



Joint Centre for Bioethics  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

## BIOETHICS SEMINAR

February 15, 2017, 4:10-5:30 pm

155 College St., Room 108 (main floor, to the right of the elevators)

This event will be webcast:

<https://jcb.adobeconnect.com/bioethicsseminars/>

# Assisted and/or Prolonged Dying: An Issue for Conscience

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**Abstract:** It is generally assumed that opposition to Charter claims, legislated policies and so forth involve issues of conscience. It is equally important to notice that approval of these issues are also issues for conscience. Justice Bertha Wilson's ruling in the Morgenthaler case regarding the legalization of abortion, and responses accusing her of simply imposing her own personal ideology, will be used to illustrate this point. Bertha Wilson was a member of the United Church and served on the committee drafting that church's position on abortion. However, she appealed neither to the authority of that tradition nor to her own personal ideology but to the respected voices of all persons including pregnant women. Her use of a common law approach in dealing with a controversial policy can be used to clarify the role of conscience in responses to the issues of assisting or prolonging death.

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A partnership among the University of Toronto; Centre for Addiction and Mental Health; Holland Bloorview Kids Rehab; The Hospital for Sick Children; Humber River Hospital; Mount Sinai Hospital; Toronto Community Care Access Centre; Trillium Health Partners; and University Health Network (Princess Margaret Hospital, Toronto General Hospital, Toronto Rehabilitation Institute, and Toronto Western Hospital).