

Letters to the Editor

Scale of Moral Values

To the Editor:

Thomas L. Shaffer, in his June 19 letter, has made the claim that if one honestly and nondogmatically evaluated all the evidence of life—biological, behavioral and ethical — one would oppose the so-called humane abortion laws.

I shall not dwell on Mr. Shaffer's efforts to impugn the intellectual and moral character of those who disagree with him. Rhetoric aside, it is simply not a fact that each unborn human infant is a human being. From a biological point of view, there is nothing wrong with saying that an individual is a human being only if it is a member of the species *Homo sapiens* and has or has had an independent nature capable of sustaining and regulating its own metabolic pattern.

Most important, the only moral imperative is not that mankind should unite in its opposition to death. A higher moral calling is to minimize injustice and avoid unnecessary suffering, which at the very least entails that where possible the basic needs of each living human being are satisfactorily met.

MARVIN KOHL
Associate Professor, Philosophy
State University College
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