

## Should you kill a violinist by disconnecting him from your body if it is keeping him alive?

If a woman is carrying a child or potential child in the womb it depends on her. Biodependency is when the unborn needs the mother so that it can remain alive. Social dependency is when the living thing needs another to look after it. The mother who is keeping her newborn warm is one example of that.

The argument that when a baby is not growing because of the informed consent of the mother in her womb she has the right to end the biodependency. Even when a child is in the womb there are different ways in which the woman provides for it as in social dependency. Eg she looks after herself for that helps the baby. She gets plenty of water and nutritious food.

In abortion, biodependency primarily is ended. Social dependency is ended too.

The violinist argument applies where a woman is held to have the right to disconnect herself from a man connected to her by machines to keep him alive. It is interesting for she gets that right for she did not make a contract with him. Its point is that if a baby in the womb has a right to life that right cannot equal or trump the right of a woman to make choices about her own body. The baby that is not viable outside the womb is essentially on life support. Life support can be switched off. If a woman is keeping a violinist alive by being hooked up to him for nine months she can disconnect herself though she knows it will kill him. So she has the right to disconnect the child from her body.

I would add that even if she has to knife him to get free she has that right. If she has this right over somebody outside her body who is joined to her imagine what right she has if he could be put inside her even if it would do her no obvious harm!

The argument is based on how nobody has the right to save their life by taking an organ from you to live even if it does you little harm and if you do not consent or you do consent and change your mind. It is about the principle. You cannot force a woman to donate her body to having a baby any more than you can force her to donate an organ. So the argument has implications for abortion.

Judith Jarvis Thomson, the creator of the violinist argument, maintained that a baby having a right to life in the womb does not in itself prove abortion wrong. Just as a woman can disconnect herself from the violinist and kill him by negligence or indirectly so she has the right to end a pregnancy - to cut off the supply her body makes to the unborn baby.

Somebody told a parable that helps see what Thomson was getting at. A robot can take eggs from young women by force but fertilise them with their consent. One young woman's egg was accidentally fertilised without her consent. In that case the machine will tear the baby to death at some stage perhaps even up to when the baby is ready to be "born". The girl can have the baby removed and implanted in her womb to save it. Should she? What if she was a clairvoyant and knew the baby would be one of the biggest life savers ever in the world? What if the baby would be an ordinary person?

Is she bound to donate her body to carry the baby?

Or is she bound to refuse to let her body be treated as an incubator?

Or is it up to her for either scenario is bad?

A baby is killed if nothing is done. She still is the cause of its death whether directly or indirectly. Direct or indirect does not matter when she knows what the result will be. It is obvious that it is up to her to decide if she is going to be a donor or an incubator. That trumps the baby's right to life and even its right not to suffer.

So we see the pro-choice argument is right. Is it really that important in that light if the baby was conceived on purpose or by accident? No. There is a difference but not a chasm. There is no morally significant difference for it is still all about, "Should a woman be made to carry a baby she does not want using her body any longer?"

If cancerous tumours routinely developed brains and ended up at the level of say four month fetuses we would have no problem aborting them. The reason we have no problem is that the person has a right not to be forced to be a body donor.

The violinist argument suggests that the woman's desire is important. The more she wants to be free from the violinist the more right she is to let him die. So desire is an important matter in deciding the morality of abortion.

One problem is the argument works best with self-administered abortion! It becomes a problem if a woman has a right to choose but the baby also has a right to life WHEN somebody else has to perform the abortion! A right to control your body

does not give somebody else a duty or right to help you if they have conscience objections.

One problem with the violinist argument is that it seems to make sense as long as you think of the violinist not as you but as somebody else. You would hate that argument if it was saying you should be the violinist. Pro-life people say that people are not putting themselves in the place of the unborn baby.

To that it may be answered that most of us it can make sense in a Darwinian sense. The fact is you are not the violinist and the unborn baby so there is something selfish in it.

You are the violinist. It is argued that unless I am to blame for you being ill nobody has the right to take blood from me by force to save your life even if there is no other way. If I am responsible then I have no right to refuse because I am responsible for you needing my blood in the first place. What if you needed my body for some magical reason? The answer is still yes. Notice how even a little blood is put before saving a life? Whatever we have proven we have certainly proven that nobody can prove abortion is wrong. Banning abortion only makes sense if the unborn child's life is sacred. But is the violinist's life sacred? If it is then it is not treated as such and we feel it should not be so we cannot say we are sure abortion really is wrong.

All that seems to suggest that if the mother is to blame for her unborn baby's illness then she cannot have an abortion. The argument that a woman is the cause of her being pregnant because she had sex freely and sex leads to pregnancy implies that abortion might be allowed in rape. If the mother was the cause of her unborn child being sick then abortion would be banned as well.

Is banning abortion bad in so far as it has to pass over the woman's right to her own body? Even if you are against abortion and you are right to it is obvious that your overriding the woman's right over her body is a necessary evil.

It is said that abortion is a human issue not a gender issue. It is both. Sometimes it is more of a gender issue. When a woman is raped the man can get no consideration if she has to terminate the pregnancy. She is having an abortion to assert that she has the right not to let men procreate by rape. As the desire of the woman for an abortion is very important it overrides the desire of the male for her to stay pregnant. He is not donating his body. She is.

What about men, the fathers of these babies lined up for abortion? It is felt that men have a responsibility for the foetus but not the right to make decision about its future.

The foetus unlike one of us does not have a concept of its future and horror that its life is going to be taken so by no means can any abortion be equated with murder. Very few consider a woman rejoicing over her miscarriage as being on a par with a woman who is delighted that her newborn dies.

The foetus is part of the mother but not just a part and has no potential to live apart from her. Life by itself does not establish a right to life. A kidney may be killed.

It is only medicine that makes pregnancy a good thing. In itself it is very dangerous for the woman and that is why a lot of human intervention is needed. Nature does not care and cannot care for it is what it is. Women's bodies are poorly "designed" for pregnancy which is why there would be a lot of deaths if nature had its way. It is more science that brings a baby safely into the world than anything else. It is more science than anything else that looks after the woman. The violence of pregnancy against the woman is critical when you are trying to formulate an argument for abortion based on the woman's right to decide for her own body.

Religion will say that if a woman had the right to make her body stop feeding her unborn baby and thus cut off its life support she still has no right to stick a needle in to kill it or get somebody else to do it. There is a difference between using a weapon or just turning of a machine keeping the other person alive. Or so it says. But that is splitting hairs. A dead body still exists at the end of it. And if she could stop her womb feeding her baby by willpower what about how this would be crueller than using a lethal injection? Pain has to matter.

We conclude that one thing is certain. The religious doctrine that life should never be taken is sanctimonious virtue signalling nonsense. The violinist argument encourages us to feel that abortion should be permitted in cases of rape or when the mother's life is in danger from the pregnancy. Religion is wanted by the world for protecting life but its logic is awry so it is no real help.