



WESTFÄLISCHE
WILHELMS-UNIVERSITÄT
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› Respecting Conscience, Protecting
Patients: An Unresolved Tension
in Health Care

Professor James F. Childress, Ph.D.

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CENTRE FOR
ADVANCED STUDY
IN BIOETHICS

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› Conscientious Refusal

Should the state, institutions, and health professions exempt conscientiously objecting physicians, nurses, and others from the performance or provision of ethically controversial services, procedures, or products that are legal, ordinarily expected, and/or sought by patients? After setting the context by discussing several cases and controversies in different countries, this lecture will examine the contours and scope of conscientious refusals in health care—with attention, for example, to universal and selective refusals, religious and secular refusals, and narrow and broad interpretations of „participation“ in wrong-doing. Several proposals for striking a balance between respecting conscience and protecting patients will be evaluated before offering and defending a particular proposal.

James F. Childress is the John Allen Hollingsworth Professor of Ethics and Professor of Medical Education at the University of Virginia. Childress is the author of numerous articles and several books in ethics, especially biomedical and political ethics. His books include *Principles of Biomedical Ethics* (with Tom L. Beauchamp), *Priorities in Biomedical Ethics*; *Who Should Decide? Paternalism in Health Care*; and *Practical Reasoning in Bioethics*. James Childress served on several bioethical committees including the presidentially appointed National Bioethics Advisory Commission. In May and June 2011 he is a fellow of the Centre for Advanced Study in Bioethics at the University of Münster.

› Venue

Max Planck Institute for Molecular Biomedicine
Röntgenstrasse 20, 48149 Münster