

Ethics & Medical Research

Nazi Research & The Nuremberg Code

As you read the material for the next class, keep the questions below in mind. To answer these questions you will have to reflect critically on what you have read and possibly re-read important passages. Keep in mind that there are two basic kinds of information that you need to look for in the readings:

1. What are the main points or conclusions that an author accepts with respect to a particular issue?
2. What are the reasons, important considerations, and evidence that lead the author to accept that conclusion?

For our purposes, *it is information of the second sort that will be our primary concern* since our most basic task is to *evaluate the reasons and evidence* that are offered to support accepting one possible conclusion about an issue, rather than another.

Although I strongly suggest that you write out brief answers to these questions, you do not have to turn in written responses. You do, however, need to be prepared to speak intelligently to these issues in the next class meeting.

Readings

- Paul Weindling, “The Nazi Medical Experiments”, pp. 18–30.
- George Annas & Michael Grodin, “The Nuremberg Code”, pp. 136–140.

Questions

1. What do you think the purpose was in creating the Nuremberg Code? What are the core values the Code is trying to safeguard and secure? Can you use these core values to organize the Code’s specific requirements into small groups? What strengths and limitations does the Code have according to Annas and Grodin?
2. Do you think that the experiments described by Weindling represent genuine instances of medical research? Using the Nuremberg Code as a guide, how would you evaluate these research initiatives? Do you think the Nuremberg Code adequately captures what was wrong with them?