

Abortion research paper

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



Introduction

Modern developments in science and technologies related to human health include significant numbers of medical jurisprudence issues, clearly demonstrating the conflict of moral values. Among them considerable attention is to be paid to the control of fertility issues, which include such modern challenges as control of the nature of the family (e. g., selecting the gender of a future child), manipulation of the family genetic pool, as well as questions, traditional for philosophical and legal debate, such as usage of contraception, sterilization and termination of pregnancy (abortion)

(Mason&Laurie 154)

Abortion is included into the range of issues under study due to the fact that it represents one aspect of fertility control. It is worth mentioning that the debate concerning abortion is one of most longstanding in terms of ethics, philosophy, biomedical ethics and healthcare law. One's attitude towards abortion is likely to depend on how far one accepts the theory of existing rights of a fetus with respect to the reproductive process in the light of one's religious, ethical and moral views. For the purposes of the assignment I will examine arguments of those, who consider abortion a lawful and morally acceptable act, which allows a woman to decide on what he wants to do with her body and counterarguments, emphasizing lawlessness and moral unacceptability of abortion.

Abortion as a morally acceptable act and the right of a woman

As I have already mentioned above, person's attitude towards abortion is dependable on his/her views regarding the rights of fetus. While in California

killing of a fetus is a criminal act (in cases, other than legal abortion), non-dependently on viability of the fetus (Magnuson&Lederman 769), those, who consider abortion morally acceptable explain their statement by the fact that almost all abortions take place in the first trimester of pregnancy, when a fetus cannot exist, independently on the mother and, therefore, cannot be considered a separate being, which can be killed.

Another arguments refers to so-called theory of personhood. Proponents of this theory claim that the concept of human life is different from the one of personhood. Personhood can be considered to be obtained after a human being gets some unique traits and experiences, while even fertilized eggs, used for in vitro implantation can be considered alive, and, by the way, multitude of them are being thrown away on daily basis. If moral acceptance of abortion was based on so-called concept of life, it the one of personhood, it would be totally impossible to conduct in vitro implementation and other procedures, involving fertilized eggs due to the fact of throwing them away being unacceptable from the point of view of biomedical ethics.

One argument, which was developed long before, is also to be mentioned to strengthen the position of those, who consider abortion to be morally acceptable. Abortion as an alternative of giving birth is considered to be a choice of a woman.

Consequently, if abortion was unavailable, many women would choose to get rid of their babies, using other means. One means can be using unsafe medical procedure for eliminating a fetus (which are frequently likely to lead to woman's injury, incapability of having children in the future and even death). Furthermore, a woman can choose to give a birth and refuse to bring

up a child, thus making him/her doomed to suffer from the lack of family and relevant support.

Moreover, it is necessary to point the attention of those, who oppose legality and availability of abortions to the fact that bodily integrity is a natural right of a person. In this context bodily integrity is to be viewed as a combination of such dimensions as a life, free from the fear of violence, spatial mobility and the chance to make decisions where to go, who to go with, where to travel etc., making informed choices with respect to sexual and reproductive health, sexual wellbeing (including being free of violence, coercion and disease), expression of self-identity, as well as the right to education on all the aspects of bodily integrity (Mathur 3-5).

Non-observance of the right to bodily integrity is strongly interconnected with violations of the right to health and wellbeing. It is also necessary to consider the outcomes of allowing the state to make women continue the pregnancy. If the state has such a right to control the body of woman with respect to her pregnancy, one can easily imagine granting a state with the right to enforce laws, providing for obligatory contraception or forceful sterilization. If one goes further, one will easily associated obligatory contraception and forceful sterilization with something looking like eugenics, which was an integral part of Nazi theory, which have once led to World War II, which was one of the greatest tragedies in terms of the history of mankind.

Taking into account possible implications of outlawing abortions, I cannot help emphasizing the need of prioritization of rights and interests in case rights and interested of an unborn child or already living human being come

into a conflict.

Last, but not least argument, which needs to be mentioned with regard to abortion, is the fact that considering abortion immoral and outlawing it, its opponents usually fail to consider variety of situations, when abortion can be critical for woman's future life. For instance, such a situation may occur in case of teenage pregnancy or if a pregnancy was a result of a rape.

Termination of pregnancy can be also a choice of married couple, when both understand that getting a child will not allow the family to survive in economic terms.

Abortions as a morally unacceptable act

Since long times ago many representatives of society have been considering an abortion to be morally unacceptable due to a range of arguments.

First argument, which is most frequently associated with Christian view on life, suggests that life is God-given, and begins with conception (Geddes&Girffiths 100). Therefore, termination of pregnancy means termination of life of an unborn child and can be viewed as murder. Sanctity of human life is often referred to as natural law tradition, which has been existing since ages along with relevant religious premises (Little 3331).

As alternatives for abortions, proponents of the view under study, consider possibilities to give babies for adoption, when born, or can be fostered, so that mothers have chance to see their babies and change her mind about taking care about them in the future (Geddes&Girffiths 102).

Continuing the logics of the first argument, mentioned above, those, opposing abortion, claim that it is degrading for human beings to take lives of other human beings, even if nobody knows, whether they will be viable.

Once more argument deals with the fact that an unborn child is innocent and, therefore, when a woman terminates pregnancy, she punished the child, who did no way deserve it. The same argument can be used with respect to cases, when a pregnancy occurred as a result of incest or rape. Totally practical argument to be mentioned can lie in emphasizing the connection, which can exist between abortion and medical risk, such as ectopic pregnancy, the chance of miscarriage and pelvic inflammatory diseases.

Once more turning to the issue of consequences of abortion, I would like to note that abortion can be associated with significant risks for mental health and psychological wellbeing of women, who have undergone it. Thus, it may be considered that giving a birth can be better for a woman, than continuously suffering from distress.

Those, opposing abortion, often consider that women can use it as a means of contraception, along with traditional birth control means. It can be said that, while birth control means are widely available and can be used in different combinations to reliably protect a woman from unwanted pregnancy, therefore, if a woman chose not to use them; it means that she should not be able to have a choice, after she already got pregnant.

Last argument to be mentioned to finalize the subsection, lies in the fact that termination of pregnancy is often being used by young women and even girls, who lack life experience and may have lifelong regrets after having once terminated a pregnancy.

Conclusion

The research paper above is dedicated to discussing arguments of both sides of longstanding abortion debate. The most important finding to be made with regard to the research lies in the fact that, life in many debatable questions, a balance is a key to creating a solution to the problem. Here the balance between rights of a fetus and woman's right to bodily integrity is central to the discussion. While at early stages of pregnancy a fetus is totally dependent on a woman, and can be medically associated with a part of her body, woman's right to bodily integrity is to be observed as it can be considered to prevail over the rights of a fetus. When a fetus already develops further to a human being, the correlation between woman's right to bodily integrity and rights of a fetus is likely to change due to the fact that fetus obtains a special status, which grants the state the basis for prohibiting abortions at late stages of pregnancy. In other words, rationales around abortion-related rights and restrictions are to be different in terms of pregnancy. While in early pregnancy, the embryo (or so-called early fetus) has a very modest status, this status changes, along with continuation of pregnancy. As for vast majority of practical arguments related to possible health risks, accompanying abortion, or implications of pregnancy for a future life of a minor, I think that they can be considered only after main solution regarding the correlation of the right of a woman to bodily integrity and the rights of fetus, is being developed, basing on medical aspects of the issue.

As philosophers, lawyers and physicians acknowledge, decisions regarding

abortions are always full of ambivalence and difficulties, as well as burdens and sharp grief.

Words cited

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