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# The View into the Womb is “Extraordinarily Dangerous?”

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The ground is shifting on the abortion debate, and the most significant issue here is the impact of modern imaging technologies — the view into the womb. Sophisticated multi-dimensional imaging technologies, such as Ultrasound, allow us to see the fetus at very early stages of development. What we see is clearly human, as the images are seared into our minds and hearts.

Those pushing the abortion-rights argument face a very real challenge in the light of these technologies. Women seeking abortions often change their minds after seeing the image of their unborn baby. Furthermore, the publication of these images in the media has pushed the fetus — in all of its obvious humanity — right onto the cultural and political agendas.

This is the case in Great Britain, where publication of compelling fetal photographs has prompted a national debate. The debate there is over lowering the developmental week boundary for legal abortion. At present, a woman in Britain can demand an abortion at a point up to 24 weeks of gestational development. Many want to see that marker lowered, and they are pointing to the images as evidence that these unborn babies deserve protection.

On October 3, *The Times* [London] reported this amazing story:

*Sophisticated ultrasound scans that show fetuses as early as 12 weeks appearing to “walk” in the womb have had a dangerous impact on the public debate over abortion, leading doctors and scientists said yesterday.*

*The emotive photographs, taken with new fourdimensional imaging technology, have created a misleading impression that fetuses become viable and potentially self-aware at a much earlier stage than is actually the case, according to experts on foetal development.*

A dangerous impact? That is nothing less than incredible. But there is more:

*Doctors and researchers, however, said yesterday that the images had confused the public about the real state of the science.*

*“I had two reactions when I saw those photographs,” said Donald Peebles, of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at University College London. “One was that this was a fantastic piece of technology that showed very clearly what we knew already about the foetus in a way that was comprehensible to the public.*

*“But there was also a temptation to associate these movements — sucking a thumb, gasping as if talking — with adult movements, to think it is sucking its thumb because it is happy. It’s that feeling which I think is extraordinarily dangerous.”*

*Though the foetus clearly looks human by 12 weeks, proper sensory development takes place much later, he said. There was a risk that the pictures would make people assume that fetuses have more advanced brains than is the case.*

Look closely at those statements. Dr. Donald Peebles says that what we see with our own eyes is an illusion. He fears that we will associate the fetal actions with “adult movements” Actually, that is largely beside the point. No one is mistaking the fetus as an adult — but those movements are recognizably and undeniably *human*, and that is the point.

That baby has been human from the moment of conception —the point of fertilization. As such, the baby deserves full protection and respect. Our eyes have now seen this baby at 12 weeks, and we see the revelation of who that baby really is — one of us. This is one key reason why the abortion debate is on shifting ground — and why the abortion rights movement is playing defense.

Amazingly, Dr. Peebles calls these images “extraordinarily dangerous.” They are, of course, extraordinarily dangerous — dangerous to the Culture of Death.

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