

What is a Person? Campus Tour
Source Binder



Panel 1:

I am
**LIVING, WHOLE,
& UNIQUE**

I AM LIVING:
96% of biologists agree that **human life begins at fertilization.**¹
An embryological study found that the embryo's development is "embryo-autonomous" which shows that the embryo operates on its own...²

I AM WHOLE:
"A human zygote acts as a complete whole...its coordinated behavior is **the very hallmark of an organism.**"³

I AM UNIQUE:
Fertilization is a critical landmark because a genetically distinct human organism, **who has never existed before and never will again,** is formed...⁴

1. Jacobs SA. The Scientific Consensus on When a Human's Life Begins.
2. O'Rahilly, Ronan and Miller, Fabiola. Human Embryology & Teratology. 2nd Edition.
3. Dr. Maureen Condic. When Does Human Life Begin: A Scientific Perspective.
4. Zernicka-Goetz M. Self-organization of the human embryo in the absence of maternal tissues. Nat Cell Biol.

Claims & Sources:

Claim: Human life begins at fertilization. This is affirmed by 96% of biologists.

Source: [Jacobs SA. The Scientific Consensus on When a Human's Life Begins. Issues Law Med. 2021 Fall;36\(2\):221-233. PMID: 36629778.](#)

Claim: An embryological study found that the embryo's development is "embryo-autonomous" which highlights the "remarkable self-organizing properties of the human embryo."

Source: O'Rahilly, Ronan and Miller, Fabiola. Human Embryology & Teratology. 2nd Edition.

Claim: "A human zygote acts as a complete whole... its coordinated behavior is the very hallmark of an organism."

Source: [Dr. Maureen Condic. When Does Human Life Begin: A Scientific Perspective.](#)

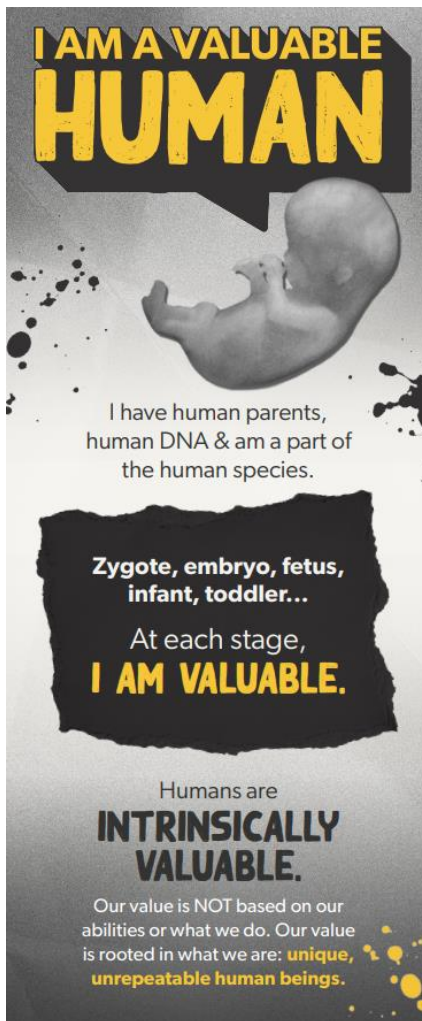
Claim: Fertilization is a critical landmark because a genetically distinct human organism, who has never existed before and never will again, is formed...

Source: Zernicka-Goetz, M. Self-organization of the human embryo in the absence of maternal tissues. Nat Cell Biol. PMID: [27144686](#).

Talking Points for Panel 1:

1. Preborn children are living, distinct, and unique human beings. This is a claim that is supported by embryology and reinforced by the very development of the zygote (a human person starts at fertilization) into a baby. The same human being exists at each stage.
2. Preborn children are not "a part of their mothers' bodies," they are distinct from them. When women give birth, they do not lose something they had before pregnancy and that is because the preborn are not their body.
 - a. When a woman is pregnant, she does not have 20 fingers, 20 toes, male genitals (in case of son), or two heart beats. She is carrying a unique human being with their own body.
3. Each human being is unique because there is no other person exactly like them in all of history. At fertilization, an unrepeatable human being begins that has never existed before and never will again.
4. People will say, "Well, it is not alive." Inanimate objects do not grow arms and legs, differentiated cells, or have self-directed growth.

Panel 2:



Claims & Sources:

Claim: If you have human parents, you are human.

Claim: There is a 1 in 400 trillion chance of being conceived and born.

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lp7E973zozc&t=3s>

Talking Points for Panel 2:

1. Preborn children have human parents, human DNA, and are a part of the human species (family). **THEY ARE HUMAN.**
2. All human beings are valuable because they are unique and unrepeatable.
 - a. Human beings are intrinsically valuable, meaning that our value is based on what *we are* and not what we do.
 - b. There is a 1 in 400 trillion chance that each human being comes into existence. If one member of your family line did not meet their partner or died before child-rearing, **you would not be here.** Each human life is precious.
 - c. The heart of the abortion debate lies in this point: pro-choice people rarely mean that preborn children are not human, what they mean is that they are not persons (human beings with full moral status and rights). Commonly for pro-choice people, human value is based on certain abilities that humans share in common. For example, they may argue that humans become valuable (worthy of protection) when they become conscious, self-aware, born (autonomous), or any other ability that may be used. We are either valuable because of what we are or what we do.
 - d. The problem with our value being based on ability: **you can lose these abilities or have them at different levels, meaning some people are more self-aware, intelligent, etc., and so those abilities are not things we share in common, EQUALLY.**
 - e. Human beings belong to the human family equally. It is something you have in common that cannot be lost or taken away.

Panel 3:

**I am a
PERSON**

A Person is...
a human being who bears rights and has full moral status because it shares the **only necessary** condition of being human.

Humans are Persons.
All human beings are **valuable**.
All persons are **human beings**.
Therefore, all human beings are valuable persons, **no matter their stage in life**.

I am human.
I AM A PERSON!

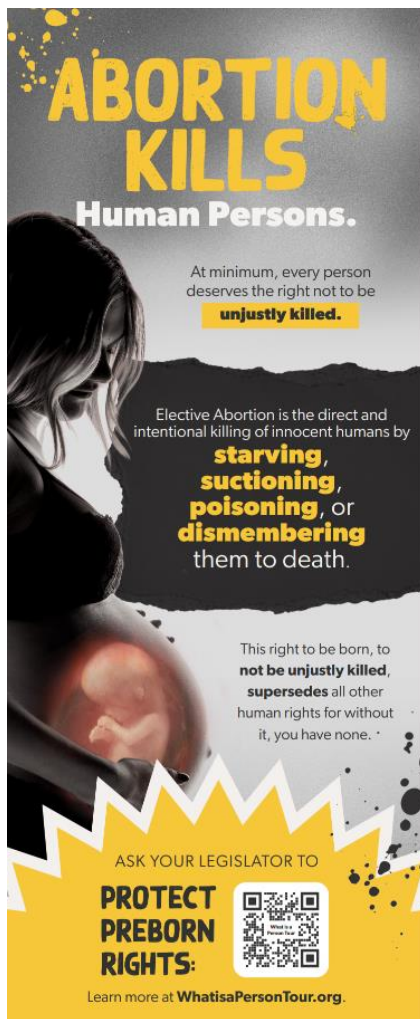
When a society defines "person" based on characteristics, like size, race, or intelligence,
ABORTION IS WRONGLY JUSTIFIED,
along with other human rights atrocities.

Talking Points for Panel 3:

1. A person is a human being with full moral status – this means they deserve full moral consideration when questions of morality are posed. Humans are also rights bearers (deserving of basic rights) that possess the **only necessary condition** (quality or attribute needed to be recognized as persons) **of being human**.
 - a. Note: Remember that the abortion debate often is focused on the humanity of the preborn, but pro-choice people use the term human as a being with “consciousness, et al.” and therefore their definition of human is also their definition of person. The debate thus comes down not to the science of human life but to the definition of a person and what conditions are **NECESSARY** to be recognized as a rights bearer. Again, our position is that human value comes from being human and not from our abilities. The position that human value is inherent to belonging to the human family helps avoid human rights atrocities like abortion, slavery, sex-trafficking, etc., because it includes more than it excludes. Excluding human beings from rights as persons is what leads to personhood abuses.
 - b. A concise way to make the point that preborn children are persons:
 - i. All humans are valuable.
 - ii. All humans are persons.
 - iii. All persons are humans, regardless of their stage in life.
 - iv. Therefore, preborn human beings are valuable persons.

Panel 4:

<https://www.abortionprocedures.com/>



Sources & Claims:

Claim: Abortion starves, suction, poison, or dismembers a unique human person.

Sources:

studentsforlife.org/learn/abortion-procedures/ (Though this is a Students for Life source, this site contains facts about abortion procedures that can be found in a wide variety of other sources.) See also:

Talking Points for Panel 4:

1. Abortion, at its essence, kills human persons. The relativistic view that humans are only valuable/considered persons once they reach a certain cutoff point or threshold point in age/gestation doesn't work.
 - a. **The only thing that gives us value is our humanity.** This is the only thing we have in common. We are all equally human and therefore we are all equally valuable.
2. The right to be born supersedes all other human rights. Without being born, no other rights would exist for a person. Some may challenge pro-lifers here, saying that they are "**pro-birthers,**" thus concluding we support "**forced birth.**" However, by refusing to support elective abortions, we are simply refusing to support elective killing of preborn persons—NOT that we are "pro-birthers." It is true that women must go through with a pregnancy if we are advocating for her to not kill her preborn child – but saying that we don't want her to kill the child does not equate to us wanting to "force" birth. This word play may seem tricky, but here is an example from our friends at the Equal Rights Institute on this argument that clears it up:
 - a. "...[L]et's imagine for a moment that there is a single-mother with a two year-old son, and she is at the end of her rope. She's struggling to make ends meet and finish school, so she comes up with a plan to kill her son and make it appear that he died of natural causes. I think we can all agree that it would be horrendously wrong for this woman to kill her son, and us telling this hypothetical woman that she can't kill her son isn't 'forcing' her to be a parent. She already IS a parent—we're telling her that she can't kill her son! Being opposed to someone killing a child is a very different thing from forcing a woman who doesn't have a child to cause a new child to come into existence."
 - b. Source: blog.equalrights.org/quick-response-20-pro-life-people-are-just-pro-birth/
3. Elective abortions are different than an "abortion" done when there are certain medical situations in which the procedure must be done. For example, a preborn child's remains that are still present in utero after an incomplete miscarriage may need to be removed (the intent here is to remove an already deceased human). Don't let the terminology confuse you.

- a. Visit this article from the Charlotte Lozier Institute which clears up the terminology surrounding abortion in the medical field:
<https://lozierinstitute.org/pro-life-laws-protect-mom-and-baby-pregnant-womens-lives-are-protected-in-all-states/>