

# Euthanasia: What It is and Why It's So Controversial

By: Ben Turrano

Euthanasia is by definition, "a pleasant and pain free death, a mercy killing". A death that although inevitable, is assisted in its arrival. People suffering from incurable and often painful diseases choose to end their lives when they feel that they can no longer be productive and while they still have all their mental faculties intact. In this article I will explore the reasons for and against euthanasia. I will begin with the reasons for this act.

To watch a person, a friend or especially a family member suffer from an incurable disease and slowly degenerate into nothing more than a shadow of a human being, we must question ourselves whether this is moral and ethical not to help this person end their suffering if they so desire. After all don't we humans often "put to sleep" the beloved family pet when the time when its suffering has no end, and don't we also shoot dying farm animals to shorten their misery and pain? We call this humane treatment, then is it not safe to assume that to prolong a life, a dog, a cat, a horse, or a human, we are doing something inhumane? Indeed these questions have plagued society since the days of the ancient Greeks, and some cultures have even developed certain customs and rights of passage to aid the sick and the dying. For example, the North American Eskimos used to have a ritual in which (usually an elderly person), was removed of all burdens and responsibilities when the time of their death was believed to be approaching. They then were put on an ice float or small iceberg and were sent out into the ocean, where they were believed to be "taken from their hardships by the gods". The Native Americans

## Dr. Frankel's "Being Gay..."

By: Nancy Costa

A topic on the minds' of many people, "Being Gay In Today's Society", was presented by Dr. Carl Frankel to a crowd of over one hundred students at 7:00 p.m., January 27 in the South Hall Lobby. Dr. Frankel, a biology professor for sixteen years at the Penn State-Hazleton Campus, spoke in an open question and answer format addressing the following topics: The process of "coming out," gays having children, why people are gay, gays in the military, "parental acceptance"

also had a similar custom which involved an elderly person, believing that they had lived a full life and their death was near, would bid farewell to their family members and friends and go out into the wilderness to die. These are only two examples of cultures who believed that integrity and usefulness meant everything to the lives of its people. Most of these people wanted to die while they still retained their honor and their strength so that the living would remember a whole person as opposed to a frail whisper of a person.

There are two kinds of euthanasia, which are known as active and passive euthanasia. Active euthanasia is best described as direct intervention in the prolonging of a life, a direct administration of a lethal dose of medication with or without a patient's consent, or a mercy killing as is the case with "putting something to sleep". Passive euthanasia is more commonly known as "pulling the plug" or to be more specific: the discontinuity of all extraordinary means of preserving life. This passive form is said to be more legal, moral, and ethical in its action. Both forms of euthanasia have the same result though --- death.

Life, all life, has value and has the equal right to live, procreate, learn, and at such time as is appointed by nature and by God all life must die. Here begins the down side of euthanasia. We as human beings have unquestionable domination over all other lower animals. This has been set forth in the book of Genesis in the Bible. However, nowhere in any religious book does it state that humans may appoint themselves superior to all other life forms including to other human beings. We are by destiny supposed to be the caretakers of this precious Earth and of its inhabitants, which is probably why we can formulate solutions to problems overcome our faults and do many other

of his being gay, and the intriguing question of, "how did he know he was gay?"

Dr. Frankel has made this presentation for the past few years and does so to clarify any misinformation about homosexuals, as a form of therapy for himself, and to let anyone still "in the closet" know there is another homosexual on campus to talk to.

extraordinary things that other species cannot. Why then do we choose to kill each other in wars instead of combining our resources to avoid them; force our elderly to live in isolation for the rest of their days instead of making their final years as comfortable as possible; kill unborn children instead of bringing another life into this world who quite possibly might hold the answers to all these questions?

We cannot, in our arrogance, ask people to kill themselves or even aid them in the taking of their own lives simply because we judge their lives to be unproductive and devoid of value. I know of a woman, who last year at this time was told her cancer could be treated no further and would die within six months. What if her family coerced her into ending her life with dignity at that point rather than enduring the pain that was to come? What if a doctor, in the dark of night, and at the request of the patient's family, administered a lethal dose of medication to that patient with the hope that it would eliminate days of untold suffering? No one has the answers to these questions because that woman decided she wanted to live for a while longer and wanted to see the smiles on her grandchildren's faces a few more times and hear the birds chirping outside kitchen window a while longer. The pain and suffering came and went along with the six months, she endured all and I feel was rewarded with many more wonderful experiences she otherwise might not have seen. Today, over one year later, she is a living, breathing, valuable person who has even returned to her old job of school teaching. She is a model for all who feel that they cannot go on living with pain, and even for those of us who complain about rather infantile things like headaches and stuffy head colds.

## CONT. Dance

the dancers experienced exhaustion, nausea, and occasional hallucinations. Lori Conway, a Hazleton dancer, said she hallucinated that she heard her parents' voices and thought it was snowing. She said she could only see shadows. But no matter how strange it was, she added that she plans to do it again next year.

The marathon came to an end with a final line dance. The crowd roared during the dance and during the final countdown. And then they sat.

Because we cannot see our future, we cannot deny ourselves the possibility of experiencing laughter, love, happiness, and satisfaction. It is illogical to end a life that is not completed. It would be like destroying your car simply because it has a flat tire or a spot of rust. Yes it will, eventually, stop functioning but who knows exactly when? Not I, not a doctor, not anyone!

## OCRA

By: Ben Williams

The Organization of Computer Related Activities (OCRA) will be staging a computer expo on Saturday, April 4. The occasion will take place in the university's gymnasium between 10 AM and 5 PM. The expo will gather regional computer establishments who will display and sell their computers and accessories to the public. Companies from the Wilks-Barre Scranton, Allentown, Tamaqua areas will be participating.

In other business:

--OCRA has recently published a notice of our expo in the latest edition of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Amateur Computer Club (NEPACC) newsletter.

--The club has located open office spaces and presently has the office in working order in South Hall, Room 200 (Boys' Stairwell).

--Elections for open leadership positions were held during the first week of March. The results are as follows: President--Eric Drumbor; Vice-President--Cris Deeter; Secretary--Rich Williams; Treasurer--Scott Lenker.

--For the last few weeks, OCRA has been helping the Collegian by organizing their system and programming.

--OCRA will be setting up a BBS system in our office. Anyone interested should contact our office at 450-3233.

--Computer disks will be on sale starting sometime in Fall.

--New members are always welcome. Our numbers continually grow with more students signing up every week.

Anyone interested should contact our office. Any questions about club requirements, responsibilities, or actives will be gladly answered by one of the members present.



Collegian Graphic Arts Bureau