In recent years, Robert M. Veatch has claimed that all clinical decisions involve making value-judgments. For this reason (as well as others), Veatch has argued that the 21st century physician cannot lay claim to knowing what is best for his/her patients and so must defer to the patient’s own conception of what is best for him in guiding treatment. Professor Groll will discuss his paper on “A Taxonomy of Clinical Disagreements” to show that the place of values in clinical decision making does not warrant Veatch’s skeptical conclusion concerning the role of healthcare providers in guiding care. Instead, Professor Groll argues that we have good reason to think that in certain cases, healthcare providers can lay claim to expertise regarding what is best for their patients and that in many other cases where they cannot lay claim to expertise, they can nonetheless still lay claim to knowing what is best. Beyond the inherent theoretical interest in classifying clinical disagreements, Professor Groll argues that his analysis yields meaningful clinical implications.

Presented by
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