

# Euthanasia: pro and contra

Sociology, Communication



## **ROGERIAN ARGUMENT**

Is it right to “justifiably kill” people? This is the question that is commonly associated with euthanasia. However, the dilemma is much deeper than this simple question. There are two types of euthanasia, passive and active. Passive euthanasia is the process of allowing a patient to die on their own without medication or direct action of killing them. This is completely legal. On the contrary, there is active euthanasia—the direct action. With active euthanasia the caretakers will take it into their own hands to kill the patient quickly and humanely (for example, a lethal injection). This course of action is illegal. Many people, like you, will argue that there is no difference between active and passive euthanasia and either procedure is still killing. I agree with this argument. But, as I have stated, the argument still goes deeper than the idea of just killing. Euthanasia is a battle over quantity and quality, both through the process of allowing someone one to die and the process of keeping them alive.

In your argument you bring up many valid points and give good examples to your opinion. I can understand that you believe that by inducing passive euthanasia allows the patient to suffer for a prolonged period of time before they die. Also, that in some cases they will suffer more. You also believe that allowing someone to suffer and to wait until their time has come is worse than just laying them down when they decide that they no longer want to suffer. In fact, by doing passive euthanasia one might be going against the patient’s wishes because they may suffer more.

You also bring up a good point about babies born with Down's Syndrome. You explain how babies born with Down's Syndrome can sometimes have other medical problems that are apparent at birth. These congenital problems are normally taken care of without the consent of the parents. However, in such cases where the baby does have Down's Syndrome, the doctors will ask the parents if they would rather the doctors did nothing and allow the baby to die. It becomes evident that the baby's congenital problem is not the reason why the doctor is asking this. The doctor is asking because the baby has Down's Syndrome. I recognize that you see this as the doctors abusing the act of euthanasia and partaking in malpractice with it.

Additionally, you put up a well constructed argument with the cases of Smith and Jones. You made it clear through your rhetoric that in each case the action should have been deemed immoral. You explained how there is no distinction between killing someone and allowing them to die. The act of killing was to represent active euthanasia and the act of watching was to represent passive euthanasia. Even though these actions seem to be morally equal, they were judged differently. This displays a huge fallacy in the judicial system. Clearly, each man should have been charged with equal consequences to their actions because allowing someone to die is killing them to die, especially when you have the means to save them. As I said, this argument was well put together and researched.

I can see that you believe that doctors see sickly patients as a burden and that they use euthanasia to free themselves of such a burden. Whether they were to perform active or passive euthanasia, they are inhumanely killing an

individual. Each form of euthanasia is immoral because it cannot be performed under moral standards. You believe that doctors will do so in order to make their jobs easier.

I must admit that there is a great difference in our opinions on this matter. Although there may be some doctors out there who would use euthanasia as such an excuse, I believe there is more who are trying to do what is best for the patient. In spite of everything, doctors are generally trained to sustain this quality of life and not to hinder it. Personally, I believe that the general population of doctors follows their training to sustain this quality.

Actually, there are aspects of the argument that we have in common. I also believe that this wrong to do and it most certainly does not help the view of euthanasia. By doctors doing things like this it makes it look like euthanasia is an excuse to cover up " mistakes." The fact of the matter is that the means by which euthanasia has been instated to be used. The rules are too simple and leave a lot of leeway for loopholes. Doctors will take advantage of these loopholes (in such cases) whenever possible it seems. Obviously, we both can agree that there should be a punishment for this and it should never be allowed.

You showed in your first example that the quality of life is greater than the quantity. You did this by purposing that a lethal injection would suffice as compared to just allowing the patient to die. Although you may be against as euthanasia as a whole you can at least agree that active euthanasia is more civil than passive euthanasia in many circumstances. With passive euthanasia you are just allowing the patient to pass on without aid and suffer

until their sickness devours the body. This is clearly less humane than giving someone an actual end to their suffering. With passive euthanasia one is basically saying, " Alright, we are taking you off your meds and are going to watch you deteriorate." The idea that passive euthanasia is legal over active is absurd. Even more so, the laws of appropriate euthanasia are poorly constructed and clearly not extensively thought through.

So I am going to propose an idea to you. As you can see we have similar views on this topic but defend different sides. Much to our surprise, we have discovered that our reason for differing is exactly the same. We both believe that dying in exemption of suffering is much greater than in accordance with it. From this we can perhaps agree that active euthanasia should be legalized and used more often. By performing active euthanasia one can preserve the quality of the life in an individual by allowing them to pass with little suffering if any at all. Additionally, this quality may diminish if one were to keep treating a patient and never " pull the plug. Simply put, euthanasia should not be used in the way it has been used; it should not be as a means to fix a problem, yet a means to allow someone to pass at the highest point of their happiness as possible.

My proposition is straightforward and uncomplicated. Since both of us believe that the quality of life is more important than the quantity of it we should petition to change the law of euthanasia. We should argue, together, that it needs to become air-tight and not have so much wiggle room for loopholes. Moreover, active euthanasia should be legalized to allow patients to die in a state where they will be most happy. I do not believe we should

completely abolish passive euthanasia, however. Passive euthanasia should be used when the patient allows the doctor to do so. Additionally, we should argue that there should be severe punishment to doctors who abuse the law of euthanasia. Euthanasia should never be used to make the life of a living person easier by killing someone because that is, under most circumstances, murder.