dropped the ball, and it is rolling quickly downhill. Where it is heading we fear even to imagine.

I venture to project that, unless we act, physicians of decades to come will become puppets of the state. They will be ordered to follow rigid criteria regarding whom to treat and how to treat them. More frightening, they will also be told whom to euthanize. This may easily be within the lifetime of our own medical practices. We will then wonder why we didn't speak up when we had the freedom to do so.

Fortunately, there are physicians such as you and I who yearn to reclaim their profession. The Physicians for Moral Responsibility (PMR) is an organization dedicated to helping such doctors become moral leaders. PMR encourages them to speak in their schools, churches and medical societies, and to write letters to their journals and newspapers. PMR endeavors to help influence society to reestablish the acceptance of the Judeo-Christian standard through the courageous efforts of bold professionals. We urge you to join our struggle to re-establish the dignity of the healing arts.

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