

LIVETS SLUT I LIVETS BÖRJAN
en studie i abortetik

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En studie i abortetik

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ABSTRACT

Arguments put forward for five positions on the moral status of abortion are discussed. The positions range from the view that abortion may be right only if it is necessary to save the woman's life, to the claim that while most safe abortions requested by the woman are right, some abortions would be wrong not to perform and there are cases where it is right to perform abortion even if the woman does not want it. The arguments are found invalid and/or irrelevant. It is argued that a tenable position on the moral status of abortion has to be supported by an act-utilitarian moral theory called BHU.

Application of BHU yields that it is impossible to obtain good reasons for any of the positions. However, this is also true of most other moral theories. Four tentative conclusions seem plausible: 1) Abortion is seldom right in countries where most women lack opportunities to have cheap, safe legal abortions. In other countries, however, many abortions can be right. 2) In many of the justifiable cases of abortion, the woman faces a moral dilemma where she cannot avoid acting wrongly even if she acts rightly. 3) It is in general wrong to omit abortion if the foetus is so severely deformed that it would develop into a person with a life worth not living. It is also in general wrong to omit abortion if this results in abortion being performed at a later time. 4) In very rare cases it may be right to perform abortion even if the woman does not want it, but in practice we lack all means of identifying these cases.

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