

PHIL 20203 – Death and Dying
Prof. Rhoda

Fourth Paper – The Morality of Physician-Assisted Suicide and Active Voluntary Euthanasia

Format: Length *at least 3 full* pages, but *no more than 5* pages. 12 pt Times Roman. 1" margins. Double-spaced throughout. (Also, no vapid introductions! Dive right into the topic.)

References: Citations should be given for any material or ideas that you derive from course texts, my PowerPoint notes, or outside sources. Place citations in the text, formatted as follows:

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|----------------------------------|---|
| (Feldman, ##) | – for Feldman (where ‘##’ is replaced with the page range) |
| (DFB, ##) | – for Dworkin, Frey, and Bok |
| (Aquinas, ST II-II, q. 64, a. 5) | – for Aquinas |
| (Hume, ##) | – for Hume (use the pagination from the version I emailed to you) |
| (PP, date) | – for course PowerPoint notes |

Don’t quote excessively. Where possible, paraphrase. Include a bibliography.

Due Date: Friday, May 6 *by 5:00 pm*. You must submit *both* a hardcopy and a digital copy (MS Word format). Email the latter to me at rhoda.1@nd.edu. Hardcopies can be dropped off in the mailbox outside my office (Malloy 327).

Topic: Which of Bok’s three positions (A, B, or C) do you consider to be the most defensible and why?

Description: In DFB, pp. 85–90, Sissela Bok develops a nice typology of the main positions on the morality of physician-assisted suicide (PAS) and active voluntary euthanasia (AVE). There are various considerations for and against each of these positions, which she labels A, B, and C. Note that A, B, and C concern not just the abstract morality of PAS and AVE, but the legalization and concrete implementation of such.

In your paper I want you to defend *one* of these positions by (1) *briefly* describing the three positions, (2) giving clear moral and/or public policy reasons for what you think is the best position, (3) responding to what you take to be the *single* strongest objection coming from each of the other two positions, and (4) outlining how your favored position should be implemented in practice (e.g., what kinds of restrictions or safeguards ought to be in place?).

Note that moral arguments need to appeal to moral principles (e.g., autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, justice, Golden Rule, etc.), whereas public policy arguments can appeal to purely practical considerations like resource limitations (time, money, manpower, etc.), the cost of disruption to existing practices, human error, noncompliance, etc.