

Attitudes For Abortion

by Thomas A. McKean: Autumn, 1989

Since the now famous Roe vs. Wade decision made by the Supreme Court in 1973, abortion has been one of the most debatable subjects in the United States. The demonstrations and rallies for both sides of the issue just seem to keep on coming. My own personal opinion is one of pro-life, and this essay will try to explain why I feel that way.

First and foremost, we have the religious aspects. If indeed our Bible is to be the unquestioned word of God, how then can we continue, as a nation, to allow this to go on? And how does God feel about abortion? Here is the answer:

For the spirit of the God has made me, the breath of the Almighty keeps me alive (Job 33:4).

Know that the Lord Himself is God; it is He who made us, and we are not ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture (Psalm 100:3).

Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you (Jer. 1:5).

You shall keep away from anything dishonest. The innocent and just you shall not put to death, nor shall you acquit the guilty (Exodus 23:7).

Fathers shall not be put to death for their sons, nor shall sons be put to death for their fathers. Everyone shall be put to death for his own sin (Deut. 24:16).

It is very clear that we were made in His own image. Even our own secular laws dictate that only God has the right to destroy life.

Second, we have the physical aspects. The debate here seems to be when the baby is to be considered "living." What is life? How can life be defined?

By just the 18th day of pregnancy, your eyes and ears begin to develop. Imagine what all must happen to you even before then! On the 25th day, your heart begins beating for the first time. Your arms and legs begin to form around that time. You are your own person from day one. Separate heartbeat, separate eyes and ears, possibly even separate blood type. You are an independent living creature, and you have a God-given right to exist from the very moment you are formed.

Also included in the physical aspect are the many misunderstandings about abortion in general. The most comprehensive study I have found to date is the Wynn Report, a compilation of 75 international studies done by authors and doctors who are not morally opposed to abortion. Findings indicate that complications are frequent and serious, especially in the younger women.

For instance, studies show that 10 to 20 percent of all suction and/or dilatation and curettage abortions will result in immediate complications, and 25 to 30 percent will suffer long term effects, usually relating to later pregnancies.

Immediate complications include hemorrhaging, infections, and perforation of the uterus. Long term effects may be damage to the cervix, damage to the lining of the womb, and/or partial or total blockage of the fallopian tubes. A later premature birth may also occur, which is the leading cause of mental retardation. (Wynn, 12)

Another problem with abortions is that they are not always successful. There are many documented cases where the baby was born alive. Here are just a few:

1978, Cleveland, Ohio: A young mother entered the hospital for an abortion. The baby was born alive, and after several weeks of intensive care, the baby went home--with its mother. A source familiar with the case remembered one detail: "The doctors had a very hard time trying to convince her that she had a child. she kept insisting she had an abortion."

1969, Scotland: A custodian heard a cry from a paper bag in the snow beside an incinerator. Inside, he found a live aborted baby. It was taken and cared for, but died nine hours later. The fetus was very close to eight months old. No one checked for signs of life before it was discarded, and no charges were filed.

1973, Bakersfield, CA: A 4 1/2 pound infant was born alive following a saline abortion. Informed by phone, the doctor ordered nurses to stop giving oxygen to the baby. His instructions were overridden by another physician. The baby survived and was later adopted. The first doctor was indicted for solicitation to commit murder. The case was dismissed (Bennett, 3).

There have also been documented cases of legalized infanticide. In 1982, in Bloomington, Indiana, a baby was born with Down's Syndrome. "Infant Doe," as he became known by the courts, needed only simple and minor surgery to allow him to eat and survive. The parents refused the surgery. Further, they refused to yield custody of the child to any of the many eager couples who wanted to adopt him. When the matter came before the courts, the parents decision to let the child starve to death was reinforced (Bennet, 4).

Then President Reagan denounced Baby Doe's death by stating, "The real issue for the courts was not whether Baby Doe was a human being. The real issue was whether to protect the life of a human being who had Down's Syndrome. The judge let Baby Doe starve and die, and the Indiana Supreme Court sanctioned that decision (Reagan, 53)."

Here are some other misconceptions about abortion:

Rape: Pregnancy resulting from rape is less than 3 percent. The woman may be on birth control, she may be sterile, etc.

Incest: pregnancy due to incest is less than 1 percent.

Unwanted babies: There are feelings by some people that unwanted babies will become abused and battered children. In a study of 674 battered children, 91 percent were planned pregnancies, thus making only 9 percent of the children unplanned.

Teenage women: Many people believe that teenage women are at high risk for problem pregnancies. The truth is that the labor and deliveries go just as well, and the baby is usually fine. The high risk factor only applies to those who were taking drugs, smoking, or drinking alcohol during pregnancy.

Women over 35: There is a rumor that women over 35 are at high risk for Down's Syndrome babies. Down's Syndrome is a genetic disease with more than 80 percent of the births coming from mothers under the age of 35. It is also good to note that in 30 to 45 percent of the Down's Syndrome cases, the babies got that 21st chromosome from their father (Duncan, 9).

Pro-lifers, unite! Picket the clinics! Write to your Congressman! Unite and sing! Sing long, and sing loud. And perhaps, if we all sing long enough, and we all sing loud enough, someday, someone will hear us...

Works Cited:

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