

(This is the 3rd video in the series, starting with Video 2)

Let's consider another revision to this pro-life argument (Video 2). Some people complained about the presence of malevolent agents—the car thief, the burglar, and the assaulter—in my previous counterexamples. So perhaps we can revise the argument with a restriction to exclude them.

Something like this:

(P1**) Pregnancy is a foreseeable outcome of sex that's not due to an external malevolent agent.

(P2**) Consent to X is consent to any foreseeable outcome of X that's not due to an external malevolent agent.

(C) So, consent to sex is consent to pregnancy.

Now, I see two potential problems with premise 2.

First, it seems a bit arbitrary or ad hoc. Why should we think the presence or absence of an external malevolent agent makes a difference to whether YOU consent to the outcome, assuming the outcome is just as likely.

This isn't self-evident to me, I'd want some sort of explanation, argument, or at least cases to motivate it.

But the deeper problem is that, upon closer inspection, this principle also seems open to counterexamples.

If I hang my coat up at a party, it's a foreseeable outcome that someone else might take it home by mistake. And yet still, I didn't consent to it being taken.

If I open my door, it's a foreseeable outcome that someone will accidentally wander in. And yet still I don't consent to their presence.

And notice there's no malevolence in these cases.

So, I think premise 2 is false, and the argument's still unsound.