1) DEVOLUTION
I think that the issue of the law around abortion in Northern Ireland should be decided by the people of Northern Ireland. In this subject, I believe there is no right or wrong answer that determines the outcome of every abortion related situation. I do believe that the lives of mothers who bear unwanted babies matter. This has really hit home in the past week as my [partner’s relative] met a girl in [location] who was living on the streets and heavily pregnant. She had been rejected by her community and made homeless and not welcome back. As an [profession] I look at the root cause of the issue. I don’t believe this is conception as her community seemingly did and turned her away because of it, I believe it is the rejection by others of this girl who has been cast out from her community. It’s their lack of compassion for her and her unborn baby. I also see that this is a situation where in other parts of the UK abortion could have come into play. Her unborn baby is not in my mind without rights. In just under a month she will have her baby and it will have life and opportunity. The problem is obvious to us all, at what stage does a baby receive human rights the same as their parents. This baby has a future, its mother will probably end up in some sort of state housing and living of benefits until a time when she can work for herself. This is the state showing great compassion for her and her baby by providing for a start to their life. Why can’t the state have the same outlook on unborn babies? We are now trying to help out this woman by gathering some things for her and finding her more help to get her off the streets as soon as possible.

2) DISTINCTIVE LAW AND CULTURE
The statistics show that over 100000 people are alive today in Northern Ireland because we did not adopt the same abortion laws as England, Scotland and Wales in the 1967 abortion act. How can abortion be deemed an ok thing for modern society to allow in cases where there is no other motive than the baby having down syndrome for example. I think the statistics show what a loving and compassionate country Northern Ireland is. For example in 2016 90% of utero diagnosed with down syndrome were born in Northern Ireland, whereas in the rest of the UK 90% of utero diagnosed with down syndrome were aborted. I am proud to be resident in the United Kingdom and identify as British but I am more proud to be from a part of the UK that shows compassion to all parts of society. I believe that decisions about our abortion laws should be made in westminster by politicians that were not elected by the people of Northern Ireland. To me this seems like a major flaw in democracy.

3) HUMAN RIGHTS & EQUALITY
As much as I believe in rights for unborn babies and showing compassion for them, I also am not intending to reject the rights and life of the mother. I feel that our law may not be perfect in its current form as criminalisation of a person who has been unwillingly made pregnant is vile. I believe that there should be more done to support women who find themselves in a situation of unwanted pregnancy. I cannot ignore the facts that out of all recorded abortions in England, Scotland and Wales, only 2% were due to life limiting conditions and sexual crime.

4) PERSONAL STORIES

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