

The Best Pro-Life Arguments for Secular Audiences

(Adapted from the Family Research Council's pamphlet of the same name)

For the full version, please click here:

<https://www.frc.org/brochure/the-best-pro-life-arguments-for-secular-audiences>

Argument from Science

1. At the moment of conception, the new human zygote (i.e. fertilized cell) has a genetic composition that is absolutely unique to itself, different from any other human that has ever existed, including that of its mother (thus disproving the claim that what is involved in abortion is merely “a woman and her body”). Moreover, this zygote is composed of human DNA and other human molecules, so its nature is undeniably human and not some other species.
2. This human zygote meets the scientific definition for a human organism – once the egg is fertilized, it initiates a complex sequence of events that will proceed (barring accident, disease, etc.) seamlessly through formation of the definitive body, birth, childhood, adolescence, maturity, and aging. This is the essence of what it means to be an organism. In contrast, a mere collection of human cells does not exhibit the coordinated interaction directed towards a higher level of organization. Hence it is quite clear from science that at the moment of fertilization, a new human being has come into existence.
3. Medical procedures done in the womb have become a medical specialty in their own right, including the specific requirements of anesthesia.

Note: A Pro-choice argument that the fetus is “not a person yet” is not at all based on science, but is rather a statement of one’s own moral or philosophical perspective.

Those who justify abortion by claiming that “no one knows when life begins” are not arguing science but rather their own brand of politics, philosophy, or even religion. Their argument is not about when life begins but about when, or whether, that life deserves legal acknowledgment and protection. And that brings us to our next topic: the law

Argument from the Legal Perspective

1. What does *Roe vs. Wade* really say about abortion? While many people believe that the Supreme Court decision put limits on when an abortion could be performed, the reality is otherwise: The Court ruled that abortion must be permitted for any reason a woman chooses until the child becomes viable; after viability, an abortion must still be permitted if an abortion doctor deems the abortion necessary to protect a woman’s “health,”²⁴ defined by the Court in another ruling issued the same day as “all factors—physical, emotional, psychological, familial, and the woman’s age—relevant to the well-being of the patient.”
2. Despite this ruling, a strong majority of Americans (61%) believe that abortion should be illegal after the heartbeat starts (22 days – before most women even know they are pregnant.) Only around 10% of Americans believe that abortion should be legal at any time, in all circumstances.
3. 92% of abortions in America are purely elective – done on healthy women to end the lives of healthy children.

4. Even Pro-Choice proponents feel that *Roe vs. Wade* was constitutionally suspect in its ruling:
 - a. The law clerk of Justice Blackmun, the Justice who authored the *Roe v. Wade* opinion, calls it “one of the most intellectually suspect constitutional decisions of the modern era.”
 - b. Even Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg has been critical of *Roe*, saying that it “ventured too far in the change it ordered and presented an incomplete justification for its action, and that the *Roe* decision was “not the way courts generally work.”

What about the pro-choice argument that that to overturn *Roe vs. Wade* would mean a return to back alley abortions and the deaths of countless women? In actuality, overturning *Roe vs. Wade* would not make abortions illegal; rather it would turn abortion legal issues over to the individual state’s and their elected representatives. Secondly, the statistics of the “countless women” who died because of “back alley abortions” is greatly inflated. For example, Dr. Mary Calderone, a former medical director for Planned Parenthood, estimated that 9 out of 10 illegal abortions were done by licensed doctors.

Arguing from Women’s Rights

1. The Pro-Choice proponents try to portray the image that abortion is positive and pro-woman. However, more and more women are coming forward to proclaim just the opposite.
2. Many women who have had abortions are now speaking out that abortion was not an act of empowerment but the result of abandonment, betrayal, and desperation, and how it has negatively affected their lives.
 - a. A website that highlights stories of women trying to cope with the after-effects of abortion: www.afterabortion.com
3. There is now a growing Feminist movement, *Feminists for Life*, that maintains that, rather than empowering women, abortion is a reflection that society has not met the needs of women. Women and children are not natural enemies, of course, and it was a perversion of feminism which brought about such a dichotomy in the first place. No woman should have to abort her child to participate fully in society. If a pregnant woman or mother can’t participate in society, the *true* feminist response is that something is wrong with society. Their website is: <https://www.feministsforlife.org/>
4. The country’s first feminists (Susan B. Anthony, for one), were strongly against abortion: Susan B. Anthony’s newspaper, *The Revolution*, called abortion “child murder” and “infanticide.” In 1869 Anthony said: “No matter what the motive, love of ease or a desire to save from suffering the unborn innocent, the woman is awfully guilty who commits the deed. It will burden her conscience in life, it will burden her soul in death; But oh, thrice guilty is he who drove her to the desperation which impelled her to the crime!”

Conclusion: The more abortion is understood, the more one realizes that it is anti-human, anti-life, and anti-woman. Abortion is different from any other modern social issue debated today, and many people are suffering because of it.