

Dear PCC member,

The following educational alert is written by Dr. Gregory Hamilton, President of PCC. In it, he describes the dangerous televised promotion of assisted suicide techniques by Derek Humphry, the co-founder of the Hemlock Society. Chillingly, one of the airings of this video is scheduled for Saturday morning--a time when many children will be "channel surfing" for cartoons. Please share this information with anyone who may find it of interest.

William L. Toffler MD

National Director, Physicians for Compassionate Care

ADVERTISING SUICIDE IS IRRESPONSIBLE

Derek Humphry claims he will make "communication history" in Eugene, Oregon, February 2, 2000, as his "world premiere" video, which graphically presents his most recent and experimental "how to die" techniques, shows viewers how to "take their own life," on Public Access TV (Ch. 97).

Physicians for Compassionate Care considers it irresponsible to promote suicide techniques over the television. This promotion of suicide techniques serves a suggestive function which says: suicide is okay and here's how you do it. This is a threat to human safety.

These suggestions of suicide techniques will work just like an advertisement. We all know that commercials don't have to say: "Go buy apples." They can just say "apples" and that's all it takes to influence viewers. Derek Humphry is not only suggesting suicide to the seriously ill and vulnerable and showing them how to kill themselves. He is, through the power of suggestion, promoting suicide as a solution to life's problems to anyone viewing, whether they be an abused teenager, a depressed adult, or an impressionable child.

In Oregon, where the suicide rate is 43% higher than the nation's, or in any state, for that matter, it is irresponsible to promote suicide on TV. Compounding the problem of a skyrocketing number of suicide attempts in our state, Derek Humphry's highly lethal suicide suggestions make it dangerously less likely that people who attempt suicide will recover to receive the help they are crying out for us to give them.

Physicians for Compassionate Care believes it is unethical for Derek Humphry to air his lethal program that suggests suicide. This program reveals just how far the man who instigated the assisted suicide movement in Oregon will go in to carrying out his suicide and death agenda.

The advertising of suicide is a threat to human safety.

N. Gregory Hamilton, M.D., President
Physicians for Compassionate Care P.O.
Box 6042 Portland, Oregon 97228
(503) 533-8154; Fax (503) 533-0429

Affirming an Ethic that All Human Life is Inherently Valuable