About the book: Seven in ten Americans over the age of sixty who require medical decisions in the final days of their life lack the capacity to make them. For many of us, our biggest, life-and-death decisions—literally—will therefore be made by someone else. Yet despite their critical role, we know remarkably little about how our loved ones decide for us. Speaking for the Dying tells their story, drawing on daily observations over more than two years in two intensive care units in a diverse urban hospital. Research has consistently found that choosing life or death for another is one of the most difficult decisions anyone can face, sometimes haunting families for decades. This book shines a bright light on a role few of us will escape and offers steps that patients and loved ones, health care providers, lawyers, and policymakers could undertake before it is too late.

Copies of advance directive forms will be provided at the event.

About the author: Susan P. Shapiro is a sociologist and research professor at the American Bar Foundation. Her publications examine the role of law at life’s end, ethics, agency theory, conflict of interest, the professions, securities fraud and regulation, and white-collar crime. In addition to many articles, she is the author of Tangled Loyalties: Conflict of Interest in Legal Practice and Wayward Capitalists: Target of the Securities and Exchange Commission.