

Callahan on Voluntary Active Euthanasia

A is an act-token of voluntary active euthanasia (VAE) =df. *A* is the intentional killing of a patient by “direct” action (such as the administering of a lethal injection) for the purpose of alleviating the patient’s suffering (or some other good) – and *A* is performed with the patient’s consent.

Callahan’s Main Argument vs. VAE:
A person’s right to life is non-waivable.

“How do we make the moral move from my right of self-determination to some doctor’s right to kill me—from *my* right to *his* right? ... Is our right to life just like a piece of property, to be given away or alienated if the price (happiness, relief of suffering) is right? ... The idea that we can waive our right to life, and then give to another the power to take that life, requires a justification yet to be provided” (Daniel Callahan, *WSDRA*).

VAE =df. Voluntary Active euthanasia.

1. If act-tokens of the type, VAE, are (other things equal) morally right then persons can waive their right to life.
2. It is not the case that persons can waive their right to life.
3. Therefore, it is not the case that act-tokens of the type, VAE are (other things equal) morally right. (MT)

Explain Premise 1.

Explain Premise 2.

Evaluation of the argument.