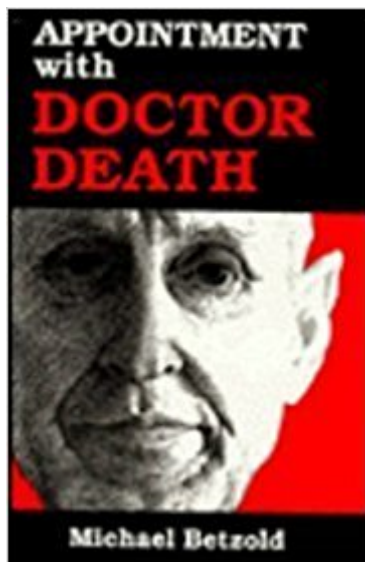


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Appointment With Doctor Death



Synopsis

Book by Betzold, Michael

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Some of Dr. Jack Kevorkian's "patients" traversed the continent seeking relief. Local prosecutors charged that Kevorkian was committing murder, not "medicide." When a court disagreed, the Michigan legislature passed a flawed law to thwart the retired pathologist. Suddenly, medically assisted suicide was out of the closet and onto every newscast. Written by a seasoned journalist who covered Kevorkian for the Detroit Free Press, this book exposes both the macabre and the merciful. Standing on either side are grandstanding attorneys, sanctimonious critics, devoted supporters and, keeping score, an often callous media horde. The patients/victims and their survivors, meanwhile, struggle to deal with untenable lives. Among those who kept appointments with Dr. Death is a young cancer victim who came to Detroit and died just as Michael Betzold sat down to write this book. Incredibly--without her knowledge that Betzold was covering the story, and without his knowledge of her impending death--medicide patient #15 was Betzold's first cousin and childhood friend.

Kevorkian, the retired pathologist who has helped 18 patients with terminal illnesses or chronic extreme pain to die since 1990, is now facing trial under Michigan's new law banning assisted suicide. In interviews with Detroit Free Press reporter Betzold (*End of the Line*), the doctor, son of immigrant Armenian parents who witnessed his own mother's agonizing death from cancer, states

his case. Kevorkian denies belief in an afterlife, and considers his cause an ethical one. The author recounts the actual last moments of the dying patients who have turned to Kevorkian. His critics are vividly sketched: the medical establishment, anti-abortion activists and what Kevorkian calls a "barbaric religious clique." And we also hear from his staunch defenders, notably his attorney Geoffrey Fieger, the ACLU and the Hemlock Society. "It's unstoppable," says Kevorkian, "It may not happen in my lifetime, but my opponents are going to lose." The book may be intended as a pre-trial defense brief, but readers who are willing to hear Kevorkian out are given much to ponder.

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The definitive treatment of the zealot who elevated the subject to national attention.

Michael Betzold is a reporter and covers the story and issues of Dr. Kevorkian from a reporters approach by covering the events and including various view points allowing the reader to make their own decision. The book begins with background information on Jack Kevorkian from childhood and personal interest. The story continues laying ground work of events that lead to Dr. Kevorkian's first assisted suicide patient. Then continues to detail the legal and political arena that covers the unanswerable question of personal choice in ending one's life. The complexity and sensitivity of the issue has left laws unmade, which allowed Dr. Kevorkian to continue to assist in 16 more suicides. The book describes each person who is assisted in their deaths by Dr. Kevorkian. Then goes on to provide view point information from the various group, including Right to Life, Hemlock Society, Medical Associations and Religious organizations. Each provide thought provoking ideals. The book is well written, precise, and informative. I had a hard time putting the book down. The topic is one that has effected or will effect each and everyone of us at some point in our lives. This book will leave you uncertain if Dr. Kevorkian was truly the angel of mercy to his patients or zealot following his own mission.

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