

## DEATH AND DYING

Audiovisual Resources Available in the  
Medical Education Media Center  
Rm. M2-C04A, ph. 235-1864, 235-1832

**ABC News presents Morrie Schwartz - Lessons on Living** [DVD] Ted Koppel, ABC New Presents 60 min. AV DV 07:3

SUMMARY: ABC New Presents journalist, Ted Koppel, conducted a series of interviews with former sociology professor Morrie Schwartz during the last year of his life after being diagnosed with ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease). This series is among the most requested and widely discussed Nightline series of the last 25 years. Watching the night they aired was Schwartz's former student and sportswriter Mitch Albom who was then inspired to reconnect with his former professor and write the best-selling book Tuesdays with Morrie. A Morrie Schwartz quote: ""When you learn how to die, you learn how to live."

**The Barbarian Invasions (Les Invasions Barbares)** {English subtitles} Director: Denys Arcand ; Studio: Miramax 1 DVD, 99 min AV DV 09:11 NOTE: Actors: Dorothee Berryman, Isabelle Blais, Markita Boies, Denis Bouchard, Toni Cecchinato ;

SUMMARY: A history professor, is dying of cancer, and his estranged and financially successful son, Sebastien, returns to care for the old man. With the power of money, Sebastien cuts through bureaucracy and the law to give his father some comfort--comfort that Remy accepts with reluctance, because in his eyes the unintellectual Sebastian has betrayed all of Remy's principles. Old friends arrive and soon the conversation turns to grappling with morality and the state of our culture, including topics surrounding academia, history, religion and sex. The Barbarian Invasions isn't very focused, but presents a breadth of its ideas with a degree of intelligence and grace. Winner of the Best Actress (Marie-Josée Croze) and Best Screenplay awards at the prestigious Cannes Film Festival.

**Brother's Keeper** Studio: New Video Group 1 DVD, 104 min. AV DV 10:6 NOTE: Actors: Delbert Ward, Roscoe Ward, Lyman Ward, Walt Geisler, Ken Elmer ; Directors: Bruce Sinofsky, Joe Berlinger; Producers: Bruce Sinofsky, Joe Berlinger, Nicholas Gottlieb;

SUMMARY : One of the best films of 1992, this acclaimed documentary focuses on the alleged murder in June 1990 of 64-year-old Bill Ward by his brother Delbert, 59, a simple dairy farmer whose defense became a rallying cause for the citizens of Munnsville, a tiny farming community in central New York. Known by all of Munnsville as harmless hermits, the Ward brothers (also including Lyman and Roscoe) live an 18th-century lifestyle in their tiny, grimy shack, sleeping in the same bed through cold winters and tending daily to their hayfields and livestock. Semiliterate and stunted by minimal exposure to the outside world, the Wards are disheveled children in the bodies of aging men; and when Delbert is charged with suffocating his ailing brother Bill, he's a prime target for legal manipulation and a media circus that's immediately drawn to his case. Filmmakers Joe Berlinger and Bruce Sinofsky spent nearly a year with the Wards and the Munnsville citizens who rallied to Delbert's defense, and their efforts prove that reality is often more compelling than even the richest fictional drama. As a slice-of-life study of eccentricity, country-folk stereotypes, small-town wisdom, and the power of the media, Brother's Keeper is funny, fascinating, and full of compassionate humanity. It's also a riveting courtroom mystery with characters that no casting director could improve upon, tracking the course of justice while leaving the viewer to mull over the truth behind Delbert Ward's alleged crime.

**Choosing Wisely: 5 [five] Things Physicians and Patients Should Question** - (Grand Rounds) [URL] - UMKC Online Lectures Richard E. Butin, MD, FACP; University of Missouri-Kansas City [UMKC], School of Medicine Online Lectures 60 min.

NOTE: This is a University of Missouri-Kansas City [UMKC], School of Medicine lecture recorded on Dec. 3, 2013;

SUMMARY: This lecture addresses "Choosing Wisely: An Initiative of the ABIM Foundation campaign, part of the high-value cost conscious care. This involves the new curriculum. Objectives provide information for participants to be able to explain and appreciate the current ABIM Choosing Wisely Campaign, understand 5 items from the American College of Physicians (ACP) Choosing Wisely list; and identify one response to a patient questioner request that will be different now in the out-patient or in-patient setting. <http://media.med.umkc.edu/private/conferences/gr/ChooseWiselyButin120313.wmv>

**Dax's Case: Who Should Decide?** [DVD] NOTE: Follow-up to "Please Let Me Die" Produced by Unicorn Media, Inc. for Concern for Dying; Presented and Distributed by Filmmaker's Library DVD, 58 min. AV DV 07:11 NOTE: Original film was titled "Please Let Me Die" (1974) which is no longer published; this is the follow-up ten years later.

SUMMARY: The fascinating and moving case of Dax Cowart is one of the best known and most significant in applied ethics, highlighting the ethical and medical dilemmas over an individual's right to die. The documentary poses the ultimate bioethical problem. Does a patient have the right to refuse treatment? Taking the case of Dax Cowart, a man in his twenties who was critically burned in a propane gas explosion, the film examines the issue from all perspectives. The accident left Dax sightless, helpless, disfigured, and in constant pain. He insisted that he did not want to live, for it was clear that he would always be severely handicapped. During his long hospitalization he was subjected to painful treatments, which he demanded to have terminated. But, he was denied the right to make the decision. The film spans a ten-year period, allowing the perspective of time. Dax made a great deal of progress over the years. He moved into his own house, started a business and married. Yet he has never changed his mind, that he should have been allowed to die, and in fact made several suicide attempts after he was first released from the hospital. We hear the positions of doctors, nurses, family and friends both at the time of the crisis, and again ten years later. Their conflicting views leave one to wrestle with how "Dax's Case" should have been decided.

**Death Just Isn't What It Used to Be** [DVD] 30 min. James N. Kirkpatrick; Network for Continuing Medical Education AV DV 10:9 SUMMARY: Controversy in diagnosing death has a long history, but the essential difficulties have not changed for hundreds of years. A major source of confusion in understanding death is the mixing of the definition of death - a decision about when life has ended - with criteria and tests used to assess when death has occurred. What is it that shifts human beings from alive to dead - lack of sentence? Lack of personhood? Cessation of all spontaneous biological activity? Departure of the soul? In this video, Dr. James Kirkpatrick revisits the concept of death. He traces the historical difficulties in diagnosing death, reviews the current controversies and criteria - cardiopulmonary versus neurological - for determining death, discusses the legal and ethical issues surrounding organ harvesting, and explores the inherent problems with making the diagnosis of death a matter of personal choice.

**DNR: Do Not (Attempt) Resuscitation / Time to resuscitate the No Code Blue Discussion** (Grand Rounds) Richard E. Butin, MD, FACP; University of Missouri-Kansas City [UMKC], School of Medicine Online Lectures NOTE: This is a University of Missouri-Kansas City [UMKC], School of Medicine, recorded on Jan. 17, 2012; <http://media.med.umkc.edu/private/conferences/gr/DNRButin011712.wmv>

**Doctor, The** Ed Rosenbaum, MD; Touchstone Pictures; Distributed by Touchstone Home Video DVD; 123 min. AV DV 11:1 NOTE:

Also available, "When the Doctor Faces Personal Illness," a lecture by Dr. Rosenbaum, from the "Humanities in Healing" series videotaped at UMKC School of Medicine (call # A/V MV 99:16).

**SUMMARY:** Gripping and emotional true-life dramatization of the autobiographical novel written by Dr. Ed Rosenbaum. The central character, played by the actor William Hurt, is a successful heart surgeon who gets the chance to find out what life is like on the other side of the scalpel when he discovers he has a throat tumor. The movie gives the patient's view of dealing with the healthcare industry, physician-patient relations, attitudes of healthcare professionals, and facing the possibility death or disability. The resolution of these life-altering events results in a more humanitarian medical practice for the "doctor" and on his method of teaching medicine. Highlighted by superior acting, an insightful script and surprising humor, Randa Haines' film also stars Christine Lahti, Mandy Patinkin and Elizabeth Perkins.

**Doctor's Emotional Reaction to Patient's Death William T. Sirridge, M.D., Humanities in Medicine Lectureship**

Robert Arnold, MD; University of Missouri-Kansas City [UMKC], School of Medicine DVD, 60 min., AV DV 13:33

NOTE: The William T. Sirridge Lecture Series was recorded on 10/17/03.

**SUMMARY:** Dr. Robert Arnold (UMKC Alumni Class of 1983 and 2003 E. Grey Dimond, MD, Take Wing Award Recipient) is the invited speaker for this annual presentation of the William T. Sirridge Humanities in Medicine Lecture. The program asks the question, "How do we take care of the care-taker?" The discussion centers around doctors as human beings who have feelings for their patients, and may have emotional reactions to death which are not properly handled. Included are reactions to doctors crying in public, open callousness, fear of displaying emotion, and team reaction to death. A study based on 164 physician interviews on their reaction to death, and a separate study of student interviews is also discussed. The result shows that there is little discussion of death unless it is at an M & M conference. This may contribute to "burn-out." Examples of short and long-term coping are discussed.

**EPEC - O: Education in Palliative and End-of-Life Care for Oncology**, [CD-ROM & DVD-ROM] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute, American Society of Clinical Oncology, Hospice and Palliative Care Nurses Association Computer Software, 1 CD-ROM, 1 DVD-ROM AV MR 07:8 CD-ROM CONTENTS: TEACHING SKILLS: Trainer's Guide, Handout with Slide images, PowerPoint Slides and a Teaching Skills video; OVERVIEWS: PLENARY SESSIONS AND MODULES : Trainer's Guide, Handout with Slide images, PowerPoint slides --- DVD CONTENTS:

Videos of the same topics on the CD-ROM as follows:

Plenary 1 - Gaps in Oncology Plenary 2 - Models of Comprehensive Care Plenary 3 - Charting the Future

Teaching Skills II

Module Trigger Tapes Module 1: Comprehensive Assessment Module 2: Cancer Pain Management Module 3: Symptoms

- a. General Introduction
- b. Anorexia / Cachexia
- c. Anxiety
- d. Ascites
- e. Bowel Obstruction
- f. Constipation
- g. Delirium
- h. Depression
- i. Diarrhea
- j. Dyspnea
- k. Fatigue
- l. Insomnia
- m. Malignant Pleural Effusions
- n. Menopausal Symptoms
- o. Mucositis
- p. Nausea / Vomiting
- q. Skin

Module 4: Loss, Grief, Bereavement

Module 5: Survivorship

Module 6: Last Hour of Living

Module 7: Communicating Effectively

Module 8: Clarifying Diagnosis & Prognosis

Module 9: Negotiating Goals of Care

Module 10: Clinical Trial

Module 11: Withdrawing Nutrition, Hydration

Module 12: Conflict Resolution

Module 13: Advance Care Planning

Module 14: Physician-Assisted Suicide

Module 15: Cancer Doctors & Burnout

**The Future of Dying [DVD]** William G. Bartholome; Midwest Bioethics Center; Kansas City, Missouri 36 min. AV DV 09:21

**SUMMARY:** This video features noted physician-ethicist William G. Bartholome, MD, MTS, reviewing the history of the death and dying movement from the work of Kübler-Ross forward. Dr. Bartholome reflects on his own life since receiving a terminal diagnosis. Presented at the How We Die Conference, March, 1995.

**Guiding Cardiovascular Patients and Their Families at the End of Life** Lynne W. Stevenson; Health e Galaxy DVD; 35 min.;

**SUMMARY:** In this video segment from the 36.5 hour Brigham and Women's "Cardiovascular Medicine Update for the Practitioner" 2013 Board Review Course (available at [www.hegalaxy.com/boards](http://www.hegalaxy.com/boards)), Dr. Stevenson emphasizes that palliative therapies to control symptoms, address quality of life, and enhance communication are relevant throughout the course of cardiovascular disease, not just in advanced disease. She points out that palliative therapies work hand in hand with traditional therapies designed to prolong survival. Finally, she explains that the critical transition into advanced heart failure from the medical perspective is often followed by a transition in goals of care from the patient and family perspective is often followed by a transition in goals of care from the patient and family perspective, wherein palliative therapies may become the dominant treatment paradigm. As the end of life is anticipated, clinicians should shoulder responsibility for initiating the development of a plan for end-of-life care consistent with patient values, preferences, and goals.

**Honoring Patient Preferences: A Guide to Complying With Multicultural Patient Requirements** [CD-rom /text] Anne Knights Rundle, Maria Carvalho, Mary Robinson, editors ; Children's Hospital, Boston ; Jossey-Bass Inc., Publishers ; National Institute for Healthcare Research, Vendors Computer Software (Win CD-Rom of textbook) ; textbook, 235 pgs; AV MR 04:54

**SUMMARY:** This is a resource for developing cultural competencies that meet official regulatory requirements and ensure the well-being of patients. From the staff of Children's Hospital Boston, comes this unique training toolkit to help doctors, nurses, counselors, and other caregivers understand the religious beliefs and cultural norms - both their own and others - that drive the decisions about illness and recovery made by patients and their families. Packed with case studies and guidance on JCAHO standards, chapters cover special concerns about illness and death, including end-of-life issues, and provide a detailed review of the spiritual traditions, health care practices, and guiding principles of the major religions and cultures around the world. Religions included in the text are: Buddhism, Christianity, Hindu, Islam, Judaism and Santeria. Other cultural or specific populations include: Asian populations, Central American and the Caribbean, European, the Middle East, South America, and North American (African American, Native American, Puerto Rican). Nationality-independent cultural groups include: the deaf, families with gay or lesbian parents, and the Caribbean culture.

**Ikiru** Studio: Criterion Collection; Directed by Akira Kurosawa DVD, 2 discs, 143 min. AV DV 05:12

**NOTES:** Japanese with English subtitles. New transfer with restored image and sound and improved subtitle translation. Audio commentary by Stephen Prince, author of *The Warrior's Camera: The Cinema of Akira Kurosawa*. A Message from Akira Kurosawa (2000): a 90-minute documentary produced by Kurosawa Productions and featuring interviews with the director on the set of his later films. A 41-minute documentary on *Ikiru* from the series, *Akira Kurosawa: To Create is Beautiful*.

**SUMMARY:** Blessed with timeless humanity, grace, and heartbreaking compassion, *Ikiru* is one of the most moving dramas in the history of film. Legendary director Akira Kurosawa is best remembered for his samurai epics, but this contemporary masterpiece ranks among his greatest achievements, matched in every respect by the finest performance of Takashi Shimura's celebrated career. Shimura, who nobly led the *Seven Samurai* two years later, is sublimely perfect as a melancholy civil servant who, upon learning that he has terminal cancer, realizes he has nothing to show for his dreary, unsatisfying life. He seeks solace in nightlife and family, to no avail, until a simple inspiration leads him to a final, enduring act of public generosity. Expressing his own thoughts about death and the universal desire for a meaningful existence, Kurosawa infuses this drama with social conscience and deep, personal conviction, arriving at a conclusion that is emotionally overwhelming and simply unforgettable.

**Life and Death: Medical Ethics of the Terri Schiavo Case** [DVD] Jim Lehrer, "NewsHour;" Films for the Humanities and Sciences, Films Media Group  
1 DVD, 27 min AV DV 07:35

**SUMMARY:** Many who followed the Terri Schiavo case struggled to make sense of the flurry of opinions it generated. This Jim Lehrer "NewsHour" program, recorded during the last days of Terri Schiavo's life, presents two opposing yet thoroughly reasoned perspectives on the issues. Beth Israel Medical Center neurologist Dr. Russell Portenov explains the medical justification for removing the feeding tube, while Dr. Robert George, professor of jurisprudence at Princeton University and a member of the President's Council on Bioethics, raises legal and moral questions surrounding the decision. Keeping its focus on the Schiavo controversy, the program also explores implications for other potential end-of-life situations.

**Managing End of Life Care** Walter L. Larimore, MD; Network for Continuing Medical Education DVD, 60 min. AV DV 03:7

**SUMMARY:** Helping a patient through the death process can be daunting and is rife with issues. The patient's family members and close friends often look to the physician to coordinate these matters, and to provide guidance and support as the loved one's condition deteriorates. This program provides an overview of end-of-life issues for physicians. It is presented in 5 parts as follows: Pt. 1 - Communication skills (breaking bad news, the SPIKE protocol for talking with patients) ; Pt. 2 - The importance of advance care planning (includes advance directives, living will, durable power of attorney, DNR) ; Pt. 3 - Medical management of the dying patient (includes patterns of functional decline, pain assessment, steps to pain control, pharmaceutical recommendations, WHO recommendations, assisted hydration and nutrition & when to withdraw, other issues such as fatigue, anorexia, constipation, nausea, and delirium) ; Pt. 4 - Spiritual intervention (the difference between religion and spirituality, spiritual assessment, and doctor-patient relationships) ; Pt. 5 - The role of hospice and other support services.

**Palliative Care and Hospice** [DVD] Bruce Ellsweig; Network for Continuing Medical Education 1 DVD; 30 min.; AV DV 10:1 2 copies

**SUMMARY:** "A medicine that embodies an acceptance of death would represent a great change in the common conception, and might set the stage for viewing the care of dying people not as an afterthought when all else has failed, but as one of the ends of medicine." The goal of a peaceful death should be as much a part of the purpose of medicine, as the promotion of good health." This quote from the medical ethicist, Daniel Callahan, serves as the foundation for this review of contemporary palliative care and hospice issues by Dr. Bruce Ellsweig. In this program, Dr. Ellsweig compares palliative and end-of-life care with the curative models of medicine. Recommendations for identifying patients who may be candidates for palliative care and/or hospice include eligibility criteria for the Medicare Hospice Benefit. A multidisciplinary approach to management with early and sustained communications between the patient, caregivers, family, and friends is critical to optimize end-of-life care and is stressed throughout the program.

**Pioneers of Hospice: Changing the Face of Dying** DVD A production of the Madison-Deane Initiative, a program of the Visiting Nurse Association of Chittenden & Grand Isle Counties, Vermont, USA ; in association with Brook Hollow Productions; distributed by Fanlight Productions 49 min. AV DV 06:6 NOTE: Provided by the Wayne R. Perry and Mary V. Perry Medical Reference Collection.

**SUMMARY:** Over a period of less than forty years, the passion and foresight of four visionary healthcare professionals dramatically transformed the landscape of end-of-life care, and inspired a movement felt around the world. What these pioneers saw of the process of dying changed their lives. They were appalled, not by the natural act of dying itself, but by the way western societies hide it, deny it, misunderstand it and fail utterly to cope with it. This program documents the growth of hospice and palliative care in Britain, the United States, and Canada, focusing on the legacies of the founders of modern hospice. The makers of this film traveled to three countries to interview these remarkable pioneers, and to preserve for all time their reflections on the astonishingly powerful impact their work has had on the ways we view and experience death. The result is a compelling film with a unique historical and socio-cultural perspective on the emergence of the modern hospice movement. The biographies include:

\*\*\*DAME CICELY SAUNDERS, MD, OM, DBE, FRCP founded the modern hospice movement, with the opening of St. Christopher's Hospice in England in 1967. Trained as a nurse, a social worker, and a physician, Dr. Saunders has spent more than fifty years of her life creating a philosophy and practice of care which has humanized the dying experience for patients and their families. Her concept of "total pain," embracing social, emotional and spiritual suffering as well as physical pain, revolutionized the medical establishment's traditional model of end-of-life care, and has changed the face of dying across the world.

\*\*\*FLORENCE WALD, MN, MS, FAAN, distinguished clinical professor of nursing and former Dean of the Yale University School of Nursing, founded the first hospice in the United States in 1974. A world-renowned leader in nursing research, Wald has been pronounced a "Living Legend" by the American Academy of Nursing.

\*\*\*ELISABETH KUBLER-ROSS, MD: Psychiatrist and founder of the Death with Dignity Movement, the late Elisabeth Kubler-Ross was one of the best-loved and most respected authorities on the subject of dying, death and grief. Her groundbreaking 1969 book, *On Death and Dying*, is still the best-selling work in the field. She

was named one of the "One Hundred Most Important Thinkers of the Century" by Time Magazine in 1999. Her other books include *To Live Until We Say Goodbye*; *On Children and Death*; *AIDS, The Ultimate Challenge*; and her autobiography, *The Wheel of Life*.

\*\*\*BALFOUR MOUNT, MD, FRCSPC: Considered the founder of Palliative Care in Canada, Mount was the Founding Director of the Royal Victoria Hospital Palliative Care Service at McGill University, in 1974, and is currently the Eric Flanders Professor of Palliative Medicine at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal. He received the Order of Canada for his work with the dying.

**The Sea Inside** [DVD] New Line Home Video 1 DVD, 125 min. AV DV 10:5 NOTE: Actors: Javier Bardem, Belén Rueda, Lola Dueñas, Mabel Rivera, Celso Bugallo; Directors: Alejandro Amenábar; Writers: Alejandro Amenábar, Mateo Gil;

SUMMARY: Winner of the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film of 2004. "The Sea Inside" delivers a fact-based Spanish drama concerning the final days of Ramón Sampedro, the quadriplegic poet who waged a controversial campaign for his right to die. He was denied this right for 30 years, and ultimately arranged for his own assisted suicide, but this remarkable film--and Javier Bardem's keenly intelligent performance--examines the hotly-debated issue of assisted suicide with admirable depth and humanity, just as Sampedro did until his death in 1998. For Sampedro, death was preferable to severe paralysis, but the film does not suggest a "disposable" attitude toward disability. Instead, it's a thoughtful meditation on life and love as gifts to be cherished, and a challenging drama that begs each viewer to examine their own personal beliefs about what makes life worth living. You may not agree with Sampedro and his ultimate denial of life, but "The Sea Inside" will urge you to ponder how you would react under similar circumstances, and that makes it a profoundly meaningful film.

**The Self-Made Man** Susan Stern; New Day Films [distr] ; Bernal Beach Films 1 DVD, 57 min. AV DV 06:23

NOTE: Special features add 7 minutes for a total of 64 minutes. The features contain an interview with filmmaker Susan Stern, director's commentary, closed captioning and 18 chapter stops to aid teaching and discussion.

SUMMARY: Is it ever rational to choose death? "The Self-Made Man" explores the philosophical and psychological issues behind physician-assisted suicide through the story of a terminally ill man who takes his own life. Two collaborating organizations, the Center for Elderly Suicide Prevention and Grief Related Services (CESP) and the Bay Area Hemlock Chapter, representing differing positions on suicide, guide the filmmaker's search. On Independence Day at Stern Ranch, 77-year-old solar energy pioneer, Bob Stern, finds out he's seriously ill. Meanwhile, an elderly in-law is dying on artificial life support. Bob decides to cheat that fate and take his own life. His family tries to stop him. Bob sets up a video camera the night before his death and tapes his arguments for suicide. Daughter Susan Stern tells the story of her father's interesting life and explores "rational suicide," the "right-to-die" and the difficult end-of-life choices faced by her father and the aging population. The video includes interviews of the family.

**Signs of the End (Grand Rounds)** [URL] - UMKC Online Lectures Thompson; University of Missouri-Kansas City [UMKC], School of Medicine [Online Lecture] Online Lecture

NOTES: University of Missouri-Kansas City [UMKC], School of Medicine

SUMMARY: Pending

<http://media.med.umkc.edu/private/conferences/gr/SignsOfTheEndThompson.wmv>

**Wit** [death and dying] [DVD] Avenue Pictures production for Home Box Office (HBO) 120 min.

Note: The movie, "Wit", is based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning play by Margaret Edson; Credits: Emma Thompson, Actress; Mike Nichols, Director.

Summary: "Wit" centers on Dr. Vivian Bearing, a renowned English literary scholar. As a disciplined academician, and expert in the brilliantly intricate metaphysical poetry of John Donne, she is prickly, precise and intensely rational in her teaching and in her life. Her passion is reserved for the classroom, yet her penetrating intelligence and biting wit alienate her students. Her academic cocoon protects her, cushions her, make it possible for her to exist without the need of anyone. When she is suddenly faced with the most daunting of personal crises -- a diagnosis of terminal ovarian cancer -- her 17th-century poetic world collides with 21st-century experimental medicine and a personal awakening is set in motion. As grim as that sounds, the play has also been praised for its wit and insight.

**Tuesdays with Morrie** [DVD] Buena Vista Home Entertainment 89 min. AV DV 07:5

SUMMARY: Based on a true-life story, "Tuesdays with Morrie" is a loving memoir to a man whose lessons on life have much to teach us about ourselves. Academy Award-winner, Jack Lemmon, delivers an outstanding performance as Morrie Schwartz, the Brandeis University professor upon whom the best-selling book is based. Hank Azaria plays Mitch, an accomplished journalist so driven by his job, he has little time or energy left for anything else. One night, Mitch happens to catch Morrie's appearance on a national news program and learns his old professor is battling Lou Gehrig's disease. After the telecast, Mitch contacts Morrie, and what starts as a visit turns into a pilgrimage as Mitch opens his heart to the lessons Morrie has to teach him. As the bond grows between these two men, Mitch learns that professional commitments doesn't mean anything without the love of family and friends.

**Wit** [death and dying] Avenue Pictures production for Home Box Office (HBO) DVD, 120 min. AV DV 07:14

Note: The movie, "Wit", is based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning play by Margaret Edson; Credits: Emma Thompson, Actress ; Mike Nichols, Director.

Summary: "Wit" centers on Dr. Vivian Bearing, a renowned English literary scholar. As a disciplined academician, and expert in the brilliantly intricate metaphysical poetry of John Donne, she is prickly, precise and intensely rational in her teaching and in her life. Her passion is reserved for the classroom, yet her penetrating intelligence and biting wit alienate her students. Her academic cocoon protects her, cushions her, make it possible for her to exist without the need of anyone. When she is suddenly faced with the most daunting of personal crises -- a diagnosis of terminal ovarian cancer -- her 17th-century poetic world collides with 21st-century experimental medicine, and a personal awakening is set in motion. As grim as that sounds, the play has also been praised for its wit and insight.

**Witnessing Death: A Grandson's Reflections** [DVD] David Rosenthal, Buehler Center on Aging at Northwestern University, Feinberg School of Medicine, Summer Program on Geriatrics & Gerontology 27 min. AV DV 07:6

SUMMARY: This is a medical student's film essay about his grandfather's struggle with Alzheimer's disease and subsequent death. The filmmaker, David Rosenthal, interweaves his grandfather's experience, interviews with clinical experts and medical ethicists, and the personal experiences of certified nursing aides. The video functions on more than one level. It is a personal memoir, but it is also a dialogue to explore the meaning of witnessing death, both to direct care workers and to academic and clinical experts on end-of-life care. In contrast to what seems to be a socially mandated tendency to sweep the details of death under the rug, this program addresses them with a lucid honesty. The result is an excellent integration of emotional and intellectual stances toward approaching death.

**You Don't Know Jack: The Life and Deaths of Jack Kevorkian** Al Pacino, Susan Sarandon; Danny Huston, Brenda Vaccaro, John Goodman; HBO Films 1 DVD; 134 min. AV DV 11:2

SUMMARY: In 1990, Dr. Jack Kevorkian astonished the world as he took the end of life debate head-on with his "Mercy Machine" and performed his first assisted suicide. Starring Oscar and Emmy winner Al Pacino, "YOU DON'T KNOW JACK" is the story of one man's obsession with challenging the rules by which we live and die - and his stubborn, heartfelt insistence on breaking the law to do so. Also starring Oscar winner Susan Sarandon, Danny Huston, Emmy winner Brenda Vaccaro and

Emmy winner John Goodman. Special features: The Real Jack/Inner Circle: A behind the scenes featurette that provides insight into the real Jack Kevorkian and his family, friends, and supporters through interviews with the film's cast and their real life counterparts.