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Abstract Submission Form – Papers

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Proposed title of paper: Genetic Counseling and Ethical Decision-Making – Reformulating the Principle of Autonomy in Clinical Ethics

Abstract with 3 clearly stated objectives in 250 words:

The concept of an “informed consent” is a central principle in modern medicine. It is based on the idea of the patient’s autonomy and their self-determined decision-making

This paper would firstly like to challenge the concept of “informed consent” and its underlying idea of personal autonomy. For decades the social sciences have stressed that the individual is embedded in social and societal circumstances (cf. Erving Goffman, Ulrich Beck et al.), and that therefore an autonomous lifestyle in the sense of a self-reliant (autarkic) lifestyle does not reflect the facts in the field and is actually counterfactual.

Understanding this has deep implications on the concept of autonomy in clinical ethics. It raises the question of how individuals are making their decisions: What is important to them, and how do they assemble their own values? In order to explore this question, we will look at the medical example of prenatal genetic diagnosis. A case study shall be presented which – in contrast to existing studies – especially focuses on the moral values of women deciding whether to undergo prenatal testing or not.

The results of the study have major consequences for theory and practice, which will thirdly be presented. On the one hand theoretical concepts of personal autonomy must be reformulated, which has not yet been accomplished. On the other hand genetic counseling can be freed from the autonomy-driven concept of informed consent. More suitable models will be discussed.

These innovative results are of high relevance for clinical ethics if it is to be interested in the concrete values of the concerned individuals.

If you have or will publish on this topic, please cite reference:

Are you planning to or will you be willing to submit a poster along with your paper?

Yes No