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Patient-physician communication at the end of life: a European perspective

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This thesis aims to address – at least, in part – the paucity of research on communication at the end of life across Europe, particularly for older people and from a cross-country perspective. The data on which the thesis is based are drawn primarily from large representative populations of GPs or older people.

The first part of the thesis is devoted to cross-country comparisons. The articles compiled herein shed light on between-country differences in the topics that patients and GPs discuss before death and on the characteristics of patients for whom communication about end-of-life related topics is limited.

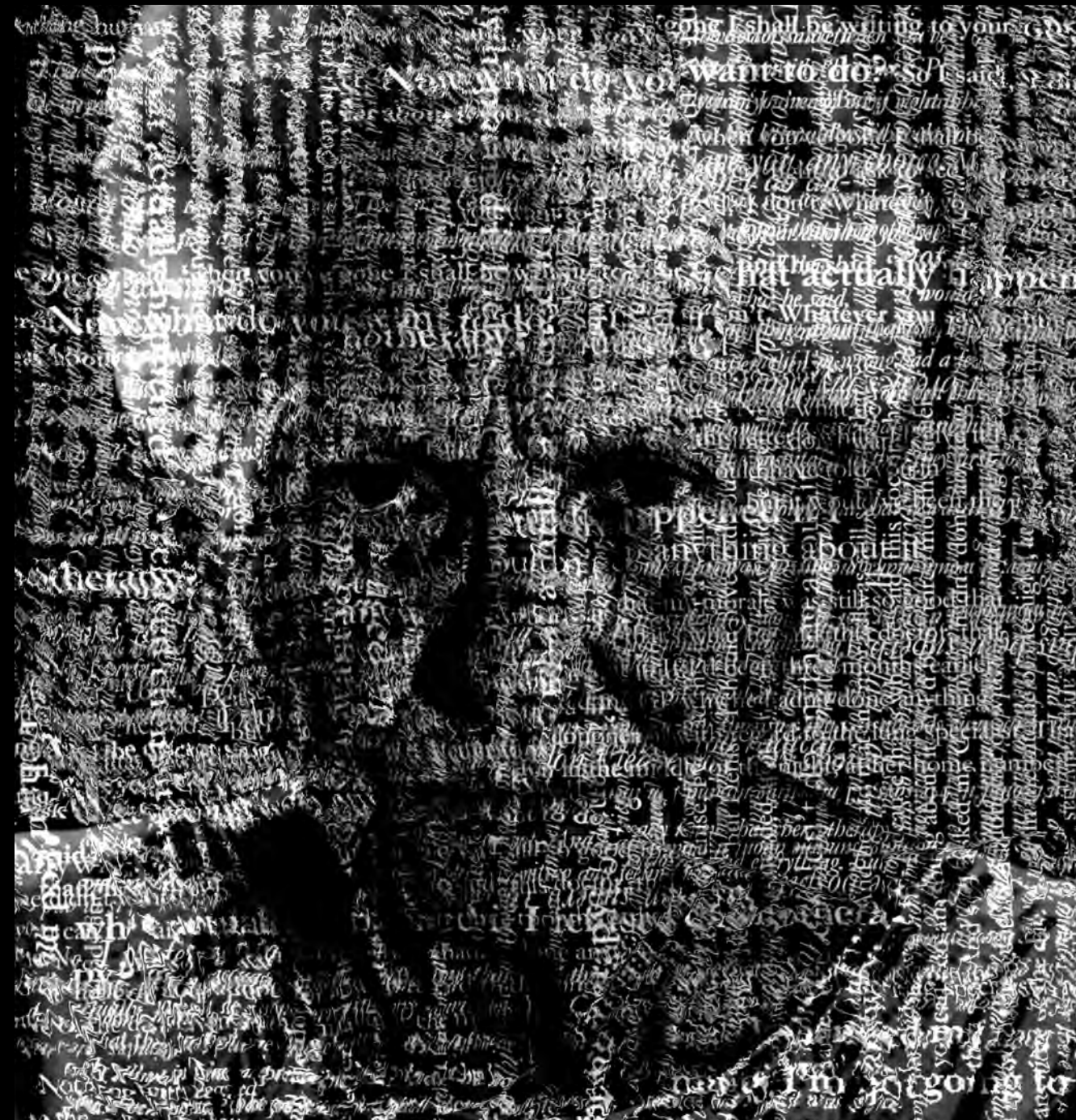
The second part looks exclusively at the situation for older people in the Netherlands. This enables an in-depth examination of the factors that affect end-of-life communication in one European country. The findings reveal, for example, the association between older people’s treatment preferences and the social support available to them, as well as how the Dutch euthanasia law influences older people’s possession of advance directives.

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Natalie Evans