

Let Beginnings Never End

By Matthew Bock

All events in the course of history have had a beginning. The Apollo 11 mission couldn't have landed on the moon without the initial ignition of fuel. All the great novels begin with a first word. Even going a short walk still requires a first step. All action, progress, and movement depend on a singular first cause. Human life is no different, for one's life always involves some sort of action, progress, or movement. But when is this beginning?

According to the majority of prominent scientists, human development begins at the moment of conception or when the egg is fertilized by the sperm. This moment is the beginning of each and every human life. In the same way that a caterpillar remains the same species as the butterfly that emerges from the chrysalis, so the embryo at the earliest stages of development remains the same human being when it exits the womb. The only difference is its level of development, not its fundamental essence and identity.

Though dependent on the mother's womb for suitable development conditions, the unborn baby otherwise develops completely on its own. Its own unique DNA, not the mother's, directs its cells' functions and division. Its own heart, not the mother's, pumps the blood necessary for life. Its own cells form the tissues of its skeleton, muscles, and nervous system, not the mother's. Thus, an unborn baby is not, as some may claim, simply an extension of the mother's body. Its weakness and dependence only place more responsibility on the mother to respect its life and personhood.

If the child is indeed human and has a personhood separate from that of the mother's, then it is imperative that its human rights be respected by all. If we as a society place such heavy moral value on giving a voice to those who are underrepresented, marginalized, and vulnerable, then affirming the rights of the unborn, who are completely unable to defend and represent themselves, is mandatory in achieving this goal. If any attempt or movement to give voice to the voiceless intentionally excludes such a uniquely vulnerable part of the population, then it is intellectually inconsistent and morally unjust.

Just as all action has a beginning, so it must have an end. The Apollo 11 mission ended with the return of the astronauts to Earth. All great novels have a final punctuation mark that concludes their magnificent story. All walks usually end with a safe return home. Human life ends just the same as well. Death comes for all, and all must accept that. The problem with abortion as with all forms of murder is that it artificially determines this end for many healthy and promising human beings. What was a beautiful beginning is cut short to a gruesome and grisly end. If society time after time cuts short the beginnings of these little ones, then it too can expect an early end as well.