

It's About Personhood

(Response to Tori cont'd). Furthermore, the fetus shows many other signs of life long before birth: a detectable heartbeat and brainwaves by 6 weeks, pain receptors by 7.5 weeks, fully formed organs by 10 weeks, REM sleep by 23 weeks, all five senses by the third trimester, etc.

WHEN DOES  BEGIN?

Peter ██████████


...the fact remains that not every fetus becomes a human, some are miscarriages, some are stillborn, some are so genetically damaged that they don't survive. That's scientifically and biologically and every-other-ology true. What you didn't do was ask all those biologist - across various cultures - is what about all the fetuses that don't make it. You're asking the wrong question, the right question is when does that life become a human, and the answer is at birth. that's why we celebrate birthdays, not conception days. Only christians, and only very recently, have the view that you have a human at conception, and it wasn't their idea, it was the idea of wicked politicians that decided this was a way of conning religious people into voting for them...

Peter, just because some fetus's die at an early age before being born does not negate their core humanity. Would we say that a 1-year-old toddler who dies young was somehow less human than an individual who lives to be 100? The toddler certainly did not fulfill their "potential". You state your own opinion that life begins at birth by stating that it is birthdays we celebrate - not conception dates. That is an incredibly weak argument. Most women don't know the date of conception. Also, we do celebrate babies' existence prior to birth. It is now the cultural norm that an ultrasound photo is the baby's first photo - passed along excitedly among family and friends. Gender reveal parties are hosted to again celebrate the baby and already make their existence a focal point of social gatherings.

Peter, the change toward recognizing conception as the beginning of each human life has been driven by emerging science - not politics and not religion. The field of genetics and the understanding of DNA exploded during the 80s and 90s. We now know - which we did not know when Roe was decided in 1973 - that at conception a unique human being is formed. Sex, hair color, eye color, even some personality traits, etc are all determined at that point. Nothing more genetically will be added. The beginning human being only needs time and nourishment.


That DNA - different from the mother and father - will identify that human being not simply as a member of the human species by as that UNIQUE, SPECIFIC human being from conception forward. The

science is clear. The biologists are in agreement. It is the politics of the abortion industry that has duped people.

WHEN DOES  BEGIN?

Samantha ██████████
Personhood begins at birth.


Samantha, the "person" vs. "human" argument is often used to devalue human life. A person is a human and a human is a person. Every human being has the Constitutional Right to Life. Therefore, a better question might be, "What is your definition of a human being?" For something as irreplaceable as a human life, an objective criteria — such as genetics — should determine humanity. Scientifically, human life begins at conception. DNA is the scientific identifier of plants, animals and humans. At conception a new human being with its own unique set of DNA — separate from that of its mother or father begins life.

WHEN DOES  BEGIN?

Jennifer ██████████
Mind your own business. An embryo or fetus is NOT the same as an actual person. Try conversing with a fetus the size of your thumb and tell us how the conversation goes. If you're against abortion it's super easy to just not have one. No need to force others to breed against their will.


Jennifer, from conception until death, a human being will continue to grow, change, and age. A human is a human regardless of the stage of growth. At conception, the egg and sperm fuse to create a human being with its own unique set of DNA, separate from that of its mother and father. From conception, the embryo is genetically human and that does not change. We definitely agree that bodily autonomy is important. Therefore, should we not protect the bodily autonomy of the fetus - a separate human life? It would seem that the correct place to exercise bodily autonomy is prior to intercourse - when the woman can rightly exercise control over her own body. Once conception has occurred, she would then be exercising control over another's body - the fetus'. We should not punish women who find themselves in

an unintended pregnancy. We should provide a full generous spectrum of resources. Neither should we punish the unborn human by ending its life.

WHEN DOES  BEGIN?

Kurt [REDACTED]
What you mean is that an embryo is a potential human. I give more rights to what is and has been for many years than I do to what might be if everything goes right.

Kurt, there is no "potential" because it is a human being from conception. The fusion of the egg and sperm creates a human being with its own unique set of DNA — separate from that of its mother or father. DNA is the scientific identifier for plants, animals and humans. A human is a human. The position of valuing one human life over another is the very basis of oppression throughout the world. When we start to put people in categories, we all eventually are put at risk.

WHEN DOES  BEGIN?

Peggy [REDACTED]
Human, yes; not a person until BORN!!!

Peggy, you make a subjective differentiation between being human and a "person". Please provide evidence as to what suddenly makes a baby a human as they pass through the birth canal. A human is a person, and a person is a human.

WHEN DOES  BEGIN?

Carolyn [REDACTED]

Personhood begins when one is born, therefore the right to life does not mean the right to BE born. Where in the Constitution does it say that the fetus has rights over the woman? It is a developing human, (not a dog or cat etc.) at conception but it doesn't have PERSONHOOD STATUS!!

Carolyn, the truth is so obvious that you just stated it yourself. The fetus is in your words, "a developing human". Our civil rights are accorded to us based on our HUMAN rights - our core identity. Again, on what basis other than your own opinion do you try to separate "human" from "person"? Please provide evidence for your assertion. Here is a quote for you to please consider.

Dr. Jerome LeJeune, professor of genetics at the University of Descartes in Paris, was the discoverer of the chromosome pattern of Down syndrome. Dr. LeJeune testified to the United States Senate Judiciary Subcommittee, "after fertilization has taken place a new human being has come into being." He stated that this "is no longer a matter of taste or opinion," and "not a metaphysical contention, it is plain experimental evidence." He added, "Each individual has a very neat beginning, at conception."

WHEN DOES  BEGIN?

Michael [REDACTED]

A woman is a person. A man is a person.
A fetus is a fetus.

Michael, "Fetus" simply designates that particular time frame in a person's continuum of life - just like "toddler" or "adolescent". A human is a human regardless of the stage of growth. From conception, the embryo is genetically human and that does not change. In fact, our DNA from the moment of conception will not only identify us scientifically as "human", but it identifies us personally from that moment until our death. A human being and a person are one and the same. There is no distinction. If it's a human being, it's a "person."

WHEN DOES  BEGIN?

Jed ██████████

No one says it isn't a form of life. So is bacteria. We are proud of our antibiotics, however. The issue is whether there is some reason to treat a blastocyst as if it were a fully formed, born human in whom the mother, family, and society, have made a significant investment.

Jed, it is very dangerous to use your shifting, subjective criteria of "importance to the family or society". Some societies do not value women - they treat them as sub humans. Under your criteria that is permissible. Some families do not value children at any stage - as evidenced by cases of child abuse. Does that abusive family have the right to determine that child's value? Your argument to consider "investment of money or energy" or "achievements" is very utilitarian. What about the handicapped or elderly individual who no longer are contributing much to their family or society? Do they lose some of their humanity? With your subjective criteria who gets to decide the threshold for protected humanity? Again, for something as irreplaceable and valuable as a human life, we need an objective, scientific, static criteria.