

This response was submitted to the consultation held by the Nuffield Council on Bioethics on Critical Care Decisions in Fetal and Neonatal Medicine: Ethical issues during March to June 2005. The views expressed are solely those of the respondent(s) and not those of the Council.

#### **Anon 4**

#### **QUESTIONS ANSWERED:**

##### **Question 1**

Depends on the definition of "serious abnormalities". (The recent court case against medical staff for performing a termination after 24 weeks for cleft lip illustrates this difficulty.)

##### **Question 3**

yes, I see the moral status of the fetus as the most important because the other 2 issues can only be discussed in the light of this. It would be easy for the Working Party to fail to address the issue of the moral status of the fetus as too complex or impossible to define. However as clinical and scientific advances occur, we are in grave danger of doing things just because we can not because we should. How can we possibly make a decision about acting or ommiting to act without considering the status and rights of the individual concerned. A society displays its wisdom and civility by how it cares for the most vulnerable in society. The life of the fetus has been undervalued and demeaned by many social changes including, most significantly, the Abortion Act. If we fail to protect the fetus, future generations will erode these rights further leaving a barbaric society which fails to value life as special and unouque but considers only its economic or social worth.