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Under English law, doctors can destroy the fetus with the mother's consent before it is capable of independent life. The Committee of Inquiry into Human Fertilization and Embryology (Warnock committee) recommended that experiments on human embryos should be permitted for 14 days from fertilization. In California, a criminal charge has been brought against a woman who suffered from placenta previa and whose child was born dead after she took amphetamines. Under the old common law, a child could bring proceedings with respect to injuries before its birth. Nevertheless, since 1976 in England a child can bring no action against its mother for antenatal injuries, unless her negligent act was committed while driving. The Infant Life Preservation Act 1929 provides that it is an offense if any person by any willful act and with intent destroys the life of a child capable of being born alive. Grossly negligent procedures which result in the child's death after birth may amount to manslaughter. With respect to the issue of parental duties toward the unborn, the impairment of health in the Children and Young Persons Act 1969 denoted a continuous state of affairs which stretched from before birth into the future. Tort law Section 1 of the Congenital Disabilities (Civil Liability) Act 1976 imposes liability for injuries incurred by a child who is subsequently born alive if the injuries were incurred as a result of an occurrence during the mother's pregnancy or labor and if the defendant would be liable in tort to the mother for that occurrence. On the other hand, the child cannot sue the mother in contrast to the earlier common law, under which persons could be under a duty of care to the child itself. If stages of embryonic development do not have moral significance,

then the same legal principles should be applicable to the embryonic fetus as to the born child.

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