

GRAND ROUNDS



Thursday, March 27, 2025

Location: Zoom (*RSVP for link*)

4:30pm- 6:00pm EST

RSVP [here](#) or

bioethics@stonybrookmedicine.edu

Surveying the Linguistic Landscape of Assisted Dying across the United States

S. Rebecca Stephen, MD/MA Candidate 2025

The way we talk about physician-assisted dying shapes public perception, policy, and ethical debates. Terms such as medical aid in dying, assisted suicide, and death with dignity are often used interchangeably to describe this practice despite carrying distinctly different connotations. Although physician-assisted dying is legal in several states, the language surrounding it varies significantly, influencing legal frameworks, patient experiences, and societal attitudes toward end-of-life care. This talk will explore how these linguistic differences may impact bioethical discourse and medical decision-making, revealing the role that rhetoric plays in shaping our understanding of autonomy, dignity, and the right to die.



S. Rebecca Stephen is a fourth-year medical student at the Renaissance School of Medicine and master's degree candidate in the department of Medical Humanities, Compassionate Care, and Bioethics. Her primary scholarly work in the master's program concerns how language affects discussions of palliative care and medical ethics. She plans to pursue a career as a neurologist and clinical bioethicist.

To learn more about the **MD with Scholarly Concentrations in Medical Humanities and Ethics track**, the **Master of Arts program**, and **Center for Medical Humanities, Compassionate Care and Bioethics**, please visit stonybrook.edu/bioethics.

Ranked #7 in the 2025 Best Bioethics/Medical Ethics Master's Degree Schools in the US (by [College Factual](#)).