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## 2006 Ernest Becker Summer Institute

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*The complete Ernest Becker Summer Institute brochure and registration form is NOW available!  
Keep going for more information!!!*

*“Finitude, Medical Futility, and Faithful Care of the Dying”*  
July 27-29, 2006

This summer institute, jointly sponsored by the School of Theology and Ministry and the Ernest Becker Foundation, is intended for hospital and hospice chaplains, clergy, physicians, nurses, social workers, therapists, hospice workers, and others who are interested in strengthening the spiritual dimensions of care at the time of death.

*Keynote Speaker: Ira Byock, M.D.,  
Author of *Dying Well**

STMM 593-05

To take this institute for 1 graduate credit contact: [stm@seattleu.edu](mailto:stm@seattleu.edu).

Sponsoring Faculty:

*Herbert Anderson*, B.A., Gustavus Adolphus College; B.D., Augustana Seminary; Ph.D., 1970, Drew University; Guest Faculty, Seattle University, 2000.

# THE ERNEST BECKER SUMMER INSTITUTE

“FINITUDE, MEDICAL FUTILITY,  
&  
FAITHFUL CARE OF THE DYING”

FROM JULY 27 AT 7 P.M.  
TO JULY 29 AT 3 P.M.  
2006

AT  
SEATTLE UNIVERSITY  
CAMPION HALL

THE ERNEST BECKER INSTITUTE IS INTENDED FOR HOSPITAL AND HOSPICE CHAPLAINS, CLERGY, PHYSICIANS, NURSES, SOCIAL WORKERS, THERAPISTS, HOSPICE WORKERS AND OTHERS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN STRENGTHENING THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSIONS OF CARE AT THE TIME OF DEATH.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER  
IRA BYOCK, M.D., AUTHOR OF *DYING WELL*  
& OTHER  
OUTSTANDING SPEAKERS AND WORKSHOPS.

REGISTRATION: \$150.00  
(REGISTRATION FEE INCLUDES TWO LUNCHES)

**Students registering for credit DO NOT need to pay  
the \$150 registration fee!**

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL THE ERNEST BECKER FOUNDATION  
(206) 232-2994 OR EMAIL [NELGEE@U.WASHINGTON.EDU](mailto:NELGEE@U.WASHINGTON.EDU)

# The Ernest Becker Summer Institute

## “Finitude, Medical Futility, and Faithful Care of the Dying”

July 27 to 29, 2006, Seattle University

Co-sponsors: The Ernest Becker Foundation and School of Theology and Ministry, Seattle University

### Keynote Speakers:

#### Ira Byock, M.D. “*The Meaning and Value of Death*”

Dr. Byock, internationally recognized author and speaker, Professor of Anesthesiology and Community & Family Medicine, Dartmouth Medical School, Director of Palliative Medicine, Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center, and author of *Dying Well* and *The Four Things that Matter Most*.

#### Randall Curtis, M.D. “*The Promise and Challenge of ‘Medical Futility’*”

Dr. Curtis, Professor of Medicine, University of Washington Medical School, Director, Harborview/University of Washington End of Life Care and Chair, Ethics Committee, Harborview Hospital.

**WELCOME** to the second biennial **Ernest Becker Summer Institute**. With hospice care firmly established as an appropriate mode of attending to the dying and with palliative care expanding end-of-life treatment, this Institute seeks to provide a timely opportunity for the helping professions to explore the implications of Becker’s thought for care of the dying and deepen our understanding of the spiritual needs and resources of the dying. **The Ernest Becker Institute** is intended for hospital and hospice chaplains, physicians, nurses, social workers, pastoral counselors, hospice workers, parish clergy, therapists and others interested in strengthening the spiritual dimensions of care at the time of death.

#### Goals of the Becker Institute:

- 1) Enhance the care of the dying.
- 2) Explore critical issues in end-of-life care and the implications of Ernest Becker’s thought for the care of the dying.
- 3) Introduce Ernest Becker’s perspective on death to those who are unaware of his seminal insights on the existential dilemma of death in life.
- 4) Identify the spiritual dimensions of the dying process.
- 5) Deepen our awareness of the ways in which caregivers are transformed by their care of the dying.

You will have brought your own goals and expectations to this Institute. It is our hope that your expectations will be met and maybe even stretched a little in the program.

**When:** July 27 - 29, 2006

**Where:** Campion Hall, Seattle University

**Program:**

**Starts** at 4:30 pm Thursday July 27

**Ends** at 3 pm Saturday July 29

**Information:** [www.ernestbecker.org](http://www.ernestbecker.org)

**Email:** [nelgee@u.washington.edu](mailto:nelgee@u.washington.edu)

**Phone:** 206-232-2994

**Registration Form:** Page 4

### Conference Schedule:

#### Thursday July 27

4:30 pm: Film: *Flight From Death*

7:00 pm: Keynote Ira Byock

Reception following

#### Friday July 28

8:30 am: Reflective Worship

9:00 am: Plenary Presentation

10:30 am: Break

11:00 am: Plenary Panel

12:15 pm: Concluding Observations

12:30 pm: Luncheon Buffet

1:30 pm: Plenary Presentation

3:00 pm: Break

3:30 pm: Case Conference

5:00 pm: Dinner Break

6:30 pm: Coffee and Dessert

7:00 pm: Film: *Wit*

#### Saturday July 29

8:30 am: Reflective Worship

9:00 am: Plenary Presentation

12 noon: Luncheon Buffet

2:00 pm: Closing Tables

3:00 pm: Adjourn

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## Summer Institute...

(Continued from page 1)

The theme of this Institute seeks to integrate three critical issues in our approach to the care of the dying. **Finitude** is a given. It is, however, as Ernest Becker reminded us, a reality we seek to avoid, even when it seems immanent. When death is unavoidable and near, we struggle to find a common language to help patients, families, and all the professionals communicate successfully with each other about the reality we share. While we may conclude that **'medical futility'** is too harsh, it points in the direction of honesty that is both necessary and painful in end-of-life care. About **faithfulness in care**, the language is clear even though our practice is not always consistent.

**Registration:** See form on page 4. Note that registrations received after July 20 will be charged an additional \$25. The registration desk in Campion Ballroom will be open Thursday from 3-7 p.m. and after the keynote as well as on Friday from 8-9 a.m.

The **Seattle University Bookstore** hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday and 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday. A select number of books will be available in the Campion Ballroom.

**Parking:** Available on the Seattle University campus for a fee.

**Accommodations:** Silver Cloud Hotel near the campus. Reservations must be received no later than June 27, 2006. Call 1-800-590-1801 and request the Ernest Becker Foundation group rate.

There is also housing at Seattle University at a reasonable rate. Contact the Becker Foundation by 7/6/6.

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## The Ernest Becker Summer Institute PROGRAM

### Thursday, July 27

**4:30 p.m. *Flight from Death.* Award-winning documentary film**

This film is an excellent introduction to major themes in Becker's perspective for participants in the Institute who are unfamiliar with Ernest Becker's thought. It exposes the pervasiveness of death denial in this society and probes some of the questions faced at the point of death. The film is 86 minutes in length so there will be time for dinner following.

**Dinner on your own**

In your packet, there are suggested places for eating, including the cafeteria in the Student Center.

**7 p.m. Keynote Address:**

***"The Meaning and Value of Death"***

Ira Byock, M.D., Professor of Anesthesiology and Community & Family Medicine, Dartmouth Medical School and Director of Palliative Medicine, Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center

Death is central to the meaning and value of human life as experienced by individuals and by communities. Death does not give meaning to life, but it does provide the backdrop against which life is lived. Beyond acknowledging and honoring basic obligations, individuals, families and communities have the capacity to respond to the ultimate concern of death in a creative manner including the performance of rituals that reflect and advance values of human worth, dignity and enduring connection.

(Those attending only this lecture will be asked to make a \$10 contribution.)

### Reception following the lecture

During the reception, there will be a book-signing for Ira Byock's new book *The Four Things That Matter Most*. His book, *Dying Well*, will also be available.

### Friday, July 28

**8:30 a.m. Reflective Worship — Chapel**

**9 a.m. Plenary Presentation:**

***"Dying well: Human Development Through the End of Life"***

Ira Byock, M.D.

The tasks of dying, as Ira Byock defines them, are not easy. He says "as a dying person confronts developmental crises and reaches toward developmental landmarks, such as experienced love of self and others, the completion of relationships, the acceptance of the finality of one's life, and the achievement of a new sense of self despite one's impending demise, one's life and the lives of others are enriched."

**10:30 to 11 a.m. Break**

**11 a.m. Plenary Panel:**

***"Dying well: Whose Responsibility?"***

Daniel Liechty, M. Div. & MSW, moderator

Sometimes, even our best intentions to care for those who are near death are undermined by unclarity about responsibility, a desire not to have someone die "on my watch," confusion in the patient and his/her family about who is in charge, and the ongoing dilemma that professionals closest to the patient often have the least authority. This panel of a physician, a nurse, a family member or patient, a hospital administrator, and a chaplain will explore these critical issues.

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## 12:15 p.m. Concluding Observations.

Ira Byock, M.D.

## 12:30 p.m. Luncheon Buffet Campion Ballroom

[Your color-coded badges are intended to encourage cross-disciplinary conversation whenever possible, especially during lunch.]

## 1:30 p.m. Plenary Presentation:

### *“The Promise and Challenge of Medical Futility”*

Randall Curtis, M.D., MPH, Professor of Medicine, University of Washington Medical School, Director, Harborview/University of Washington End of Life Care and Chair, Ethics Committee, Harborview Hospital

The use of the term ‘medical futility’ continues to generate a lively debate in medical practice. This session will discuss the promise and the challenge of using “medical futility” to “fix the problem” of end-of-life care. As palliative care becomes more common near death, why is there not increasing acceptance of the idea that sometimes medicine should focus on caring and not curing? Providing comfort and pain management with the most modern medical, psychosocial and spiritual tools is never futile, but sometimes attempts to prolong life are. Why is the concept of the futility of life-sustaining therapy controversial? Might an acceptance of human finitude, as Ernest Becker understood it, make it easier to recognize the futility of life-sustaining measures?

## 3 – 3:30 p.m. Break

## 3:30 – 5:00 p.m. Case Conference

### *“Futility: Reaching Consensus”*

Presented by a team of medical and spiritual care residents, nurses, and social workers from Harborview Medical Center, Seattle. Moderated by Chaplain Nancy Chambers, Assoc. Director of Clinical Education.

## Dinner on your own

## 6:30 p.m. Coffee and Dessert

## 7 p.m. Film: *Wit*

Produced and directed by Mike Nichols, starring Emma Thompson, from the play, *Wit* by Margaret Edson. This film is a provocative, dramatic portrayal of the end of life. The aim of this program is to explore how death is presented in literature and film.

## Saturday, July 31

## 8:30 a.m. Reflective Worship — Chapel

## 9-11:30 a.m. Plenary presentation and discussion:

### *“How Patients Use Religious Beliefs to Cope with Life-threatening Illness and the End of Life.”*

John D. Wynn, M.D., board-certified in Internal Medicine and Psychiatry, is Medical Director of Psychooncology, and Program Director for PsychoSocial Oncology, Swedish Hospital Cancer Institute, and is Clinical Associate Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Washington. He also has a private practice of psychiatry and serves on the Board of Directors of the EBF.

Herbert Anderson, PhD., is Professor Emeritus of Pastoral Theology, Catholic Theological Union and Visiting Professor of Pastoral Care at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary (and see below).

This presentation will include video presentations, small group discussion, and plenary conversation. Hospice chaplains will be invited to participate in a fishbowl conversation in response to a video presentation of the use of religious beliefs in the face of life-threatening illness or death. Being ‘faithful’ is meant in two ways: as dependable care and as care that takes into account the faith of the patient. How do we embody faithful care when the way the patient uses religious beliefs seems to circumvent the reality of the illness?

Be assured, there will be a **coffee break** sometime in this session!

## 12 Noon-1:45 p.m. Luncheon Buffet and Roundtable Conversations

During this luncheon, you will have an opportunity to be in a roundtable discussion with outstanding professionals in the field on a variety of topics that will address faithful care at the end of life.

## 2 p.m. Closing

### *“Faithful Care and The Spiritual Agenda of Dying”*

Table conversation and summary reflections. The Rev. Herbert Anderson, Ph.D., Institute Director.

## 3:00 p.m. Adjourn

## Certificate of attendance

A certificate of attendance is available on request at the conclusion of this Institute that indicates the hours of attendance. Contact Nikki Coyote at the Ernest Becker Foundation.

For more info, call **The Ernest Becker Foundation** at 206-232-2994 or email [nelgee@u.washington.edu](mailto:nelgee@u.washington.edu).

## About the Director

Plaudits to Herbert Anderson, who conceived and directed the First Institute 2 years ago and now directs this, the Second, despite moving to Berkeley California where he is “First Man” to his wife, the President of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary. Last year he was a visiting professor at Yale Divinity School. The author of many books, his article *Living Until We Die* will shortly appear in "Clinics of Anesthesiology." A Becker fan since the late sixties, he serves on the EBF Advisory Board. We are most appreciative of his many gifts to us and grateful for his creation and directing of the Institute. Its spirit, collegiality, warmth, understanding, and good nature are all Herbert's.

## The Ernest Becker Foundation

[www.ernestbecker.org](http://www.ernestbecker.org) / [nelgee@u.washington.edu](mailto:nelgee@u.washington.edu)

206-232-2994

**THE ERNEST BECKER FOUNDATION**

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Mercer Island WA 98040

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—REGISTRATION FORM—

Name:

Address

City, State, Zip

Phone (day/evening)

E-mail:

Profession:

Workplace:

Emergency contact name:

Emergency number:

**Registration Fee: \$150 (\$175 after 7/20/06)**

(I would like to be considered for a student scholarship. \_\_\_\_\_)

**Make checks payable to: The Ernest Becker Foundation (EBF)**

**Mail fee and form by July 20 to:**

The Ernest Becker Foundation, 3621 72nd Avenue SE, Mercer Island, WA 98040

For further information, phone the Ernest Becker Foundation at  
206-232-2994 or e-mail: nelgee@u.washington.edu

Please add me to the **Ernest Becker Foundation** mailing list: \_\_\_\_\_