

Analysis of medical ethics via Brave New World

Ethical challenges are prevalent in modern day medicine and society. Whether it is the rising in the daily practice of medication, in the conduct of research, or in our educational practice, physicians need to understand that relevance and importance ethics plays in our professional lives (Eliers 2017). This paper will examine the ethical foundation of medication by analyzing this theme within the novel *Brave New World* written by Aldous Huxley through a scope of truth versus happiness.

This novel is one that characters “prioritizes happiness at the expense of truth by design, they believe that people are better off with happiness than with truth” (Huxley, 96). The almost universal use of the, muscle relaxer, soma in the novel is probably the most pervasive example of such willful self-delusion. Ostensibly the government provided a solution to a Utopian society, but in reality the solution is one that should be condemned as it leads to a loss of self-worth. Although the invention of soma may have been well intended, the reckless behavior and the lack of regulatory parameters set out by the government has broken the system of moral principles that applies values and judgment to clinical medicine research as the drug become maleficent.

Helmholtz Watson, a character facing his midlife crisis, resulted to abusing soma instead of searching for new meaning in his life. Temporality all his problems were gone, happiness related to the indulgence in food, fashion, sex, and drugs fulfilled his life. However, it was artificial happiness engineered by scientist that fulfilled Helmholtz’s life; when it comes to discussing happiness for a human being, it is the process of bettering and improving himself that brings about true happiness and it is what separates us from animals. Thus the government didn’t really provide a solution to a Utopian world but instead devised a false happiness to maintain stability within the society.

As mentioned in the introduction, the ethical foundation of medicine was expressed in the novel *Brave New World*. Although the pillars of the foundation were broken in the novel, it provides a great counterexample as to the consequences of breaking medicine ethics. Towards the end of the story, all those who abused soma and those who made self-medication and drug abuse a possibility were all met with their demise. Although fictional, the story written by Aldous Huxley actually draws a great parallel with the real world. When faced with great hardship and difficulties in

life people often results to substance abuse as well. According to the Health Officer's Council of British Columbia about 47000 deaths a year is related to substance abuse (Ministry of Health 2017). Through the research data we can conclude that although people state they value these medical ethical principles, they do not actually seem to use them directly in the decision making process. Therefore it is our responsibility as future medical professionals to recognize the problem in the lack of awareness in the field of medical ethics and promote the concept when it comes to practicing safe self-medication techniques.

Reference

Eilers R, Introduction to Medical Ethics. Retrieved www.pubmed.ca

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