



Bioethics Review

The Scholl Institute of Bioethics is a nonprofit, Judeo-Christian organization that addresses bioethical issues including euthanasia, physician-assisted-suicide, the withholding or withdrawing of food and water from non-dying patients, brain death, organ transplantation, genetic engineering, and the rights of disabled or mentally ill persons.

First we killed our unborn children. Now we're killing our own parents

by Jonathon van Maren, Communications Director, Canadian Center for Bio-Ethical Reform

We don't kill problems anymore. We kill people, and pretend that it is the same thing.

I noted some time ago that the concept of "dying with dignity" is rapidly becoming "killing with impunity," as our culture finds all sorts of excuses to assist "inconvenient" people in leaving Planet Earth.

There is a similarity to abortion, here, too—our technologically advanced culture is no longer looking for compassionate and ethical solutions to the complex, tragic, and often heartbreaking circumstances. Instead, we offer the solution that Darkness always has: Death, Disability, dependence, difficult life circumstances: a suction aspirator, a lethal injection, a bloody set of forceps. And the "problem," as it were, is solved.

We don't kill problems anymore. We kill people, and pretend that it is the same thing.

There is something chilling about the intimacy of these killings. As Gregg Cunningham noted, "Ours is the first generation that, having demanded the right to kill its children through elective abortion, is now demanding the right to kill its parents through doctorassisted suicide." The closest of human relationships are rupturing under the sheer weight of the selfishness and narcissism of the Me Generation.

The great poet Dylan Thomas is famous for urging his dying father to fight on, to keep breathing, to live longer:

*Do not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.*

Such sentiment is not present among the advocates of euthanasia. In fact, the tagline "dying with dignity" is starting to very much sound like, "Now don't make a fuss, off with you now." Consider this story in The Daily Mail from a few days ago:

An elderly husband and wife have announced their plans to die in the world's first 'couple' euthanasia - despite neither of them being terminally ill.

We once lived in a culture that drafted laws to protect ³dependents²: the very young, the very old, and the disabled. This was done in recognition of the fact that a human being's increased vulnerability correspondingly heightens our moral responsibility to that human being.

Instead the pair fear loneliness if the other one dies first from natural causes.

Identified only by their first names, Francis, 89, and Anne, 86, they have the support of their three adult children who say they would be unable to care for either parent if they became widowed.

The children have even gone so far as to find a practitioner willing to carry out the double killings on the grounds

that the couple's mental anguish constituted the unbearable suffering needed to legally justify euthanasia.

... The couple's daughter has remarked that her parents are talking about their deaths as eagerly as if they were planning a holiday.

John Paul [their son] said the double euthanasia of his parents was the 'best solution'.

'If one of them should die, who would remain would be so sad and totally dependent on us,' he said. 'It would be impossible for us to come here every day, take care of our father or our mother.'

I wonder why no one considers the fact that the reason some elderly parents may experience "mental anguish" is that they have come to the sickening realization that their

grown children would rather find an executioner to dispatch them than take on the responsibility of caring for their parents. Imagine the thoughts of a mother realizing that the child she fed and rocked to sleep, played with and sang to, would rather have her killed than care for her: that their relationship really does have a price.

This is why some scenes in the HBO euthanasia documentary *How To Die In Oregon* are so chilling. In one scene, an elderly father explains to the interviewer why he has procured death drugs that he plans to take in case of severe health problems. "I don't want to be a burden," he explains while his adult daughter nods approvingly, "It's the decent thing to do. For once in my life I'll do something decent."

No argument from the daughter.

If we decide in North America to embrace euthanasia and "assisted suicide," we will not be able to unring this bell. Just as with abortion and other manifestations of the Culture of Death, the Sexual Revolutionaries work hard to use heart-rending and emotional outlier examples to drive us to, once again, legislate from the exception.

But for once, we have to start asking ourselves if we really want to further enable our medical community to kill rather than heal. We have to ask ourselves if the easy option of dispatching "burdensome" people will not impact our incentive to advance in palliative care. And we have to stop simply asking how someone in severe pain might respond to such a legal "service," and start asking how greedy children watching "their" inheritance going towards taking proper care of their parents.

And to the pro-life movement, those fighting to hold back the forces of the Culture of Death—the words of Dylan Thomas have a message for us, too.

Do not go gentle into that good night...

Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

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<https://www.lifesitenews.com/blogs/first-we-killed-our-unbornchildren.-now-were-killing-our-own-parents>

WARNINGS: CHALLENGES in 2015

Here are two of the anti-life challenges that we will be facing in the upcoming months/years.

PROMOTING POLST: A pro-euthanasia group is touring California promoting the POLST form. The goal of the POLST form is to have a person sign it and then it will "travel" with them wherever they are. See [SchollBioethics.org](http://www.schollbioethics.org/wpcontent/uploads/2013/03/new_medical_care.pdf): http://www.schollbioethics.org/wpcontent/uploads/2013/03/new_medical_care.pdf or [EthicalNurses.org](http://www.ethicalnurses.org/archived_newsletter_articles/POLST.htm): http://www.ethicalnurses.org/archived_newsletter_articles/POLST.htm.

PASSING PHYSICIAN ASSISTED SUICIDE IN

CALIFORNIA: Compassion and Choices (formerly Hemlock) is preparing to promote Physician Assisted Suicide again in California. Whether it will come as legislation or an initiative is yet to be seen. There will be numerous stories in the media, on television and in the theaters pushing PAS. Recently there was a story about a young woman in Oregon who is asking for PAS because of a brain tumor. The story is very convincing and heart rendering. Be aware of these deceptive maneuverings. Scholl has very qualified speakers to tackle all these hard issues. Please contact our speaker coordinator, Elizabeth, for more information. ehanink@aol.com or 310-671-4412.

The following comes from an October 1 story by Vicki Evans in *Catholic San Francisco*.

The state of California has passed some of the most permissive laws in the country on social issues including abortion, contraception coverage, and embryonic stem cell research. The one issue on which it has been unable to gain traction is physician assisted suicide, but it's not for lack of trying. In 2007, California's most recent assisted-suicide bill called the Compassionate Choices Act failed. This marked the sixth time since 1988 that assisted-suicide advocates have failed in their attempts to transform the crime of assisted suicide into a medical treatment in California.

There are reasons for their past lack of success. One is an effective coalition formed in the early 2000s called Californians Against Assisted Suicide, whose members include the California Catholic Conference, disability rights advocates, medical professionals and religious and civil rights organizations. Another is the fact that the history of the right-to-die movement is somewhat macabre. Compassion & Choices, a nationwide organization that has the dubious honor of being the leader in promoting "aid in dying" legislation is intent on providing it to Californians. Formerly called the Hemlock Society, Compassion & Choices is now trying to change its image from one of merchants of death to one of ... compassion and choices. Their motto: my life, my death, my choice.

Their online petition to "bring end-of-life choice to California" asks signers to declare, "We feel strongly that terminally ill, mentally competent adults should have the right to medication that they can use to achieve a peaceful death."

Expect the introduction of new assisted suicide legislation here in the not-too-distant future or a California ballot initiative in 2016.

Evans is respect life coordinator for the Archdiocese of San Francisco.