

# [Euthanasia as a mercy killing](https://assignbuster.com/euthanasia-as-a-mercy-killing/)

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﻿Euthanasia as a Mercy Killing
Euthanasia, or assisted suicide and also known mercy killing, has been a divisive issue for many centuries. Advocates of the procedure believe that a person’s freedoms of choice they enjoy during their life also apply to decisions made at the end of their life. They also maintain that the same humans should be afforded the same humane treatment given to animals that are severely injured or terminally ill. Opponents of euthanasia say that is a ‘ slippery slope’ that could allow occurrences of coerced suicide by family members of the elderly pressuring them not to delay their inevitable death for financial purposes. Additionally, the procedure would decrease the need for developing new medicines designed to extend life. Those who are against euthanasia for religious reasons claim that it is ‘ playing God’ and therefore immoral. Health care professionals allude to the Hippocratic Oath which prevents them from performing the procedure.
The word ‘ euthanasia’ is derived from Greek origin. The literal meaning is “ good death.” Writers during the 1700’s in England wrote of euthanasia being the preferential technique by which to “ die well” (“ Definition”, 2007). Euthanasia describes a circumstance where patient who is terminally ill is given a fatal dose of medicine, is taken off a life-support system or is allowed to pass away without active involvement such as resuscitation. A doctor’s participation in the process could be by inserting a needle intravenously into the terminally ill patient who themselves activate a switch that dispenses the fatal dose or to prescribe a fatal dosage of drugs with the specific intent of ending the life.
The regrettable reality is that most people in America die a ‘ bad death.’ The majority of Americans (53 percent) consider euthanasia to be ethical and compassionate. 69 percent say they would vote for the euthanasia legalization according to a 2004 Gallup Poll. (“ Public Grapples”, 2004). Those who oppose doctor-assisted euthanasia often cite the possibility for doctor abuse. However, recent laws in Oregon and Britain prove that reasonable laws can be crafted that prevent patient abuses and puts emphasis on the value of life. For example, legislation could be written which requires the authorization of two physicians and a psychologist in addition to a practical waiting period, a family members’ endorsement in writing and allows for certain medical conditions.
The euthanasia debate contains impassioned and compelling arguments on both sides of the discussion. Advocates of euthanasia want to diminish needless suffering. Numerous diseases such as cancer are responsible for causing patients to linger while experiencing an excruciatingly painful existence. Witnessing a loved one as they slowing degenerate from a disease that is consuming their vital organs is very difficult for family members. To watch them suffer even after medication is administered is excruciating for the loved ones while the patient must also feel the physical pain. This physically and emotionally torturous circumstance occurs every day in every hospital yet serves no purpose. To most people, it is unthinkable to allow anyone especially a cherished grandmother, for example, who has cared for others most of her life to endure the few six months of life in constant pain, not capable of controlling bodily functions, vomiting, coughing, convulsing, etc. If grandma were the family pet, most everyone would agree that ‘ putting her to sleep’ would be the only humane choice. Jack Kevorkian was well-known as a martyr for assisting the dying to experience a dignified death, reducing as much of the physical and emotional pain as possible. Euthanasia should not have to be debated and certainly not illegal. When an animal is suffering and dying society does the ‘ humane thing’ by allowing it a ‘ good death.’ People deserve to be treated humanely as well.
Works Cited
“ Definition of Euthanasia.” Medicine. net. (2007). July 10, 2011 “ Public Grapples with Legality, Morality of Euthanasia.” The Gallup Poll. (July 13, 2004). July 10, 2011