

## Tilburg University

### The intricacies of euthanasia

Oei, T.I.

*Published in:*  
Abstracts XXII International Congress on Law and Mental Health

*Publication date:*  
1997

[Link to publication in Tilburg University Research Portal](#)

*Citation for published version (APA):*  
Oei, T. I. (1997). The intricacies of euthanasia. In *Abstracts XXII International Congress on Law and Mental Health* (pp. 30-31). Unknown Publisher.

#### General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal

#### Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

## The Intricacies of Euthanasia

XXIIe Congrès international de droit et de santé mentale

Tjoe I. Oei  
*Tilburg University*

Euthanasia is a personal existential dilemma of enormous and complex proportions. The present situation in the Netherlands regards the element of 'unbearable and extreme psychological suffering', as in the case of Chabot (as brought before the High Court), as an absolutely essential criterion for euthanasia. The discussion surrounding the question of euthanasia is not simply one of ticking off the various items on a check-list.

It is an 'abnormal' phenomenon, and until recently has never been regarded as an ethically acceptable and applicable procedure. The guiding principle has always been to safeguard the integrity of human life. The right to self-determination has never been an absolute one, and the decision of whether or not to apply euthanasia in any particular case can only be considered, and with the greatest possible care, when palliative care fails to relieve the patient's suffering, to within what for him/her are acceptable limits. This palliative care may, of course, also include existential and religious help. Ultimately it concerns not only the quality of life, but also the quality of decision-making. The Chabot case is a recent example of such a situation and will be discussed within the confines of the above-mentioned framework.