

Preface

This book brings together three of my long-standing interests: decision analysis, utilitarianism, and applied bioethics. I have felt for some time that decision analysis needed firm roots in utility theory and in the sophisticated forms of utilitarian philosophy advocated by Richard Hare and others. I have watched the recent growth of applied bioethics, at first through the eyes of two close colleagues, David Asch and Peter Ubel, and as a member of the Ethics Committee of the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania and the Institutional Review Board. I became more and more disturbed about how bioethicists were neglecting medical decision analysis. With my increased involvement with the journal *Medical Decision Making*, I saw how decision analysis was developing, and it seems highly relevant to questions faced in bioethics. I think decision analysis should get more attention from both the medical and policy-making communities.

So this book arose as an expression of my grumpiness about what is happening and not happening—in these worlds. I have retained the grumpy title and a few rants (mostly against Institutional Review Boards, which may yet drive me out of empirical research before I am ready to retire from it). But basically I try to present an explication, in very rough outline, of what applied bioethics might look like if it took utilitarian decision analysis more seriously.

I also include some psychology here. That is my field, and I do explain at least why I think that many moral intuitions are interesting psychological phenomena rather than windows into some sort of moral truth.

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