

# Euthanasia



# Definitions of Euthanasia

**Euthanasia**: *the intentional killing by act or omission of a dependent human being for his or her alleged benefit.*

- **Voluntary euthanasia**: *When the person who is killed has requested to be killed.*
- **Non-voluntary**: *When the person who is killed made no request and gave no consent.*
- **Assisted suicide**: *Someone provides an individual with the information, guidance, and means to take his or her own life with the intention that they will be used for this purpose*

# Laws around the world

- There are few countries around the world in which euthanasia is legal.
- There are just 3 countries in Europe where it is: Belgium, Netherlands and Switzerland.

# What is the law in Britain at the moment?

- At present, all forms of euthanasia are illegal in this country.
- Suicide is legal but assisted suicide is not.
- This is to dissuade people as this is not morally accepted in this country.

# Human Rights

These are the rights which each individual has and that are relevant to the case of euthanasia.

In the European convention on human rights:



Article 2, protection on life



Article 3, freedom from inhuman treatment

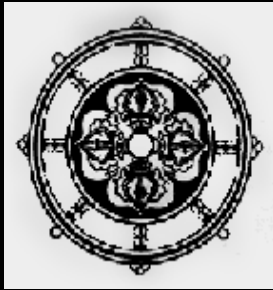
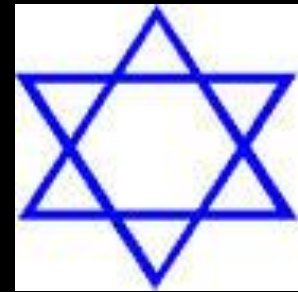


Article 5, right to liberty and security of person



Article 6, the right to a fair public hearing.

# Religious Views

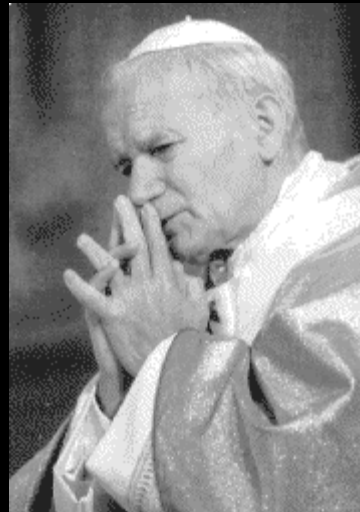


# Christianity: the arguments against euthanasia

- ✝ Life is a gift from God that should not be destroyed.
- ✝ One of the 10 Commandments is : “*Thou shall not kill*”.
- ✝ God is in everyone and every living thing. If you harm a living thing, you harm God.

***“Euthanasia is a grave violation of the law of God, since it is the deliberate and morally unacceptable killing of a human person.”***

Pope John Paul II



# Christianity: the argument for euthanasia

✝ Christians respect all living things, so if someone wants to end their life that wish should also be respected.

# Hindu beliefs on euthanasia

- ॐ Anyone who helps someone to die would be damaging their own and the other person's karma.
- ॐ Euthanasia goes against the belief of Ahimsa.
- ॐ Ending the life of someone going through great pain is helping them and therefore fulfils a Hindu's moral obligations.

# Euthanasia- the Buddhist view

- ❁ Voluntary euthanasia is wrong, as it shows that the person's mind is in a bad state.
- ❁ Meditation and pain-killing drugs help a person to achieve a state where they are not in mental pain.
- ❁ Only if you have achieved enlightenment is euthanasia approved of.

# Muslim Beliefs

- ☾★ All life is given by Allah, so it is sacred.
- ☾★ Only Allah can choose when a life will end.

***“And no person can ever die except by Allah's leave and at an appointed term.”***

***Qur'an 3.145***

***“Do not take life, which Allah made sacred, other than in the course of justice.”***

***Qur'an 17.33***

# What do Jews think about euthanasia?

- ✧ The preservation of human life is one of the supreme moral values.
- ✧ Anything which shortens life is forbidden.
- ✧ Saving someone from pain is not a reason to kill them.
- ✧ Active euthanasia is murder.

***"...The message of Judaism is that one must struggle until the last breath of life. Until the last moment, one has to live and rejoice and give thanks to the Creator ..."***

**Dr. Rachamim Melamed-Cohen**

# Sikh teachings on euthanasia

- ★ Sikhs have a high respect for life.
- ★ The timing of birth and death should be left in God's hands.

# Real Life Examples: Diane Pretty



- ↳ Suffered from motor neurone disease.
- ↳ She was incapable of ending her life due to her illness.
- ↳ She wanted her husband to help her die but could have faced 14 years in jail.
- ↳ She went to the High Court in England but her plea was rejected.
- ↳ She went to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. She was rejected here as well as it was against human rights.
- ↳ She died on the 11<sup>th</sup> May in 2002 of natural causes.

# Turning Off Life Support Machines

- ☠ Turning off a person's life-support machine can often be non-voluntary euthanasia.
- ☠ The person may be brain dead or incapable of functioning properly if kept alive.
- ☠ In this instance the decision is often made by doctors and family.
- ☠ This practice is legal in Great Britain.
- ☠ It can be requested on wills and living wills.
  
- ☠ Are there other purposes to this type of non-voluntary euthanasia, though?

# Real Life Examples: Laura Sadler



Nurse Sandy Harper  
in BBC's "Holby City"

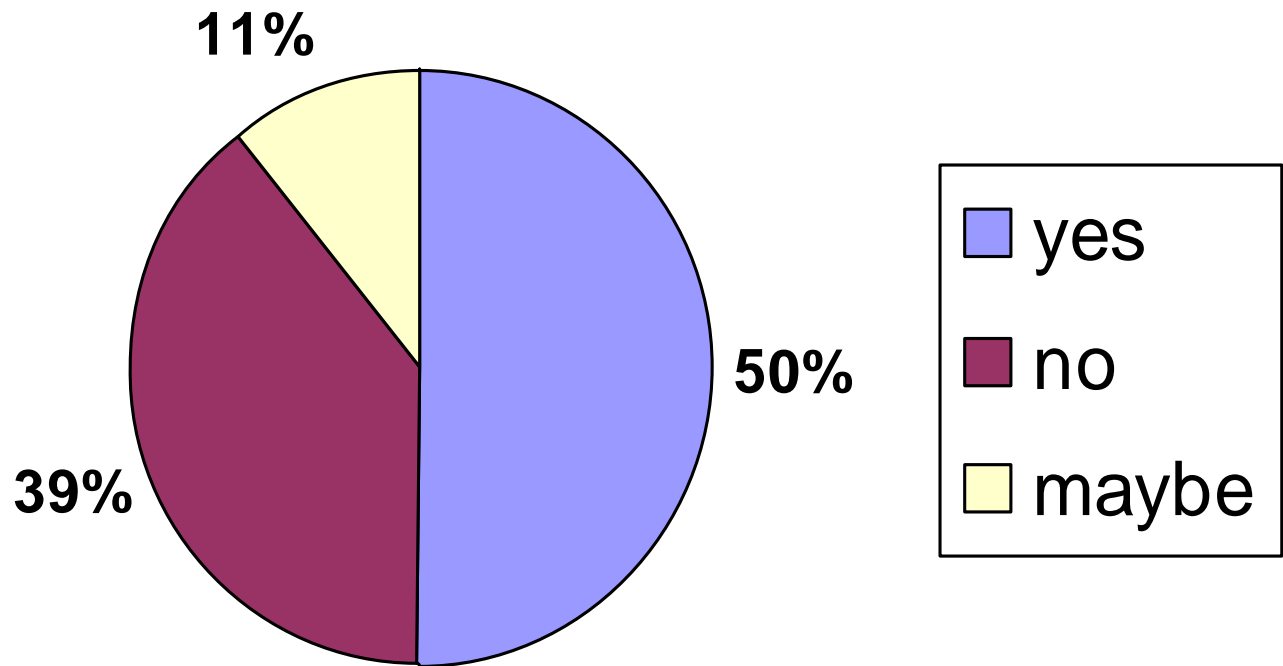
- ▣ Laura Sadler lived on a life support machine for 5 days.
- ▣ She was in intensive care during those days. She suffered severe head injuries; she was classified brain-dead.
- ▣ Her family made the decision to turn the life support machine off on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2003.
- ▣ She was only 22.

# What do doctors think of euthanasia?

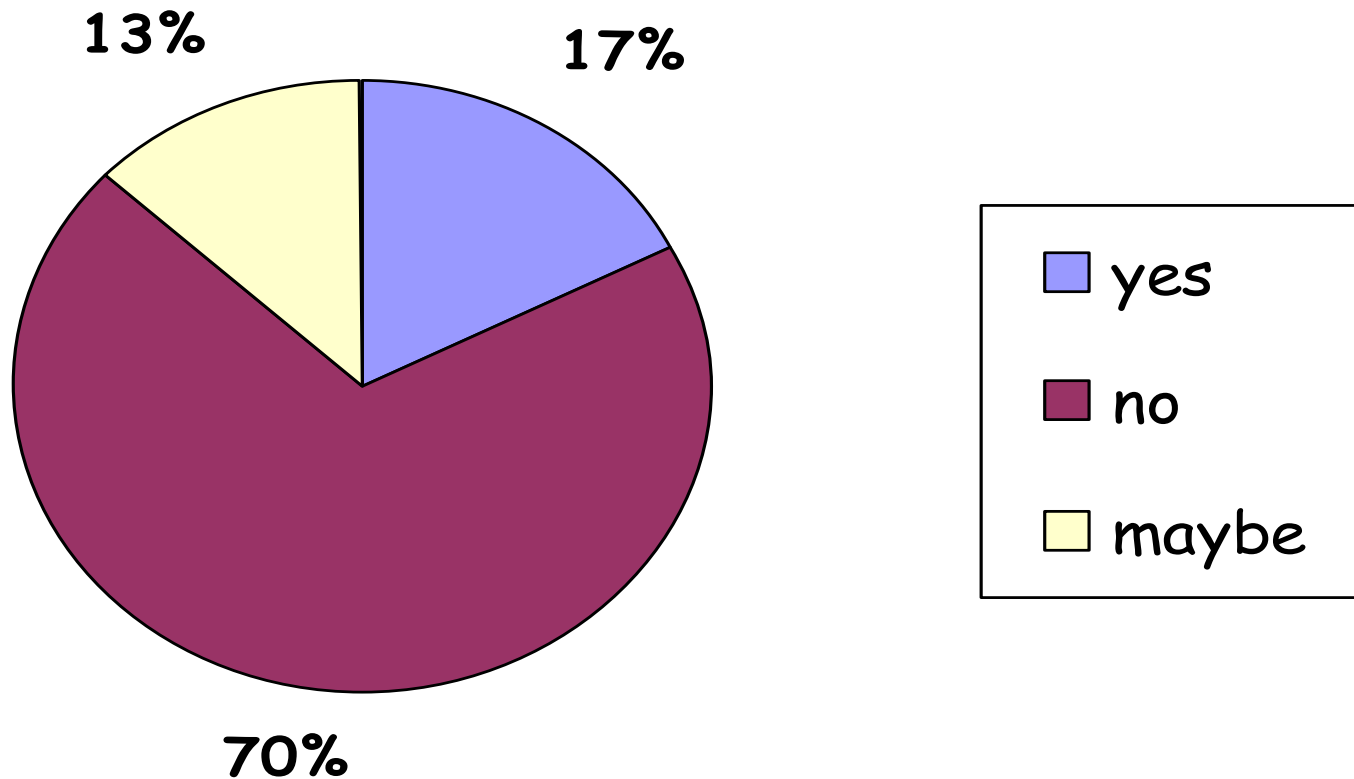
Two thirds of doctors are against the legalisation of euthanasia and physician assisted suicide.

- 💣 Only 34% of the 3,700 doctors asked supported euthanasia – compared to 82% of the general public.
- 💣 Only 35% think they should be allowed to give their patients the means to kill themselves.

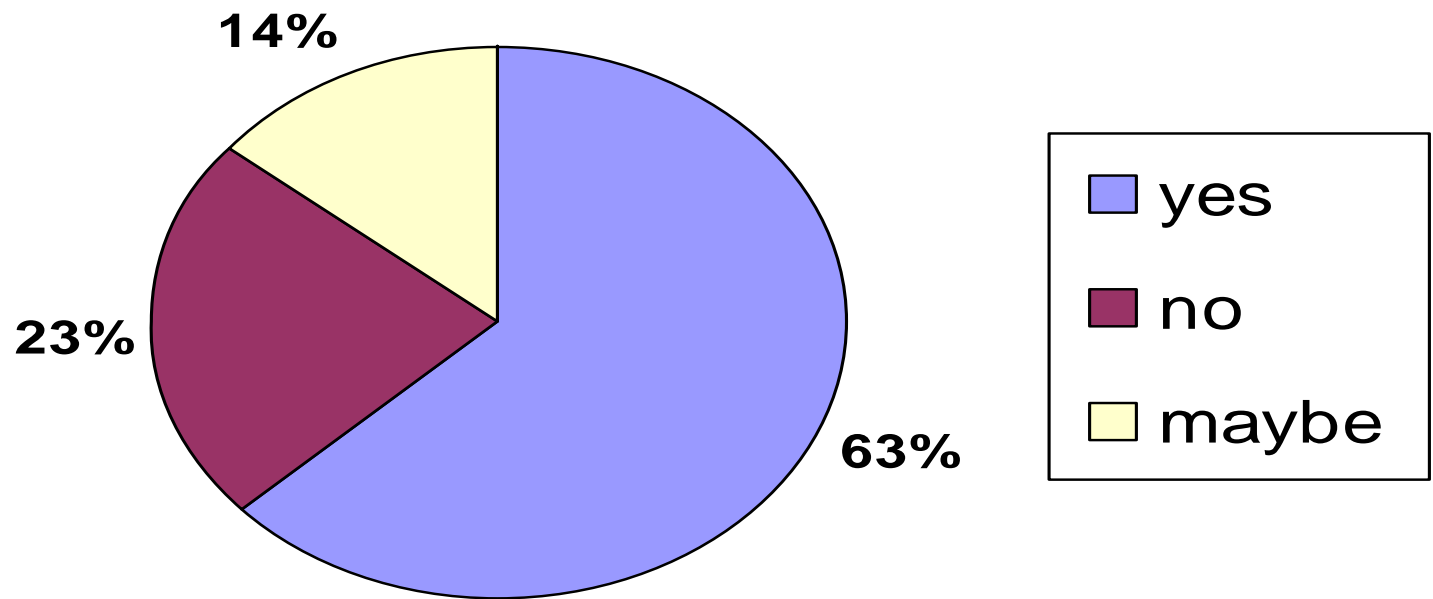
# Is Euthanasia Suicide?



# Are Those Who Commit It Murderers?



# Should Euthanasia Be Legalised?



# Cases In The Media That You Might Know

On television:

- Dot and Ethel in “EastEnders”.



# The Consequences



# Consequences of Euthanasia

- The majority of bereaved family and friends who have lost loved ones through the means of euthanasia are able to cope with grief and post-traumatic stress reactions better, in comparison to those who die due to their illness.
- However, an unnatural death is able to cause severe grief reaction amongst those close.
- Family members in euthanasia cases have the opportunity to say goodbye, whereas this is very rare in suicide cases.

# Summing up

- Laws

- Yes under certain circumstances in Netherlands, Belgium and Switzerland.
- No in most places including England.

- Religions

- Mostly against because all life is sacred.

- Other forms of euthanasia

- Life support machines, D.N.R.'s, refusing medication, abortion.

# Could you?

- If a close friend or family member was suffering and wanted to die, could you help them?

**“do not fear death so much,  
but rather the  
inadequate life.”**

Bertolt Brecht (1898 - 1956)

**“It is better to die on your feet than live on your  
knees.”**

*- Emiliano Zapata*

**“as it is with a play, so it is with life—  
what matters is not how long the  
acting lasts, but how good it is.”**

Seneca ~ Roman Tragedy Poet