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Question 3 (Daniel Callahan)

The article titled "When Self-Determination Runs Amok" by Daniel Callahan explores the concept of active euthanasia, focusing on three key elements: Self-Determination, Killing and Allowing to Die, and Calculating the Consequences. Regarding Self-Determination, Callahan questions, "The doctor would have to decide on her own, whether the patient's life was 'no longer worth living.' But how could a doctor possibly know that or make such a judgment?" (Callahan, 358). This concern arises from the inherent challenge that the doctors face in accurately assessing the value of the patient's life. However, given the different types of suffering and how it varies, the doctor's ability to gauge the severity of the patient's well-being becomes very challenging. Callahan further draws parallels between dueling, euthanasia, and slavery, arguing that even with mutual consent, these actions were morally wrong. He states, "Considered from these angles, there are no good moral reasons to limit euthanasia once the principle of taking life for that purpose has been legitimated. If we really believe in self-determination, then any competent person should have a right to be killed by a doctor for any reason that suits him" (Callahan, 361). This links back to the initial point, highlighting the discrepancy in allowing competent individuals to choose assisted suicide while deeming those deemed incompetent as ineligible. The ethical implications of such distinctions raise concerns about potential biases in the healthcare system, especially if influenced by financial motives in the future, which makes me wonder if in the future healthcare professionals will lack passion, and only see the industry for what it is, which is a money printer.