

In Class Exercise on Introductions

80–212

Read each of the following introductions. List any flaws or good features you notice while reading them. Which introduction do you think is the best? Which do you think is the worst? Why?

Introduction 1

Abortion dates back thousands of years and has always been a controversial topic, with no agreement yet being reached over its moral status. One famous contribution to this debate is Judith Jarvis Thomson’s paper “A Defense of Abortion”, in which she introduces a thought experiment designed to show that at least some abortions are morally permissible. In this paper I’ll discuss issues surrounding the thought experiment and consider criticisms that it faces.

Introduction 2

Abortion is a very controversial topic, and one which philosophers are still debating today. One famous contribution to this debate is Judith Jarvis Thomson’s paper “A Defense of Abortion”, in which she introduces a thought experiment designed to show that at least some abortions are morally permissible. In this paper I’ll discuss issues surrounding the thought experiment and consider criticisms that it faces. In my opinion, these criticisms are not successful.

Introduction 3

In her paper “A Defense of Abortion”, Judith Jarvis Thomson introduces a thought experiment designed to show that some abortions are morally permissible. However, the thought experiment has been criticized on the grounds that it is too different to abortion to allow any conclusions to be drawn. In this paper, I will reconstruct an argument for that conclusion and will show that it is not sound. To accomplish this, I will argue that the central premise, that the thought experiment is relevantly different to abortion, is false, by showing that proposed differences are not relevant after all.