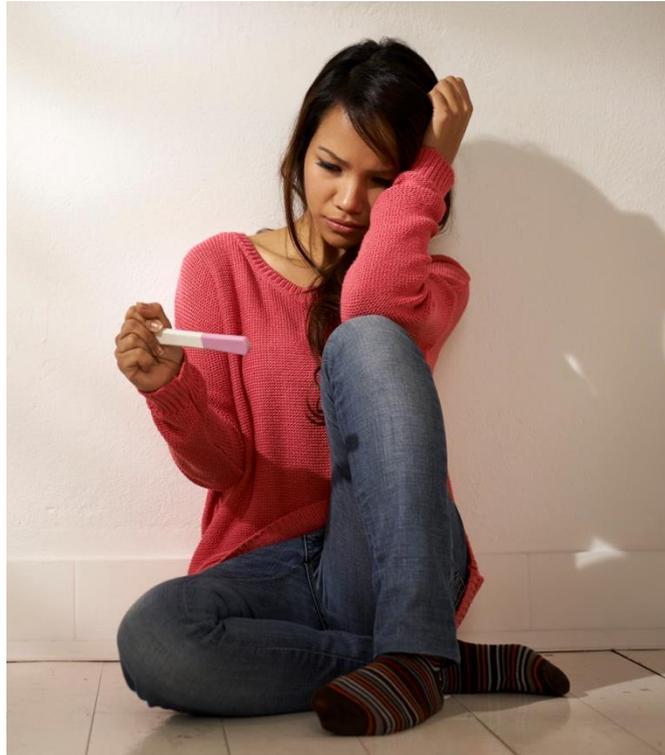


# SHOULD I SUPPORT ABORTION



**A TRACT BY JOHN POTTER**

## SHOULD I SUPPORT ABORTION?

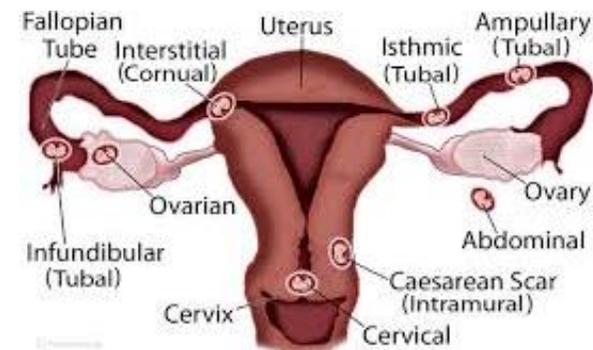
Abortion is a general term referring to an act that causes some process not to proceed to completion. Business projects may be aborted when there is a change in the economy and holidays can be aborted because of bad weather. In this little document I am not talking about those matters; I am referring specifically to abortions in which a foetus/child is removed from the uterus (womb) by deliberate human intervention. And the question I am asking is: should I support such actions?

### CASES TO CONSIDER

#### Foetus Abnormalities

There are two conditions for which we can agree that abortion is a sensible strategy:

- Cases in which the foetus is proved to be dead in the womb.
- Cases of ectopic pregnancy, where the foetus adheres outside of the uterus and has no hope of proper development.



#### Threats to the mother's life

Sometimes something goes wrong in the pregnancy and the mother's life comes under threat. Sepsis/Septicaemia (blood poisoning) is a case in point. This is caused by a bodily reaction to infection; it is a common

condition. In relation to pregnancy it most often develops after the birth but it can occur during pregnancy and the mother's life may be threatened if the pregnancy is permitted to continue. In such cases there is a medical question to be asked and only a competent physician can supply an informed answer as to what action should be taken. In the final analysis though it is the woman's choice as to whether her baby should be killed in order to save herself. We are not able to make general rules about such cases; each situation must be considered on its own merits.

### Threats to the mother's mental health

Some women experience trauma when they discover that they are pregnant. Rape, early teen age pregnancy and women beyond the normal child bearing age are cases in point. On the other hand, abortion is also demonstrated to be the cause of mental trauma years after the event. Once again, there are questions to answer here on an individual case basis; it is difficult if not counter-productive to try to make a general rule.

### Abortion as a means of birth control

In Western countries there is little excuse for women to become pregnant against their will. Young women are given sexual education at school these days at or around puberty, and there are multiple choices of proven contraceptives to choose from if a woman wishes to indulge in sex but deliberately exclude pregnancy. It is regrettable that despite this, the vast majority of abortions carried out in the West have to do with women who get pregnant by their deliberate and free choice to indulge in sexual intercourse without protection. Should the baby be sacrificed in such cases?

### SOME CONCLUSIONS

The case for abortion moves from: (1) situations on which we can all agree that abortion is a sensible and ethical procedure; to (2) women who wish to indulge in sex without responsibility and get pregnant because they fail to take reasonable precautions to prevent it. In cases where the baby is not dead or the mother's life is not threatened we need to ask whether a woman's choice to be free of responsibility for her actions is more important than the life of the baby. And this comes down to what we think a

baby in the womb is: is it a thing or a human being? For we still view killing a human being as murder and prescribe penalties for those who do so.

### THE FOETUS/BABY

There are plenty of websites that give a week by week picture of the development of a baby in the uterus, e.g. [www.babycentre.com.au](http://www.babycentre.com.au).



At 4 weeks the foetus is not recognisable as a human being; by 7 weeks it is vaguely human in shape but still a blob; at 10 weeks it is distinctly humanoid - fingernails and hair are developing and the baby can be seen swallowing and kicking. That is to say, at 10 weeks the evidence is that the 'thing in the womb' has become a living person, with the right to live and continue developing until it is ready to be birthed. To kill a baby, that has no defects at or after 10 weeks simply because the mother finds it inconvenient must be considered murder. The pro-choice people get around this problem by claiming that a baby is not a human until it is birthed but in my view this position cannot be justified.

### WHAT IS A HUMAN?

The evolutionists tell us that humans are just animals, like every other animal with no soul or spirit dimension; they are just a body with a mind - although positivists they do not agree as to where the mind actually is! In the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, evolutionists argued that dark skinned people were inferior types – not as far up the evolutionary ladder as white people. They used this idea as an excuse to shoot and starve to death dark skinned people in order to take control of their goods. This idea was called Social Darwinism; unfortunately for the evolutionists, Hitler took the idea to an extreme and it has become unpopular now to call Africans and South Sea

Islanders 'sub-human'. It is now classified as racist to demeanour dark skinned persons and murder if you kill them. So why is it not murder when you kill a living baby in the womb?

The long held traditional idea of a human, which I prefer, is a being with a body and a soul. The ancient Greeks believed this (*soma* and *psyche*), as do the Sotho tribes in South Africa today (*mmele* and *moyo*). And this is definitely the Judaeo-Christian position: a human has a *body and a soul*. St Augustine saw the soul as a rational (thinking) being and a human as a soul fused with a human body; both are needed to declare a person a human. The question is: when do the soul and body come together? If the baby is aborted before the soul is added, then we are only aborting human flesh. If we abort the baby after the soul is added then we are murdering a human being.

The Judaeo-Christian belief is that the soul is added when the foetus is fully humanoid, i.e. at 10 weeks. [This opinion is based on the Biblical evidence that the Spirit of God inhabited Moses's Tabernacle as soon as the physical structure was completed (Exodus 40:33-34); and the same things happened when Solomon's Temple was completed (I Kings 8:10-11)]. But is there any practical evidence that this is so?

### **A CASE IN POINT**

A colleague of mine had a daughter, a lovely child who mixed with the wrong people in her early teenage years. She became both completely disobedient to her parents and extremely promiscuous. Her parents persisted in trying to get her to behave in a socially acceptable manner to no affect. Her response was to refuse to speak to them.

Over the next few years she ran into trouble with the authorities and at 16 she was classified as an extreme schizophrenic. At 17 she began living with a warlock and became pregnant. When that happened the warlock and all of her anti-social friends left her, and in desperation she returned to her parental home. Her mother hearing a knock at the door opened it and was surprised to find her daughter standing there and falling into her arms in tears. From that moment forward their relationship was fully restored.

Under South African law a person classified as an extreme schizophrenic

may be aborted by the authorities without her permission. My friend and her daughter began to pray about this and were surprised when the Holy Spirit said: 'I want this child to have a soul'. Thanks to a number of strange delays, the baby was aborted at 12 weeks. Both the young woman and her mother felt at peace about this believing that the baby had received its soul

and was snatched away to heaven when it was taken from the womb, to await the judgement on those who kill the saints (Revelations 6:9-11).

At the time that this story came to my attention, I was writing a research report on humanness and asking questions about when the soul might be added to the body. I took this case to be strong support for the notion that the soul is added to the body at about 10 weeks from conception. And this being so, I am persuaded that:

- An abortion prior to 8 weeks removes a developing embryo that is not fully human. The 'crime' is to negate God's intention that we be 'fruitful and multiply'.
- An abortion after 10 weeks kills a fully developed human and the 'crime' is murder. Our Parliaments may determine that this is a lawful act but that only brings a sad responsibility on all of us who are citizens under those laws.

### **THE CURRENT POSITION**

Abortion is a State issue in Australia and regulations vary between States. Most States allow abortions up to 20-22 weeks of pregnancy. In Victoria, a baby may be aborted after 24 weeks if two doctors agree it is necessary to save the mother.

South Australia is the only State to collect statistics on government funded (Medicare) abortions. In 2002 there were 5147 abortions in South Australia which, extrapolated nationally, suggests the number was 73 000 abortions country wide that year.

In consideration of the above discourse, I am anti-abortion except for cases where the baby is dead or ectopic. With regard to cases where the mother's life is endangered, I am not in a position to make a judgement – this is the mother's decision based on advice from her medical advice. The

case for abortion on account of the mother's mental health is problematic and prone to abuse; on such cases I also do not make a judgement. But I am opposed to abortions which are purely a means of birth control on the ground that woman who do not wish to become pregnant have every opportunity to avoid pregnancy.

It is clearly demonstrated that women who have an abortion simply to get rid of an unwanted baby often regret it. I would counsel such women against an abortion on the grounds that they will suffer more mental trauma as a result of taking this action than carrying the baby to birth. Carrying a baby to birth is after all a very rewarding occupation. A pregnant woman experiences the Life-force within them in a unique way; it may be hard to see at the time but the advantages of carrying the baby full term far outweigh the disadvantages.

My wife fell pregnant at 39 years of age. This was something of a 'surprise' to both of us. Her doctor offered her an abortion but she said: 'If I am pregnant then I am pregnant'. The result was a beautiful and highly intelligent daughter (we had three sons prior to this) who has been a fantastic companion for my wife over the past 39 years. We would not have missed her for anything. I agree with politicians like Tony Abbot and Barnaby Joyce that abortion has become a national tragedy in Australia and women need to seek counselling before they take such an action.

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