

### **Views on the duty to die**

It is plausible that only certain kinds of people can have certain kinds of duties. E.g. maybe only police officers can have duties to arrest criminals, or only judges and juries can have duties to fairly consider evidence, etc. These people wouldn't *always* have this duty: it might only apply when they are in a courtroom, or know someone is a criminal, etc. But they (and only they) always *potentially* have this duty.

*Can potentially anyone have a duty to die?*

*If yes, why?*

*If no, then who can potentially have a duty to die?*

*When is there a duty to die? What considerations are relevant? (e.g. fairness (past fairness, future fairness), welfare (and whose welfare?))*

**An argument about the duty to die**

1. There is no intrinsic, morally relevant difference between killing and letting die.
  - This is Rachels' view, and most of you agreed with this.
  - Some non-intrinsic differences: killing is more certain to cause death, there is a more direct causal connection to death, and there is often a motivational difference
2. Killing is one of the most serious moral issues. So, if there is no intrinsic, morally relevant difference between killing and letting die, then there is no intrinsic, morally relevant difference between doing harm and allowing harm to happen.
3. If there is no intrinsic, morally relevant difference between doing harm and allowing harm to happen, then letting people suffer is not intrinsically morally different from causing them to suffer.
4. There is a duty to *triage* when others are suffering and resources are scarce: a duty to allocate resources to minimize the harm done / rights violated.
  - Failure to triage allows others to suffer unnecessarily, which is not intrinsically different from causing suffering yourself.
5. There is nothing intrinsically more wrong about harming ones' self versus harming another (and, plausibly, making yourself suffer is *less* wrong).
  - Making others suffer harms them, and can violate their right to autonomy.
  - Making one's self suffer does not violate one's right to autonomy, since it is one's own choice (Hardwig).
6. Thus, anyone can have a duty to die when resources are scarce and allocating resources to minimize harm requires dying.
  - This comes from the duty to engage in triage, and there is no difference between triage involving ones self and triage involving only others.
  - What about the non-intrinsic differences between killing and letting die?
    - Acting on the duty to die is not problematically motivated.
    - Does the certainty or directness of causal connection matter?