Judith Jarvis Thompson

A Defense of Abortion



We are asked to notice the development of a human being from conception through birth into childhood is continuous:



The prospects for drawing a line in the development of a fetus look thin.

2

The Case of the Famous Unconscious Violinist

l. Abortion is impermissible even to save the mother's life.

EXTREME

2.

Directly killing an innocent person is murder, murder is impermissible, an abortion may not be performed.



If one's only options are directly killing an innocent person or letting a person die, one must prefer letting a person die, thus an abortion may not be performed One's duty to refrain from directly killing an innocent person is more strigent than one's duty to keep a person from dying.

3.



A woman surely can defned her life against the threat to it posed by the unborn child, even if so doing involves its death. And this shows nor merely that the theses in (1) through (4) are false; it shows also that the extreme view of abortion is false.



Good & Minimally Decent Samaritans



Women are compelled by law to be not merely Minimally Decent

Samaritans but Good Samaritans



No one person is morally required

to make large sacrifices to sustain

the life of another who has not

to unborn persons inside them

right to demand them

