

Philosophy paper critical analysis

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In this paper, I will discuss euthanasia and demonstrate its immoral implications using J. Gay-Williams' essay, "The Wrongfulness of Euthanasia"; more specifically his attempt to show the wrongfulness of euthanasia through an argument from nature. I believe that the argument is valid and presents a very good approach for those who are opposed to euthanasia. Below is my effort to summarize this view by placing it in the standard argument format. Argument from Nature) If there is a person in a situation, where a natural instinct compels them to take action, it is morally wrong to intentionally suppress that instinct. 2) In all euthanasia cases, there is a doctor in a situation where their patient's natural instinct compels them to survive. 3) Therefore, in all euthanasia cases, it is morally wrong for a doctor to intentionally suppress their patient's natural instinct to survive. The argument above is derived from part one of Gay-Williams essay. He begins his discussion of the argument from nature by asserting that each person "has a natural inclination to continue living".

He displays this furthermore by explaining, that everything about the composition of a human organism has been designed to have a conditioned reaction that makes "the continuation of life a natural goal." It is by this rationale he claims, "that euthanasia sets us against our own nature." In order to further demonstrate the argument's validity and good quality, I will explain how it follows all the rules of a good argument. The rules are as follows: 1) all the premises are reasonable 2) the conclusion follows 3) the argument does not beg the question.

Premise one may be better explained in and of itself through an example having to do with a general, natural instinct. One example could be when

someone is in a situation in which their family is put in harm's way when an intruder with sinister motives enters their house. It is a natural reaction to protect that which belongs to you (in this situation your property-your "territory" and your blood- your family). To stand idly by and witness attacks upon your family and home, without in any way, making an effort to stop the attacks, would require an intentional suppression of a natural instinct.

Premise two becomes more specific by stating that in euthanasia cases throughout, a doctor is always in a situation in which their patient's natural instincts compel them (for as we saw in the quotes from J. Gay-Williams, a human's conditioned response in all situations-based on the make-up of the body-is to function in a way that would always enable (or lean towards) continuity.) to survive. The way to show that this argument follows rule number two is to reveal its logical pattern.) If there is P (a person in a situation), where Q (a natural instinct compels them to take an action), it is R (morally wrong to intentionally suppress that instinct). 2) In all S (euthanasia cases), there is P (a doctor in a situation), where Q (their patient's natural instinct compels them to survive). 3) Therefore, in all S (euthanasia cases), it is R (morally wrong for a doctor to intentionally suppress their patient's natural instinct to survive). I think that this argument is good. The way in which Gay-Williams went about presenting his case was commendable.

He did make brief reference to there being a God, and that human beings are supposed to act as "trustee of his body", and in taking a life or our own, humans are acting against him. However, it seemed as though he was keeping in mind that many people might not share the same beliefs as he, and therefore needed to have rational arguments against euthanasia which

pertained in no way to faith or religion. This was the admirable thing, because it seems that many times religious people, although trying to argue an important idea, seem to have no rational approach and end up “ Bible-thumping”, and coming across as ignorant.

One objection someone might have to this argument would be to premise two. Someone might say that the premise is generalizing when it says “ all euthanasia cases”, because in certain cases of euthanasia a person might not be being kept alive through natural means any longer (such as: artificial life support); therefore, it can't be said that the person's natural instinct is to survive because without life support the person would have already died thus following the natural instinct towards death. My response to this objection would be the following: in my interpretation of J.

Gay-Williams argument from nature, I used “ In all euthanasia cases, there is a doctor is in a situation where their patient's natural instinct compels them to survive. ” As my second premise. And I must admit, that with this as the second premise, the argument is flawed as the objector revealed. However, if I were to make the second premise not end with “ natural instinct compels them to survive” and rather put “ natural instinct compels them” then it wouldn't be a flawed argument. This is because it would merely be adding a twist on the argument, which Gay-Williams did not come right out and say, but it is implied.

This twist that is implied is that it is morally wrong to go against any natural human instinct, and this includes the natural instinct of dying. Maybe then, the problem of removing someone or not removing someone from life

support would no longer be the problem, due to the fact that artificial life support is preventing some people from allowing their bodies to follow the natural instinct to die. Now of course this seems a bit morbid, and I'm not at all suggesting that modern technology and what it can do to save lives is morally wrong, I'm simply showing what other routes this argument from nature implies.