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Writing Assignment 2

Personhood is defined as the condition of being a fully grown individual. When personhood debate goes on, it is usually related to abortion. Abortion was common in ancient times, and the matter of personhood is always the realm of philosophy. Aristotle believed that couples who have many children should have an abortion. It was believed that there is no wrong in killing the baby before his life or sense begun. Even the religion of Hebrew and Christian does not state that a fetus has the same rights or falls into the category of being a person. Many philosophers believe that there are some characteristics of being a person: self-consciousness, interest, rationality, awareness of the future, and ability to communicate. If these conditions are not found in a person, he does not consider a person and for that, he lacks the rights of a person.

Don Marquis is a contemporary American Philosopher who argues that abortion is morally wrong. He believes that abortion is totally immoral, except in some cases. He considers it murder as it belongs to the same moral category as killing an innocent human being. He asserts that the debate of abortion can be resolved after the understanding of wrongness of killing. It is important to know why it is wrong to kill. The philosophy of the future of value condemns the act of favoritism of abortion. He gives the example of people who have future plans. Those plans might not be helpful in the present, but at some point, they will have some value for a person. If such a person is killed, he will not only be deprived of his present values but also the values he might have in future. He believes that infants have future of values, even though they are not a person but in future they will have value for things. He believes that future of values is the best example to condemn the act of abortion. It is because if the fetus is allowed to live it will experience things and have value. The future of value have all the goods that the fetus would have experienced if not be killed.

Judith Jarvis Thomson is an American moral philosopher who wrote an article 'A Defense of Abortion.' In the article, she argues that a woman has right to decide what should happen to her own body even the fetus is person or not. She believes that fetus has a right to live does not mean that a woman does not has a right on her own body. She talks about personhood that a fetus is a person because in some point when it will born, it will become a person. Thomson argue that the 'right to life' does not entail the right to use someone's biology in order to stay alive. She gives the example of thought experiment. She describes in the experiment that suppose a person is plugged to another person for nine months because only his blood can keep him alive. In this way that person will have a right to live, then what about the other person who has to tolerate this for nine months. Thomson says that a person has right and so our bodies are the only thing we have a natural and legitimate claim to own. In another thought experiment she talks about people-seed. She says that a person have no duty to allow the people-seed to gestate on the floor of the house just because one happened to get through meshed curtains. A person voluntary opening of the windows does not give an insurmountable right to the people-seeds. Thus she believes that abortion should be allowed in the case of rape.

Judith Jarvis Thomson gives a more compelling case. Every person has right to live and when a person is given such rights, they have full authority to make decisions for themselves. Women should have right to treat their body the way they want to treat it. The decision of abortion should be given to a woman because they have full claim of their own body. Just because a person has right to live does not mean that the other person can suffer for them. There is a great difference between 'living off a person's body' and ‘caring for someone’ (Boonin and Boonin).

**Reference**

Boonin, David, and Professor of Philosophy David Boonin. *A Defense of Abortion*. Cambridge University Press, 2003.