

# Assisted euthanasia with focus on terry schiavo's case research paper sample

[Life](#), [Friendship](#)



This is a research paper that aims at reviewing Mrs. Terry Schiav case. It considers the views of a number of people who are familiar with Mrs. T. Schiav's case. This included a friend of mine and our local hospital administrator. Their views and opinions are employed to write up a recommendation and finally a resolution concerning the ethical issues that were highlighted during this case.

Terry Schiav was thirty seven years old when she had a sudden cardiac arrest. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Schindler. On further diagnosis, it was noted that she had abnormally low potassium levels. The medical cause of such a case of electrolyte imbalance has been established to be excessive drinking of fluids and in some cases self-induced vomiting. It had been reported that she had been consuming excess iced tea and was in constant fear of gaining weight. For the purpose of this paper, a friend of mine and hospital administrator were interviewed on their thoughts about the case.

My friend pointed out a number of issues that he felt were most outstanding to him. First of all, he felt that Terry had an unsolved body image problem. He thought that it was strange that at her age she still feared gaining weight, a thing that comes with age, especially in women. He pointed out that this may have been due to the presence of a stressor in her life. This stressor may have been her friends or husband. Whoever it was, they must have been taunting Terry about her appearance. To add on that, he said that the doctor who had examined the cause of Terry's inability to be fertile had handled the matter unethically. Had the doctor done a thorough job, he or she might have noted that Terry had a bulimic condition. At that time,

measures to help Terry would have been applicable. However, my friend blamed society for selling an image of what was acceptable about how a woman's physical appearance. This image may have driven Terry to push herself too much to remain small bodied. This led to her self-induced vomiting and excessive consumption of iced tea. She may have thought that this would help her, but in the end, it led to her death and caused her loved ones emotional and financial losses.

He also commented on the fact that Mr. Schiav did not exhibit commitment to Terry as he had already started another family. Also, the fact that he was the sole inheritor of Terry's estate in case she died also made it hard to tell why he wanted Terry to be off life support. However, my friend strongly felt that Terry's husband had the right to decide when to take Terry out of life support. Despite the fact that her parents were acting out of love, Terry had ceased being their responsibility when she turned eighteen. Terry and her husband were legally bound during her adult life by their marriage certificate. Whether to take her off life support or not was his decision to make.

The local hospital administrator also had a number of things to say. In her opinion, every medical procedure that could help Terry was carried out in the rehabilitation center her husband took her to in 1991. According to him, this went to show that most of Terry's brain was non-functional at the moment. He also noted that this was Terry's second year of being non-responsive. It was still an early period for her case, if she had been meant to recover, this would have been it. She pointed out to me that since Terry's brain was not functional and was also not showing any signs of recovering, trying to keep

her alive was irrational. If Terry's parents had sought emotional counsel from a psychologist, maybe they would have come to terms with their loss early enough to avoid the many law suits and emotional strain everyone involved underwent. However, she understood where Terry's parents' opinion was coming from. It must have been hard for them to lose their daughter the manner in which it had happened.

## **Recommendation**

The issue in this case was whether to take Terry off life support or not. Both Terry's husband and parents were doing what they thought was ethically right for Terry. The sad truth is that none of them really knew what that was and they were guessing what Terry would have wanted. All this drama erupted due to the fact that Terry did not have a living will stating what should have been done in case of such an unfortunate event. If people would take note of that and have living wills, it would be much easier for their loved ones to handle such emergencies without conflicts.

## **References:**

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