

A crime of compassion

[Law](#), [Crime](#)



In my opinion, taking a life away is a sin and a punishable crime, even if it is your own life. But, also if the person has to go through unbearable physical and emotional pain, due to a disease or an ailment, and death is his/her only salvation then euthanasia is acceptable. A Crime of Compassion is a nurse's point of view on euthanasia and who is more eligible than a nurse to talk about the suffering that a patient goes through. The essay is about a Mr. Mac who suffered from terminal lung cancer and Hetman was the nurse tending him at that time.

She writes about how much he suffered and how much that diseases changed him, both physically and mentally, for the worst. When Mac entered the hospital all he had was a bad cough; Hetman also explains that he was a cop and that he used to be very active (Hetman, 2002). Mac was diagnosed with lung cancer and he was treated for over a year. And in the period, Hetman got to know his family, his wife and three kids, better. Naturally, an emotional bond was built over time between Mac and Hetman. Throughout the essay, Hetman tries to show the level of pain and discomfort Mac was going through.

Over time, he lost weight, hair, bodily controls, sense of taste and many other things. He was just a shadow of the old person he used to be. On top of that, his whole body was covered with bed sores and every time he moved, even a little bit, it hurt him very much. Hetman also explained the effect it had on his family; his wife was suffering just as much he was but emotionally. Mac asked Hetman to let him go many times and he was in tears. These are the lines he said when they resuscitated him yet another time, " Mercy... Or God's sake, please let me go" (Hetman, 2002). Hetman

being a good nurse knew that she couldn't do it and that taking control of a person's death is a crime. In the starting of the essay, Hetman talks about her TV show experience. These are the words she used to descry here experience, " we resuscitated him 52 times in just one month. I refused to resuscitate him. I simply sat there and held his hand while he died" (Hetman, 2002). Watchman's decision was not an impulsive and reckless one; she followed the hospital protocol until the day she decided to let Mac go.

She took care of him for such a long period that his pain became a part of her; she couldn't get rid of It even when she was at home. She also tried to convince the physician to give out the " no code call", but Like many doctors he was reluctant. And anally, when Mac was lucid enough to beg Hetman for death, after his 52nd code, she decided to help him die peacefully, no matter what the consequences were. Hetman is an experienced nurse who sees patients suffering on a daily basis. If she really believed that letting Mr.. Mac die as the only solution, then it is safe to deem the decision credible.

Hetman is a nurse, her Job is to take care of the patient's needs and if the patient himself wanted to die then what Hetman did is both ethical and moral. Euthanasia is a very sensitive topic and obviously so. There are many people out here who think that what Hetman did was a horrible thing and I understand where they are coming from. Religion also thinks that taking a life away is a sin and our justice system agrees. There are no laws that support euthanasia and I think it is about time. There is no reason as to why a person can't die a dignified way if there is nothing else adoctorcan do to improve his state.

Only the state of Oregon has a law named 'The Death with Dignity Act' which enables Euthanasia. The death by Dignity Act is an act that is exclusive for Oregon. This act lets terminally ill patients to end their lives by voluntary administration of lethal drugs (OregonHealthAuthority). This act was first initiated by the citizens in 1994 and it was passed by a margin of 51%. Even though an injunction delayed it, in 1997 it was passed by the government with a 60% margin. This act got introduced in the state of Washington in 2008 and it became a law in 2009 (Washington State Department of Health).

In 2009, the Montana Supreme court agreed up on an act where a physician is allowed to prescribe a terminally ill patient with a lethal drug (State of Montana). Oregon's Dignity Act is a strictly laid act and it is so to stop misuse of the law. There are certain pre-conditions for a patient to be eligible for this act such as: he/she should be above 18 years in age, they have to be a resident of Oregon, they have to be mentally sound to make this decision and they have to be diagnosed with a terminally illness that will lead to death in six months.

The physician that is currently foreseeing the patient can give the drug, but only if he is willing to. The participation of the doctor is completely voluntary and the patient must find a willing physician to go through this. Another important aspect is that only the patient can request for this, his family cannot do this on their behalf. The process that follows after a request is a well organized one. First the patient has to make two oral requests to the physician with each separated by at least 15 days.

Then he has to make a written request asking for the same thing and it should be signed by two witnesses, where one of them must be other than a family member. Then the attending and consulting physicians must agree on the diagnosis and they also must confirm the patient's physiological condition. If everything checks well then they can administer the patient with the drug after the end of the waiting period. The patient can back off from the request any time he/she ay want to. In conclusion, the Dignity Act is a step forward where medical laws are concerned.