
Subject: Re: McCain picks his vp.
Posted by [Nukelt15](#) on Mon, 01 Sep 2008 16:58:10 GMT
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Extreme views in either direction concerning abortion ignore one of two facts of biology:

1. An early-term embryo has no functional nervous system (though the first activity can be measured fairly early), thus no brain, no consciousness, no feeling.
2. A late-term fetus does have a near-fully-developed nervous system; thus it is capable of feeling and limited thought (possibly consciousness, though we really don't know where that begins), even motor control.

We can safely assume that the line between a human being and a potential human being- if a definite line exists- falls somewhere between those two stages of development. There is a huge, obnoxious gray area there, and both sides of the abortion 'debate' (since it is never a formal debate so much as a passionate argument) tend to expand their position from one end clear across the gray area into the opposite end of the pregnancy. This is absolutely stupid.

Everything we know about biology tells us that an embryo which is only a month old is not a human being yet- that it is not capable of thought, feeling, or anything beyond the basic metabolic processes which sustain even the most elementary bacteria. Likewise, everything we know about an 8-month-old fetus tells us that it is clearly a human being; it is even able to survive and finish developing outside the womb if necessary (with some assistance from modern medicine- I should know; I was born a month early). Hell, a 6 or 7-month-old fetus is well-developed enough to be recognizable as human, to the point where its brain- as it truly is a brain by that time- is able to effect control over muscles.

Arguments to the effect of "we don't know where the line is, so we must err on the side of caution" are utter bullshit- we do know where the line is, we just don't know where it is exactly, and we know damn well that it doesn't lie at conception. Arguments to the effect of "until you are born, you have no rights" are utter bullshit also; we know, and have known since the ECG (that's Electrocardiogram) and the ultrasound became mainstream medicine, that a late-term fetus is as human as a newborn baby.

Arguments from the "it's your responsibility, slacker" perspective are even worse, relying on ad-hominem to make their point. Yes, it's your responsibility... but the argument goes both ways, doesn't it? It is your responsibility not to bring a baby into the world when you know you can't care for it, just as it is your responsibility to make sure that baby is cared for if and when it is born. It is an inherently neutral argument given weight only by the actual or implicit inclusion of "you kill babies because they're inconvenient."

Based on the known facts- not on bullshit, not on the "Word of God," and not on those heart-wrenching pictures of dead embryos- my stated opinion on the subject is that abortion only becomes objectionable late in a pregnancy when the fetus is known to be a thinking, feeling creature. What would I do if I got someone pregnant? I honestly have no idea; I've never been there. I like to think that I'd consult her, then make a decision based on our situation at the time- but who knows, maybe I'd get all sentimental over that little clump of cells and try to hold onto it no

matter what. What I do know is that sentimentality makes horrible policy; the difference between "right" and "wrong" on this subject is almost always defined by entirely subjective views- not by biology.

Not to drag this even further off-topic or anything- just trying to inject a little common sense (appalling how uncommon it is) into the thread. By all means, flame away.
