

<http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/subjects/a/abortion/index.html?inline=nyt-classifier>

<http://www.policyalmanac.org/culture/abortion.shtml>

<http://www.abortionfacts.com/>

<http://www.religioustolerance.org/abortion.htm>

The Center for Bio-Ethical Reform - AbortionNo

<http://www.abortionno.org/Resources/fastfacts.html>

NOTE: this site also contains abortion photos, articles, audio/video, and facts.

WORLDWIDE

Number of abortions per year: Approximately 46 Million

Number of abortions per day: Approximately 126,000

Where abortions occur:

78% of all abortions are obtained in developing countries and 22% occur in developed countries.

Legality of abortion:

About 26 million women obtain legal abortions each year, while an additional 20 million abortions are obtained in countries where it is restricted or prohibited by law.

Abortion averages:

Worldwide, the lifetime average is about 1 abortion per woman.

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UNITED STATES

Number of abortions per year: 1.37 Million (1996)

Number of abortions per day: Approximately 3,700

Who's having abortions (age)?

52% of women obtaining abortions in the U.S. are younger than 25: Women aged 20-24 obtain 32% of all abortions; Teenagers obtain 20% and girls under 15 account for 1.2%.

Who's having abortions (race)?

While white women obtain 60% of all abortions, their abortion rate is well below that of minority

women. Black women are more than 3 times as likely as white women to have an abortion, and Hispanic women are roughly 2 times as likely.

Who's having abortions (marital status)?

64.4% of all abortions are performed on never-married women; Married women account for 18.4% of all abortions and divorced women obtain 9.4%.

Who's having abortions (religion)?

Women identifying themselves as Protestants obtain 37.4% of all abortions in the U.S.; Catholic women account for 31.3%, Jewish women account for 1.3%, and women with no religious affiliation obtain 23.7% of all abortions. 18% of all abortions are performed on women who identify themselves as "Born-again/Evangelical".

Who's having abortions (income)?

Women with family incomes less than \$15,000 obtain 28.7% of all abortions; Women with family incomes between \$15,000 and \$29,999 obtain 19.5%; Women with family incomes between \$30,000 and \$59,999 obtain 38.0%; Women with family incomes over \$60,000 obtain 13.8%.

Why women have abortions

1% of all abortions occur because of rape or incest; 6% of abortions occur because of potential health problems regarding either the mother or child, and 93% of all abortions occur for social reasons (i.e. the child is unwanted or inconvenient).

At what gestational ages are abortions performed:

52% of all abortions occur before the 9th week of pregnancy, 25% happen between the 9th & 10th week, 12% happen between the 11th and 12th week, 6% happen between the 13th & 15th week, 4% happen between the 16th & 20th week, and 1% of all abortions (16,450/yr.) happen after the 20th week of pregnancy.

Likelihood of abortion:

An estimated 43% of all women will have at least 1 abortion by the time they are 45 years old. 47% of all abortions are performed on women who have had at least one previous abortion.

Abortion coverage:

48% of all abortion facilities provide services after the 12th week of pregnancy. 9 in 10 managed care plans routinely cover abortion or provide limited coverage. About 14% of all abortions in the United States are paid for with public funds, virtually all of which are state funds. 16 states (CA, CT, HI, ED, IL, MA, MD, MD, MN, MT, NJ, NM, NY, OR, VT, WA and WV) pay for abortions for some poor women.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss5309a1.htm>

- A total of 853,485 legal induced abortions were reported to CDC for 2001 from 49 reporting areas, representing a 0.5% decrease from the 857,475 legal induced abortions reported by the same 49 reporting areas for 2000.
- The abortion ratio, defined as the number of abortions per 1,000 live births, was 246 in 2001, compared with 245 reported for 2000. This represents a 0.4% increase in the abortion ratio.
- The abortion rate was 16 per 1,000 women aged 15--44 years for 2001, the same as for 2000. For both the 48 and 49 reporting areas, the abortion rate remained relatively constant during 1997--2001.
- The highest percentages of reported abortions were for women who were unmarried (82%), white (55%) and aged <25 years (52%).
- Of all abortions for which gestational age was reported, 59% were performed at ≤ 8 weeks' gestation and 88% at <13 weeks.
- From 1992 (when detailed data regarding early abortions were first collected) through 2001, steady increases have occurred in the percentage of abortions performed at ≤ 6 weeks' gestation.
- A limited number of abortions were obtained at >15 weeks' gestation, including 4.3% at 16--20 weeks and 1.4% at ≥ 21 weeks.
- A total of 35 reporting areas submitted data stating that they performed medical (nonsurgical) procedures, making up 2.9% of all reported procedures from the 45 areas with adequate reporting on type of procedure.
- In 2000 (the most recent year for which data are available), 11 women died as a result of complications from known legal induced abortion. No deaths were associated with known illegal abortion.
- **Interpretation:** During 1990--1997, the number of legal induced abortions gradually declined. When the same 48 reporting areas are compared, the number of abortions decreased during 1996--2001. In 2000 and 2001, even with one additional reporting state, the number of abortions declined slightly. In 2000, as in previous years, deaths related to legal induced abortions occurred rarely (less than one death per 100,000 abortions).
- For women who obtained an abortion and whose number of previous abortions was adequately reported (39 reporting areas), 55% were reported to have obtained an abortion for the first time, and 18% were reported to have had at least two previous abortions.
- For women whose marital status was adequately reported (39 reporting areas), 79% of women who obtained abortions were known to be unmarried ([Table 11](#)). The abortion ratio for unmarried women (572 per 1,000 live births) was 8.8 times that for married women (65 per 1,000).

Arguments Against Abortion

Kerby Anderson

<http://www.leaderu.com/orgs/probe/docs/arg-abor.html> - Leadership University

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Biblical Arguments Against Abortion

In this essay we will be discussing arguments against abortion. The first set of arguments we will consider are biblical arguments.

That being said, we must begin by acknowledging that the Bible doesn't say anything about abortion directly. Why the silence of the Bible on abortion? The answer is simple. Abortion was so unthinkable to an Israelite woman that there was no need to even mention it in the criminal code. Why was abortion an unthinkable act? First, children were viewed as a gift or heritage from the Lord. Second, the Scriptures state--and the Jews concurred--that God opens and closes the womb and is sovereign over conception. Third, childlessness was seen as a curse.

One of the key verses to understand in developing a biblical view of the sanctity of human life is Psalm 139. This psalm is the inspired record of David's praise for God's sovereignty in his life. He begins by acknowledging that God is omniscient and knows what David is doing at any given point in time. He goes on to acknowledge that God is aware of David's thoughts before he expresses them. David adds that wherever he might go, he cannot escape from God, whether he travels to heaven or ventures into Sheol. God is in the remotest part of the sea and even in the darkness. Finally David contemplates the origin of his life and confesses that God was there forming him in the womb.

For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven

together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be (vv. 13-16).

Here David speaks of God's relationship with him while he was growing and developing before birth. Notice that the Bible doesn't speak of fetal life as mere biochemistry. The description here is not of a piece of protoplasm that becomes David: this is David already being cared for by God while in the womb.

In verse 13, we see that God is the Master Craftsman fashioning David into a living person. In verses 14 and 15, David reflects on the fact that he is a product of God's creative work within his mother's womb, and he praises God for how wonderfully God has woven him together.

David draws a parallel between his development in the womb and Adam's creation from the earth. Using figurative language in verse 15, he refers to his life before birth when "I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth." This poetic allusion harkens back to Genesis 2:7 which says that Adam was made from the dust of the earth.

David also notes that "Thine eyes have seen my unformed substance." This shows that God knew David even before he was known to others. The term translated *unformed substance* is a noun derivative of a verb meaning "to roll up." When David was just forming as a fetus, God's care and compassion already extended to him. The reference to "God's eyes" is an Old Testament term used to connote divine oversight of God in the life of an individual or group of people.

Next, we will consider additional Old Testament passages that provide a biblical argument against abortion.

Additional Old Testament Arguments Against Abortion

Now that we've looked at Psalm 139, the most popular argument against abortion, let's look at two other Old Testament passages.

Another significant passage is Psalm 51. It was written by David after his sin of adultery with Bathsheba and records his repentance. David confesses that his sinful act demonstrated the original sin that was within him, "Surely I have been a sinner from birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me" (Ps. 51:5). David concludes that from his time of conception, he had a sin nature. This would imply that he carried the image of God from the moment of conception, including the marred image scarred from sin.

Human beings are created in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1; 9:6). Bearing the image of God is the essence of humanness. And though God's image in man was marred at the Fall, it was not erased (cf. 1 Cor. 11:7; James 3:9). Thus, the unborn baby is made in the image of God and therefore fully human in God's sight.

This verse also provides support for what is called the traducian view of the origin of the soul. According to this perspective, human beings were potentially in Adam (Rom. 5:12, Heb. 7:9-10)

and thus participated in his original sin. The "soulish" part of humans is transferred through conception. Therefore, an unborn baby is morally accountable and thus fully human.

Another argument against abortion can be found in the Old Testament legal code, specifically Exodus 21:22-25.

If men who are fighting hit a pregnant woman and she gives birth prematurely but there is no serious injury, the offender must be fined whatever the woman's husband demands and the court allows. But if there is serious injury, you are to take life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise.

The verses appear to teach that if a woman gives birth prematurely, but the baby is not injured, then only a fine is appropriate. However, if the child dies then the law of retaliation (*lex talionis*) should be applied. In other words, killing an unborn baby would carry the same penalty as killing a born baby. A baby inside the womb has the same legal status as a baby outside the womb.

Some commentators have come to a different conclusion because they believe the first verses only refer to a case of accidental miscarriage. Since only a fine is levied, they argue that an unborn baby is merely potential life and does not carry the same legal status as a baby that has been born.

There are at least two problems with this interpretation. First, the normal Hebrew word for *miscarry* is not used in this passage (cf. Gen. 31:38; Exod. 23:26; Job 2:10; Hos. 9:14). Most commentators now believe that the action described in verse 22 is a premature birth not an accidental miscarriage. Second, even if the verses do describe a miscarriage, the passage cannot be used to justify abortion. The injury was accidental, not intentional (as abortion would be). Also, the action was a criminal offense and punishable by law.

Medical Arguments Against Abortion

Thus far in our discussion we have looked at biblical arguments against abortion. But what if someone doesn't believe in the Bible? Are there other arguments we can use? Yes, there are: medical arguments, for example. Let's look, then, at some of the medical arguments against abortion.

The medical arguments against abortion are compelling. For example, *at conception the embryo is genetically distinct from the mother*. To say that the developing baby is no different from the mother's appendix is scientifically inaccurate. A developing embryo is genetically different from the mother. A developing embryo is also genetically different from the sperm and egg that created it. A human being has 46 chromosomes (sometimes 47 chromosomes). Sperm and egg have 23 chromosomes. A trained geneticist can distinguish between the DNA of an embryo and that of a sperm and egg. But that same geneticist could not distinguish between the DNA of a developing embryo and a full-grown human being.

Another set of medical arguments against abortion surround *the definition of life and death*. If one set of criteria have been used to define death, could they also be used to define life? Death used to be defined by the cessation of heartbeat. A stopped heart was a clear sign of death. If the

cessation of heartbeat could define death, could the onset of a heartbeat define life? The heart is formed by the 18th day in the womb. If heartbeat was used to define life, then nearly all abortions would be outlawed.

Physicians now use a more rigorous criterion for death: brain wave activity. A flat EEG (electroencephalograph) is one of the most important criteria used to determine death. If the cessation of brain wave activity can define death, could the onset of brain wave activity define life? Individual brain waves are detected in the fetus in about 40-43 days. Using brain wave activity to define life would outlaw at least a majority of abortions.

Opponents to abortion also raise the controversial issue of fetal pain. Does the fetus feel pain during abortion? The evidence seems fairly clear and consistent. Consider this statement made in a British medical journal: "Try sticking an infant with a pin and you know what happens. She opens her mouth to cry and also pulls away. Try sticking an 8-week-old human fetus in the palm of his hand. He opens his mouth and pulls his hand away. A more technical description would add that changes in heart rate and fetal movement also suggest that intrauterine manipulations are painful to the fetus."

Obviously, other medical criteria could be used. For example, the developing fetus has a unique set of fingerprints as well as genetic patterns that make it unique. The development of sonography has provided us with a "window to the womb" showing us that a person is growing and developing in the mother's womb. We can discern eyes, ears, fingers, a nose, and a mouth. Our visual senses tell us this is a baby growing and maturing. This is not a piece of protoplasm; this is a baby inside the womb.

The point is simple. *Medical science leads to a pro-life perspective rather than a pro-choice perspective.* If medical science can be used at all to draw a line, the clearest line is at the moment of conception. Medical arguments provide a strong case against abortion and for life.

Legal Arguments Against Abortion

At this point in our discussion, we need to look at legal arguments against abortion.

The best legal argument against abortion can be seen in the case of *Roe v. Wade*. It violated standard legal reasoning. The Supreme Court decided not to decide when life begins and then turned around and overturned the laws of 50 different states.

Most of the Supreme Court's verdict rested upon two sentences. "We need not resolve the difficult question of when life begins. When those trained in the respective disciplines of medicine, philosophy, and theology are unable to arrive at any consensus, the judiciary, at this point in the development of man's knowledge, is not in a position to speculate as to an answer."

Although the sentences sounded both innocuous and unpretentious, they were neither. The Supreme Court's non-decision was not innocuous. It overturned state laws that protected the unborn and has resulted in over 30 million abortions (roughly the population of Canada) in the United States.

The decision also seems unpretentious by acknowledging that it did not know when life begins. But if the Court did not know, then it should have acted "as if" life was in the womb. A crucial role of government is to protect life. Government cannot remove a segment of the human population from its protection without adequate justification.

The burden of proof should lie with the life-taker, and the benefit of the doubt should be with the life-saver. Put another way: "when in doubt, don't." A hunter who hears rustling in the bushes shouldn't fire until he knows what is in the bushes. Likewise, a Court which doesn't know when life begins, should not declare open season on the unborn.

The burden of proof in law is on the prosecution. The benefit of doubt is with the defense. This is also known as a presumption of innocence. The defendant is assumed to be innocent unless proven guilty. Again the burden of proof is on the entity that would take away life or liberty. The benefit of the doubt lies with the defense.

The Supreme Court clearly stated that it does not know when life begins and then violated the very spirit of this legal principle by acting as if it just proved that no life existed in the womb. Even more curious was the fact that to do so, it had to ignore the religious community and international community on the subject of the unborn.

Had the religious community really failed to reach a consensus? Although there were some intramural disagreements, certainly the weight of evidence indicated that a Western culture founded on Judeo-Christian values held abortion to be morally wrong. People with widely divergent theological perspectives (Jewish, Catholic, evangelical and fundamental Protestants) shared a common agreement about the humanity of the unborn.

The same could be said about the international legal community. Physicians around the world subscribed to the Hippocratic Oath ("I will not give a woman a pessary to produce abortion"). The unborn were protected by various international documents like the Declaration of Geneva and the U.N. Declaration of the Rights of the Child.

Just as there are solid medical arguments against abortion, so also there are legal arguments against abortion. *Roe vs. Wade* was a bad decision that needs to be overturned.

Philosophical Arguments Against Abortion

Finally, we will conclude our discussion by looking at philosophical arguments against abortion.

A third set of arguments against abortion would be philosophical arguments. A key philosophical question is where do you draw the line? Put another way, when does a human being become a person?

The Supreme Court's decision of *Roe v. Wade* separated personhood from humanity. In other words, the judges argued that a developing fetus was a human (i.e., a member of the species *Homo sapiens*) but not a person. Since only persons are given 14th Amendment protection under the Constitution, the Court argued that abortion could be legal at certain times. This left to

doctors, parents, or even other judges the responsibility of arbitrarily deciding when personhood should be awarded to human beings.

The Supreme Court's cleavage of personhood and humanity made the ethical slide down society's slippery slope inevitable. Once the Court allowed people to start drawing lines, some drew them in unexpected ways and effectively opened the door for infanticide and euthanasia.

The Court, in the tradition of previous line-drawers, opted for biological criteria in their definition of a "person" in *Roe v. Wade*. In the past, such criteria as implantation or quickening had been suggested. The Court chose the idea of viability and allowed for the possibility that states could outlaw abortions performed after a child was viable. But viability was an arbitrary criterion, and there was no biological reason why the line had to be drawn near the early stages of development. The line, for example, could be drawn much later.

Ethicist Paul Ramsey frequently warned that any argument for abortion could logically be also used as an argument for infanticide. As if to illustrate this, Dr. Francis Crick, of DNA fame, demonstrated that he was less concerned about the ethics of such logical extensions and proposed a more radical definition of personhood. He suggested in the British journal *Nature* that if "a child were considered to be legally born when two days old, it could be examined to see whether it was an 'acceptable member of human society.'" Obviously this is not only an argument for abortion; it's an argument for infanticide.

Other line-drawers have suggested a cultural criterion for personhood. Ashley Montagu, for example, stated, "A newborn baby is not truly human until he or she is molded by cultural influences later." Again, this is more than just an argument for abortion. It is also an argument for infanticide.

More recently some line-drawers have focused on a mental criterion for personhood. Dr. Joseph Fletcher argues in his book *Humanhood* that "Humans without some minimum of intelligence or mental capacity are not persons, no matter how many of these organs are active, no matter how spontaneous their living processes are." This is not only an argument for abortion and infanticide; it's adequate justification for euthanasia and the potential elimination of those who do not possess a certain IQ. In other writings, Joseph Fletcher suggested that an "individual" was not truly a "person" unless he has an IQ of at least 40.

In conclusion, we can see that there are many good arguments against abortion. Obviously there are a number of biblical arguments against abortion. But there are also medical, legal, and philosophical arguments against abortion. The Bible and logic are on the side of the Christian who wants to stand for the sanctity of human life.