

counterpart” but does not show clearly how this can be done. In the case of long-term relationships between people of the same sex, he identifies the chaste counterpart as “the living together of people whose relation is not sexual,” as in extended families. Because such relations are already defined in law, “it should be easy enough to develop a scheme that would give suitable protection and recognition to people who pool their resources and living arrangements, without taking their sexual practices into account” (128).

My criticisms of Rodes’s agenda do not mean I have proposals of my own to offer. *On Law and Chastity* credibly and professionally states the problem; solutions will need to come over time from a society that values chastity and commitments to lead a virtuous life. I fear we may have quite a wait.

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An Introduction to Bioethics, fourth edition
by **Thomas A. Shannon and Nicholas J. Kockler**

Paulist Press, 2009, paperback, \$22.95
316 pages, bibliographic notes, ISBN 978-0-8091-4623-9

The first three editions of this text were done by Shannon alone; Kockler coauthored this edition with him. The book has a comprehensive scope and is divided into five parts. Part 1 covers general issues—bioethics, technology, and the use of ethical theories to solve problems—and introduces common terms. Part 2 addresses beginning-of-life issues—abortion, reproductive technologies, and the early diagnosis of genetic anomalies—while part 3 focuses on issues at the end of life—definitions of death, forgoing and withdrawing treatments, euthanasia, and physician-assisted suicide. Biotechnology is the subject of part 4—the genetic engineering of nonhuman organisms and human beings, and cell-based technologies. Part 5 addresses organ and tissue transplantation and research on human subjects, and closes with the proposal of a “whole earth” ethic.

The volume is seriously deficient because of bias in its presentation, particularly of ethical theories, and because of its underlying anthropology, its failure to inform readers of substantive literature challenging the views it reports, and its misleading report of a major Church document on the care required of persons said to be in the “vegetative” state. I will illustrate some of these serious defects.

The chapter on ethical issues and theories (chapter 3) describes two action-based theories as “teleological” and “deontological,” understanding as teleological theories those that morally evaluate actions in terms of their consequences, or results, and as deontological theories those that assess actions in terms of principles, norms, and duties. It is almost incredible that the authors do *not* include among teleological theories the one known as “proportionalism,” which is championed by several authors whose work is cited approvingly, including Rev. Richard Gula, SS, and Lisa Sowle Cahill. Shannon and Kockler do not even mention this theory, about which an abundant literature developed from 1968 until the end of the last century. The fact that proportionalism is not mentioned is particularly surprising in view of the fact that the theory was trenchantly criticized as incompatible with the truth by Pope John Paul II in his 1993 encyclical *Veritatis splendor*, an encyclical repudiated by proportionalists themselves.¹

The authors also include, under the rubric “character-based ethical theories,” the “relationality–responsibility” model proposed by Richard Niebuhr and adapted and developed by Charles Curran, Stephen Happel, and James Walter, but they do not

note the criticisms made of this theory by competent scholars. Notably lacking in their presentation of ethical theories is any account of the natural law theory of St. Thomas Aquinas, particularly as developed by Germain Grisez, John Finnis, Joseph Boyle, and others. Shannon and Kockler's description of deontological theories may in some ways be just to the thought of Immanuel Kant, but it is a bad caricature of Thomistic or Thomism-rooted natural law.²

The anthropology underlying the volume is dualistic, sharply distinguishing between human life as merely biological and human life as personal. This dualism is clearly at work in the authors' treatment of such matters as contraception, abortion, and various end-of-life issues and in their approval of Teilhard de Chardin's notion of *person* and Gregory Baum's contrast between what the authors call a "static, biologically rooted" worldview, which is "conservative on the abortion question," and a "dynamic, personalistically rooted" worldview, by which "abortion becomes a moral possibility" (82–83).

The chapter on abortion (chapter 5) illustrates the one-sided and strongly biased approach of the authors. In text and footnotes, for example, the authors refer several times to Daniel Callahan's 1970 "classic" work on abortion, *Abortion: Law, Choice and Morality*, which is essentially a defense of abortion as a legitimate moral choice in certain situations, presenting what the authors later describe as a "moderate" position on abortion, in contrast to "conservative" and "liberal" ones. The chapter also stresses the significance of monozygotic twinning as challenging the view that an individual human life begins at fertilization /conception, and speaks approvingly of the "delayed hominization" theory of Aquinas. The bibliography for the chapter on abortion refers to an article that Shannon coauthored with Rev. Allan Wolter, OFM, on the moral status of the "pre-embryo," which holds that "personal" life is possible only after the neocortex of the brain is formed. Not only do the text and bibliography of this chapter not mention the teaching of the Church on abor-

tion, and reasons that support the teaching; they also do not let the reader know that important studies have shown, for example, that monozygotic twinning does not falsify the claim that an individual human life begins at conception—studies like Germain Grisez' masterful 1970 book, *Abortion: The Myths, the Realities and the Arguments*; the more recent, richly researched works of such scholars as Patrick Lee (*Abortion and Human Life*, 1995) and Robert George and Christopher Tollefsen (*Embryo: A Defense of Human Life*, 2008); and the masterful articles of Rev. Nicanor Austriaco, OP, and Maureen Condic. In short, Shannon and Kockler grossly shortchange readers by failing to even let them know of substantive studies that challenge their own limited views.

The bias is also clear in other chapters. In the chapter on definitions of death (chapter 8), for example, the many important studies by Alan Shewmon, MD, are completely ignored, as is the rationale for accepting the neurological criterion for death given in December 2008 by the President's Council on Bioethics. And in the chapter on physician-assisted suicide (chapter 11), Arthur Dyck's many studies of this issue and his scathing demolition of the arguments, legal and moral, to justify physician-assisted suicide are not mentioned. Throughout the book, the one-sided character of sources permeates the text, the notes, and the references to further reading.

In only one chapter of the seventeen do the authors explicitly refer to any documents of the Catholic Church on bioethical issues. This is in chapter 9, on forgoing and withdrawing treatment. There the authors first cite part of the text of Pope John Paul II's allocution of March 20, 2004, at an international congress on "Life-Sustaining Treatments and Vegetative State: Scientific Advances and Ethical Dilemmas." They then refer to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith's "Responses to Certain Questions of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops concerning Artificial Nutrition and Hydration" (August 1, 2007) and the Congregation's commentary accompanying these responses. They cite passages from

the commentary in which the Congregation notes three conditions under which ANH can be removed from a person in a vegetative state: (1) if ANH becomes physiologically futile, i.e., if the person is no longer able to assimilate nutrition and hydration; (2) if ANH becomes excessively burdensome for the patient or causes significant physical discomfort; or (3) if ANH is impossible, as “in very remote places or in situations of extreme poverty.” The authors leave readers with the impression that the first two of these conditions when ANH can rightly be removed may indeed be applicable in our country and in other developed nations. This impression fails to place the exceptions in their proper context, which is apparent in a section of the commentary that the authors do not cite, where the Congregation clearly states that “these exceptional cases . . . take nothing away from the general ethical criterion, according to which the provision of water and food, even by artificial means, always represents a *natural means* for preserving life, and is not a *therapeutic treatment*. Its use should therefore be considered *ordinary and proportionate*, even when the ‘vegetative state’ is prolonged” (original emphasis).

The text is intended for use as an introduction to bioethics for undergraduate students. Unfortunately, the bias and narrow views

of the authors make it a deeply flawed work that will shortchange those who are starting to learn about bioethics as well as those who are seriously interested in the subject.

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¹On the rejection of *Veritatis splendor* by proportionalists, see Richard A. McCormick, “Some Early Reactions to *Veritatis splendor*,” in *John Paul II and Moral Theology*, ed. Charles E. Curran and Richard A. McCormick (New York: Paulist Press, 1998), 5–34. See also three essays in *The Splendor of Accuracy: An Examination of the Assertions Made by Veritatis splendor*, ed. Joseph A. Selling and Jan Jans (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995): Joseph A. Selling, “The Context and Arguments of *Veritatis splendor*,” 111–170; Louis Janssens, “Teleology and Proportionality: Thoughts about the Encyclical *Veritatis splendor*,” 99–113; and Bernard Hoose, “Circumstances, Intentions and Intrinsically Evil Acts,” 136–152.

²On this, see my *An Introduction to Moral Theology*, 2nd ed. (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 2003), 93–119.

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