

UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE
 Department of Philosophy

Abortion overview

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Remember?

Legal issues:
 "We the People"

- US constitution
 - Articles
 - Amendments
 - Explicit rights
 - Penumbra rights
 - XIV
 - IX
 - An ethical guide?
- Case law
- Non-constitutions & common law


Yawn! You've heard it all before

- It's a human being from conception
- *It's just a blob of cells*
- It's a potential person
- *It's the woman's body*
- It's killing the innocent
- *If you don't want an abortion OK - but don't impose your view on me*



Remember this guy?

- Meanings of 'person'
 - Everyday
 - Human being
 - Philosophical
 - Being with full moral status / a full right to life
 - Being with reason, reflection, self-awareness,...
 - Legal
 - Enron




John Locke

Key ethical questions

- Criteria for special moral status
- Relevance of potentiality
- Maternal v. fetal rights
- Distinguish factual claims from value claims



Uncomfortable positions




- Pro-life (anti-choice?)
 - Ronald Bailey's burning fertility clinic
- Pro-choice (anti-life?)
 - Line drawing and baby killing

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Philosophy gives the means to speak with apparent authority on all matters, and to make oneself admired by the less learned; while law, medicine and the other sciences bring honor and riches upon their practitioners.

- Rene Descartes, Discourse on Method
