

Book Reviews

OWSEI TEMKIN, WILLIAM K. FRANKENA and SANDFORD H. KADISH, *Respect for life in medicine, philosophy, and the law*, Baltimore, Md., and London, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977, 8vo, pp. ix, 107, £5.95.

There are three essays in this book, based on lectures originally delivered at The Johns Hopkins University in the spring of 1975: 'The idea of respect for life in the history of medicine' (Temkin); 'The ethics of respect for life' (Frankena); and 'Respect for life and regard for rights in the criminal law' (Kadish). Each approaches the central topic from an entirely different point of view. Professor Temkin's essay is concerned with ways in which the duty to respect life was understood in early Western medicine, and, as one would expect, it is a thoughtful, scholarly, and well-documented piece. It is complemented by the other two articles, by a philosopher and lawyer respectively. The current interest in medical ethics will ensure this excellent book a wide appeal.

STANLEY JOEL REISER, ARTHUR J. DYCK and WILLIAM J. CURRAN, (editors), *Ethics in medicine. Historical perspectives and contemporary concerns*, Cambridge, Mass., and London, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1977, 4to, pp. xiii, 679, illus., £28.00.

At a time when a great deal is being written on medical ethics a book like this is most welcome. It is an anthology of 103 articles already in print, dealing with ethical problems, ranging in time from the Hippocratic Oath to 1975; most of the material has been published in the last two or three decades. There are eight sections: ethical dimensions of the physician-patient relationship through history; moral bases of medical ethics; regulation, compulsion, and consumer protection in clinical medicine and public health; truth-telling in the physician-patient relationship; medical experimentation on human subjects; procreative decisions (population policy, genetic dimensions, abortion, foetal experimentation); suffering and dying; rights and priorities in the provision of medical care. There are also sections entitled 'Illustrative cases', where examples of specific moral dilemmas are presented and decisions invited.

As each page has three columns of print, the book holds a vast amount of valuable material, which is well indexed. Despite its price, it will be acquired widely, because a similar collection does not exist and the selected articles have appeared in a variety of publications, some not readily available. It will be of immense value to clinicians of all kinds, historians, clergymen, philosophers, sociologists, and administrators concerned with health care. It provides both a source-book for reference and a teaching collection of documents and essays.

STUART F. SPICKER and H. TRISTRAM ENGELHARDT, jr. (editors), *Philosophical medical ethics: its nature and significance*, Dordrecht and Boston, D. Reidel, 1977, 8vo, pp. vi, 252, Dfl.55.00, \$19.50.

These are the papers given at a conference in December 1975, and they concentrate especially upon the problems of euthanasia and experimentation on people, and the role of the moral philosopher, as well as the doctor, in the practice of ethics. The major part of the book is concerned with present-day issues, but it opens with Dr. Chester Burns' remarks on some historical roots of American medical ethics, and the