Thomson — "a defense of abortion"



The violinist case (and all of its variants)a. Fetus = person from moment of conception

- b. Abortion still often permissible even if fetus has right to life
- c. Kidnapped/plugged into violinist: analogous to rape
- i. Someone's right to use one's body as wished > right to life
- d. You will die if you don't unplug from the violinist: analogous to mother's life in danger
- i. Not wrong to intentionally kill violinist by unplugging
- ii. Extreme view: always wrong to intentionally kill someone, not always wrong to merely let someone die
- This disproves the extreme viewThe Henry Fonda case (and all of its variants)a. Henry Fonda necessary to keep alive → not req
- i. Right to life doesn't entitle one to bare min to keep one alive
- b. Right not to be killed (unjustly): original violinist case disproves this
- i. Also highlights weakness in conservative argumentThe human spores casea. Analogous to consensual sex
- b. Intentionally opening window doesn't give burglar right to stay in your house
- c. Permissible to vacuum up human seeds even if you opened your windows
- i. Abortion sometimes permissible after consensual sexThomson's arguments that use the above casesa. Abortion is sometimes permissible not always, fetus's interests are still relevant: have right to life from conception, but sometimes right to use one's body > right to lifeSummarya. Abortion is sometimes permissible not always, fetus's interests are still relevant: have right to life from conception, but sometimes right to use one's body > right

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