

'Attend your own funeral, arrange your death now'—this book tells how

by Linda Everett

This Far and No More, A True Story

by Andrew H. Malcolm

Times Books, New York, New York, Random House, Inc.

247 pages, hardbound, \$17.95.

Andrew Malcolm, Chicago bureau chief of the *New York Times*, opens his book describing how he started his investigation into the right-to-die arena, which eventually led to writing this book. In 1984 he was researching a news item about an elderly man who walked into a Texas hospital, shot his wife who suffered from Alzheimer's disease, and then

turned the gun on himself. When Malcolm asked the hospital spokesman for more information about the man who walked into their facility and killed his wife, the spokesman replied, "Which one?"

This incident, Malcolm says, launched him into a period of research that led to a lengthy series of *New York Times* articles and this book. Judging by the results of his "research," Malcolm is now "top gun" in the press for the euthanasia mafia.

This Far and No More is based on the true story of a New York psychologist who is stricken in her mid-forties with ALS—amyotrophic lateral sclerosis or Lou Gehrig's disease, a neuro-muscular disorder causing muscle degeneration and sometimes total paralysis. The central character, "Mrs. Bauer" (all names changed to protect the guilty), her husband, and lawyers and doctors from the Concern For Dying, CFD, plan her death in "the least illegal manner possible" in September 1983.

CFD carefully evaluated any family, friends, or nurses who might be "whistle-blowers" and "negotiated" Bauer's death with hospital physicians who did not want her dying in any "accident" at their hospital. During a visit to her home, a Concern For Dying physician injected the patient and turned off her respirator as he had done with others many times in the past.

Malcolm's book is written around Bauer's journal, which she kept up throughout her illness; when totally paralyzed she used a printing machine. Malcolm develops a chronological background and enough right-to-die rubbish to blot out Bauer's initial but inadequate refusal to "give in" to her disease. Before long, she shifts from science and doctors to alternative medicine and quacks who variously massage her body, put her in touch with her "earlier Egyptian life," and charge \$50 an hour in the process. Unfortunately, her perspective of humanity's fight, her own (as well as Malcolm's), does not extend beyond Nietzsche's: "Would that there came preachers of *quick* death!" So Bauer, fed by death-and-dying literature, succumbs to the dominant cultural pessimism that fosters medical budget cuts, nursing shortages, collapsing hospitals, and warehousing of paralyzed patients. When Emily Bauer turns to Concern For Dying, these problems cease to be hurdles one overcomes and become reasons to die—which she did, after a gathering of friends at her pre-death funeral.

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NBC-TV used Malcolm's book as a basis for their Columbus Day TV movie "Right to Die." Both the book and film, a Dan Ohlmeyer production, draw enormously on the capacity of their audience to empathize and be emotionally hard hit by the story of a sick woman who can no longer wrap her arms around her young children, no longer smile at her husband and whose friends become overwhelmed moments before her (arranged) death. Suddenly, the audience is sobbing for this gang of murderers. How can that be? Aha, this is Nazi propaganda at its best!

Bauer, played by Raquel Welch, gasps for breath, as she pleadingly tells her husband, "My body is a coffin, I am being buried alive, I want to die. . . . If you love me, you'll do it. . . ." Using Hollywood magic and a seasoned reporter's manipulation and lies, the right-to-die crowd wants *you*, if faced with a similar crisis, to bail out.

We are told that Malcolm's advocacy for physician-assisted death makes Derek Humphry of the Hemlock Society look like a pussy cat. His book drums up demands for "negotiated death." His "research" plies the euthanasia lobby's latest campaign, targeting conscious but paralyzed victims of ALS and similar disorders. In the last year courts have acceded to the starvation suicide wishes of several ALS patients, including the precedent cases in New Jersey of Beverly Reuena and Kathleen Farrell, whose families wanted explicit laws allowing the "right to die" for patients who are "mentally competent, but [their] body . . . dead."

Modern medical nihilism

There are about 5,000-10,000 new ALS cases every year, and at any time 20,000-40,000 living patients in the United States. But whether an ALS patient opts for living is frequently based on his physician's outlook and the patient's ability to pay for medical and nursing care. Physicians at San Francisco's ALS Research Center were so totally outraged by routine non-treatment of ALS patients that they wrote in the *British Medical Journal*: ALS provided "an astonishing example of therapeutic ignorance or nihilism in modern medical practice." The physicians' proper role, they said, is to offer treatments that relieve the patient's symptoms—not withhold them! ALS patients are not "invariably" terminal—some live for 15-20 years. In others, the disease "burns out." They slam the insurance companies for causing patient suffering by not covering necessary aids that relieve patient's symptoms. One physician-researcher who has cared for 3,500 ALS patients, made it clear: "There is absolutely no place for suicide among ALS patients."

Obviously Malcolm and the Concern For Dying think otherwise. Malcolm writes that the CFD doctor who killed Emily Bauer, said he admired Bauer's bravery in bucking the system, that is, society's laws against murder and suicide. He says, "I'm a nice Jewish boy and I put people to sleep. I regard what I do as very ethical, compassionate, sensible, and moral. On the other hand, Hitler put people to sleep too, and he thought what he was doing was right."

Books Received

Lords of the Last Machine: The Story of Politics in Chicago, by Bill and Lori Granger. New York: Random House, Inc., 1987. \$18.95 hardcover, 242 pages.

Beyond Our Means: How America's Long Years of Debt, Deficits and Reckless Borrowing Now Threaten to Overwhelm Us, by Alfred L. Malabre, Jr. New York: Random House, Inc., 1987. \$17.95 hardcover, 174 pages.

Are We to Be a Nation: The Making of the Constitution, by Richard B. Bernstein with Kym S. Rice. Cambridge, Mass., and London, England: Harvard University Press, 1987. 342 pages.

Manufacturing Matters: The Myth of the Post-Industrial Economy, by Stephen S. Cohen and John Zysman. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1987. \$19.95 hardcover, 297 pages.

Memoirs of a Fortunate Jew: An Italian Story, by Dan Vittorio Segre. Bethesda, Md.: Adler and Adler, 1987. First English Edition. \$16.95 hardcover, 273 pages.

The Soviet Union: The Incomplete Super Power, by Paul Dibb. Champaign, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1986. 293 pages.

Fidel and Religion: Castro Talks on Revolution and Religion with Frei Betto, by Frei Betto. Translated by the Cuban Center for Translation and Interpretation; introduction by Harvey Cox. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987. \$19.95 hardcover, 314 pages.

Camp X: OSS, "Intrepid," and the Allies' North American Training Camp for Secret Agents, 1941-1945, by David Stafford. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1987. \$18.95 hardcover, 352 pages.

Harry Hopkins: Ally of the Poor and Defender of Democracy, by George McJimsey. Cambridge, Mass. and London, England: Harvard University Press, 1987. \$25.00 hardcover, 474 pages.

Spirit of Survival, by Gail Sheehy. New York: Bantam Books, 1987. \$4.95 paperback, 407 pages.

A Cup of Coffee With My Interrogator: The Prague Chronicles of Ludvik Vaculik, translated by George Theiner, introduction by Vaclav Havel. London, England: Reader's International, 1987. \$7.95 paperback, 127 pages.

The Constitution: Reflections of a Changing Nation, by Margot C.J. Mabie. New York: Henry Holt, 1987. \$12.95 hardcover, 148 pages. Children's book.