

Counter-Argument Example

Subject: Abortion

Thesis: Abortion should be illegal because it violates the rights of a fetus, which is a human being.

Concession: Supporters of abortion often challenge the notion that a fetus has rights by positing that before the third trimester, it cannot exist outside of the body on its own; therefore, it cannot be alive and is more akin to a human organ than its own autonomous entity. In her book, *Pro-life, No Life*, noted author and physician Emma Notreal, MD states, “You can’t say that a heart or lungs are alive, can you? They contribute to your life, but they aren’t alive per se. A fetus is the same. If you take it out, it’ll die” (45). Notreal compares a fetus to a non-sentient organ within the body based on the idea that a fetus is connected to and feeds on the mother’s body and is not self-reliant. To Notreal and abortion rights supporters, a fetus is nothing more than a parasite growing within the body until, like a fattened leach, it unlatches and slides off to solitude once again.

Rebuttal: However, what abortion supporters fail to recognize is that these fetuses are alive. They are seeds of humanity and like an acorn is also an Oak, so are they human. Physician and Pastor, Summah Guy, MD takes the position that these fetuses are alive and are already human, “By the twentieth week of gestation, a fetus can smile. It can reach for things. It has recognizable facial expressions. It does many of the things we do every day. Who can say that they aren’t alive? Who can say that they aren’t human?” (193). Guy questions the legal criteria for life as it is described in *Roe vs. Wade*. What is it that makes someone or something “alive” as it were? It must also be noted that human children are reliant on their parents well into a decade past the time they are born, despite the fact that they are not physically attached. Is it then safe to conclude that these children do not deserve to live?

*Pt 1 [this point should “piggy-back” off of the rebuttal. In other words, the rebuttal and pt 1 should be related so that there is a smooth transition from the rebuttal to pt 1.

**The counter-argument is generally accepted as being 1-2 paragraphs long. The above example is two paragraphs long, but it need not be. In many cases, it is acceptable to have both the concession and the rebuttal in the same paragraph.