whose soul is functioning successfully because it is well guided by reason.

While these two claims are the core of eudaimonism, Aristotle's version is complicated by two factors. First, his argument in the central books of the *Nicomachean Ethics* seems intended to establish that the virtuous activity of the soul, which is the chief component of *eudaimonia*, is activity which expresses the moral virtues and is exemplified by political and active life. However, in Book X (1177a), Aristotle identifies *eudaimonia* not with the moral virtues but with the intellectual virtue of wisdom; Aristotle says that *eudaimonia* is contemplation of truth. Many commentators believe that it is possible to integrate these two accounts of *eudaimonia*; without some integration, Aristotle's first account would be eudaimonism only in the attenuated sense that it would identify *eudaimonia* with the intellectual virtue of wisdom. Second, in Book I, Aristotle raises the important issue of whether virtuous activity by itself is enough for *eudaimonia*; or whether other, external goods, e.g., friends and health, are constituents of *eudaimonia*. Most commentators take Aristotle to mean that, while virtuous activity is the chief constituent of *eudaimonia*, some external goods are also necessary.

It is over this last point that we can distinguish Stoic eudaimonism from that of Aristotle. Stoicism holds that virtue by itself is *eudaimonia*; this teaching leads to the Stoic doctrine that all other values besides virtue are indifferent to one's being *eudaimon*. Only virtue is good, advantageous, or useful. Health and friends are merely preferable, in the Stoic terminology—i.e., it is good if one has these sorts of things but they are not constituents of *eudaimonia*. Thus, Stoicism holds a strong version of eudaimonism, one that completely identifies virtue and happiness.

'Eudaimonism' is also used to describe subsequent moral theories which hold that virtue is partially or completely identical with happiness (understood as human flourishing). Since their notions of both virtue and flourishing are significantly different from those of the ancient Greeks, these subsequent theories (for example, those of Thomas Aquinas [1225?–1274] and of Spinoza [1632–1677]) are variations on a theme. For instance, Aquinas augments the moral virtues with the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity and holds that complete happiness is achieved only by contemplation of God in eternity (*Summa Theologiae*, First Part of the Second Part, Questions 1–3). For Spinoza, virtue is a God-like intuition of universal necessity; this intuition is blessedness and as such it restrains lust (*Ethics*, Part V). *See also*: Aristotle; Epicureanism; Excellence; Good, Theories of the; Plato; Pleasure; Stoicism; Virtue Ethics; Virtues.

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Richard D. Parry

Euthanasia *

The term euthanasia literally means "the good death of another." It can be lexically defined in at least three different ways. Without referring to the intention or necessary consequences of the act, it is often defined as "the act or method of painlessly inducing the death of a nonfetal sentient being." This characterization has the advantage of distinguishing acts of abortion and suicide from acts of euthanasia. It also allows the term to be correctly used, whether the death in question be for the patient's benefit or not. Arguably, the major advantage of this particular

* Marvin Kohl, Encyclopedia of Ethics, Lawrence C. Becker, Ed., New York: Garland, 1992, 335–339.

usage is that it allows us to distinguish between moral and immoral acts of euthanasia, and to place opportunistic and Nazi-like acts in the latter category.

'Euthanasia' is sometimes defined as "the act or method of directly causing or allowing the painless and quick death of a nonfetal being, so as to end suffering or an undesirable existence." However, the notion of "undesirable existence" introduces a plethora of difficulties. Conservative quality-of-life advocates tend to use "undesirable existence" to denote only those patients who are terminally ill. Moderates increase the range of reference by including those who are terminally ill, devoid or almost devoid of cognitive function, and suffering from intractable pain. Libertarians, on the other hand, typically use "undesirable existence" to refer to a very wide range of negative situations and believe that any competent individual has the right to choose the time, the place, and the manner of his/her own death. This disagreement may be symptomatic of the conceptual indeterminacy entailed by the notion of "undesirable existence," an openness or looseness that may be reduced by specifying clearer criteria.

Some analysts find the above definitions problematic. They suggest that an act which simply allows death to occur earlier than it medically need occur is neither an act of killing nor (strictly speaking) an act of euthanasia. They also maintain that it is not sufficient to merely intend the ending of suffering or an undesirable condition. Rather, they define 'euthanasia' as "the act or method of inducing as painless a death as possible, where the organism is acutely suffering or in an undesirable state, where the relief of the latter condition is the only or primary motive and where there is convincing evidence that the resulting death is a greater good or lesser evil for the recipient than the failure to actively intervene." Since euthanasia has been advocated by most of its champions chiefly as a means of reducing human misery, and more particularly as a way of maximizing kind or merciful treatment, there is a growing tendency to use the last definition; its necessary conditions are inducing as painless a death as is possible, the primacy of merciful intention, and convincing evidence of beneficent results.

There is also a corresponding distinction between voluntary and non-voluntary acts. Here again we find a narrower and a broader characterization. According to the narrower point of view, an act of euthanasia is held to be voluntary only if there is full disclosure and freely given consent by the intended recipient of the act. An act of euthanasia, from the broader perspective, is held to be voluntary only if it either is the result of the fully informed consent of the intended recipient, or, when the recipient is not mentally or physically free to choose (as in the case of permanent coma or other forms of genuine incompetence), if the closest relatives and/or legal representatives acting in the individual's behalf gives consent. The line between voluntary and involuntary is the crucial line in a society that values self-determination.

Moral Evaluation

Under the influence of what may broadly be called quality-of-life points of view, advocates of voluntary euthanasia have urged that morality and wisdom consist not in the pursuit of life but in the pursuit of a quality life and, conversely, that it may be desirable to end a life which is irreparably blasted by the most loathsome forms of disease or degradation. Advocates of voluntary euthanasia believe, in what seems to be a proto-theoretical way, that a credible moral theory has no genuine need to claim that life is always a good, death always an evil and, therefore, that the deliberate killing (or letting die) of an innocent human being is always wrong and impermissible. Despite great variety in the kinds of justifications offered, quality-of-life advocates do agree that voluntary euthanasia is sometimes excusable, permissible, virtuous, or obligatory. Indeed, the quality-of-life group might well be called Promethean, since they are hostile to the idea of just letting nature take its course; and they insist that we should consciously and intelligently control our own destiny. This Promethean perspective is grounded in moral rules like those of autonomy, freedom, or dignity—rules which typically prohibit deprivation of freedom, thereby encouraging individual control of one's own life and death plans.

At the heart of the quality-of-life position is a negative moral intuition and two positive theses.

The intuition is that existence is not always preferable to nonexistence. The first thesis is that life is a primary but not an absolute good and, therefore, that death may sometimes be a good. This, in part, means that the badness of death resides in the goodness of what it prevents as well as the goodness of what it ends. Similarly, the goodness of death resides in the badness of what it prevents as well as the badness of what it ends.

Quality-of-lifers also hold that judgments about the quality of life often can be correctly made and that these judgments provide part of the basis for rationally deciding whether or not to end a life. According to these advocates, there is convincing evidence that what human beings generally regard as a life of minimal quality is bound up with an individual's ability to satisfy certain kinds of reasonable desires or goals and that there is a difference—a vital logical, if not moral difference—between a life devoid of any quality, one almost devoid of quality, and one that lies just on the negative side of the scale.

The contrary point of view is put forward with considerable vigor by anti-quality-of-life advocates or vitalists who argue that talk about worthwhile or worthless, meaningful or meaningless, quality or non-quality life generates formidable problems. Here too we find a diversity of philosophical and moral positions—ranging from the view that euthanasia is immoral and unlawful because it is intrinsically evil and entails a direct violation of the right to life and of God's supreme domination over His creatures, to the view that euthanasia is almost always wrongful because sentience, even painful experience, is almost always preferable to a permanent state of non-sentience. The primary moral intuition here is that sentient existence is almost always preferable to nonexistence.

A more plausible objection is that if euthanasia were permitted it would, in fact, lead to a general decline in respect for human life. In its most exaggerated form the claim is that permitting a single instance of euthanasia would very probably lead to a slide, that is, dangerous misuse. This objection is an application of what is variously called the "slippery slope" or "wedge" argument.

Used in this context, the argument raises the question of whether or not the idea or practice of killing is contagious—that is, whether or not a person, group, or society exposed to actual killing, or the idea of sanctioned killing, universalizes and thereby extends this domain. It is tempting initially to reply by saying that there is overwhelming evidence indicating that human beings compartmentalize their experience and ideas; and that it is only when the normal process of compartmentalization breaks down that one encounters difficulties. In other words, in the normal process of generalization there are constraints, and one of the more important constraints is that the process is limited by the concept of 'same kind or same class of objects.' For example, if we crush an insect and believe this to be a permissible act, we do not conclude that it is permissible to kill all living things. We conclude only that it is permissible to kill that kind of insect, or at most, all kinds of insects. Similarly, if we are taught to kill Nazis and the criteria for a Nazi and the circumstances of permissible killing are clearly spelled out, we do not kill all German nationals. We do not mistakenly generalize even further and kill all Europeans. Nor do we proceed either in fact or in mind to kill all human beings. Again, there is convincing evidence that the killing of human beings in "X" situations does not necessarily lead to the killing of human beings in non-"X" situations. Or, to be more concrete, the merciful killing of patients who want to die does not necessarily lead to the killing of the unwanted or the extermination of the human species.

Fairness requires that we grant there are rational grounds for distinguishing between permissible and impermissible killing and that the practice of euthanasia does not necessarily lead to undesirable difficulties. Escalation of killing is not foreordained and it is not impossible to develop an institutional system that strictly enforces reasonably clear criteria for what constitutes permissible acts of euthanasia. Nonetheless, there are significant difficulties. For one thing, the principle that "the direct and deliberate killing of innocent persons is never morally permissible" is thereby abrogated. Strictly speaking, this is an "open slope" and not a "slippery slope" argument. Yet it is not at all clear what sort of evidence is available for believing that utilitarian alternatives or other deontological

principles would be as effective as the simple principle of prohibiting the killing of the innocent. A second objection is that if the practice of voluntary euthanasia depends upon holding all sorts of lines, if human beings are naturally disposed to bring about death by violating rules that are not self-regarding, and if there are tremendous forces in our society for scaling back costs, then the probability of abuse is real and much greater than quality-of-life advocates suspect. *See also*: Abortion; Life and Death; Life, Right to; Medical Ethics; Rights; Suicide.

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Marvin Kohl

Evil

According to early versions of the Greek myth, when Pandora opened the forbidden jar she let loose all (and only) the evils in the world. What was in the jar? What was the world like before she opened it? To say that something is evil is partly to ascribe a degree of intensity to it; if it is evil, then it is worse than merely bad. But the worseness is not just a matter of more of the same, as in the case in which one toothache is more painful than another. To call a situation evil is to suggest that it is the intentional outcome of some agency. If the world is not just bad but evil, then it is appropriate to seek out perpetrators of or agents responsible for the evil(s). Many theistic religions, in particular, confront the *problem of evil:* How can there be evil in a world created and sustained by God?

Types and Causes of Evil. Discussions of the problem of evil typically extend the notion of evil to cover all cases of badness, since God is typically thought to be an agent permissively responsible, at a minimum, for everything in the world. The major types of evil—the contents of Pandora's jar—would thus include:

Physical suffering of any kind in a sentient being, either human or animal.

Mental anguish and mental disability of various kinds, such as grief, despair, dementia, and insanity.

Vicious attitudes, even if they find no expression in action, such as envy, greed, and prejudice.

Character traits or dispositions in agents to cause suffering or to fail to respond to the suffering of others, such as cruelty, selfishness, callousness, and cowardice.

Events, actions, and omissions that bring about any of the evils above, even if the events, actions, or omissions are not bad in themselves.

Actions and omissions bad in themselves, even if they do not cause suffering, such as lying and failing to perform duties.

It is common practice to sort the causes of evil into two major kinds.

Natural evils bring about any of the types of evil listed above in virtue of the operation of the laws of nature on sentient beings. The Lisbon Earthquake (1755; 10,000–100,000 estimated fatalities) is an example of a large-scale natural evil; an earthquake of similar force in an uninhabited area of Alaska is not. Natural evils can be large in scale (earthquakes, floods, plagues) or small (one's falling off a stepladder).

Moral evils cause suffering in virtue of the activities of responsible agents. Robbery, rape, and slander are examples, as are neglect and negligence. The boundary between natural and moral evils is not always clear. One presumes that being attacked by an animal is a natural evil, but it may be harder to say whether smoking that leads to lung cancer is, on balance, a natural or a moral evil. One version of the problem of evil maintains that since all evils are at least permitted by God, all evils fundamentally are moral evils.

The Problem of Evil Defined. Most theists want to hold the following quintet of beliefs: (1) God exists. (2) God is omniscient. (3) God is omnipotent. (4) God is perfectly good. (5) There are instances of evil in the world. It is hard to see how all the beliefs can be true, especially in light of the apparent truisms that (a) if God is omniscient, then he knows about all the evil in the world; (b) if God is omnipotent, then he is able to prevent or eliminate all the evil in the world; and (c) if God is perfectly good, then he wants to