

Biomedical ethics assignment

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A From an ethical standpoint the concept of abortion is a popularizing issue. This is in part true because there are those who assert that the fetus is a person who has a right to life which begins at conception. In following this train of thought there are certain considerations which must be made as well as some concessions which become necessary as a means of providing a fetus with all of the same rights that any other person would be granted.

There are numerous reasons why a person may choose to agree with this argument, and the rationale behind such reasoning can be just as varied. In looking at the nature of fetal development it can be argued that the process exists in such a way that it demands that there needs to be an unchanging way in which Persephone begins, and moreover that if this is not done at the moment of conception that there is no way in which this can be done that will serve to allow for a truly accurate comparison between two fetus who may be chronologically the same but developmentally different (1 .

Glover, C 322). Unlike conception and birth which are two clear points, the way in which a fetus develops is a less concrete concept. As an example of that consider that there are likely few differences that exist between a newborn baby, and that in fact they are viewed as being at the same stage of development. In noting this it can be presented that one should not have less rights than the other because one is still in the womb (2. Glover, C 323).

Based on the changeable nature of factors such as viability of a fetus outside of a mother's womb which is based more on medical technology than fetal development it can be resented that the only clear demarcation of where life begins must be drawn at conception, otherwise such distinctions will not be

made until a baby is born which can be viewed as being incorrect biologically (3. Glover, C 322). It must be noted that not everyone shares the viewpoint that a fetus has a right to life that begins at conception. Opponents of this argument look at the nature of fetal development similarly e. G. Ewing it as a something which it is nearly impossible to set or agree to any clear cut boundaries relative to when life begins (4. Thomson C 32), but serve to come to divergent conclusions relative to what the fluidity of development actually means. Consider the position that viewing a fetus as a person can be viewed similarly to looking at an acorn as an oak tree. While one has the possibility to become the other, one is not necessarily the other (5. Thomson, C 333). Just as an acorn cannot be climbed the way in which an oak tree can, a fetus at conception should not be afforded the same rights that would be given to an infant.

While human development does exist as continuous in nature it is not necessarily as clear cut or as simply explained as some people believe or assert, and in this vein the argument that the fetus is a person from the moment of conception is at best flawed (6. Thomson, C 332) and is at worse dangerous. In comparing the two arguments the sole similarity lies in the uncertainty about when life begins in that neither proponents or opponents of this argument can, or attempt to, define the exact moment at which a fetus becomes a person.

Instead the former group chooses to make a determination while the latter group refuses to do so. Proponents of the argument take the position that life begins at conception whereas opponents of the argument present that there is no real way of knowing when life begins, and as such it should not be

speculated on. In ascribing to the former belief the fetus is treated like a person from the moment it is conceived, and subsequently granted a right the same rights as any other person. In ascribing to the latter belief it is asserted that there is no way of truly knowing when Persephone begins. Art B The question of whether or not abortion is the same as murder depends largely on whether or not the fetus is viewed as a person. There are those who do not live that a fetus is a person and that as such abortion is not an act of murder, and therefore it can be performed in a wider range of circumstances other than just those where the life of the pregnant woman is threatened. Conversely, there are those who in viewing the fetus as a person also look at the act of abortion as being akin to murder, and therefore permissible only when the life of the pregnant woman is threatened.

In looking at the argument that posits that the fetus is not a person and that therefore abortion is not an act of murder which would be wrong only in resistances where the life of the pregnant woman is threatened there are several factors which can be considered. First, consider that a fetus can be viewed as a person and the argument can still be made that abortion is not wrong except to save the life of the mother. In this instance it can be acknowledged that even if the fetus is a person they should not be afforded any rights in addition to the same rights that any other person would be granted.

As such the fetus may have a right to life but it does not have a right to utilize someone else's body in order to maintain or sustain that life (7. Thomson C. 336). Essentially what this means is that a fetus does not have any more right to the body of a woman than a stranger would have to utilize <https://assignbuster.com/biomedical-ethics-assignment/>

the blood and/or organs of another individual (8. Thomson, C 333). In looking beyond this the threat to the life of a pregnant woman can be presented as only one of a number of scenarios under which abortion may be permissible, and not viewed as murder.

For example in instances where a woman made reasonable attempts to prevent pregnancy e. G. The usage of contraceptives or abstaining from sex, it can be resented that a woman should be allowed to abort a fetus. This is due to the fact that the woman in this instance did not wish to contribute to the conception of the child. This exists in clear contrast to a woman who is actively engaging in specific sexual behavior knowing that it may result in pregnancy (9. Thomson, C, 337).

Finally, in noting that regardless of the circumstances there is little to nothing that a woman can do in order to perform an abortion on herself, it must be noted that the act of abortion almost always falls to a third party and what they will and will not do when faced with a woman seeking an abortion. In leaving the decision largely if not solely to a third party acting under the auspices of medicine and law, it can be presented that a woman is not necessarily being viewed as an autonomous person and as such is not being given the same rights that it is demanded be given to the fetus (10.

Thomson, C 335). Having noted the elements of the argument that present that the act of abortion is not murder which would be wrong only in the event that the life of the pregnant woman is threatened, it is important to acknowledge that there are ways in which it may be criticized. In criticizing this argument it is not necessary to view it as a whole and instead it is possible

to attack specific elements of it. In looking to critique the argument consider position that abortion can be deemed as acceptable in instances where a woman is taking measures to actively prevent conception.

There are those who would strongly disagree with this on the basis that there are those who believe that sex is meant to be utilized primarily for procreation, and that the act of becoming a parent is a natural function as opposed to a social hooch (11. Glover, C 328). In following this logic it can be presented that anyone who was having sexual relations, regardless of what preventative measures were being taken should be prepared to have a child. In response to this argument there are two counterpoints which can be made. The first is that the argument is acknowledged as one which is seen as being rooted in religion.

While this is not inherently bad it does serve to be problematic in the sense that not all people view the construct of God in the same way (12. Glover, C, 329). This is highly problematic in the sense that it only serves to be valid for individuals who follow a certain belief system. Even if there are multiple belief systems that present a similar argument, it would stand to reason that they would all present it in slightly different ways. More importantly however is that in noting the sheer number of different religions which exist it is plausible that there are some which would reject this train of thought outright.

Secondly, this argument fails to solves for instances of sexual abuse and assault such as rape and incest. In making the assertion that sex is meant for procreation, and that parenthood is natural without also providing

exceptions for instances in which a woman did not or was not able to consent, and moreover forcing her to give birth to the resulting child can be seen as taking the position that the rights of the unborn fetus are more important than the rights of the pregnant woman.

It should not be attempted to be presumed what is meant or intended by these omissions, but even in not trying to infer what they mean what has to be acknowledged is that they exist at all. Regardless of the position that is ultimately held on whether or not the fetus is a person, the crux of the argument can be seen as residing in whether or not this serves to make abortion murder. There are compelling arguments made by individuals on both sides of the debate. Noting the decision regarding what to believe, and why to believe it should be a personal one. Art c It can be deemed erroneous to believe that other than the life of the fetus and the life of the pregnant woman that there are no other values relative to the ethics of abortion. Both proponents and opponents of abortion have presented evidence to the contrary. In looking at the argument surrounding abortion it cannot be ignored that at its core it is a person to person matter, and just as person to person matters are varied so are the values which surround them (13. Noon, C 303). In this vein the argument about abortion is not simply an argument about life.

As a means of exemplifying this consider that while there is a great deal of conversation relative to when a fetus becomes a person that this argument can be seen as distracting from the nature of moral decision making because it insists that only one thing is considered without looking at anything else. Moreover the argument can be made the decision making can be looked at <https://assignbuster.com/biomedical-ethics-assignment/>

as an act of balancing, while it can be posited that it is a mistake to think of this as weighing one action against another, it does involve looking at different aspects of a situation (14.

Noon, C 307-308). Additionally, it is presented that we are all controlled in part by how we see and how we respond to fetus (15. Noon, C 310-311).

What all of these serves to mean is that there is no singular factor which may river to contribute to why a pregnant woman chooses to abort a fetus or bring it to term and this is because there is no single value or set of values which can be consulted in order for this decision to be made.

Instead of a person simply viewing the issue of abortion as an issue of the life of the fetus and the life of the mother or the life of the fetus versus the life of the mother, what needs to occur is a more in depth consideration of all of the factors that may potentially serve to surround the individual experience of pregnancy and abortion or pregnancy and birth.