

Abortion Rights

This book features opening arguments followed by two rounds of reply between two moral philosophers on opposing sides of the abortion debate. In the opening essays, Kate Greasley and Christopher Kaczor lay out what they take to be the best case for and against abortion rights. In the ensuing dialogue, they engage with each other's arguments and each responds to criticisms fielded by the other. Their conversational argument explores such fundamental questions as: What gives a person the right to life? Is abortion bad for women? What is the difference between abortion and infanticide? Underpinned by philosophical reasoning and methodology, this book provides opposing and clearly structured perspectives on a highly emotive and controversial issue. The result gives readers a window into how moral philosophers argue about the contentious issue of abortion rights, and an in-depth analysis of the compelling arguments on both sides.

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Abortion Rights

For and Against

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Preface and Acknowledgments

The authors of this work passionately, vehemently, and steadfastly disagree about the moral and the legal permissibility of abortion. One of us, Kate Greasley, describes herself as strongly pro-choice. The other author, Christopher Kaczor, would call himself strongly pro-life.

But we do agree that the legal and ethical question of abortion is of signal importance. We agree that political, cultural, and social debate about this topic is enhanced by civil disagreement in which opposing views are openly aired and subject to intense criticism and rational scrutiny.

Most importantly, we value the freedom of speech that makes possible the rational pursuit of deeper insights into political, ethical, and legal issues such as abortion. We are also alike in appreciating the possibility of moral error in our own conclusions. Thus, even while we remain resolute in those conclusions, we recognize that it is worthwhile to engage in thoughtful and respectful exchanges with others and to listen and learn from one another.

Veterans of philosophical abortion argument will no doubt notice that we do not disagree with one another about every element of the traditional debate. While this may sacrifice something in the breadth of the argument, it is, we believe, more than compensated for by the ability to reach greater depth on the matters about which we do disagree. It also means that the book better emulates a real conversation between two people who are engaging with one another not in their capacity as

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representatives of a cause but as individual thinkers who find some arguments on both sides more intriguing and potentially convincing than others. What we find to be the most compelling arguments weighing down on our own or our interlocutor's side, other people may not. Again, this makes the book more of a unique dialogue than a textbook of arguments for and against abortion rights. But it is in this respect in particular that we hope it will contribute something of value to the existing discussion. The hope is that readers whose sympathies lie on either side of the debate (or indeed, are as yet undecided), will find within this one conversation some arguments and objections upon which it is worth reflecting, and will perhaps at least deepen their understanding of the other side's point of view.

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