

My Body/My Choice

WHEN DOES  BEGIN?

Taylor [REDACTED]
Doesn't matter. It's alive, it can't be in my body.

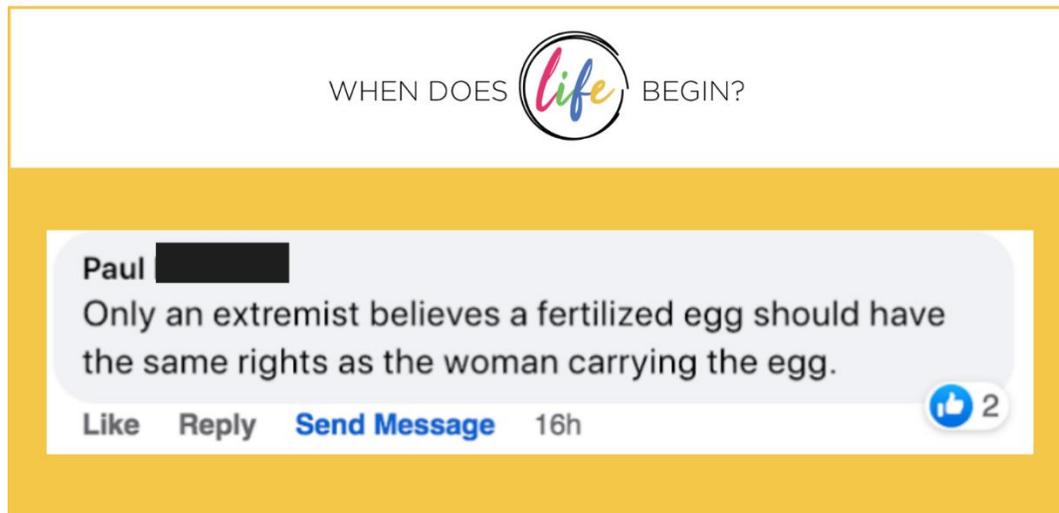
Taylor, Mahatma Gandhi said, "the true measure of any society can be found in how it treats its most vulnerable members." Once conception occurs there are two distinct human beings - both with rights to life and body autonomy. Should the baby's very right to life be subject to the mother's simply because she is the stronger party? Might does not make right. Respecting the life of the baby is not inherently anti-woman or anti-choice — the woman has many choices prior to the creation of the new human life. Her choice should end where another human life begins. Both must be protected from that point.

WHEN DOES  BEGIN?

Robin [REDACTED] We can argue over when a few divided cells become a human being and never settle it. The question on abortion is that of body autonomy which is a critical component to the right to privacy that is protected by the Constitution. See *Griswold vs Connecticut* (1965), *McFall vs Shimp* (1978) and *Roe vs Wade* (1973). The same way you cannot force someone to donate bone marrow or their organs after death to save a life you cannot force the use of a woman's uterus to save a life. It must be voluntary. Whether or not you think it moral or immoral, the law is clear. A woman has the right to decide for herself.

Robin, pro-choice arguments suggest that forcing a woman to carry an unwanted pregnancy is a violation of her bodily autonomy. **However, since an embryo is a person with its own unique set of DNA, then abortion is a violation of the embryo's bodily autonomy.** Bone marrow and organs are an extension of a person. When a woman is pregnant, the embryo or fetus is not an extension of the mother. It is its own separate

person. Furthermore, pro-life arguments are not inherently anti-woman or anti-choice — the woman has many choices prior to the creation of the new human life. Her choice should end where another human life begins.



Paul, you are misunderstanding. Following long established common law and cultural norms, the woman's life would take precedence in a situation where the woman's and the baby's physical lives were at risk. What we are saying is that we must recognize that TWO human beings' lives are at stake in every abortion decision. Both must be treated with respect. Should the baby's life be ended for eternity in order to avoid the months long consequences of pregnancy? We are a compassionate people. There are pathways forward - either parenting or adoption that enrich, support and value both the woman and the baby. Why wouldn't that fertilized egg have the same right to life? With its own unique set of DNA, that "fertilized egg" is a human being. A human is a human. The position of valuing one human life over another is the very basis of oppression throughout the world. Every human life has intrinsic value. **When we start to put people in categories, we all eventually are put at risk.**

Our nation's body of law is all about establishing universal, objective human rights - that are not subject to the whims of bureaucrats, parents, or any other subjective decision maker. Our human rights should be protected on the objective basis of humanity. **Please consider that the first right enumerated in our Declaration of Independence is the "Right to Life". That right forms the foundation for all our rights.**