Analysis of euthanasia- levinas essay

The conflict of euthanasia and assisted suicide has been an ongoing debate between philosophers.

The main issue regarding this matter is, whether it is morally permissible in certain circumstances to allow one to choose if and how they want to end their life. Heidegger supports euthanasia and assisted suicide from the standpoint that in order to be in authentic existence one must be able to select one's own manner of death. As specified in Some Heideggerian Reflections on Euthanasia by Nuyen, " Voluntary euthanasia is thus a wholly authentic activity, an exemplification par excellence of Heidegger's resoluteness." 1 In contrary, Levinas supports an ethical position that death is not a choice or something that can be anticipated. When faced with the choice of death, the ethical responsibility of ' I' converts into the unethical irresponsibility.

As stated by Levinas, " The idea of taking control of one's death, determining its timing, as if it is one's right or an expression of authenticity, is metaphysically, logically and ethically nonsensical." 2 While Both Heidegger's perspective and Levinas' perspective attempt to explain death, Heidegger's perspective focuses on ' Dasein' and what constitutes an authentic death versus an authentic death; whereas, Levinas' perspective focuses on the ' I' and the ' Other' to explain an ethical death versus an unethical death. The Heideggerian philosophical perspective is based entirely on the Being of human beings, coining a technological term called ' Dasein'. Dasein differs from other beings in the sense that it questions its own identity, and its life is something, which must concern itself.

Dasein literally can be translated to ' Being-there', where a human is a being in the world, attempting to understand and express this understanding in the world. Further expanding on this tenet Nuyen proclaims, " Dasein understands its ' throwness' into the world (its past), its ' falling' in the world (its present), and its ' existence' or…