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In Defense of the Weak and Powerless

A Thesis Submitted

To the Teacher and Students of Advanced Apologetics

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Introduction

The world has witnessed murders in larger numbers than the casualties of World War II and the Civil War combined, and people have permitted such crimes against humanity to continue for centuries, right under their noses. The killing of the innocent is perhaps the greatest atrocity, so why then is it mostly permissible by law? This genocide of humankind is known as abortion, and millions of lives are taken by such an act each year.

Such accusations are bold statements, but if it is true that life begins at conception, abortion must be murder. Abortion is accepted as right and just in the eyes of the law in today's society, and this should not be the case. Murder in society is only justified so as to protect one's right to defend themselves, and abortion does not fit under this category—terminating a pregnancy is not justified by the reasoning that the mother should be able to defend herself. If babies have the natural right to life and death, nobody else may infringe upon this right.

While proving that life begins at conception is the most essential piece of evidence to defend this thesis' validity, there are other factors that would prevent certain individuals from believing that abortion should be outlawed. For one, people who are for abortion would say that there is a difference between human life and personhood—fetuses may be alive, but they do not have the characteristics of a person. Later on in this thesis, the validity of the concept of “personhood” will be challenged, along with the idea that a woman should have the right to make choices for her own body. Next, this thesis addresses the challenging cases of rape, incest, and the life of the mother being in danger when it comes to reasons for having an abortion.

This thesis will come to a conclusion that can be derived solely from scientific evidence and pure logic, but it also includes biblical evidence, contextual support, data, and quotes to

provide additional validity. God's kingdom is put at risk with the increasing amount of abortions, and it is the job of the temporary rulers of His kingdom, humankind, to uphold His perfect standard. With the historical, biblical, scientific, and logical support of the thesis statement, there will be no denying that life begins at conception, thus abortion is murder.

What is Life?

The Biological vs Biblical Definition of a Life

The definition of a life is “a distinctive characteristic of a living organism from a dead organism or non-living thing, as specifically distinguished by the capacity to grow, metabolize, respond (to stimuli), adapt, and reproduce.”¹ When considering when life begins, it is important to realize that at every developing stage of the fetus, this definition remains accurate. When a sperm cell meets an egg, they form a completely individual, unique zygote made up of its own DNA unlike anyone else’s in the world. Life is different, intricate, and constantly growing and developing, which are characteristics that can be used to decipher who or what is alive.

The Bible is one of the best and most credible sources when searching for the truth about the start of life. From Genesis, all the way through Revelation, the disciples and other writers have given a clear definition of life through various verses. First of all, God speaks words of truth to David when he says:

For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.²

God is the author of life, and because of His power and full dominion over heaven and Earth, He has the ultimate authority. Speaking to David, God is portraying His mightiness, and because of His mighty rule over everything, He is the deciding factor when it comes to life or death. The Father knows His children even before conception, and He has given each and every one of them

¹ "Life." Biology Online. Accessed November 2018. <https://www.biology-online.org/dictionary/Life>.

² Psalm 139:13-16 ESV

a purpose and place in this world. God speaks to David in words of love and strength, for God has the power to know all of His children at conception when He breathes life in them. No single person is forgotten, and God knows His children from the beginning when He allows for them to exist.

Psalm 22, often referred to as the “Song of David”, is another description of the start of life, for it says, “Yet you are he who took me from the womb; you made me trust you at my mother's breasts. On you was I cast from my birth, and from my mother's womb you have been my God.”³ There is never a period of time in a person's life when God is not present—from the very beginning at conception, God has been the overarching ruler that will never cease to be present. This is further explained when God tells His people, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.”⁴ God is all-knowing and all-powerful, and there is no point in time where His dominion over life itself is taken away—even the smallest fetus in the world is submissive under the power and glory of God.

³ Psalm 22:9-10 ESV

⁴ Jeremiah 1:4-5 ESV

What is Freedom?

Natural Rights According to Thomas Aquinas

Natural rights are derived from human nature and the world; every person on this planet has them, and they stem from human morality. Humans were born with the ability to have reason and values concerning what is right and what is wrong. The idea of good and evil is not a lesson needed to be taught, for it is one's morality endowed in them by God that has allowed for them to make wise decisions, along with foolish ones. All humans have a natural tendency to sustain their lives and the rest of humankind, and people must be trusted with this ability. Due to the fact that humans are born as rational beings, it only makes sense that they would carry out this nature when making decisions about the sustainability of their lives. These ideas all stem from the Natural Law Theory by Saint Thomas Aquinas, which is derived from the concept of human morality and human nature. Aquinas, a Catholic philosopher and theologian of the 13th century, sets the foundation for the concept that one's natural right to do whatever they please, so long as the action does not harm anyone else, begins at the start of life.⁵

The Biblical Definition of Freedom

In the Bible, it is made clear that the path to true freedom is through Christ alone, for He rids His followers of the shackles of sin and death. Jesus says to the Jew who had believed in him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. They answered him, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, 'You will become free'?" Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not

⁵ Natural rights are limitless, but if an action threatens another's life, liberty, or property, the person does not have the right to do so.

remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”⁶

According to the Christian beliefs, freedom in Christ is the true gift of following Him, and one will never receive it unless it is through Him alone. Full freedom is granted upon the acceptance of Christ in one’s life, but humans are not controlled like robots before this—people can make their own decisions and choice on earth, but once life ends, true freedom will be revealed through God in Heaven.

The right to one’s body is not fully supported by the Bible because according to Christian teachings, the human body is a temple, and it should be protected according to God’s word, for it has been created in His image. In one of Paul’s many letters to the Corinthian church, he writes, “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.”⁷ Contrary to the popular view, someone’s body is not completely their own to make decisions upon—it belongs to the divine creator who made it. Any choice of the body that would harm His perfect creation would be directly interfering with biblical teachings, and would not be right in the eyes of God.

⁶ John 8:31-36 ESV

⁷ 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

What is Personhood?

One of the greatest controversies when debating about abortion is whether or not life and personhood are one and the same. If the two terms are equal, this would mean that the termination of a life is the same as the killing of a person, but if the words have different meanings, one must begin to consider how this would affect the abortion debate. According to one view by philosopher Mary Anne Warren⁸, there are five traits of personhood:

1. Consciousness and the capacity to feel pain
2. Reasoning
3. Self-motivated activity
4. The capacity to communicate
5. The presence of self-concepts and self-awareness⁹

Most people fall under these five characteristics, but placing these as the only traits of a person would leave out a large number of human beings: people that are fully brain dead, small children with little to no reasoning, people who are asleep, those with an inability to feel pain, and the severely retarded or demented. Someone who is asleep is unconscious, so does this make them any less of a person than when they are awake and aware? Similarly, the human brain is not fully developed until one reaches the age of twenty-five, so would killing a baby be less of a tragedy than killing a fully capable, rational, grown man? The entire concept of personhood must be speculated, for it is a term that imposes on the overarching idea of a life, and if proved to be any different, it could be a rational way to accept abortion to be appropriate.

⁸ Mary Anne Warren was a famous philosopher and writer on the topic of abortion in the late twentieth century, and she is regarded as a credible and reliable source for the pro-abortion argument.

⁹ Santa Clara University. "Ethics and Personhood." Sustainability - Office of the Provost - Santa Clara University. Accessed November 2018. <https://www.scu.edu/ethics/focus-areas/bioethics/resources/ethics-and-personhood/>.

Abortion in the Ancient World

Motives

Abortions have been practiced in pagan, Jewish, and Christian worlds since the time of Augustine, but even before this, abortions were common. The first known presence of abortion in history comes from the Ebers Papyrus, an ancient Egyptian medical text from the third millennium BCE, suggesting the termination of a fetus by the use of a plant-fiber tampon.¹⁰

After this concept became widely known, ancient places began to practice abortion with various motives in mind. Primarily, abortion was most common among the rich, but poor people were not strangers to the practice. The rich were not quick to have many offspring of which they would have to distribute their wealth, and the poor were unable or unwilling to support large families. Most of the time, a pregnant woman would be forced by her husband to terminate the pregnancy for various reasons, one of which being to conceal any illicit sexual activity.¹¹

Another motive behind having an abortion was to preserve “sex appeal”, for the women of the time did not enjoy the physical changes of being pregnant and believed that men would find them unattractive.¹² Furthermore, Plato and Aristotle thought that abortion was the correct way to control the population by family limitation, and this can be seen in the declining population of the Roman Empire in Augustus’ time.¹³ Finally, the inefficiency of contraception led to a rise in abortion as a solution.

¹⁰ Gorman, Michael J. *Abortion & the Early Church: Christian, Jewish & Pagan Attitudes in the Greco-Roman World*. Eugene, Or.: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1998, 14.

¹¹ In the ancient world, the presence of a patriarchal society was widely practiced, thus the reputation of the man was always held at utmost importance. Men forced women to terminate their pregnancies for various reasons, but no matter what the reason may be, the woman was always told to obey no matter what.

¹² Gorman, Michael J. *Abortion & the Early Church: Christian, Jewish & Pagan Attitudes in the Greco-Roman World*. Eugene, Or.: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1998, 15.

¹³ Ibid.

Methodology

In the ancient world, there were two main abortion techniques that were performed: chemical and mechanical.¹⁴ In order to destroy the fetus inside the womb, pessaries were used, according to the gynecologist Soranos of Ephesus.¹⁵ Additionally, poisons were taken by the woman to kill the fetus from the inside, burning any remains inside the womb. Harmful drugs and medicines were given as a quick fix to any regretful mothers, but unfortunately, most procedures resulted in the death of the mother. Women went to the extent of asking magicians for abortifacient “potions”, normally consisting of a mix of herbs, flowers, and animal parts that resulted in an undoubtedly useless remedy.¹⁶

While chemical procedures were popular, the mechanical methods occurred more often, and with more tragic endings. One of the most haunting methods was the practice of binding the stomach of the mother, squeezing the torso to the point of asphyxiation.¹⁷ If this did not work, however, there were plenty of other methods to physically remove the fetus from the womb of the mother, all of which required life-threatening tools. Tertullian describes one of the instruments as a “copper needle or spike”, while the other method required the hands and a hook.

¹⁸ The first method using a needle requires a tool to fully open the uterus, allowing for a needle to be inserted to poke at the live fetus. With a blade attached to the end of the needle, the fetus is scraped and dissected, first removing the limbs. Once most of the hanging parts of the fetus are easily removed, the remaining body is poked until it can be fully ripped out of the uterus in its entirety with a violent pull.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid, 16.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid, 17.

¹⁸ Ibid.

The second method that would be used regularly for a woman or her husband wanting to terminate their pregnancy included the use of two hands and a hook. First, the doctor would begin with the insert of two fingers into the woman's vagina, feeling for her uterus. Seconds later, the doctor would insert his whole right fist, reaching for the fetus. Once the perfect time came, the doctor would then insert a soft hook into the uterus, feeling for the position that the fetus was lying at. If it were laying on its side, the hook would be inserted into an eyeball or an ear, and at the same time, the doctor would insert his left hand to guide the fetus.¹⁹ If the fetus were to lay in any other position, the hook would grab around the neck or head to bend it in the way the doctor needed to pull the fetus out in one go.²⁰ If the fetus were to not budge, the doctor would proceed to insert both of his fists, violently grabbing and pulling the fetus from around the neck. Despite the fact that nearly all abortion procedures were fatal, these methods reoccurred during the time the Christian church was born.

¹⁹ Ibid, 18.

²⁰ Ibid.

Abortion in the Pagan World

Ancient Greece

The legality of the practice of abortion in the ancient Greek world is unclear, for there is only one source that may hint at any anti-abortion legislation. This particular source has been deemed unreliable due to the fact that it is incorrectly attributed to the Roman physician Galen of the second century A.D. The text reads that both Lycurgus²¹ and Solon²² prohibited abortion.²³ While this may have been true of ancient codes or laws, it is not a reliable statement; it incorrectly sums up the abortion practices in ancient Greek times. The truth of the matter is that in ancient Greek times, the exposure of newborns went unpunished, and was not deemed unlawful, thus abortion was most likely accepted by society.²⁴ If anything, the only concern of the matter would be regarding the safety of the mother and her husband, not the child itself.

As civilizations spread, non-Greek culture began to spread as well, presenting the concept of abortion as wrong and immoral.²⁵ In the Oath of Hippocrates, “[he swears] by Apollo Physician, by Asclepius, by Health, by Panacea, and by all the gods and goddesses, making them my witnesses, that... I will not give to a woman a pessary to cause abortion.”²⁶ Though it is unclear who wrote the Oath, the acceptance of it was carried to the Jews, Christians, and Arabs, along with Greek doctors who agreed not to terminate a pregnancy.

²¹ The ninth-century B.C. Spartan lawgiver

²² The sixth-century B.C. Athenian lawgiver

²³ Gorman, Michael J. *Abortion & the Early Church: Christian, Jewish & Pagan Attitudes in the Greco-Roman World*. Eugene, Or.: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1998, 19.

²⁴ *Ibid*, 20.

²⁵ Egyptian laws favoring the unborn child may have influenced Greek and Jewish law in Alexandria, although evidence for such influence is inconclusive.

²⁶ Gorman, Michael J. *Abortion & the Early Church: Christian, Jewish & Pagan Attitudes in the Greco-Roman World*. Eugene, Or.: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1998, 20.

While pro-life ideas began circling the ancient Greek culture of thought, Plato and Aristotle came in with ideas that were contrary to Christian beliefs. Plato commanded for women above the age of forty to have an abortion, for he believed strongly that a woman who was incapable of carrying and raising a child should not be able to have the child.²⁷ He also was concerned for the population of the State, promoting smaller families and abortion to control an overflow of people from occurring. Aristotle, on the other hand, believed in lawful and unlawful abortions.²⁸ While protection of the State and its population still remained important to Aristotle, he did not believe that abortion was completely necessary for this purpose. Instead, he believed it was necessary for circumstances involving deformities or child limitations.²⁹ In Aristotle's eyes, lawful abortions occur when the fetus has not developed its fetal organs. For women, this process was complete by the 90th day after conception. Unlawful abortions, on the other hand, occurred any time after the 90 days, and it is at this point that Aristotle believed life was formed.

Both Plato and Aristotle possessed views that were contrary to Christian belief and aligned with heretical and pagan views. Due to the fact that the exposure of newborns went unpunished and the teachings of Plato and Aristotle were widely heard, it is safe to assume that abortions were widespread and frequent in the ancient Greek world.³⁰ The fetus was hardly considered a life, and the lives of the mother and father were always placed at a higher value.

²⁷ Ibid, 21.

²⁸ Ibid, 22.

²⁹ The number of children at this time was limited to control population from getting too extensive.

³⁰ Gorman, Michael J. *Abortion & the Early Church: Christian, Jewish & Pagan Attitudes in the Greco-Roman World*. Eugene, Or.: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1998, 23.

The Roman Monarchy and Republic

It was during the time of the Roman Monarchy and Republic that abortion spread like a wildfire, being so commonly practiced that the population began to decline. While abortion was frequent, this did not mean that abortion was accepted as moral—abortion was actually considered to be an offense against the father of the aborted fetus.³¹ Due to the fact that men in a family were the stronghold, any threat to their power would be reason enough for the man to divorce his wife, according to Plutarch.³² The type of society at the time was a strict patriarchy where men dominated life as the leaders in everything besides childcare, cooking, cleaning, and other duties suitable for women only. The husbands had complete control over their families and asserted their dominance by having possession over everything. Men had the power to force their wives to have an abortion, for if the child was not their own, this could conceal any type of sexual immorality. Selling or killing the wife and kids was also common for husbands to do, and it went unpunished under Roman law. Everything changed, however, from 145-130 B.C., when adultery, divorce, and abortion skyrocketed.³³ In order to control the chaos, the Lex Cornelia was made to penalize murderers and poisoners, hoping to eliminate the State from this illegal activity.³⁴ As a result, women who took pessaries³⁵ as a form of abortion were punished, for they used illegal drugs to terminate pregnancies. This was a matter of drugs and other crime, not of life or death—the Romans were never concerned with the abortion procedure as a whole, for the law gave no rights to the unborn.

³¹ Ibid, 24.

³² Ibid, 25.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid, 26.

³⁵ Women took other forms of contraceptives to prevent the birth of their child, but pessaries were frowned upon because it infected the women with harsh drugs. The issue never revolved around the life of the child, but was rather a pang to the medicine men and irresponsible mothers.

The Roman Empire

In the Roman Empire, abortion flourished, and although both pagans and Christians attempted to limit them, no legislation was ever made to prevent the procedure from occurring.³⁶ At this time, everyone had abortions for different reasons. It was during the reign of Caesar Augustus that this frenzy of abortions began, and it only continued to grow. Augustus believed in having a sturdy family unit to benefit the State, thus straying away from a fully patriarchal society.³⁷ By taking away some of the power of the man and dividing it between a man and his wife, the families would be more stable, thus causing there to be a much more stable State as a whole. Augustus tried to combat celibacy by means of contraception and abortion, and no laws to limit the procedure were ever passed because there was the firm belief that life does not begin until the child is physically born from the mother's womb.³⁸ Any attempts to control abortions were crushed, and the Roman Empire became a place where fetuses were disregarded—a fetus is not a life until it takes its first breath.³⁹ Abortions also spread due to the new advancements in Gynecology as a medical practice, which provided for safer procedures that resulted in fewer women dying along the way. Furthermore, according to scholars, there were no punishments for a woman who had an abortion at the time, which only resulted in more women having them. In the Roman Empire, so long as the father approved, pessaries were not used, and the life of the mother was not threatened, abortions became a popular, acceptable medical procedure.

³⁶ Gorman, Michael J. *Abortion & the Early Church: Christian, Jewish & Pagan Attitudes in the Greco-Roman World*. Eugene, Or.: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1998, 27.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid, 28.

³⁹ This was the first implementation of this very modern idea that once a baby is physically born, it obtains the status of a living thing.

Abortion According to the Early Church Fathers

Tertullian

Tertullian is sometimes frowned upon when used as a source, for he was already half-way through his life before he became dedicated to the Church of Carthage—before this, Tertullian was a Pagan who indulged in shameful pleasures. Becoming a priest, however, changed the Church Father's life, and he spent the rest of his days proclaiming the truth and denying heresy. Tertullian was a firm believer that abortion was murder, and he made this quite clear in his letters and writings to the church and the people. In order to explain the significance and value of a fetus, Tertullian wrote:

Thus, you read the word of God, spoken to Jeremias: "Before I formed thee in the womb, I knew thee." If God forms us in the womb, He also breathes on us as He did in the beginning: "And God formed man and breathed into him the breath of life." Nor could God have known man in the womb unless he were a whole man. "And before thou camest forth from the womb, I sanctified thee." Was it, then, a dead body at that stage? Surely it was not, for "God is the God of the living and not the dead."⁴⁰

God has given each and every one of his children a purpose and a life, and He does so at the instance of conception. If God's breath formed man and gave him life in the womb, must not he be a full man of God at conception? Tertullian explained that this must be the case, for God cannot possibly breathe life into something that is dead—His children are made alive in the womb when they are sanctified.

Furthermore, Tertullian brought up the comparison of abortion and murder. The Early Church Father painted a picture of the tragic death of a fetus by saying:

In our case, murder being once for all forbidden, we may not destroy even the fetus in the womb, while as yet the human being derives blood from other parts of the body for its

⁴⁰ Feldman, David M. *Birth Control and Abortion in Jewish Law*. New York: Schocken Books, 1978, 54.

sustenance. To hinder a birth is merely a speedier man-killing; nor does it matter whether you take away a life that is born, or destroy one that is coming to the birth. That is a man which is going to be one; you have the fruit already in the seed.⁴¹

A fetus in the womb has its own separate blood and DNA from the mother, and the termination of any such thing is the ending of its life. Tertullian reasoned that despite the fact that the fetus is not fully developed, the killing of it is simply destroying the possibility of it ever being born; the fetus is already ordained to become a man or a woman at conception, thus the time at which the process of its development is terminated is insignificant.

Augustine of Hippo

This Early Church Father has high credibility, for he was a well-loved priest who eventually became the bishop of Hippo, and his teachings glorified God. Similar to the other Early Fathers, Augustine was completely against abortion. This is quite clear when he says:

At what time the infant begins to live in the womb: whether life exists in a latent form before it manifests itself in the motions of the living being. To deny that the young who are cut out limb by limb from the womb, lest if they were left there dead the mother should die too, have never been alive, seems too audacious. Now, from the time that a man begins to live, from that time it is possible for him to die. And if he die, wheresoever death may overtake him, I cannot discover on what principle he can be denied an interest in the resurrection of the dead.⁴²

Augustine's main point is that abortion is the denial of a life that could potentially be lived to the fullest. Life is taken from a child that could not choose for himself, and instead, his destiny is chosen for him by the mother. He also considered the brutality of the abortion procedure of the time and expressed that no one can deny the horrors and wrongs of the process in its entirety.

⁴¹ Noonan, John Thomas. *The Morality of Abortion: Legal and Historical Perspectives*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977, 22.

⁴² Ibid, 24.

Hippolytus

Hippolytus was an Early Church Father who, while controversial due to his withdrawal from the Roman community, still wrote about how various Christian heresies are traceable to false pagan philosophies. His stance on abortion was very strict, for he made it clear to those he wrote to that abortion is murder.

Women who were reputed to be believers began to take drugs to render themselves sterile, and to bind themselves tightly so as to expel what was being conceived, since they would not, on account of relatives and excess wealth, want to have a child by a slave or by any insignificant person. See, then, into what great impiety that lawless one has proceeded, by teaching adultery and murder at the same time!⁴³

Hippolytus referred to abortion as shameful, for most of the time it commits and allows for two sins: murder and adultery. He deemed abortion as selfish, for the woman or her husband are not willing to deal with what they have conceived—instead, they kill it to hide behind sinful ways.

⁴³ Ibid, 25.

The Early Birth Control

Birth control in ancient times was significantly different than how it is now, but developments were made that are still used today. In ancient Egypt, for example, women would mix honey, sodium carbonate and crocodile dung into a pessary to prevent their eggs from being fertilized.⁴⁴ Also, in ancient China, concubines were thought to have consumed lead and mercury to stop pregnancies, and this unfortunately led to horrible side effects, such as brain damage, sterility, and death.⁴⁵ Condoms also grew in popularity as European doctor Gabriel Fallopius recommended the use of linen to protect against a women's eggs being fertilized by a man's sperm.⁴⁶ Birth control methods were becoming more and more popular in the early 1800s, and new varieties were created every day. There came a point, however, when obscenity became an issue, and an American post inspector named Anthony Comstock began crusading against it.⁴⁷ Due to Comstock's influence, the Comstock Act was passed in 1873, and the spread of birth control ceased. For years, people were left without birth control methods, but when Margaret Sanger came along, this would all change. Sanger was a feminist who acted against the Comstock Act and challenged its validity, but for this, she was in trouble with the law and had to flee. By 1916, Sanger returned to open the first family-planning clinic in the U.S, only for it to be closed two weeks later.⁴⁸ Later, Sanger founded the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, and in 1937, "the American Medical Association officially recognized birth control as a legitimate part of doctors' practice."⁴⁹ Due to Sanger's insistent advocacy of birth control,

⁴⁴ "The Birth Control Pill: A History." Planned Parenthood. Accessed December 2018. https://www.plannedparenthood.org/files/1514/3518/7100/Pill_History_FactSheet.pdf.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

the funding from Katherine McCormick, and Pincus' synthetic used to suppress ovulation in animals, birth control rates skyrocketed. On May 9, 1960, the FDA approved Enovid, an oral contraceptive pill released by G.D. Searle and Company, and "by 1965, almost 6.5 million American women were on "The Pill," the oral contraceptives enduring vague nickname, which is thought to have stemmed from women requesting it from their doctors as discreetly as possible."

⁵⁰ After this, the birth control pill gained a significant popularity nationwide, and several women were using it to prevent getting pregnant. Even today, the birth control pill that Sanger advocated for is the most common form of contraceptive on the market.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

Historical Analysis: Concluding Thoughts

In order to fully grasp the idea of abortion, one must first become familiar with the term and what exactly it entails. By dissecting the true meaning behind the concept of life itself, the debate of whether or not abortion is murder becomes more relevant in today's society. Comprehending the concept of freedom is essential in order to refute the argument that a mother has an undeniable "choice" to have an abortion—a woman cannot make any decision about her body because it is God who created it, and it is God who has deemed her body as a temple. Additionally, the idea of personhood has recently arisen, and by assessing the faulty logic behind the word, one can begin to understand that the term is simply a cover-up to rationalize the termination of a life.

Before discussing the proof of the thesis, the reasoning behind why the topic has any significance today is necessary to know before moving forward, thus a full analysis of the pagan world is included in this thesis. The concept of abortion has been around for centuries, and for decades, the practice has been developing into a now "safe" procedure for all women who desire a choice over their own bodies. By analyzing the first abortions in history and the motives behind them, it becomes clear that a selfish initiative is always the primary case, whether it be to preserve "sex appeal" or to hide sexual immorality. The life of the fetus has rarely been put to question in the pagan world, for the heretical concept of life beginning at the first breath had been implemented along the way.

With a review of three major Early Church Fathers, the reader may begin to realize the importance of the topic, and how the concept of life beginning at conception makes absolute logical sense. From the very beginning of Tertullian, Augustine of Hippo, and Hippolytus' time,

abortion has been considered murder because it is the termination of a life. Coming from ancient writings that have been used by scholars for centuries, it is important to consider these credible sources.

The origin of abortion has been laid out for the reader to digest, and hopefully piece together. If the reader is not convinced of this thesis yet, this is not a bad thing; the historical review of abortion should set the foundation for the full proof in the next section. By relating and analyzing the trends of ancient times to the modern processes today, this thesis should give a full and in-depth understanding of abortion and why it is murder in all cases.

Life Begins at Conception

As discussed in the historical analysis of abortions, if life begins at conception, all abortions must then be murder. The notion of “conception”, therefore, must be discussed in depth, so as to prove the main point in the end. Biologically speaking, life begins when a particle or substance begins to grow and thrive with its particular functions. Therefore, a fetus, a being that grows and thrives in the mother’s womb from the minute the sperm cell meets the egg, must be a life at conception. The biological definition of a life is “a distinctive characteristic of a living organism from a dead organism or non-living thing, as specifically distinguished by the capacity to grow, metabolize, respond (to stimuli), adapt, and reproduce.” Fertilization is the process of the sperm and the secondary ovum coming together by the fusion of their pronuclei, subsequently creating a completely individual zygote—the zygote is a large diploid cell that is the beginning form of a human being.⁵¹ Once the zygote has been formed, it has attained its own code of information that is particular to no other newly-made set of human DNA.⁵² If at the instance of a zygote being formed, the new being acquires its own completely new, unique set of human DNA, as well as attains the capacity to grow, metabolize, respond to stimuli, adapt, and reproduce, is the zygote not a life? With scientific definitions alone, a fertilized egg meets all of the requirements to be a human life, for it is at this instance that the continual processes of life will commence.

After this fertilization process, the diploid cell will continue to advance, just like how a newborn will eventually develop the ability to walk. Human development is a never-ending process that begins at conception and ends at death. Any termination of this development would

⁵¹ Moore, Keith L. *Essentials of Human Embryology*. Toronto: B.C. Decker Inc, 1988, 17.

⁵² *Ibid*, 18.

be murder because it stops the process of life altogether, disallowing the human life from continuing through its natural stages of growth.

However, how does one decipher between the life of a human being versus the life of a plant? A plant does not, and never will have a brain. Furthermore, a plant is not, nor ever will be aware that it exists because it has not been born with a sense of morality and consciousness that all humans have or will have. Both species are living and growing, but only humans have the ability to attain the rights of human life.

The idea of “potential life” is a term that many use to describe a fetus, but is a toddler “potentially living” when he/she does not have the ability to walk yet? Is an adolescent only a “potential life” when his/her brain has not yet fully developed? The answer to these questions is “no” because it is irrational to call someone any less of a human just because they are not fully developed—in reality, a human will never be fully developed because growth and maturity of human life never ceases. Therefore, it would be irrational to say that a fetus is a “potential life” at conception because humanity begins when the sperm and egg cells fuse together.

The Stages of Life of the Fetus in the Womb

Once the zygote has been formed in the mother's womb, if not terminated, the fetus will begin to grow as a living human being, acquiring new traits and abilities every month. During the first month, the amniotic sac and placenta develop. Additionally, a primitive face including the eyes, mouth, lower jaw, and throat begin developing.⁵³ Lastly, the "heart tube" of the fetus beats 65 times a minute by the 4th week.⁵⁴ The fetus begins to acquire distinct physical features of a newborn baby, and by the second month, the face, bones, nervous system, digestive tract, and sensory organs begin to develop. The baby's ears, limbs, fingers, and toes start growing, and the brain and spinal cord are well-formed.⁵⁵

By the third month of development and growth, the baby is fully formed. The baby can open and close his/her fists and mouth, the reproductive organs begin to develop, and at this point, all critical developments have taken place. The heartbeat becomes fully audible through a doppler at the mark of month four, and the nervous system also begins to function, allowing for the baby to feel pain.⁵⁶ By month five, the baby begins to exercise his/her muscles by stretching out the limbs and joints.

At the six-month mark, the baby then responds to sounds by moving or by the increase of the pulse. If the mother of the child were to go into labor after the 23rd week of pregnancy, the baby would be able to survive a premature birth with intensive care.⁵⁷ Any time after that, there is a great chance of survival of the newborn if born prematurely. The baby begins to respond to stimuli even further at seven months and is almost completely in-tune with his/her surrounding

⁵³ DeMarco, Donald. *Abortion in Perspective*. Cincinnati, OH: Hiltz & Hayes, 1974, 59.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 60.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 61.

⁵⁷ *Ibid*.

environment. At eight months, the baby's brain begins developing rapidly, and most internal systems at this point are well-developed.⁵⁸ The final month of pregnancy allows for the continual growth and maturity of the baby.

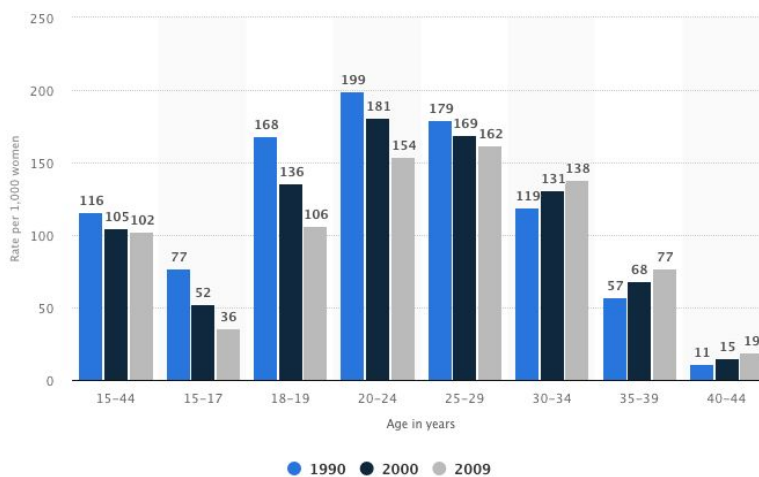
In all stages, the growth of the child never ceases—if no one stops the process of pregnancy, the baby will continue maturing into a newborn child, a toddler, a young adult, and so on. The development of a child will never stop because humans are constantly growing, so any termination of this process would be to end the life of the human being.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

The Statistics of Pregnancy

Age?

The age of the woman who is pregnant seems to be a large factor when determining if an abortion is justified in the particular circumstance. In the United States, however, teenage pregnancy is not a tremendous issue, and making the decision to end a life would be traumatic for a teenage mother even more so than an adult.



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Additional Information: United States; 15-44 years

Sources: CDC; NCHS; Guttmacher Institute

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According to the Guttmacher Institute, the research arm of Planned Parenthood, the age of the women being pregnant varies, but it is most common amongst 20-year olds.⁶⁰ From 1990 to 2009, the number of pregnancies per age group is seemingly declining, which has led there to be a greater number of pregnancies in the 30-40 and 35-39 age group in 2009.⁶¹ As teenage pregnancy remains at a high number in the United States, this could directly contribute to a high

⁵⁹ "Guttmacher Institute." Guttmacher Institute. November 01, 2018. Accessed December 2018.

<https://www.guttmacher.org/>

⁶⁰ Ibid.

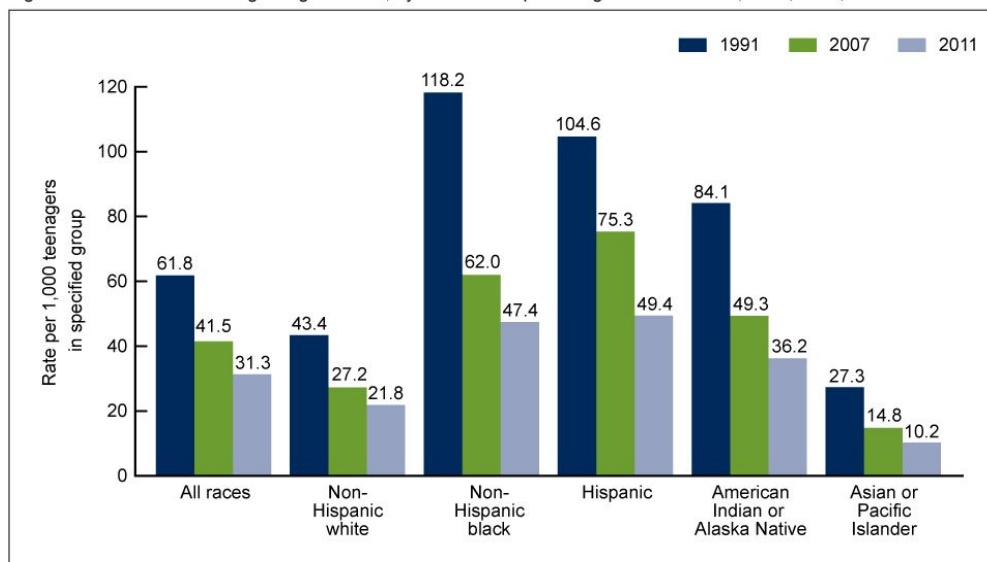
⁶¹ Ibid.

number of abortions as well. Due to the fact that teenagers' brains are not fully developed yet, many of them would choose to abort their child if they unintentionally became pregnant. Furthermore, a teenager would say that she is not ready to take on the role of a mother at such a young age. Most teenagers rely on their parents for finances and other needs, thus bringing another life into this world would not only be a burden upon themselves, but to their family as well. Again, this could very easily lead to the decision to have an abortion because many people today think about themselves and their needs over others. Since it is promoted to be an easy way out of a responsibility, abortion is common amongst teenagers who become pregnant. With more education on pregnancy and protection, the number of teenage pregnancies could decrease significantly, which could lessen the number of abortions as a direct result.

Race?

Race is a sensitive subject today in America, and those who support abortion use race to validate certain situations where a terminated pregnancy would be more beneficial to everyone.

Figure 1. Birth rates for teenagers aged 15–19, by race and Hispanic origin: United States, 1991, 2007, and 2011



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SOURCE: CDC/NCHS, National Vital Statistics System.

⁶² "National Center for Health Statistics." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. November 29, 2018. Accessed December 2018. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/index.htm>.

According to facts from the National Vital Statistics System, the race of pregnant teenagers in 2011 does vary amongst different origin groups, but it does not show anything out of the ordinary. In 1991, the number of pregnancies amongst black and Hispanic women was significantly higher than white women.⁶³ This trend has not fallen, even up into 2011 where white teenagers still have the lowest number of pregnancies.⁶⁴ This could be for various reasons: white teenagers are more educated on contraceptives and other methods of preventing pregnancy, they have better access to clinics that provide abortions, and they are possibly more able to afford the procedure. When a certain group is more educated over a matter, they are more likely to stray away from what is recommended not to do; if colored women are less educated about pregnancy and contraceptives, they are more likely to unintentionally get pregnant.

Regardless of the situation, the race of the mother has absolutely nothing to do with the fact that all abortions are murder. The life of the child does not have any more or less value due to the skin color of the mother, or any other factor.

Unintended Pregnancy?

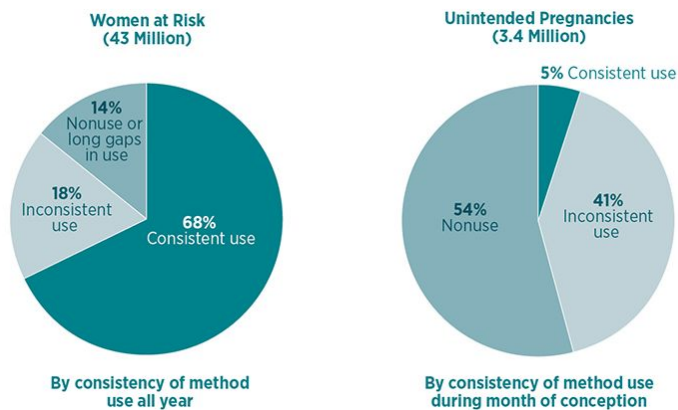
Due to the fact that no method of prevention besides celibacy guarantees a woman that she will not become pregnant, many people make excuses that abortion must, therefore, be an option for everyone.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

MODERN CONTRACEPTION WORKS

In 2008, the two-thirds of U.S. women at risk of pregnancy who used contraceptives consistently accounted for only 5% of unintended pregnancies.



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Planned Parenthood released that in 2008, the two-thirds of U.S. women at risk of pregnancy who used contraceptives consistently accounted for only 5% of unintended pregnancies.⁶⁶ Therefore, women who have sex without any protection make up 95% of all the cases of unintended pregnancy. This could be a case of lack of knowledge about the topic of conception and pregnancy, or it could be the inability to attain contraception at the time.

Regardless of the scenario, unintended pregnancies are still pregnancies, and there is no exception to the fact that the result of unprotected sex could very well be a fully living child. The only complete solution to unintended pregnancies would be to practice celibacy, which is not the answer many people want to hear. It is true, however, that any other form of contraception, whether it be condoms or birth control pills, leaves a percentage of possibility that they will not prevent all pregnancies. If women want a true choice over their own bodies, they can choose not to get pregnant with the option that will never fail them—celibacy.

⁶⁵ "Guttmacher Institute." Guttmacher Institute. November 01, 2018. Accessed December 2018. <https://www.guttmacher.org/>

⁶⁶ Ibid.

The Statistics of Reasons for Abortion

Reason for Abortion	Percentage
Victims of incest or rape	<1%
Fetal abnormalities	<1%
A doctor said the mother's health would worsen if they did not end the pregnancy	<4%
The mother did not want to be a single parent or they had current relationship problems	50%
Financial issues	66%
The child would interfere with the mother's life	75%

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As shown in the chart, victims of incest or rape together make up less than 1% of the total reasons for having an abortion. The worsening of the health of the mother is less than 4%, and the case of the mother's life being in full danger is not stated in this gathering of statistics.⁶⁸ More than 50% of women admit to having an abortion due to the fact that they do not want to be a single parent, or they have current issues with their significant other. The child interfering with the mother's life is a reason used 75% of the time, and the issue with finances comes up 66% of the time.⁶⁹

Regarding the cases with more than 50% of women, all of the reasons are selfish. Should a woman kill her newborn baby because his/her existence would cause the mother to be unable to work for a while? Should a mother kill her mentally unstable child who has not been able to live

⁶⁷ Swindoll, Charles R. *Sanctity of Life: The Inescapable Issue*. Dallas: Word Pub., 1990, 12.

⁶⁸ Ibid. This is very important to note because many people who are pro-choice will use the extreme cases of rape, incest, or the life of the mother being in danger to qualify their points. Using the marginal case of a subject to justify the entire topic is a logical fallacy, and it does not allow for any clear conclusion whatsoever. If someone is going to argue for abortion, then they must consider the fact that the "exceptions" are rare, and the life of the mother being in danger is almost unheard of in the medical world.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

on his/her own because he/she would prevent the woman from living her life freely? The answer to these questions is, of course, no—murder is not an acceptable excuse just because it happens to be beneficial to the murderer's life—this would be madness. Murder of the innocent is not justifiable in any way, and just because something may benefit someone does not deem it correct by any standards.

Pertaining to the other cases that make up less than 1%, no one can make a statement or a decision that encompasses an entire topic when it is solely the marginal case. Further on in this thesis, a more thorough analysis of different scenarios that many people deem acceptable to perform an abortion will be provided. As for now, it is important to note that the majority of the time, the reason for abortion is not only disregarding the life of the child as a whole, but it deems the baby's life worthless.

The Body of the Fetus vs the Body of the Mother

DNA

When two people have a child, it does not come as a surprise when the baby is not identical to his/her parents. It also does not come as a surprise that when someone walks down the street, everyone in sight has varied features that make them look completely unique. This can be explained by DNA—the code of information that makes up how the person looks, and even how the person acts based on certain personality traits. When the sperm cell meets the egg, the codes of information from the two people immediately form to make a diploid cell, a zygote, that carries its own unique, individual DNA unlike anyone else's. This DNA is then carried on inside the baby for his/her entire life and will continue to allow for that baby to grow into an individual, unique being unlike anyone in this world.

It is odd, then, how the body of the fetus and the body of the mother are compared to be interchangeable—how is this possible if their DNA is completely different? Yes, it is true that the baby lives inside of the body of the mother, but does this make them the same? If a baby chick is inside of an unhatched egg, does it become a chicken only when it breaks free of the egg its mother provides for it? No—the environment that the living thing thrives in does not determine if it is alive or not.

Once something begins to live, it lives on until something terminates its life. A baby acquires life at conception because it is scientifically proven so. Therefore, the baby will continue living on to become a more grown human, but due to the fact that its DNA is completely unique, he/she will develop into someone unlike anyone else in the world. No one

can argue against science and facts, and the fact of the matter is this: a fetus is an individual, living being because of distinct DNA.

Internal and External Functions

As seen in the stages of the life of the fetus in the womb, the baby develops organs, limbs, and processes of his/her own very early on. The nervous system, spinal cord, brain waves, and more are partial to the fetus alone, as well as every other process and organ in his/her body.⁷⁰ The organs begin to develop, the baby's five senses start taking part, and many more processes begin.

The only thing in common with the internal and external functions of the baby and his/her mother would be the umbilical cord, where the mother provides nutrients for her child.⁷¹ Yes, the two are connected by this cord, but is this not similar to when a newborn breastfeeds? A mother is a mother for a reason, and one of those reasons is to provide, nurture and care for her child. Whether the baby is inside the womb or out, the baby will develop better and faster with help from the mother. This does not change the fact that while the baby is getting nutrients from the mother, his/her internal and external functions are performing on their own, completely separate from those of the mother.

⁷⁰ Granfield, David. *The Abortion Decision*. New York: Image Books, 1971, 56.

⁷¹ Ibid.

The Abortion Procedure Today

Medical and Surgical Abortion

In a medical abortion, a doctor gives the mother a pill to end her pregnancy. This particular pill has two medicines that prevent the pregnancy from continuing, and it provides almost immediate results. The first medicine is called mifepristone and it terminates the pregnancy by blocking progesterone, which is a hormone essential for pregnancy.⁷² Without progesterone, the lining of the uterus wears down to the point where the pregnancy cannot continue.⁷³ The second medicine in an abortion pill is called misoprostol.⁷⁴ This particular medicine results in an abortion similar to a miscarriage, for it causes the womb to contract to the point where the mother is cramping and bleeding. The baby begins to suffocate, and its internal organs that have been in the process of developing begin to cease. The baby, as a result, is killed instantly and leaves the mother's womb along with the blood.

There are two types of surgical abortions that call for a minor operation: the vacuum aspiration method and the dilation and evacuation method.⁷⁵ Vacuum aspiration is when a doctor uses a small vacuum to suck the fetus out of the mother's womb. The woman is sedated or numbed, so do not worry because the mother will not feel a thing! While the mother is sedated and prepared for the procedure, the baby is torn to pieces inside of a vacuum. Not only are vacuums meant for removing dust or dirt from the floor, but apparently, they are used to terminate pregnancies. This procedure occurs during or before the first 14 weeks of pregnancy.⁷⁶

⁷² "Considering Abortion?" British Pregnancy Advisory Service. Accessed December 2018. <https://www.bpas.org/>.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

If a mother desires to end the life of her child any time after that, there is another option: dilation and evacuation. At 16 weeks or before, the doctor starts by dilating the mother's cervix to prepare her for the procedure and to allow the doctor access to the fetus.⁷⁷ After this, the doctor begins by suctioning the tiny human. If he/she is too large to fit inside the vacuum, the doctor goes in with forceps to grab on and pull the baby out with force. Most of the time, this results in the ripping of the limbs, head, and body. Once all of the parts are removed, the doctor goes in and scrapes the lining of the mother's womb to ensure that there is no tissue left behind—any leftover tissue from the newly-murdered baby would result in serious internal issues for the mother. Once the mother's womb is completely clear, she is free to go home and rest, and she may resume sexual activity within a week.⁷⁸

Late-Term Abortion

Late-term abortions occur during the second or third trimesters, and they normally occur over a span of several days.⁷⁹ Primarily, the doctor injects a solution into the mother to stop the baby's heartbeat. Next, the doctor will dilate the cervix over the course of three or four days, manipulating it to stretch to the size necessary to perform the abortion. Due to the fact that the fetus is much too large to be suctioned out at this point, the doctor removes him/her with forceps, almost always ripping the developing flesh in the process. Many times, women request late-term pregnancies upon their doctor's referral because they warn the mother of their baby's abnormalities.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

Partial-Birth Abortion

Some women are desperate to kill their baby before they enter into this world, which is why some places have allowed for partial-birth abortions as an option to all mothers opting out of motherhood. This procedure is “deliberately and intentionally vaginally delivering a living fetus until, in the case of a head-first presentation, the entire fetal head is outside the body of the mother, or, in the case of breech presentation, any part of the fetal trunk past the navel is outside the body of the mother, for the purpose of performing an overt act that the person knows will kill the partially delivered living fetus.”⁸¹

To paint a clearer picture, partial-birth abortions occur when the mother is in labor, right before the baby enters into this world. Once the baby’s head is almost out of the mother, a doctor kills him/her. Since he/she has not yet taken the first breath, the doctor would ensure the mother that her child is not yet living, so it would be just like killing a bundle of useless cells. At this point of the pregnancy, the baby would have been seconds away from taking the first breath—a skill the baby has been exercising and anticipating for his/her entire stay in the womb. The baby would also have a heartbeat and would have developed the internal systems, as well as the limbs, eyes, a face, and body.

⁸¹ Ibid.

The World of the Doctors

Medical research has proven that life begins at conception, and many doctors have accepted this and are pro-life. The common teaching that abortion should only be allowed for “therapeutic abortion” if the mother’s life is in danger has been around for years, but still, people argue the case of life beginning at conception.⁸² The money that would be lost if abortions were no longer performed would be tremendous, thus almost all medical schools continue teaching upcoming doctors that a fetus is not yet human.

The matter of women’s rights comes up as a hot topic of controversy, and doctors have shied away from any articles or news that may possibly hint at the possibility of a fetus being a human. Therefore, doctors are not informed of this truth until they watch an abortion procedure take place, when they are almost always appalled of the entire process. Neonatologists, the doctors most associated with newborns, are the ones who are most against abortions since they believe that a fetus is a life.⁸³

The Consultants of the Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynecology were asked to take a poll on whether or not they favored abortion-on-demand, and the results are not to be expected.

Do you favor abortion-on-demand?	Percentage
No	92%
Yes	4%
No answer	4%

84

⁸² Willke, Dr. & Mrs. J.C. *Handbook on Abortion*. Cincinnati: Hayes Publishing, 1979, 134.

⁸³ *Ibid*, 135.

⁸⁴ *Ibid*.

Doctors that are associated with pregnancy and birth are the ones who are against abortion. More than 80% of doctors from the poll said that the only way they would agree with abortion would be if they were done by a consultant gynecologist and in a hospital, but only 21% of those same doctors said that they would be willing to perform the abortions themselves.⁸⁵ Of the physicians actually performing the abortions, 75% of them were greatly opposed by their own nurses and other staff. Also, two-thirds of gynecologists said that the fact that they perform abortions would cut down on the number of potential young physicians entering into that field.⁸⁶

If so many people in the medical world oppose abortion, then why are they still practicing this procedure? The answer to this question is simple: money. Since the topic of women's rights is so relevant today, the need for abortionists is also great. Nowadays, medical schools are using the topic of abortion in their admission questions to pre-med students, and pro-choice is highly favored.⁸⁷ If a pre-med student is being interviewed for admission into a medical school, he/she may be asked what to advise a couple to do if they came to the doctor seeking an abortion.⁸⁸ If the student's answer is to advise the couple against having an abortion, the school would possibly deny the student's acceptance. An example of this comes from the University of Manitoba Medical School, where a boy proclaiming to be a Christian was failed in his Obstetrics and Gynecology course, denying him the ability to obtain his medical degree.⁸⁹ The reasoning for this is the fact that he was pro-life, and he made it known that he would not perform any abortion

⁸⁵ Ibid, 136.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid. p.137

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ The University of Manitoba: The boy who this happened to is unnamed. The only sources that provide information over the matter are from the early 2000s, and no updates have been given. This could very well be because the University of Manitoba Medical School sued the family, or the information was prevented from getting out somehow.

procedure in the future. He received the failing grade in October of 2003 despite the fact that he had all A's in every other course and was well-liked by the rest of his professors.⁹⁰ After appealing to the Faculty of Medicine in 2004, the unnamed student was still not given anything. Dr. Frederick Ross was one of the many pro-life doctors who supported the student in his fight for justice, but as of now, there is no other information regarding whether or not the university re-evaluated their decision of denying the boy his medical degree.⁹¹

The same goes for nurses in nursing school, and if a doctor says no to an abortion, he may have to face a lack of referrals. Humankind lives in an age of manipulation and selfishness, and no matter how high one's morals are, money has a way of changing them.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid.

The Case of Personhood

As stated in the historical analysis of abortion, personhood is a term that has allowed people who are pro-abortion to come to terms with their beliefs. It has created a schism between a human life and a person which, according to those who accept abortion as correct, are two different states of existence. People who are pro-choice have narrowed down the characteristics of a “person” to nine qualities, but each and every one of them has a flaw that would ruin the argument as a whole. The nine characteristics of a “person” are the following:

1. *One who is embodied, one to whom we ascribe mental and physical characteristics*⁹²

In order to deny this statement as a qualified definition of a “person”, one must first be able to come up with a solid definition of “embodiment”, which scientists have been in disagreement about for centuries. A timeline with a marker at the start of a substance being “embodied” is unheard of, for it is unknown when exactly this occurs. Also, is it up to the human race to determine when one has mental and physical characteristics? Do they only apply when brain waves are sensed, or when the heartbeat is heard? It is not man’s decision of when these characteristics must be applied, therefore it only makes sense to acquire these attributes at conception.

2. *Possessing a network of beliefs*⁹³

People’s networks of beliefs are constantly developing—a person may believe one thing on a certain day and then immediately change his/her mind the very next day. It is irrational to identify a beginning to when this network is acquired other than at conception, for it is from this point on that the human being will grow to eventually acquire beliefs.

⁹² Santa Clara University. "Ethics and Personhood." Sustainability - Office of the Provost - Santa Clara University. Accessed November 2018. <https://www.scu.edu/ethics/focus-areas/bioethics/resources/ethics-and-personhood/>.

⁹³ Ibid.

3. *Rationality*⁹⁴

If a four-year-old child walks into a forest alone, will he/she have the rational thought process to head towards a stream for clean water and find shelter? No, for the rationality of human beings will develop as the brain is developing, which will not be finished until the person reaches his/her mid-twenties.

4. *A social being, one whose sense of self emerges in and is created through relationships with others*⁹⁵

It is irrational to apply an attribute to all persons when not everyone fits into the category—there are plenty of people in this world, children and adults alike, who are anti-social. Yes, God created humans to be creatures dependent on relationships with others, but the lack thereof does not deem someone any less of a person.

5. *Self-awareness and awareness of oneself as a continuing subject of experience*⁹⁶

The experience and self-awareness of a human does not determine their personhood—any variation of these characteristics makes the individual unique, but does not differ him/her in terms of being a person. A living human being will inevitably become subject to experience if nothing ends his/her life, thus how can a certain amount of experience determine personhood?

6. *A language user, able to communicate meanings*⁹⁷

Every human has the ability to grow and develop into a communicative being, no matter if he/she has the ability to communicate verbally or not. Due to this fact, no one can deny someone

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

else the title of a “person” just because he/she has not yet reached the pending stage of being able to communicate.

7. *Being reflective about one’s experiences, feelings and motives as well as those of others*⁹⁸
8. *Creativity, autonomy and/or individuality, one who shapes themselves through choices, goals, actions, and reactions*⁹⁹
9. *One who is responsible, accountable and possesses rights in virtue of this*¹⁰⁰

As seen in the explanations for the first six characteristics of “personhood”, they all require an assumption that places a marker on a timeline at an unknown time—the only valid start of anything regarding the growth and development of human life is at conception.

Regarding the last three characteristics, all of them can be refuted by one explanation: all of these qualities can be acquired by humans, but if not at conception, then when? There is no reasonable time other than at conception when all human beings would become “persons” because it is at this instance that the processes of life will commence—unless natural causes or something else terminates the life, it will continue on until death. There are no points of reference regarding human life, so the only plausible starting point is at conception when life itself begins.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

The “Exceptions” Explained and Refuted

The Case of Rape or Incest

Rape is an incomprehensible act that is devastating to the victims of such crimes. Whether it be committed by a family member, friend, or complete stranger, rape is traumatizing and evil. Rape is something so cynical, it is difficult even to comprehend the mindset of such criminals; to even think of invading and disrespecting someone’s body to that extent is sickening. Although rape is traumatizing and horrible, it happens, and it is awful. Women go into therapy after such an action against them, and it is for certain that men go through the same mental recovery process if it is done to them. Such a case, however, does not change the validity of this thesis.

As discussed previously, the body of the fetus and that of the mother is completely individual and unique due to their separate DNA. Why, then, would a baby have to suffer an even worse outcome as the mother who is raped? Two evils do not make a right, and murder is not justifiable if the mother is raped. This situation happens less than 1% of the time, which is still a group of people, but rape cannot be used to justify abortion as one of the marginal cases. Abortion is abortion, and abortion is murder, regardless of how the baby is conceived.

Incest is a result of sin and evil entering this world, perverting the minds of people who have no self-control. When a family member forces themselves on another one of their family members, it is both heartbreaking and traumatizing. There is no doubt that this would cause anxiety, pain, and confusion in the mind of the victim. The result of this horrible act could be an unintended pregnancy, which would then lead to possible birth defects. No matter how vile the act may be, the fact that the baby is not the same as the mother is enough to say that an abortion

would still be murder. In incest, the baby has absolutely nothing to do with the trauma the victimized mother endures, so it would be just as cynical to end the life of someone who did no wrong.

Furthermore, this case occurs less than 1% of the time, which is still a percentage of people, but no one can argue that abortion should be legal based on this marginal case being true. In the case of the baby being deformed or defective in some way, this does not change his/her right to live. If the right of life is given when one attains life, then abortion must be murder because life begins at conception.

The Case of the Endangerment of the Life of the Mother

One belief that may not always align with those who are against abortion is what to do in the case of the endangerment of the life of the mother. Someone who is pro-life may say that this is the only exception, for it is a matter of saving a life. Something to consider, however, is the idea that this circumstance is not abortion, but rather the protection of life. If abortion is the termination of a life, then this has nothing to do with saving the mother's life in a time of endangerment by death.

For example, what if a pregnant woman is told that she has cancer, and she must go through chemotherapy to live and destroy the malignant cells in her body? The woman has the right to go through with her therapy, despite the possibility that as a horrible result, her baby may die along with the cancer cells. This is not an abortion at this point, but it is going through with a procedure that is necessary for the health of the mother. There is no killer here—this situation would simply have a tragic effect because of a terrible disease.

The matter pertains not to killing the baby to save the mother, but the doctors doing all that they can to save the mother. The doctor must do all that they can to save the mother's life, and if this treatment happens to kill the baby as a result, it is no longer a matter of abortion. There is no case where abortion is absolutely necessary to save the mother's life—it always pertains to a certain procedure that may possibly kill the baby as a horrible result.

Besides the fact that the case of the mother's life being in danger would never require an abortion, it is almost unnecessary to worry about since such circumstances only occur 0.01-0.3% of the time.¹⁰¹ Dr. Levatino, a former abortionist who came about over the media in 2017, admitted that under no circumstance is an abortion necessary in order to save a woman's life. The argument goes as so: abortions that would potentially be "life-threatening" would occur during the third trimester, for it is only during this time that such cases could occur. If a doctor comes upon the realization that the woman's life is in danger, they have approximately 36 hours to solve the issue before the woman dies, according to Dr. Levatino. In order for a third-trimester abortion to take place, however, a procedure must go on for 3-4 days, and during this time, the mother would be dead already. It is common for the absolute extreme cases to be used as arguments to defend the entire topic of abortion, but to do so would make the logic flawed. Yes, this situation does happen, but when it does, it is both rare and not even a matter of abortion.

¹⁰¹ "Guttmacher Institute." Guttmacher Institute. November 01, 2018. Accessed December 2018. <https://www.guttmacher.org/>.

Birth Control

Contraceptives are methods or devices that are used to prevent pregnancies.

Unfortunately, some methods act as a form of abortion. The most common is the birth control pill, otherwise known as an oral contraceptive. This pill is to be taken consistently, and when taken properly, it prevents pregnancy and has a failure rate of 5%.¹⁰² The way the pill works is by thickening the mucus lining to prevent fertilization while also thinning the lining of the uterus to prevent implantation.¹⁰³ The fact of the matter is that one-third of the time, while on the pill, the sperm cell makes its way past the thick mucus lining and fertilizes the egg.¹⁰⁴ Since life begins at conception, this would mark the beginning of a new life. The birth control pill, however, has the property of thinning out the uterus lining. This prevents the newly fertilized egg from implanting and growing in the womb of the mother, thus causing an abortion at this time.

Another birth control method is the Intrauterine Device, also known as an IUD.¹⁰⁵ This device works like the pill: it thins the lining of the uterus so the already-fertilized egg can no longer implant itself to begin growing. Other contraceptives that cause the same result are the depo-provera, the patch, the hormone vaginal contraceptive ring, and the “morning after” pill.¹⁰⁶

The only possible birth control methods that would not have any possible way of causing an abortion would be continuous abstinence, condoms, or surgical sterilization.¹⁰⁷ To make things more simple, if the birth control allows for the sperm cell to fertilize the egg before it is killed, it can possibly cause an abortion.

¹⁰² Birmingham, William. *What Modern Catholics Think About Birth Control*. New York: New American Library, 1964, 35.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 36.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 37.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

Murder

Abortion is murder, and there is no possible way of getting around this fact. Life begins at conception because science and facts have proven it to be so, and the argument of personhood is flawed. If one accepts the definition of life, the next step would be to accept that the made-up definition of personhood would disqualify several individuals from being “people”. After this realization, there is no arguing the fact that once a fertilized egg begins to grow and thrive at conception, it has every right that every other human being has, and this includes the right to live. Terminating a pregnancy in any circumstance falls under the category of murder because it ends the life of the child, no matter how the child was conceived in the first place. The inability to purchase contraceptives or be educated about pregnancy provides no excuse for the fact that the killing of babies should be illegal. The genocide against innocent babies is greater than any other war on this planet, and it is about time that the murderers are stopped and punished for performing such crimes against humanity.

The murderers in the case of abortion are the abortionists and, at times, the mothers. The doctors performing the abortions are well-aware of the fact that they are killing a living human being, and the idea that they would do so for money is vile. When a doctor opens the mother’s cervix to reveal an innocent, perfect baby, only to begin ripping him/her out with forceps, it is nothing short of sickening. In the case of surgical abortion, the abortionist is always the murderer, for he is intentionally and consciously ending the life of the child with his own hands and tools—the mother is simply the doctor’s accomplice in the murder. In other cases, however, when a woman takes an injection or a pill to end the life of her child, she is physically poisoning the baby to death, making her just as guilty of the murder as the doctor who provided the

substance. Therefore, the doctor is always the murderer when performing abortions, but there are certain cases when the mother is only an accomplice.

The killing of another human being with full intention that is willful and premeditated is defined as first-degree murder, thus this is what abortionists must be charged with. If one believes that life begins at conception and that a fetus is a human being with natural rights, then he/she must come to the realization that abortionists must be convicted of this felony. If a baby is a human life, and if life is the same as personhood, then the termination of it would be punishable as murder. Abortionists know fully well that what they are killing is a life, not just a mass of cells. For this reason, they are to be convicted of first-degree murder. In the case of surgical abortion, the woman would be convicted of criminal facilitation, for she would aid in the killing of her own baby, but would not perform the abortion herself. In the case of the woman ingesting a pill or another substance to poison the baby to death, the woman would then be charged with first-degree murder, for she would intentionally take a medication that would kill her child as a result.

Conclusion

When science, logic, God, and facts are all on the same side of a particular issue, it is impossible to refuse the validation of the argument—if one does deny the validity in this circumstance, then they are simply foolish and ignorant, for they refuse to accept factual information as true. There is no inconsistency when it comes to calling abortion murder, for every argument against this statement has been refuted. In terms of the “exceptions” that most people deem as acceptable circumstances in which abortion must be allowed, these have been refuted as well. God and evidence are aligned with the belief system of this thesis and should not be otherwise be challenged.

Along with abortion comes topics such as birth control and methods, and by determining which kinds would result in an abortion, this thesis clarifies and distinguishing which should be permissible by law. Furthermore, by formulating the conclusion that an abortion is never necessary in regards to saving the mother’s life, this thesis disqualifies any “exceptions” that would otherwise weaken the argument as a whole.

Abortion is a topic of controversy that fuels anger, confusion, and frustration, but facts are difficult to argue with—there are no other means of denying that due to the fact that life begins at conception, abortion is murder.

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