

The Philosophical Case

STUDENT INTERACTIVE



Try to answer the following questions without using your notes. The answers are found at the end of session 3.

1. _____.
2. _____.
3. _____.

1. _____.
2. _____.

1. _____.
2. _____.
3. _____.

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1. _____.
2. _____.

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NOTES



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N O T E S

I. REVIEW

A IN THE LAST SESSION, WE USED SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE TO ANSWER THE QUESTION “WHAT IS THE UNBORN?”

1. First, we’ve proven the unborn is alive.
 - a. *There is no period of non-life.*
 - b. *The unborn is growing biologically.*
 - c. *Abortion kills the unborn, and only something living can be killed.*
2. Second, we’ve proven the unborn is a separate individual being, not his mother’s body.
 - a. *He can be a different gender from his mother.*
 - b. *He has a separate brain and central nervous system.*
 - c. *He can have a different blood type.*
 - d. *He has his own unique genetic fingerprint.*
3. Third, we’ve proven the unborn is a human being.
 - a. *He has a human genetic signature.*
 - b. *He is the offspring of human parents (principle of biogenesis).*
 - c. *He’s not partially human, not potentially human, and not possibly human. He is a complete human being for his entire life.*
4. We reached a conclusion: The unborn is a distinct, individual, living human being.
5. Therefore, it seems our argument has succeeded.

STUDENT INTERACTIVE



As a quick review, write out from memory the three steps of our basic argument against elective abortion, the moral logic of the pro-life position. (1 minute)

1. _____.
2. _____.
3. Therefore, _____.

It’s reasonable to conclude that . . .

- If it’s wrong to take the life of any human being for the reasons most people have abortions, and . . .
- If abortion kills a distinct, individual, living human being . . .
- Then abortion is a terrible evil.



NOTES

B IN THIS SESSION, WE WILL ANSWER THE PRO-ABORTIONIST CHALLENGE: “JUST BEING HUMAN DOES NOT MAKE YOU A PERSON.”

1. We will learn how the challenge to our argument has shifted dramatically.
2. We will learn a philosophical argument that shows there is no meaningful difference between a human being and a human person.

II. CHANGING THE CHALLENGE

A CONSIDER THE THREE STEPS OF OUR ARGUMENT. THE ARGUMENT INITIALLY HINGED ON THE SECOND PREMISE — THAT ABORTION INTENTIONALLY KILLS AN INNOCENT HUMAN BEING — AND THE QUESTION “WHAT IS THE UNBORN?”

1. We presumed everyone would agree with the first premise — that it is wrong to kill innocent human beings — and so we focused our efforts on proving the second premise.
2. If both premises are true in this valid argument, then the argument is sound and the conclusion is true also.

B THE ONLY WAY TO REFUTE OUR ARGUMENT IS TO DENY THE FIRST PREMISE AND CHANGE IT TO SOMETHING ELSE, WHICH PRO-ABORTIONISTS IMMEDIATELY DO.

1. They change the premise “It’s wrong to intentionally kill a human being” to “It’s wrong to intentionally kill a human **person**.”
2. The unborn is a human, but not a person.
3. Therefore, it is okay to kill the unborn.



MBASSADOR SKILLS

Always try to anticipate the rejoinders or counterarguments the other side might raise. Take these rejoinders seriously, state them fairly and clearly — even convincingly — then refute them in advance. This tactic removes the possibilities for future objections before they’re raised. It’s as if you’re saying, “I know what your thinking and it’s not going to work. Here’s why.”



N O T E S

☛ WE HAVE A NEW TASK: DEFEND THE FIRST PREMISE.

GOING DEEPER: INFORMATION FOR SELF-STUDY

1. History is strewn with the wreckage of the decision to classify some humans as non-persons.
 - a. *The Concise Columbia Encyclopedia depicts the 1857 Dred Scott decision of the U.S. Supreme Court:*
 - Scott, a slave, had been taken to Illinois and the Wisconsin territory, where slavery was prohibited by the Missouri Compromise. Later, in Missouri, he sued for his freedom on the basis of his residence in a free state and territory. The Supreme Court's Southern majority declared that the Compromise was unconstitutional and that Congress had no power to limit slavery in the territories. Three justices also held that a Negro descended from slaves had no rights as an American citizen and thus no standing in the court.¹
 - b. *The Nazis disqualified the value of human "undesirables" with the phrase "life unworthy of life" ("lebensunwertes Leben").*
 - 1) Robert Jay Lifton describes this principle in *The Nazi Doctors*:

Prior to Auschwitz and the other death camps, the Nazis established a policy of direct medical killing: that is, killing arranged within medical channels, by means of medical decisions, and carried out by doctors and their assistants. The Nazis called the program "euthanasia". . . . This term camouflaged mass murder . . . The Nazis based their justification for direct medical killing on the simple concept of "life unworthy of life." While the Nazis did not originate this concept, they carried it to its ultimate biological, racial, and "therapeutic" extreme.²
 - 2) The Nazis followed five identifiable steps as part of this principle:
 - Coercive sterilization
 - Medical killing of "impaired children"
 - Medical killing of "impaired adults"
 - Medical killing of "impaired inmates of concentration camps"
 - Medical participation in mass extermination, mostly of Jews
2. History teaches us that man's attempt to classify some humans as non-persons results in barbarism.

III. HUMAN NON-PERSONS

"They may be human, but they're not persons."



AMBASSADOR SKILLS

When confronted with this statement, always ask this question: What's the difference? What's the difference between a human and a person? (Memorize this question.)



NOTES

A OUR OPPONENTS MUST HAVE AN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION "WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A HUMAN BEING AND A HUMAN PERSON?" WHY?

1. If they permit the killing of a human being who's not a person, but not the killing of a human who is, then they must be clear on the difference between the two.
2. What are the specific reasons for disqualifying some humans from protection?
3. Generally, you won't get an answer. Their response is not based on principle. It's just an attempt to dismiss our view.

B ALL LISTS OF QUALITIES THAT DETERMINE PERSONHOOD HAVE THREE PROBLEMS.

1. They exclude obvious examples of persons (such as newborn infants, people who are asleep or in a coma, or people who are handicapped).
2. They include obvious examples of non-persons (such as animals — especially "higher" primates — and even machines, in some cases).
3. They appear arbitrary and self-serving, used as tools of the powerful to oppress the weak who are in the way and can't defend themselves.



AMBASSADOR SKILLS

It's not unusual for people to raise empty objections when a cherished view is at stake. An empty objection is one that initially sounds worthwhile, but simply can't be defended upon examination. Probing questions (the "Columbo Tactic") will often show that there's little substance behind the bluster.

STUDENT INTERACTIVE



Think about a few ways some human beings are often disqualified as persons. What kinds of reasons are given for why the unborn is not a real person? (1 minute)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Break up into pairs and discuss your answers. (4 minutes)



NOTES

● CAN YOU BE A HUMAN AND NOT A PERSON?

1. Why should we accept the notion that some humans are not persons?
2. The distinction seems arbitrary.
3. Humans are personal kinds of beings.³

① THE UNBORN DIFFER FROM THE NEWBORN IN FOUR WAYS THAT HAVE DISQUALIFIED THEM AS PERSONS. THE ACRONYM SLED IS A HELPFUL REMINDER OF THOSE DIFFERENCES.

1. **First**, *size* or physical appearance — the unborn doesn't look like a person.
2. **Second**, *level of development* — the unborn doesn't have the same abilities as real persons.
3. **Third**, *wrong environment* — the unborn isn't located in the right place as real persons. This is implicit in abortion laws.
4. **Fourth**, *degree of dependency* — the unborn is too physically dependent on others to be a person; he is not viable and can't survive outside the womb.



Our strategy: First, we will examine the four ways the unborn have been disqualified as valuable persons. Then we will ask if any of those reasons are adequate to deny human value. If they think the answers are adequate, then clear examples of other valuable human beings would have to be disqualified, too.



AMBASSADOR SKILLS

When you accept the other side's point of view for the sake of discussion and then show the absurd consequences that result when the view is applied consistently, you are employing a powerful tactic called "Taking the Roof Off" (reductio ad absurdum).

Let's take each one in turn...

IV. APPLYING THE SLED TEST

Ⓐ SIZE OR PHYSICAL APPEARANCE — DO HUMANS LOSE VALUE WHEN THEY DON'T LOOK RIGHT?

1. Does size equal value?
 - a. *Men are generally larger than women.*
 - 1) Are husbands more valuable than their wives?
 - 2) Can men oppress women just because women are generally smaller than them?



-

If someone says, “The fetus doesn’t look human,” ask, “If the fetus doesn’t look human, then you’ll have no objections to showing pictures of aborted fetuses, will you?” People object to graphic images precisely because the mangled forms look unmistakably human.

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6. **Conclusion:** *Size and physical appearance are irrelevant to significance.*



N O T E S

B LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT — IS A PERSON’S VALUE DEFINED BY HIS ABILITIES, BY WHAT HE CAN OR CAN’T DO?⁵

1. Is a person’s value simply determined by what he can do?
 - a. *Do we forfeit our rights as human persons — our claim to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness — because we don’t have the capabilities others have?*
 - b. *What if we could no longer play chess, run bases, read, or remember?*
2. Many disabled adults are less “developed” than many newborns, but that hardly justifies killing them.
3. Do stronger, more capable, more intelligent people have more rights than others?
4. Do human beings become disposable simply because at their level of development they are helpless, defenseless, and dependent?

REFLECTION

Think about this for a minute. Abortion is often justified because of fetal deformity.

If it’s wrong for a man to take advantage of a woman and harm her just because he’s bigger and stronger, wouldn’t it be a greater crime if the woman was defenseless in a wheelchair? Would it be worse still if he was seeking to harm — even kill — a handicapped *child* and not a grown woman?

If all of those things are wrong, then why is it considered gracious, kind, and even loving for this same adult man to take the life of the smallest and weakest human beings — the unborn — who have a handicap?

Justice involves protecting the weak from the powerful. Who is weaker and more vulnerable than a handicapped infant?

5. Human value transcends abilities or lack of abilities. Therefore, missing abilities cannot disqualify human value.



If a human being’s value is determined by his abilities — by what he can or can’t do — then all those who are handicapped or considered unfit are in danger. Only the physically perfect are safe.

6. Conclusion: *Level of development has nothing to do with value.*

C ENVIRONMENT — DO HUMANS FORFEIT THEIR WORTH WHEN THEY CHANGE LOCATIONS?

1. Baby Rachel (Rachel Caruso) was born prematurely at 24 weeks, in the middle of her mother’s second trimester.
 - a. *On the day of her birth, Rachel weighed 1 pound, 9 ounces, but dropped to just under 1 pound soon after.*
 - b. *She was so small she could rest in the palm of her daddy’s hand. She was a tiny, living, human person.*



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- c. Heroic measures were taken to save her life because she was a vulnerable and valuable human being.
- d. If a doctor had killed Rachel while she quietly slept at her mother's breast, we would have recoiled in horror at this homicide.
- e. However, if this same little girl — the very same Rachel — was inches away from the outside world, resting inside her mother's womb, she could be legally killed by abortion.

2. Here's the question: If we are valuable human persons, do we cease being valuable because we move locations by crossing the street, moving from the kitchen to the den, or simply rolling over in bed?

- a. If it's wrong to kill an innocent human child at one location, then it's wrong to kill that same innocent human child located six inches away.
- b. If it is considered homicide to take the life of any child like little Rachel outside her mother's womb, then why is it legally protected to take the same life for the same reasons at exactly the same stage of development while inside her mother's womb? Nothing changes except the child's location.
- c. If this is true, then minimally all mid-to-late-term abortions (Rachel's birth age) are immoral because the liberty to kill the child is based merely on the child's location.

3. Clearly, one's environment can't be the deciding factor. Changing locations is morally trivial.

4. Conclusion: *Environment has no bearing on who we are.*

STUDENT INTERACTIVE



"The fetus isn't 'viable.' It can't survive on its own outside the womb." Is this a good objection? Why or why not? Jot down your answers and be prepared to share your thoughts with the class. (2 minutes)

① DEGREE OF DEPENDENCY — IS HUMAN VALUE DETERMINED BY OUR DEGREE OF DEPENDENCY ON OTHERS?

- 1. The unborn's dependency on his mother for biological sustenance is irrelevant to the baby's value.
 - a. No baby is "viable" if degree of dependency matters.
 - 1) Babies of all ages depend on their mothers for feeding, whether via blood (an umbilical cord), breast, or bottle.
 - 2) In this sense, no child is "viable" even years after she's born.
 - b. Human beings may be dependent on others for their survival, but they aren't dependent on others for their value.



N O T E S

c. *All physically dependent people are at risk if degree of dependency determines their value.*

- 1) If dependence on an external source makes one non-human, then all those dependent on kidney machines, pacemakers, and insulin would have to be declared non-persons.
- 2) Dr. Bernard Nathanson — formerly one of the largest abortion providers in New York City and an original founder of NARAL (National Abortion Rights Action League) — now points out as a pro-lifer that there is no ethical difference between an unborn child who is plugged into and dependent upon her mother and a kidney patient who is plugged into and dependent upon a kidney machine.



Dependence (viability) doesn't change what the unborn is: a separate, unique, living being.

d. *If dependency determines worth, then no moral principle protects the weak and vulnerable from the strong and powerful.*

2. Conclusion: *Dependency does not determine worth.*



We can see, then, that the unborn child differs from a newborn child in only four ways — size, level of development, environment, and degree of dependency — and that none of these differences is a good reason to disqualify the baby as a valuable human person.

STUDENT INTERACTIVE



From memory, write out the elements of the SLED test.

S _____
L _____
E _____
D _____

Take turns with a partner explaining the significance of each category and why each one is not a good reason to disqualify a human being from value and protection. Alternate through the elements of the SLED test until you've both had a chance to practice each one. (10 minutes)



Remember, anything that can be functionally defined — valuable because of some condition, such as size, level of development, location, or degree of dependency — can be functionally defined away — no longer valuable because the ability is lost.



N O T E S

V. INTRINSIC VALUE

A HUMAN BEINGS HAVE INTRINSIC VALUE.⁶ THEY ARE VALUABLE IN THEMSELVES . . .

1. Not for their size or physical appearance.
2. Not for their level of development (first, second, or third trimester, infant, adolescent, or adult) or anything they can do.
3. Not because of their environment or where they are located (inside the womb or out).
4. Not because they can live on their own and are not physically dependent on another.



Changing the external looks or external physical location or adding or subtracting external abilities doesn't change who someone is on the inside.

B ONE RADIO TALK-SHOW HOST RAISED AN INSIGHTFUL QUESTION: "WOULDN'T I STILL BE ME?"⁷

1. A blind man called in and said he sometimes was treated as less than a person because he was blind. The surprised host asked if a blind man was any less a person than somebody who could see. "Even if I become blind," the host said, "wouldn't I still be me?"
2. If we are no less ourselves because we lose our sight, what if we lost our ability to speak or communicate at all? Wouldn't we still be ourselves?
3. What if we were smaller in stature or weighed only one pound, like little Rachel, or even a few ounces? What if we had no legs or our bodies were terribly misshapen, like the Elephant Man's? Would we be any less ourselves? Would we be any less a person?
 - a. *Here is the key question: How many body parts can we lose or alter and still be considered ourselves?*
 - b. *Answer: No matter how many pieces we're missing, as long as we're still alive, we would still be ourselves.*
 - c. *Christopher Reeve's memoir of life after his devastating riding accident in 1995 that left him a quadriplegic is entitled Still Me.*

GOING DEEPER: INFORMATION FOR SELF-STUDY

4. No physical change — whether in size, level of development, location, or degree of dependency — will ever cause us to cease being ourselves unless that physical change ends our lives.⁸
5. A human being changes his size, level of development, location, and degree of dependency throughout his lifetime from conception to death. These are not good reasons to take his life, yet these are the very arguments advanced against the unborn.



NOTES

VI. SUMMARY

- A IN SHORT, WE USED TO DISCRIMINATE BASED ON SKIN COLOR AND GENDER. NOW WE DISCRIMINATE BASED ON SIZE, LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT, AND DEGREE OF DEPENDENCY. WE'VE SIMPLY SWAPPED ONE FORM OF DISCRIMINATION FOR ANOTHER.**
- B IN SHARP CONTRAST, PRO-LIFE ADVOCATES BELIEVE THAT NO HUMAN BEING — REGARDLESS OF SIZE, LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT, RACE, GENDER, OR PLACE OF RESIDENCE — SHOULD BE EXCLUDED FROM THE COMMUNITY OF HUMAN PERSONS. OUR VIEW OF HUMANITY IS INCLUSIVE, WIDE OPEN TO ALL — ESPECIALLY TO THOSE WHO ARE SMALL, VULNERABLE, AND DEFENSELESS.**
- C HUMANS ARE PERSONAL TYPES OF BEINGS. THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN HUMANS AND PERSONS IS ARBITRARY; IT IS NOT ADEQUATE TO DISQUALIFY A HUMAN'S VALUE SIMPLY BY LABELING HER A NON-PERSON.**

VII. WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED THIS SESSION?

- A WE'VE USED A PHILOSOPHICAL ARGUMENT (THE SLED TEST) TO ARGUE THAT THERE AREN'T ANY GOOD REASONS TO DISQUALIFY SOME HUMAN BEINGS AS HUMAN PERSONS.**
 - 1. Human beings can't be disqualified as persons simply because . . .
 - a. *They aren't the right size.*
 - b. *They don't have the right level of development.*
 - c. *They're not in the right environment.*
 - d. *They have too much physical dependency.*
 - 2. All human beings have intrinsic value.
- B IN THE NEXT SESSION, WE'LL LEARN HOW TO COMBINE WHAT WE'VE LEARNED SO WE CAN ANSWER THE OBJECTIONS OF PRO-ABORTION RHETORIC.**



N O T E S

STUDENT INTERACTIVE



SELF-ASSESSMENT

Try to answer the following questions without using your notes.

1. In denying the personhood of the unborn, how has the pro-abortionist shifted the argument?

- Instead of denying the truth of the _____ premise of our argument, they deny the truth of the _____ premise. They shift the argument from defending the lives of human _____ to defending the lives of human _____, which they say excludes the unborn.

2. What is the first question to ask when someone says the unborn is a human being, but not a person?

- What's the _____?

3. What three problems do we find with lists that try to establish the qualifications for human personhood?

1. They _____ obvious examples of _____.
2. They _____ obvious examples of _____.
3. They appear _____ and _____.

4. Write out the four elements of the SLED test.

- S _____
- L _____
- E _____
- D _____

5. What term describes the destruction of large groups of human beings simply because of their physical appearance?

- _____

6. What does it mean when we say human beings have intrinsic value?

- Human beings are valuable in _____, not for anything else they can _____ or _____.



NOTES

SELF-ASSESSMENT WITH ANSWERS

1. In denying the personhood of the unborn, how has the pro-abortionist shifted the argument?
 - Instead of denying the truth of the second premise of our argument, they deny the truth of the first premise. They shift the argument from defending the lives of human beings to defending the lives of human persons, which they say excludes the unborn.
2. What is the first question to ask when someone says the unborn is a human being, but not a person?
 - What's the difference?
3. What three problems do we find with lists that try to establish the qualifications for human personhood?
 - They exclude obvious examples of persons (people who are asleep or in a coma, people who are handicapped, etc.).
 - They include obvious examples of non-persons (animals — especially “higher” primates — and even machines).
 - They appear arbitrary and self-serving, used as tools of the powerful to oppress the weak who are in the way and can't defend themselves.
4. Write out the four elements of the SLED test.
 - Size
 - Level of development
 - Environment
 - Degree of dependency
5. What term describes the destruction of large groups of human beings simply because of their physical appearance?
 - Ethnic cleansing
6. What does it mean when we say human beings have intrinsic value?
 - Human beings are valuable in themselves, not for anything else they can be or do.

GOING DEEPER: INFORMATION FOR SELF-STUDY

- Describe the SLED test to two different people (friends are okay), giving reasons for the test's importance and what it's meant to accomplish. Be sure to explain the significance of the following illustrations to make your points: Baby Rachel, the *Elephant Man*, and “Wouldn't I still be me?”
- Rent the video *Elephant Man* and watch it with your family or friends.
- Review the self-assessment exercise above so you will be able to answer all the questions without the prompts. At the beginning of the next class you will be given an exercise to demonstrate your mastery of these questions. Be prepared.
- Skim over the next lesson in this workbook before the next class to prepare yourself for the session. This simple preview will really help you understand the material when you cover it in the next session.



N O T E S

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The Founders ascribed rights to men simply by virtue of their humanness. All human beings possess those unalienable rights, regardless of their levels of physical development or their capabilities.

LINCOLN'S WISDOM

by Gregory Koukl

On November 19, 1863, Abraham Lincoln opened his Dedication of the Cemetery at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, with these immortal words: "Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." Lincoln quoted this last phrase from the Declaration of Independence for a reason. Four months earlier, 55,000 men had shed their blood in a three-day battle that contested the foundational principle of this republic conceived in liberty: that all men are created equal.

The Declaration of Independence is an important source for a couple of reasons. First, as the foundation of American law, it is the legal cornerstone of our most cherished freedoms. Second, it argues for those freedoms in a particular way. The Founding Fathers of our country didn't pluck these rights out of thin air, as many do today. Instead, they made a careful justification for transcendent human value, based on the fact that humans are certain types of beings.

When the Founders wrote that all men are created equal, they were not referring to males of a certain age, but to all human beings. Further, the thing that made men equal was not some physical quality that each of them shared — it was the mere fact of their creation as equal beings. Therefore, no argument could ever be given to disqualify any human for life, liberty, or the pursuit of happiness based on any physical characteristics (such as skin color, in the case of the slavery that Lincoln addressed).

The equality that exists among human beings has nothing to do with any physical trait or capability — shape, size, age, level of development, function, intelligence, looks, or performance. Instead, human beings have intrinsic value simply because they are human. The Founders ascribed rights to men simply by virtue of their humanness. All human beings possess those unalienable rights, regardless of their levels of physical development or their capabilities.

Lincoln understood that any attempt to alter this truth would be self-destructive. In "Fragments on Government and Slavery," July 1, 1854, he wrote:

If A can prove, however conclusively, that he may of right enslave B, why may not B snatch the same argument and prove equally that he may enslave A?

You say A is white, and B is black. It is color, then; the lighter having the right to enslave the darker? Take care. By this rule, you are to be slave to the first man you meet with a fairer skin than your own.

You do not mean color exactly? You mean the whites are intellectually the superiors of the blacks, and therefore have the right to enslave them? Take care again. By this rule, you are to be slave to the first man you meet with an intellect superior to your own.



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But, say you, it is a question of interest; and if you can make it your interest, you have the right to enslave another. Very well. And if he can make it his interest, he has the right to enslave you.

According to Lincoln, we cannot claim intellectual superiority or superiority of color over anyone — such reasoning necessarily places ourselves under the same yoke of obligation. If we hold to such reasoning, we must be willing to submit to any man who can claim the same proof of superiority over us.

The futility of this argument also applies to the unborn. The claim that a human being loses value because he doesn't look like or act like other persons is devastating for all of us. Human beings do not lose their value because of physical differences or missing capabilities. They are equal and valuable for other reasons.

"TRUST YOU WITH A CHOICE?"

The bumper sticker says, "If you can't trust me with a choice, how can you trust me with a child?" Unfortunately, the reasoning behind this sticker misses the point. The point is not whether we trust a person to make the right or wrong choice with regards to their unwanted pregnancy, but rather that there are some choices no one should be "trusted" to make at all. One such choice is the choice to kill innocent human beings.

The question of the morality of abortion has nothing to do with personal choice. It has to do with killing an innocent human being for frivolous reasons. This is never defensible. Further, no one is "trusting" the mother with a child. She doesn't need permission to get pregnant. Because of the nature of motherhood, this is properly out of the state's control.

CREATING A POTENTIAL LIFE?

Pro-abortionists commonly dehumanize the unborn in order to justify abortion by referring to the unborn as a "potential life." But calling an unborn child a "potential life" is just a clever rhetorical trick. There is no such thing as a "potential life."

There are two options. First, we can potentially create life, that is, create a potential for life. When a man and a woman get married and have sex, there's potential in their conduct for life to be created. Second, we can create a life with potential, one that has the possibility of developing into something good or noble. But that's the end of our options. We either potentially create a life or we create a life with potential. We never create a "potential life."

This line of thinking is the same as saying, "I just had a potential thought." What could that possibly mean? You either had a thought or you didn't. You could have the potential for a thought, or you could have a thought with potential. But you never have a "potential" thought.

In the same way, pregnancy doesn't create a potential life. If it did, then the problem of that potential life could be solved simply by having a potential abortion. Since a real abortion, not a potential one, is needed to end pregnancy, a real life must be involved, not a potential one.



N O T E S

ENDNOTES

- 1 Judith S. Levey and Anges Greenhall, gen. eds., *The Concise Columbia Encyclopedia* (New York, Avon Books: 1983), 241.
- 2 Robert Jay Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors* (HarperCollins: 1986), 21.
- 3 This attempt actually inverts the genus-species relationship when applied to personhood and humanity. The category of persons is actually the larger category (genus), not the smaller category (species). There may be persons who are not human (corporations under U.S. law and, arguably, God and angels), but there are no humans who are not also persons.
- 4 Stephen Schwarz, *The Moral Question of Abortion* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1990), 15.
- 5 Some have said the fetus isn't human until it's fully developed. This is odd when teenagers make this claim. They're not fully developed, either.
- 6 Intrinsic value means that our value is tied to what we are, not to what we can do. We need nothing more than our shared humanity to have equal value and to deserve equal protection.
- 7 Dennis Prager, KABC, Los Angeles, 23 December 1994.
- 8 Questions of life after death aside.

