

DIALOGUES IN RESEARCH ETHICSDialogue 7**Are Patients with Psychiatric Disorders
'Competent' to Consent to Research?**

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Noon, Friday, April 16, 1999

VAMC Conference Room 207
(Research & Education Bldg., across from library)

—————> Lunch will be provided <—————

National attention has been given to experiments in which schizophrenic patients were, as part of one research project, taken off anti-psychotic medications and, as part of another, given drugs intended to worsen their psychotic symptoms. It is alleged that one patient killed himself as a result. One argument that might be made in defense of these studies is that the subjects were competent to give consent to the research. How can we decide whether they were competent? And should the patients' "competence" be the pivotal concept in judging the ethical acceptability of the research projects?

Dr. Culver is Professor of Medical Education at Barry University and Voluntary Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Miami School of Medicine. He is a Fellow of the Hastings Center and has published numerous articles and several books in the field of bioethics, including *Philosophy in Medicine*, with Bernard Gert (OUP, 1982), and *Bioethics: A Return to Fundamentals*, with Bernard Gert and K. Danner Clouser (OUP, 1997).

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