

Abortion: an ethical issue



Abortion means terminating pregnancy. Abortion is widespread now days all over the world. Abortion is the most controversial subject when it comes to ethical issue. Ethical issues in abortion involve a constant battle between freedom and life.

As per the article given in website [www. bbc. co. uk/ethics/abortion](http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/abortion), there are two groups of people: Pro-choice and Pro-life.

Pro-choice people are for freedom. They consider it unethical to take away a woman's right to decide over their own body. While pro-life people are for life. They consider it unethical to kill a growing life. Let's discuss in detail of both views.

Prochoice people regard right to control one's own body as a key moral right. If women are not allowed to abort unwanted fetus they are deprived of this right. The foetus exists inside a woman's body. A woman has the right to decide whether the foetus remains in her body, therefore a pregnant woman has the right to abort the foetus

Pro-life advocates say that the right to life should always outweigh the right of an individual to equality or to control their own body. They raise arguments that abortion does not liberate women, but allows society not to cater to women's needs. They say that what women need for equality is not free access to abortion but to be given what they need to survive financially and socially as mothers. Further they hold that foetus is not a part of woman's body like liver, kidney, lungs. It is a saperate Person inside the womb. Abortion means killing a human being or murder. Here they raise question that why woman or couple did not take precaution instead ? Why an

innocent life is killed for someone else's mistake ? This also justifies the anti-abortion argument.

Apart from Pro-life advocates there are other view against abortion like it is against feminist principle of justice, non-violence and non-discrimination. Another group objects abortion as they see it as a men plot. They argue that men see the risk of pregnancy as something that stops men having sex when they want it. If men are to achieve full sexual freedom it is essential that abortion be freely available to backup contraception.

Summary:

The issue of abortion is the most controversial issue. The advocates of Pro-life and Pro-choice have their own justifications. Pro-choice advocates hold that it is their right to have control over their own body. Pro-life advocates hold that from the very conception life start in the womb of a woman. It is actually a Person inside the womb. So, the question remains, Pro-life or pro-choice ?

Critical analysis and evaluation of argument

The fight between pro-life and pro-choice is an everlasting battle and the ethical dilemma. Let's analyze the arguments in context of two major philosophical theories: Teleological Theory and Deontological Theory, taken from the source: website: [www. socyberty. com/Issues/Abortion-An-Ethical-Analyses](http://www.socyberty.com/Issues/Abortion-An-Ethical-Analyses)"

First take a look at abortion from a Teleological point of view, it depends solely on consequences. Teleological theory is basically a Utilitarianism formulated by Jeremy and John Stuart Mill. This approach to morality and <https://assignbuster.com/abortion-an-ethical-issue/>

ethics hold that there is no universal basis for determining what is right. Main idea behind it is the principle of Utility. The principle focuses on the consequence of action, intentions are irrelevant, therefore breaking promise, lying, causing pain or killing someone may under certain circumstances be the right action and in other circumstances, wrong action.

Applying this theory into the topic of abortion, question arises: Do I really need a child ? Am I ready for a baby ? Do I really want to give up all of my time to raise a baby ? or What if I am unhappy with a child. This theory seems to focus on a very selfish viewpoint of the situation.

Utilitarian theory does not mean that a woman is selfish on her decision of abortion. Let's say a woman decides to have an abortion because she is not prepared to have a child, she has no support: financial or emotional and she is still in school. The woman decides that it would be in her best interest to have abortion at this point. This woman can remain in school and not have to worry about bringing unplanned child, but just because this decision worked out well for her, was it the right decision ? Although this might seemed like a good decision, it still brings concerns and ethical dilemmas to our attention. Could she not have had child , found employment and stayed in school (as most people do)? Could she not have ultimately ended up being the happiest she has ever been because of this child coming into her life ?

It might seem easy to determine one's own self interest, but do we sometimes take advantage of the choices we are given ? This question brings the case in the light of Deontological Theory. This theory is based on

something other than the consequences of a person's actions. This theory has two approaches: Divine command Theory and System of duties.

Thomas Aquinas (1274-1275) was the proponent of Divine command theory. According to him the world is created by God. Whatever happens, happens with the will of God. Life is given and taken by him only. Human being doesn't have any right to take anyone's life. A woman who followed the Divine Command theory might have done things differently in the same situation. She might not have based her decision on self interest, nor on consequences, but rather on something higher like God. God has given her this child to birth and care for. This also face criticism like how can we base a life altering decision on the belief that there is a higher power, God ?

Immanuel Kant (1725-1805) is the leading proponent of Deontological Approach in decision making.. He formulated a System of Duties: Perfect duties and Imperfect duties. Perfect duties are to be followed in all circumstances. In Perfect duties he mentions ' Not to kill an innocent person'. Taking the pregnant woman's case in this context, There is a Person inside her womb. From the time of conception in the womb, the child is, not just another part of the mother's tissue, but a separate person. Abortion means killing of that Person. This faces criticism that at the time of conceiving there is a just formation of cell having few tissues. Cells are created and destroyed continuously in our body.

Both of these situations determine very different viewpoints, but how do we know which theory can be considered ethically moral ? There are many possible reasons a woman might choose to have an abortion, for example: to

avoid interruption of life goals, the pregnancy is a result of rape, or to prevent birth of abnormal or diseased child, just to name a few. It is also obvious why some may consider abortion to be morally problematic, whether the reasons are based on religion, and the values of life. The truth is that each one of us is forced to decide how we feel about abortion, as we are with any ethical issue. So, the question remains, Pro-life or Pro-choice ?

Personal Position:

I personally feel that a woman should have the right to choose when it comes to abortion, but I will contradict myself under certain circumstances. In certain scenarios, the choice of abortion can be justified , but what about those who are just pure careless ? What about those who act carelessly because they know in the back of their minds that they have another alternative if something go unplanned ? For example: there are many teens that become pregnant because of carelessness in practicing safe sex. If these young girls knew that if they became pregnant, they had no option but to keep the child, would they be more careful ? Or would the number of teens who become pregnant remain the same ? I believe it would decrease..

Utilitarian approach of Teleological theory allows us to consider the Utility of child, it allows us to have second chance (abortion) should we make mistake or put health of ourselves at risk and kill unborn child. Divine Command theory does the exact opposite, it opens our eyes to new life, it leads us to believe that morality is based on God and the child was given to us by God. It also allows us to believe if our child had a deformity or disease, that it was meant to be and it is what makes our child special. It perceive us to believe

that abortion would be wrong because the child was sent to us for a reason. So can abortion be ethical ? In my opinion, yes it can. It can be ethical when the choice is not being taken for granted.

In conclusion, my research lead me to believe that while we have different theory's to agree or disagree with, abortion is a choice. I feel that when it comes to a decision of this kind, the ethicality of the situation is left only to that individual. As long as the women is presented with all options and alternatives, and she has the right to choose what she feels is best, regardless of our own personal feelings or religious beliefs towards abortion.