

Reading Questions for February 22

These questions cover an article by Winston Nesbitt called “Is Killing No Worse Than Letting Die?” and an article by Matthew Weaver titled “British conductor dies with wife at assisted suicide clinic.” The answers do not have to be turned in. You will probably have to read more than once to get the answers.

*Background:*

In his article, Nesbitt is responding to the article from Rachels we read last time, arguing that Rachels has made a crucial mistake that renders his key case unpersuasive. After reading this, we’ll turn to a particular case, this time of a couple who choose to end their lives at the same time.

*Questions:*

1. In the first couple of sections, Nesbitt gives some context that helps explain what Rachels is up to in offering his cases. In the first section, he introduces the difference thesis. What is the difference thesis? In the second section, Nesbitt explains why Rachels sets up cases the ways he does. Why does Rachels set them up this way?
2. In the third section, Nesbitt argues that Rachels’ cases fail to demonstrate Rachels’ conclusion. Why does Nesbitt think this? Is he right, why or why not?
3. What are Nesbitt’s main claims from the fourth section? Is he right in what he says there? Why or why not?
4. After reading the news article by Weaver, do you think euthanasia was morally acceptable in the case of Joan and Edward Downes? Why or why not?