

# Death Be Not Proud

A Discussion of Physician-Assisted Suicide

## St. John's Learner's Exchange

### I. Introduction

- A. Format
- B. Tone
- C. The State of the Question in Canada

### II. Terms

- 1. Active v. Passive Euthanasia
- 2. Voluntary v. Involuntary Euthanasia
- 3. Physician-Assisted Suicide (PAS)

### III. In Favour of PAS

- A. Recap: The Viewpoint of Dr. Ellen Weaver
- B. Core Idea: We must respect the autonomy of individuals to choose what is best for their life as long as said choice does not harm another.
  - 1. Auto → Greek for 'self' / Nomos → Greek 'custom or law'
  - 2. John Steward Mill's "Harm Principle" as the Check on Autonomy

### IV. In Protest of PAS

#### A. Making the Case Against PAS in the Public Square - 5 Points

'Nobody has the monopoly on rationality in the debate about Physician-Assisted suicide.'

- 1. (1) The legalization of PAS will likely result in an increase of the practice. Increase results in normalization, which in turn is to be avoided.
- 2. (2) The legalization of PAS stands to undermine an esteem for and protection of a healthy vision of individual autonomy
- 3. (3) The legalization and proliferation of PAS threatens to sabotage one of the great achievements/virtues of the western medical tradition.
- 4. (4) PAS is not necessarily of palliative care is properly prioritized, funded, and administered.
- 5. (5) The inclination towards PAS can be altered by the presence of purpose and hope, so long as they are grounded in a broadened apprehension of human worth.