

## Sperm of the Dead

Amy's husband, Bob, has just died tragically in an accident. Before Bob's death, the couple had agreed that they would like to have children together one day, though they never had a conversation about exactly when they would start their family. After Bob was pronounced dead, Amy began inquiring about a process called posthumous sperm retrieval, a procedure in which doctors would retrieve Bob's sperm, potentially allowing Amy to become pregnant with Bob's child.

Amy is still committed to the couple's shared goal of one day starting a family. She doesn't want to raise just any child; she wants to raise *Bob's* child. She thinks that their earlier conversations about someday having a family make it morally permissible for doctors to go ahead with the retrieval procedure.

But some of Bob's family members are uneasy about Bob fathering a child after his death. They feel uncomfortable with the fact that the retrieval would occur without Bob's consent and find the whole process objectionably intrusive. Amy, they argue, does not own or have a right to Bob's sperm.

### STUDY QUESTIONS

- (1) Would the situation be different if Amy and Bob had never seriously discussed the possibility of having children? Why or why not?
- (2) What moral difference, if any, does the opinion of Bob's family members about the procedure make?
- (3) What difference, if any, would it make if Bob's religious beliefs precluded organ donation after death?