Below is a section from my dissertation: https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/doctoral/1536/
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Considerations on abortion

My position is that societal acceptance of abortion is antithetical to our basic moral knowledge. There is no shortage of substantive critiques of abortion so my treatment here will be largely a worldview excursus on the implications of abortion: What does it indicate about a culture’s beliefs on children? What worldview indicators can be extracted from a tolerance or advocacy of abortion?

A nation’s economic policy and financial choices reflect both their theology and anthropology. As Os Guinness puts it, “There is always a moment in the story of great powers when their own citizens become their own worst enemies—not so much in the form of homegrown terrorism as in the form of the citizenry thinking and living at odds with what it takes for the nation to thrive.”¹ In democracies and democratic republics, public abortion funding indicates a majority cultural commitment to allocate a certain amount of its resources to the destruction of its own citizens. At the very least it signals a devaluation of children.² Fairly recent acceptance of abortion in the West as a staple of contemporary society is a monumental shift from the Judeo-Christian belief that unborn humans are in fact persons. Nevertheless, data suggests a rise in percentage of Americans who consider themselves pro-life.³

¹ Guinness, A Free People’s Suicide, 13.
² Craig Mitchell states, “You cannot separate economics from ethics.” (CNETH 4373, Ethics and Public Policy, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, January 2007).
I am suggesting that legalized abortion on demand is a sign of a society in conflict with proper moral sensibilities and fundamental self-preservation. Whether ancient Carthage or contemporary Italy, a population that does not value children, even for the purpose of utilitarian conquest, will necessarily give way to a culture that does. The plummeting birthrates of Western Europe may be indicative of this sort of cultural decline and loosening of moorings from a Christian memory that values children.4

As in the ancient world, unborn females and the physically challenged have the most to lose in an abortion culture. Steve Connor reports that gender selection may account for a global shortfall of up to 200 million girls since 1990.5 An abortion culture is a practical war on women and the weak. Plato would give a standing ovation for eugenics-esque selective genetic testing that allows parents to deliberately weed out unborn Down Syndrome children.6 All Canaanite, Greco-Roman, and contemporary pragmatic rationalizations aside, the selective termination of females and special needs persons should grate against our essential moral sensibilities. In the

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5 Steve Connor, “The Lost Girls: It Seems That The Global War on Girls Has Arrived In Britain,” The Independent, January 14, 2014, accessed June 28, 2017, http://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/the-lost-girls-it-seems-that-the-global-war-on-girls-has-arrived-in-britain-9059610.html. Connor notes, “In parts of India, notably the relatively affluent north-west states of Punjab and Haryana, the sex ratio of certain age groups is now about 1.2 or above - meaning there are 120 boys for every 100 girls. While in some parts of China, especially those where the Han Chinese form the main ethnic group, sex ratios among children have reached as high as 1.4 or even 1.5 - one-and-a half times as many boys as girls. In both these regions of the world, the vilification of girls is deeply engrained within some elements of the population. A Punjabi proverb, for instance, likens raising a daughter to watering your neighbor’s garden, while an old Chinese saying states that it is better to have one crippled son than eight healthy daughters.”

haunting words of Kevin DeYoung, “Where in the progression does our humanity begin and end? Where does life become valuable? When are we worth something? When do human rights become our rights? What if Dr. Seuss was right and a person's a person no matter how small? Why celebrate the right to kill what you once were? Why deny the rights of the little one who is what you are?”

The slippery slope from abortion to outright infanticide is well documented as in the abstract of a British *Journal of Medical Ethics* article:

Abortion is largely accepted even for reasons that do not have anything to do with the fetus’s health. By showing that (1) both fetuses and newborns do not have the same moral status as actual persons, (2) the fact that both are potential persons is morally irrelevant and (3) adoption is not always in the best interest of actual people, the authors argue that what we call ‘after-birth abortion’ (killing a newborn) should be permissible in all the cases where abortion is, including cases where the newborn is not disabled.

David Boonin is more honest than many in the pro-abortion movement when he chillingly writes of his son in the foreword of his *A Defense of Abortion*:

In the top drawer of my desk, I keep [a picture of my son]. This picture was taken on September 7, 1993, 24 weeks before he was born. The sonogram image is murky, but it reveals clear enough a small head tilted back slightly, and an arm raised up and bent, with the hand pointing back toward the face and the thumb extended out toward the mouth. There is no doubt in my mind that this picture, too, shows [my son] at a very early stage in his physical development. And there is no question that the position I defend in this book entails that it would have been morally permissible to end his life at this point.

To talk so calmly, yet cold-bloodedly, of executing one’s own infant is unnerving.

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Quite possibly the strongest argument made in favor of abortion is from rape or incest. Yet even MIT professor Judith Jarvis Thomson, arguably one of the most influential pro-abortion philosophers in recent American history, argues, “Surely the question of whether you have a right to life at all, or how much of it you have, shouldn’t turn on the question of whether or not you are the product of rape.”10 In cases of abortion to save the life of the mother, Thomson acknowledges the Good Samaritan (or Minimally Decent Samaritan) argument: “Perhaps he (Jesus) was urging people to do more than is morally required of them.”11 For Thomson, the unborn child’s right to life should not depend on the whims of others. Instead, she claims the morally praiseworthy act is giving birth to an unborn child conceived in rape or incest but that the law should not require such self-sacrifice. That life begins at conception is as accepted in the scientific community as the claim that the earth is not flat.12 If life and personhood are two separate events then the question of when an unborn child has basic human rights requires herculean ethical gymnastics.

Moreover, data suggests abortions from rape or incest account for a mere 1% of all U.S. abortions. So, the argument on these grounds is far more a paper tiger than a widespread health epidemic.13 Pro-abortion arguments are largely emotional in nature, divorced from scientific data and our most treasured moral beliefs that human life is intrinsically valuable and worth protecting.

10 Judith Jarvis Thomson, “In Defense of Abortion,” Philosophy & Public Affairs 1, no. 1 (Fall 1971), 5. To punish the child for the crime of the father is morally problematic.


By and large, the acceptance of abortion is a worldview, rather than a scientific issue.\textsuperscript{14} The data seems to suggest the vast majority of abortions are not for health reasons but personal convenience. Abortion on demand is quite possibly one of the greatest cultural indicators of crass egoism. I submit this is a focal reason why abortion has remained at the forefront of ethical and political debates for the past 40+ years. Here we find a plausible parallel between the ancient practice of child sacrifice and contemporary abortion culture: both sacrifice children for the benefit of adults.\textsuperscript{15} Handicapped or inconveniently timed children are not needed so they are not wanted.\textsuperscript{16} Even in ancient pagan human sacrifice there was still a reverence for spilling blood\textsuperscript{17} whereas aborted children today are discarded or sold for research.\textsuperscript{18} Such measures are not customary for modern day Westerners but one can observe the visible emotional turmoil expressed by certain animal rights activists over animal mistreatment. Compared to the silence from many of the same groups over abortion, the so-called “respect for all life” rallying cry becomes radically inconsistent.\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{14}“Historically, the greatest evils in the world have occurred when those in power have made their own interests supreme at the expense of other human lives, and then dehumanized said human beings to justify their actions.” Addison Merryman, “Abortion in Worldview,” The Chronicle, March 24, 2016, accessed May 16, 2017, http://www.dukechronicle.com/article/2016/03/worldview-in-abortion.


\textsuperscript{17}One example is from the Mayan’s lack of distinction between human and non-human animal life: “Any form of death was defilement. The greater social uncleanliness came from the shedding of blood. The Maya had even to atone for the killing of an animal. That is why he hung up something of the animal and usually pierced his own tongue and/or penis and spread a few drops of his own blood over the recently killed animal. Killing an animal was the same as homicide, and anyone who took life and shed blood brought about social defilement; he was subject to tribal discipline.” Victor W. Von Hagen, World of the Maya (New York: New American Library, 1960), 102.


Egoism offers a precedent for practical eugenics as far as the weak and helpless is concerned. Consistently claiming to be an advocate for children while simultaneously supporting abortion on demand is contradictory. The ontology of abortion categorizes unborn children not as persons but as excess biological matter so the claim must be qualified: “Children who are allowed to be born have intrinsic value.” However, egoism can’t make sense of the category of intrinsic human value, so the egoist is unable to affirm the intrinsic value of born or unborn children.

In the words of the great Austrian economist F. A. Hayek, “I doubt whether it is possible to overestimate the influence which ideas have in the long run.” Public policy inhibits or promotes human suffering. Take for example the economic policies of the Soviet Union, which caused untold devastation and suppression of basic human rights or China’s One Child policy culminating in a crisis of 30 million bachelors now within its borders.

Cavalier acceptance of abortion within professing Christian circles indicates an enormous post-Christian shift. It is unlikely it has not affected how we raise children. For those strongly in favor of abortion on demand G. K. Chesterton’s warning is fitting: “It is not bigotry to be certain we are right; but it is bigotry to be unable to imagine how we might possibly have gone

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20 Michael S. James, “1900 Predictions of the 20th Century,” ABC News, December 31, 2000, accessed May 16, 2017, http://abcnews.go.com/US/story?id=89969. Carolus Duran, a French artist with the St. Louis Post-Dispatch muses in an eerie, pre-WWII eugenics-laced absorption, “The majority of people will go from ‘hideously malconformed’ to beautiful … Already the present adult generation is, as a whole, more handsome than the one that proceeded it; and again, the children of today are a far more comely lot than those of thirty years ago. Another hundred years and no imperfect being will be allowed to reproduce itself and inflict upon society a spreading perpetuation of his taints.”


wrong."²³