



ANALYSIS OF EUTHANASIA AND ASSISTED SUICIDE

A Right to Life Essay



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The principle that “autonomy overrules all moral standards” has become a popular belief in today’s society. It’s the belief that the right to self-government should precede all other rights or ethical normalcies, even if it result is death by euthanasia or assisted suicide. Which raises the question: Is it morally permissible to kill another human being, to end another’s life? Many advocates claim that these procedures support autonomy and personal rights; however, it comes at the cost of cheapening the value of human life as a whole. The immorality of euthanasia and assisted suicide can be exposed by investigating the most common and compelling defensive arguments, which are ensuring autonomy and protecting rights. And while these concepts seem agreeable, we will find that they are false and mislead people into believing in a cause that destroys the sanctity of life.

What can justify the taking of another life? Some believe that a person’s desire to die automatically takes away the situation’s immorality. But compare it to suicide. I don’t know of anybody who would say that suicide is validated. The immorality of suicide is the same immorality of murder: in both cases, an innocent person is being killed. These procedures are similarly wrong - the only difference between suicide and mercy killing is that it is self-murder vs. doctor murder. A person’s desire to die cannot change the fact that their life is innocent. Matthew Lu, author of *On the Moral Wrongness of Suicide: Self Murder and Euthanasia*, puts it like this: “The state of innocence must be guarded at all costs; otherwise, morality itself loses meaning.” How could we be convinced that a person’s desire for death could be greater than that person’s state of innocence?

Another argument against the sanctity of life reinforces individual rights. A favorite argument is having the right to die, but a rights-based argument is simply not capable of

holding the topic's ethical weight. Life's value will always precede human rights; because if life isn't valued, then why should anybody respect humans' rights? We deserve our rights because of life's inherent value. This argument is dismissible due to the importance of the value of life.

Assisted suicide and euthanasia jeopardize our most treasured right: the right to live and to have our lives be of value. Very strong arguments for complete autonomy exist, but can be contradicted by an argument of ethics and justice. The right to die is disproved by exploring the contesting rationale, which is preserving innocence and having true compassion and reverence for human life.

This essay is based upon a self-written and performed speech. It was an argumentative piece on why mercy killing is unethical. I won gold at the WIAA State Competition and First-Team All-Conference for my school's forensics team. As a Christian, I believe that all life is treasurable and deserves to be protected. The lives we are given are not only ours to live but also are the times of grace God gives us. No such life should be taken for granted, and thus must be defended.

Works Cited

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