

UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE
 Department of Philosophy

Why Abortion is Immoral Don Marquis

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Remember?

Key ethical questions


- Criteria for special moral status
 - Why is killing wrong?
- Relevance of potentiality
- Maternal v. fetal rights
- Distinguish factual claims from value claims

Death: What's all the fuss?



Epicurus

Death is nothing to us. When we exist, death is not, and when death exists, we are not.



Lucretius

To fear death is to blunder into thinking you exist to suffer it. But it's no worse than non-existence before birth.

How does death harm?

- We are harmed by being robbed of things of value
 - And...
- Death robs its victim of ALL future value
 - So...
- Death is one of the greatest harms...




...and that's why kittens are evil

Why abortion is immoral

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    graph LR
      A[Ending a future of value is wrong] -- And --> B[Killing ends future of value]
      B -- Why? --> C[Killing us is wrong]
      A -- And --> D[Abortion ends future of value]
      D -- So --> E[Abortion is wrong]
  
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What is the role of potential in all this?



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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*
