

# A logical case against abortion

[Family](#), [Abortion](#)



Jacob E. Bell 02-28-08 Philosophy 60 T-TH 10: 40-12: 10 The case against abortion Is abortion murder or a matter of choice is a question that has been in the mainstream of moral debates for as long as I can remember. I have always supported a women's right to choose, however in this paper I shall look at the philosophical argument to the contrary. In this deductive look at a classic dilemma, I will first outline why killing a person is wrong and then determine at what point the " unborn" is considered to be a person. At that point, we can decide when abortion becomes murder and not a matter of a person's free will concerning their body. Most people can agree that the killing of a fellow human being is " severely wrong, " excluding specific instances like self-defense and euthanasia (Marquis). However, Professor Dan Marquis of the University of Kansas takes it a step further and attempts to decipher exactly what it is about murder that makes it wrong. Marquis states that a " premature death" has the misfortune of " depriving an individual of a future of value" and for this reason killing is immoral. Now professor marquis' argument itself can and is used as an argument against abortion, however, I want a more definitive answer as to when a fetus is considered a person. For this, I found a very cogent argument written by John T. Noonan Jr. The first of his two main arguments states that at the moment of conception there is a substantial jump in " human potential" (Noonan). That is to say, that before conception occurred there is very little chance that a rationally thinking human being will (for lack of a better term) be created. In fact, the odds of one sperm reaching one egg at precisely the right moment (ovulation) are roughly 200, 000, 000 to one. Compare that to the four out of five odds that a human being will result after or rather at the

moment of conception. Noonan supports his view that conception is the decisive moment in human development when abortion becomes the homicide of a human being by providing a convincing example. Noonan's example says that no one will hold you responsible for shooting your gun into some rustling bushes if the odds are 200, 000, 000 to one that a man is causing the rustling. However, if the odds were four out of five that a man causes the rustling in the bushes than it would be very irresponsible of you to discharge your gun. Noonan's second reason for conception being the ideal moment to draw the proverbial line is that at the moment of conception the "new being" has the human genetic code, which according to Noonan makes it a human being. He states that the human genetic code contains the "possibility of human wisdom" (Noonan). To summarize, Marquis shows us that killing is wrong because it takes away a person's ability to have a "future like ours" (Marquis). Which accurately explains why killing a human being is wrong. Then Noonan defines for us at what point a fetus is considered a human being. That is to say that the only significant jump in "human potential" comes at the moment of conception, where the fetus also receives the human genetic code. Now using the arguments I have shown why killing a person is wrong and that a person is "born" at the moment of conception, thus proving that abortion is morally wrong and murder. I set out to take a deductive look at the counter argument to my current beliefs. However, in the end it turns out that all I could accomplish was to find a very cogent inductive reasoning for the stance that abortion is murder. On the other hand, the counter to the debate on abortion is also inductive as nothing can prove morality, only try to define it as universally as possible,

thus making all positions on the issue inductive. Bibliography 1. " The Morality of abortion: Legal and historical perspectives. " John T. Noonan Jr. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press. 1970. pp. 51-59. 2. " Why Abortion is Immoral. " Dan Marquis. Journal of Philosophy, 86. 1989. pp. 183-202.