

Reproductive medicine could become entangled in the 'embryos are people' debate

The announcement that Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy will retire at the end of [July] and President Trump's nomination of Brett Kavanaugh to take his place has spurred concern over the future of women's reproductive options. Not only is the legal status of abortion at stake, but the concept of embryos as "persons" could be decided by the next Supreme Court.

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Since 1978, more than [8 million babies](#) have been born using in vitro fertilization (IVF) and other assisted reproductive technologies. Couples who never would have conceived due to blocked Fallopian tubes or severely low sperm counts can now have children of their own.

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The status of preimplantation testing of human embryos is a complex ethical and emotional issue. Some people believe that life begins at fertilization and, since every life has inherent value, we should not "play God" by choosing not to implant some embryos.

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I side with Dr. Richard Paulson, the former president of the American Society for Reproductive Medicine, who wrote that there is [no scientific basis](#) for the concept that life begins at fertilization.

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Eleven states have introduced "personhood" bills (none have passed) and more than a dozen court cases have been brought on this issue. The outcome of these cases could significantly [limit the ability](#) to practice reproductive medicine techniques such as IVF with preimplantation genetic testing.

Read full, original post: [Are embryos people? The answer will determine the future of reproductive medicine](#)