



Fig. 1. New fourth-generation HIV test protocol.

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Abortion – an elusive moral cut-off point?

To the Editor: The argument about some theoretical 'cut-off' point has an unrecognised objective: to deflect, allay or absolve guilt in the aborting mother or the operator of the abortion.

These arguments are based on 'moral' grounds, ignoring the higher issue of the spiritual self. To discount the Spirit is to discount humanity: you have a body, you have a mind ... yet you are a spirit.

Contrary to conventional wisdom the fetus does think, does have emotions and certainly displays survival behaviour. The truth is that the fetus is intensely concerned with its survivability – not only from a physical perspective but still more powerfully at an emotional and spiritual level.

Separation-survivability theory operates from the perspective of physical survival but, with respect, ignores the great suffering experienced emotionally and spiritually by the fetus, and occasionally physically, from as early as the first trimester.

I will not sit idly by without comment. I emphatically vote for the Conservatives.

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- 1. De Roubaix JAM, Van Niekerk, AA. Separation-survivability – the elusive cut-off point? S Afr Med J 2006; 96: 623-626.
2. Modlin CT. The psychodynamics of the prenatal experience. Serenity 2006; 4 (2): 2-6.

To the Editor: The article by De Roubaix and Van Niekerk¹ is interesting and thought provoking.

As they try to define the moral cut-off point, they discuss different views on the time-old question – when does life begin? In my humble opinion, they left out one important theory: the pragmatic view.

Three clerics were talking about the beginning of life. Said the first: When the baby is born, with the first breath the soul enters the body and the life begins.

The second cleric disagreed: After the sperm hits the ovum, with the first division the life already begins.

So they asked the third one for his view. And the Rabbi promptly replied: When the kids are out of the house and the dog is dead, this is when the life really begins.

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- 1. De Roubaix JAM, Van Niekerk AA. Separation-survivability – the elusive moral cut-off point? S Afr Med J 2006; 96: 623-626.

AIDS prevention: Rapes, needlesticks and stabs

To the Editor: I recently attended the HIV course held in Durban by the Foundation for Professional Development. The course was most informative and brought to light some interesting statistics about HIV transmission rates in various scenarios.