

Kevin R. Moreno

Flora S.

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Physician Assisted Suicide:

## Rhetorical Analysis on Faye Girish's Should Physician-Assisted suicide be legalized?

Death is inevitable, but do we ride it out until the bitter end or chose a quick and painless death? Many people are against the idea of physician-assisted suicide and others aren't such as Faye Girish writer of the article "Should Physician-Assisted Suicide Be Legalized?" Published in 1999 in Insight on the News, she argues that legalization of Physician-Assisted Suicide will allow those who wish to die a peaceful way to do so. Faye establishes the building of her credibility with questionable facts and statistics, great emotional appeal, and personal sources. However, throughout the essay several times she attempts to use pity to guilt people into agreeing with her argument, and doesn't cite her sources questioning her credibility and finally, her argument.

In the article, Faye initiates the subject at hand by announcing that making physician-assisted suicide legal will provide a "peaceful and wished-for death". Faye attempts to strengthen her argument by using a letter written by a dying patient example: "For us, hospice care was our choice. We, however, still had 'our way', also our choice, as 'our alternative' We were prepared. And the 'choice should be that of the patient and the family". Faye uses many other sources and

even another letter sent from a dying hospice patient to fill her readers with guilt and convince them that her argument is correct,

Throughout the piece, Faye utilizes a few personal sources, which are faulty, to fortify her appeal to ethos. As written in her article, a multiple sclerosis patient wrote to the Hemlock Society, a nonprofit organization seeking to help to help legalize euthanization. "I feel like I am just rotting away... if there is something that gives life meaning and purposes it is this: a peaceful end to a good life before the last part of it becomes even more hellish."

Building on to her ethos appeals, Faye uses powerful appeals to logos, with many facts and statistics and reasoned advancement of intentions. She points out facts about physician-assisted suicide:

"In Switzerland, where physician-assisted suicide is legal, about 120 people die annually with the help of medical assistance" This fact establishes and reinforces Faye's idea of physician-assisted suicide being legalized within the U.S. Faye continues with more statistics:

"In Canada, Australia, Great Britain and other parts of Europe show 60 to 80 percent support for legalization of assisted suicide is that people want to know they will have a way out if their suffering becomes too great. This statistic and a few others in her piece logically support her claim that people should always have a choice on how they bite the dust.

Along with sturdy logos appeals, Faye successfully makes an appeal to pathos at the start and end of her piece. Faye opens her article with the following "Don't make doctors criminals for helping people escape painful terminal illness". The idea she stimulated with her opening sentence tells us that doctors face challenges such as being called "criminals" for helping terminally ill people expire the way they wanted. The opening sentence of her essay was demanding and protective of the choices terminally ill patients should have on their lives and that

doctors shouldn't be blamed for doing their jobs. Faye's Goal is to make the reader feel guilt and sympathy towards patients dying in ways they don't approve of. "Doing so will result in readers concurring with her belief that physician-assisted suicide needs legalization in the U.S. These words help construct how important it is for a dying patient to have the choice, the freedom and the liberty of choosing how they leave this world.

Nevertheless, while bringing her piece to an end, Faye brought up two amazing points. Faye began discussing that people will resort to buying motel rooms and with the help of another have "a plastic bag on their heads, with a gun in their mouth or, worse, botching the job and winding up in worse shape and traumatizing their families". Faye also adds that people wouldn't result to such heinous acts if the law were legalized.

Though Faye opens her article by successfully convincing her readers how unjust it is for patients in U.S hospice care to not have a choice on the way they cease to exist. I feel like she never had the power to "seal the deal" throughout the entire article because she over uses pity to guilt people into agreeing with her argument too frequently rather than using more credible and reliable sources she even closes her essay with one of her pity filled quotes! Example: Ronald Dworkin said in *Life's Dominion*: "Making someone die in a way others approve, but he believes a horrifying contradiction of his life, is a devastating, odious form of tyranny". All in all, I believe this article is filled with more pity than the facts because when I finish reading it I feel guiltier about what people are saying rather than convinced I should side with her based on facts.