

The ethical dilemma of abortion

[Health & Medicine](#), [Nursing](#)



The Ethical Dilemma of Abortion Grade (November 14th, The Ethical Dilemma of Abortion Abortion is a topic that has, and will forever remain to be debatable, considering that a consensus regarding the issue does not seem to be anywhere closer to being reached. Abortion becomes an ethical dilemma however, whenever some aspects arises which appears to justify its procurement (Simon, 2000). For example, let us pose and think of how a pregnancy that results out of rape will affect the woman carrying the child. While some people would hold the opinion that life starts at conception and therefore a baby needs to be kept no matter how it has come about, there are others who have an opinion that procuring an abortion in such a case is the only way out, which can enable the woman who has undergone rape to forget and move on with life (Ziegler, 2013). The proponents of this argument holds that, while abortion may not be socially acceptable, it should be allowed in situations like this, so that the affected woman will not be forced to keep a baby that has been conceived out of rape, thereby living the rest of her life remembering the ordeal that she underwent, whenever she looks at the baby (The Association of Pro-Life Physicians, 2013). However, those opposed to abortion in absolute, will argue that procuring an abortion because a woman was raped does not help to cure her mind or even help her forget the deal, since by procuring an abortion she is going to develop a guilt conscious, which she has to live with for the rest of her life (Stark, 2013). In fact, to those opposed to abortion in its absolute form, argue that the guilt conscious of having terminated a life is much haunting, than the ordeal of a rape incidence, which might fade over time, and become forgotten. Another controversial issue that raises an ethical dilemma regarding abortion is

whether terminating the life of a child, due to a pregnancy that arises from incest is right or wrong. On the face of it, it may appear that it would be wrong to procure an abortion notwithstanding its cause, and therefore the answer to whether procuring abortion in this case is right or wrong would be an obvious wrong (Ziegler, 2013). However, when we pose for a moment to think about it, it may eventually emerge that there are some justifications for procuring an abortion in this case, considering the fact that it would be utterly difficult for a woman to raise a child who is born out of incest. Further, the issue does not only affect the woman, but also the family at large, and would also extend to affecting the child that is born, the moment the child realizes that he/she was born out of incest (Simon, 2000). Thus, through logically reasoning, it appears that the reasoning for and against abortion for a pregnancy arising out of incest may never even get to a logical conclusion. The major ethical dilemma that arises in such a case is that; any argument that is opposing the procurement of abortion in such a case would be viewed as insincere and insensitive, not only to the affected woman, but to her family and also to the child that is to be born (Reader, 2008). Another instance that raises an ethical dilemma regarding the issue of abortion is when the pregnancy puts the life of the mother at risk, or when it is apparent that the unborn child will have severe deformities. In this case, the ethical dilemma is which life ought to be saved, between that of the child and that of the mother, when it becomes apparent that the life of the mother is in danger, due to the pregnancy she is carrying (The Association of Pro-Life Physicians, 2013). While it would be easier to uphold that the life of the mother should be saved by aborting the child, it will not be as easy to

subsequently justify why the life of the child should be terminated, yet it is a life that is equally important, and which ought to be protected by the cardinal rule of respecting life (Ziegler, 2013). The contention here will then arise regarding whether life begins at conception or after birth. For the proponents of the view that life starts at conception, terminating the life of such a child is wrong, because it is still another life that is worth rights and respect (Stark, 2013). However, to the proponents of the view that life starts at birth, they would advocate for saving the mother's life. In conclusion therefore, the issue of abortion is a complex one, and affects the profession of nursing, since its answer cannot be a mere right or wrong, considering that it largely depends on the rare scenarios like the once discussed above, which puts the issue in a non-definitive position. This leaves the issue at the discretion of an individual nurses and the patient, based on their belief, and the scenarios at hand.

References

Reader, S. (2008). Abortion, Killing, and Maternal Moral Authority. *Hypatia*, 23(1), 132-149.

Simon, A. (2000). A Right to Life for the Unborn? The Current Debate on Abortion in Germany and Norbert Hoerster's Legal-Philosophical Justification for the Right to Life. *Journal of Medicine & Philosophy* 25(2), p220-239.

Stark, P. (September 9, 2013). Abortion Justified When the Unborn Baby is Disabled? LifeNews. com. <http://www.lifenews.com/2013/09/25/is-abortion-justified-when-the-unborn-baby-is-disabled/>

The Association of Pro-Life Physicians. (November 14, 2013). Are There Rare Cases When an Abortion Is Justified?: Official position statement of the Association of Pro-Life Physicians. <http://www.prolifephysicians.org/rarecases.htm>

Ziegler, M. (2013). Women's Rights on

the Right: The History and Stakes of Modern Pro-Life Feminism. Berkeley
Journal of Gender, Law & Justice 28 (2), p232-268.