
Debunking the Myths



Dear Pro-Life Partners:

The following is the first in a 5-part series in which I will respond to 21 pro-abortion myths which Danielle D’Souza Gill outlines in her excellent book, “The Choice: The Abortion Divide in America.” The myths I will discuss in this installment revolve around the false belief that life in the womb is merely “A Cluster of Cells.”

MYTH #1: Life begins when a baby is born. A fetus is just a cluster of cells. The fetus is only a potential human being, not a human being.

Pro-choice advocates justify abortion with the argument that a baby not human or a person until birth for the following reasons:

1) *It is not fully developed.* By this reasoning, it would be justifiable to kill a person until the mid-20’s when the brain is fully developed. I understand that many parents would feel justified in strangling their teenagers, but this is generally frowned upon. If birth did indeed produce a fully developed human being, this argument could have some credence. Yet a newborn child is simply entering the next phase of development.

2) *The child is just a part of the mother, like a liver or kidney.* So what is the liver or kidney becoming? Stupid question, you say, for it will always just be a liver or kidney, respective parts of the whole body it occupies. The embryo, conversely, is not part of the whole, but rather its own whole, with its very own liver and kidneys, developing into what it has been since conception—a 46-chromosome-count person.

Furthermore, if I wanted my perfectly healthy liver removed simply because I didn’t want to bother with it, no reputable surgeon would comply. If I sucked up a sea turtle or bald eagle with my shop vac, I would be fined and jailed, not to mention crucified on social media. An unborn child is neither a single organ nor a lesser animal and deserves at least as much consideration.

3) *It is dependent on the mother for life.* A child is still dependent on others for life for quite awhile after birth. (Perhaps infanticide will gradually gain traction for this reason). And what about children born prematurely? Are they magically granted personhood by virtue of breathing air outside the womb, yet children still in mom's tummy at the same point of development are still considered "reproductive tissue"? The only difference is their residence.

MYTH #2: Even if it's technically a human life, the fetus doesn't feel anything or know what's happening anyway. As long as the fetus is dependent on the woman's body, we shouldn't consider it a separate life.

Of course it is true that child in utero depends on the mother for life-giving nutrients...and a completely separate newborn infant needs the intervention of a caregiver to sustain life...and my 26-year-old daughter still needs my hugs, so there. What is becoming increasingly supported by science (imagine that) is that unborn babies feel pain as early 20 weeks, when the nervous system begins to develop (Lozier Institute). Babies will react to, and try to avoid, pain during an abortion "procedure." As for the dependency issue, mother and child have a symbiotic relationship, known as fetomaternal microchimerism. This involves bidirectional cross-placental trafficking during pregnancy, or the persistence of fetal cells in the mother without any apparent rejection. Fetal cells engraft the maternal bone marrow and are able to migrate through the circulation and reach tissues, leading to a micro-chimeric state that can persist for decades. In this manner a pregnant woman will harbor cells from her mother, as well as cells from her child.

MYTH #3: There is a difference between a human being and a person. Even if the fetus is human, it is not a person with rights.

This is hair splitting to support the pro-abortion viewpoint. The genetic makeup of an unborn child cannot deny his/her humanity, but a "person" is defined as "a human being regarded as an individual." In this argument, the very act of granting someone "personhood" lies in the subjective eye of the beholder. Faulty reasoning that led to viewing African-Americans and Jews as less than person, even animals by some, is the same heinous train of thought that is at work here.

MYTH #4: Abortion is a simple and safe procedure, no different from any other medical procedure. Abortion is health care.

Go online and you will find numerous accounts of women's health being put at risk, from complications due to the "procedure" itself that require hospitalization, to infertility, not to mention possible long-term psychological effects. Unless the pregnancy is creating direct harm to the women's life, this is not health care. Planned Parenthood fights against (and wins) legislation that would require abortion facilities to 1) have doorways and hallways wide enough to accommodate a stretcher; 2) be located within 30 miles of a hospital; and 3) employ doctors who have admitting privileges to these hospitals.

Partnering with you for Life,

Linda Verhulst, MRL-WR