

# Pro-life Basics

## **Why doesn't American Life League simply say that a human being's life begins at conception or fertilization?**

—Keith

First of all, we know that some human beings' lives begin in the fallopian tube, while some begin in a test tube. These persons should not be discriminated against simply because of how their lives began.

As American Life League points out in "The Language of Personhood,"

Fertilization is now only one method of reproducing members of the human species. It is a medically accurate term, but not sufficient because humans are now also created artificially, that is, by asexual means not involving fertilization. To use the term "fertilization" when referring to the moment that a

new human being comes into existence would consequently exclude from this document's intended scope a whole class of people who are reproduced asexually.

Although "conception" is commonly used by the general public, it is expressly and universally rejected as a scientific term by embryologists, scientists and medical professionals, and thus does not adequately support the concept of personhood. In addition, the term is not always understood to refer to the act of fertilization and is often erroneously taken to mean "implantation." In many

states, as well as in literally dozens of national and international medical and research organizations (including the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists), the term "conception" is defined as "beginning at implantation." ACOG adopted this new definition in 1965 in response to political pressures and not as a result of scientific discovery. Thus, since the personhood movement aims to recognize all human beings, precise, unambiguous and scientifically accurate terminology is indispensable and of the utmost importance.

Use the term "point of creation" instead of "conception," or even "fertilization." If explaining when a person comes into existence, explain that human embryology experts recognize that the life of each human being begins at his or her biological beginning.

You can read more about "The Language of Personhood" at [www.all.org/personhood](http://www.all.org/personhood).

**Use the term "point of creation," instead of "conception" to explain when a person comes into existence.**

Click on "Resources."

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