



## Medical Ethics: A Very Short Introduction

*Tony Hope*

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Medical ethics is an area that has particular interest for the general public as well as for the medical practitioner, and issues concerning medical ethics seem to be constantly in the headlines. This short and accessible introduction provides an invaluable tool with which to think about the ethical values that lie at the heart of medicine.

Tony Hope deals with thorny moral issues, including euthanasia and the morality of killing. He also explores political questions, such as how we can make sure health care resources are distributed fairly. Each chapter in the book considers a different issue, for example, genetics, modern reproductive technologies, resource allocation, mental health, and medical research. Each section also discusses controversial questions such as: Who should have access to reproductive technology? Is it right to fund expensive drug treatment for individuals? Should treatment for mental illness be imposed on patients without their consent? Considering a wide range of questions of medical ethics, this *Very Short Introduction* will help to explain some of the confusing issues facing the field of medicine today.

**About the Series:** Combining authority with wit, accessibility, and style, **Very Short Introductions** offer an introduction to some of life's most interesting topics. Written by experts for the newcomer, they demonstrate the finest contemporary thinking about the central problems and issues in hundreds of key topics, from philosophy to Freud, quantum theory to Islam.

## Medical Ethics: A Very Short Introduction Details

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## From Reader Review Medical Ethics: A Very Short Introduction for online ebook

### **Mario Tafferner says**

Very helpful introduction into the methodology and theory of medical ethics. However, I found his selection of discussed topics to be somewhat random.

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### **Elizabeth says**

This book reads like a philosophy book discussing methods of analysis with only a few, brief hypothetical clinical cases. I don't recommend this for a clinician at all. Pence's Medical Ethics is much, much better.

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### **Joan Embola says**

I thought this was awesome. It is definitely a very short introduction as the title says. What i like most about it is the fact that the author poses firm arguments each time about every situation. He also argues on both sides and gives his personal opinion sometimes. You can never know what to expect or what the conclusion is except at the end. It is very fascinating and gives you a very solid understanding of medical ethics.

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### **Rex Libris says**

I found the reasoning and the positions taken by the author to be rather off-putting. Like too many modern philosophers he commits Chesterton's "disregarding the gate." Chesterton argues modern thinkers disregard the conventions of the past without understanding why they are and how they came to be. He says to imagine coming across a fence and a gate in a field. They do not seem to be there for any reason, so from the vantage point of the now, the reaction is to take them out. But maybe they were put there for a good reason that just is not apparent at the time being. In the same way, Hope seems to be too quick to dismiss the ethical conventions of the past and replace them with his own notions, allegedly based on reason. Is the corollary that previous ethics were not based on reason? I think not.

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### **Gilgamesha says**

It is a must read for everyone....rarely I have come across a book with 120 pages packed with this much crucial information

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## **Fredrik says**

En fin liten introduksjon til medisinsk etikk. Forfatteren tar opp eksempler som eutanasi, abort, mentale sykdommer (det heter vel ikke det på norsk?!) som fetisjisme og homofili, medisinsk forskning, og litt til. I hvert tilfelle veier han argumenter for/mot to posisjoner, og forklarer hvordan medisinske etikere argumenterer i hvert tilfelle.

Ikke alt var nytt for meg her, så tidvis litt kjedelig, men praktisk etikk er morsomt.

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## **Gabriela says**

It was very accesible for an introduction and I liked that the author was very clear on what his opinions were and why they differed from the norm when this was the case. The methods aren't overly complicated and the overview to multiple topics within medical ethics was enjoyable and very well written.

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## **Salman Tariq says**

### **Only for medical Students , doctors or researchers**

This book debates dilemmas of modern medical world, like euthanasia, IVF, Medical research in devolving countries , homosexuality , hermaphrodites and genetics.

writer has not presented the case of getting maximum funds like military complexes. Its strange how much money is fulled in wars, how system keep people hand to mouth for health. Beside this issue, it is well researched book for a particular socio-cultural background.

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## **Marco says**

Medical Ethics: A Very Short Introduction by Tony Hope is an impressive book. Despite fitting into my coat pocket and having only 128 pages, Medical Ethics discusses and covers a huge range of medical topics both moral and political.

Medical ethics is a subject that is interesting but decent resources for people like me who want to do Medicine at university are scarce. What I love most about medical ethics is that there is hardly ever a clear cut answer and it is a constantly developing field. Many people have in their minds that medical ethics is just debates about whether euthanasia or abortion is immoral or not, but personally, just as Tony Hope says in this book's first chapter, I believe that "medical ethics is exciting!"

The best thing about this book is that when it discusses controversial questions such as...

- Who should have access to reproductive technology? Who should pay?
- Is it right to fund expensive drug treatment for individuals?
- Should active euthanasia be legalized?

- Should treatment for mental illness be imposed on patients without their consent?
- Who should have access to information from genetic testing?
- Should we require consent for the use of dead bodies or organs in medical research?

Hope goes through each topic by using what he calls the tools in the tool-box for reasoning: logic, conceptual analysis, consistency and case comparison, thought experiment, and reasoning from principles. One of the chapters in this book specifically looks at how to use these tools and also looks at critically analysing fallacies in reasoning, which I used to base my blogpost on Tony Nicklinson's case.

Each chapter takes on a different moral dilemma and the way the book is written makes it very accessible by busting legal and medical jargon and setting the scene for each chapter. I wholeheartedly recommend this book to anyone who wants to do Medicine as it helps to develop critical thinking skills and ethical reasoning and of course, give an introduction, a gateway into the world of medical ethics.

Ultimately, this book does what it says on the tin and it gives a very short introduction. (Hence why at the end of the book, there are some more further reading recommendation!) Unfortunately, it does not cover every ethical situation in medicine but the framework and structure that it provides when tackling an ethical question is what this book endows on the reader.

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### **Nate says**

Indeed a short introduction the medical ethics of various more controversial problems like euthanasia and IVF. I expected a bit more on general medical practise, but this was pleasant enough, though not particularly simple. It required some focus as the author does move quickly.

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### **Petra CigareX says**

From an existential point of view, everyone should read this short book. We will all face quite a few of these situations in our lives or those of our friends or family. Before making the decisions that the doctors will inevitably ask us to make, although they are the ones with all the knowledge and we are the ones likely caught up in a turmoil of emotion, we should know all the factors involved. Or at least all the questions we should be considering answering before we make decisions whether they be of life or death or a possible course of treatment.

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Notes on reading the book A really good read. The author's absolute simplicity in explaining medical decisions that look simple on the surface but are in fact very complex, and then suggesting the questions, logical but philosophical too, makes this book an interesting, informative and mind-opening book. It has a feminist and existentialist slant which makes it in tune with how people think these days, as opposed to academics or health care tribunals.

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## **Ahmad Sharabiani says**

Medical Ethics: A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions #114), Tony Hope

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## **Duc Hoang says**

It is what the title says it is, a very short introduction to medical ethics. It's short, indeed, but it's not an easy read (to those whose mother tongue is not English like me, at least). It won't introduce the whole system of medical ethics structurally or any theories related to it in details, but rather pose interesting cases in which medical ethics is challenged and questions are raised, like the case of voluntary euthanasia, is it just for a physician to help a patient die as the patient wishes to? Or the case of genetic information, consider a couple who comes to you, a geneticist, to consult about their child, you find out that the child doesn't belong to the father, will you tell him at the breaching of the mother's confidentiality? Whose are those information anyway?... Yes, there are answers given, too, but it won't end there. You may find the answers somewhat unsatisfactory (well, at least, I did). Then you can look up the reference at the end of the book to find your own answers. That, I think, is the success of an introduction, it shows you the gates to choose, the roads to take and the places to explore. Kudos to the author, Tony Hope, for having done such a good work.

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## **Stephanie Fang says**

Hope carefully considers the various arguments behind many ethical dilemmas, such as euthanasia and the distribution problem of healthcare. He explained the slippery-slope argument and its relevance to many ethical dilemmas, such as the problem with mercy killing. He was also able to break down arguments and explain each point thoroughly. He supplied the arguments with interesting case studies that are representative of the point that he is making. All in all, this is an excellent book for someone who is a beginner to medical ethics, which is an increasingly difficult subject.

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## **Nisa Greennpanda says**

I initially picked up this book for a translation project I had to do in university. This book points out several

medical ethics that are occurring in the West (and maybe in other parts of the world too), such as euthanasia, child bearing according to selected gene history, human cloning, mental illness etc. It's useful for those in the medical field, and as additional knowledge for those who like to read medical stuff.

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