

## ABORTION

During the past quarter century, abortion has joined race and war as one of the most debatable subject of controversy in the United States. It discusses human interaction where ethics, emotions and law come together. Abortion poses a moral, social and medical dilemma that faces many individuals to create a emotional and violent atmosphere. There are many points of view toward abortion but the only two fine distinctions are "pro-choice" and "pro-life". A pro-choicer would feel that the decision to abort a pregnancy is that of the mothers and the state has no right to interfere. A pro-lifer would hold that from the moment of conception, the embryo or fetus is alive. This life imposes on us a moral obligation to preserve it and that abortion is tantamount to murder (Kolner 5).

In the United States about 1.6 million pregnancies end in abortion. Women with incomes under eleven thousand are over three times more likely to abort than those with incomes above twenty-five thousand. Unmarried women are four to five times more likely to abort than married and the abortion rate has doubled for 18 and 19 year olds. Recently the U.S. rate dropped 6 percent overall but the rate of abortion among girls younger than 15 jumped 18 percent. The rate among minority teens climbed from 186 per 1,000 to 189 per 1,000.

The most popular procedure involved in abortions is the vacuum aspiration which is done during the first trimester (three months or less since the women has become pregnant). A tube is simply inserted through the cervix and the contents of the uterus are vacuumed out. The most commonly used type of second trimester abortion is called dilation and evacuation. Since the fetus has bones, bulk and can move, second trimester is not as simple. When as much of the fetus and placenta are vacuumed out then tweezers are used to remove larger parts. After this, or the beginning of the fifth month abortion is serious and actually induced as childbirth. That is, the mother is given substances which puts her into labor and delivers the fetus as she would a full-term baby. About 40 percent of Americans believe that abortion should remain legal and 40 percent believe it should be banned except when the pregnancy threatens the life of the mother or is the result of rape or incest. Also 15 percent believe it should be illegal in all cases. Although abortion is regarded as a women's right, it should be banned with exceptions because it's considered murder, has many psychological side effects and there is an alternative.

Abortion is a women's own right and choice. In 1973 the Roe v. Wade decision proved this by recognizing abortion as a fundamental constitution right and made it legal in all states. The law now permits abortion at the request of the women without any restrictions in the first trimester and some restrictions in the second trimester to protect the women's health. The National Abortion Right Act League argues that without legal abortion women would be denied their constitutional right of privacy and liberty. The women's right to her own body subordinates those of the fetus and the U.S. Supreme Court in Roe v. Wade argued that the women's "right to privacy" overruled the fetus's right to life. If abortion was illegal it would force poor women to bear and raise children they can't afford to bring up. There would be a number of unsafe abortions in back allies. It would also force women to give up their dreams and stay home to bring up babies. Worst of all, it would condemn victims of rape and incest to carry and nurture the offspring of their rapist. (Kolner 5) Abortion is necessary for women to have control over their own bodies and life. One activist said,

"If I hadn't had that abortion my life would have been a disaster. I wouldn't have made it to medical school. I was married at that point to a very ill man and it would have been terrible to have to have my baby. People who need abortions are in some kind of turmoil and it's really a life-saving thing." (Blender 4) To ignore the rights of others is selfish and injustice. Women must have the right to control the functions of their own bodies. Reverend George Gardiner pastor of the college Hill United Methodist Church, told the council that the ordinance would have done little good. "Young women need the freedom to make choices for their reproductive life when their family can't guarantee them parental support." (Lynn B6-7) Women should not be forced to have babies they don't want. They must be able to decide what happens to them and have a safe plus legal way of doing so. Women are in control of their own bodies and lives. Legislators have no right to interfere. The practical assertion that since pregnancy involves a woman's body, the choice of continuing that pregnancy must be hers alone. This was the first given beautiful theoretical articulation and defense by Judith Thomson. (meilander 3)

However, abortion is considered murder by half of all Americans. Pro-lifers believe that human life begins at the moment of conception. When the merge of the egg and sperm is complete, they are fertilized and known as the "zygote". The zygote contains a full set of 46 chromosomes which is required to create a human life. Scientists identify that at the moment of fertilization the ovum takes on an entirely different destiny, life. About 15,000 genes from the sperm and ovum form a unique combination. This is nothing less than a new human life at its earlier stage of life. In the United States many infants will not make it to puberty, old age or even their second birthday. Just because of their shortened life, it doesn't mean that it never existed. Dr. Nathanson stopped performing abortions after becoming aware of the horrors he observed. "A woman has the right to go to bed with who she wants, but she can not choose death for her child. It's a direct violation of human rights." (Koval i grid c-7) Anthony Simpson has a photo of an aborted fetus and believes that abortion is nothing less but ruthless murder. In southern Kentucky, Robert Hollis brutally assaulted his wife in effort to abort the fetus he suspected wasn't his. He successfully did so and Carroll believed Hollis set out intentionally to kill that fetus and that is in fact murder. Kristina Kleg a graduate from high school has recently become pregnant and decided against abortion. She feels that it's an innocent child inside of her. It has a brain and a heart therefore it also has a right to life. "Abortion is the unnatural end of pregnancy. That child has a right to life that is equal to the mother's right. One cannot kill another human being just because they wished it wasn't around. Abortion is murder of the innocent practiced on a national scale." (Abortion: The Personal, Medical and Social Dilemma) Overall it has been proven that the fetus is a real person. It responds to noise, has feeling and fears. To have an abortion it will destroy an innocent life which is directly connected to murder.

Scientific research has successfully shown that abortion causes many psychological side effects. It leaves the woman with many strong feelings about their decision. They feel sadness, wishing things could have been different and grief for a lost life. Guilt arises because they know a fetus represents an independent life. Anger builds up towards other people having to do with their decision. Sometimes the mother may feel that she has in fact been abandoned. Most of all the mother feels ashamed and embarrassed

about her action. People close to the mother may be angry at her for ending her pregnancy and make it difficult for her to deal with. Even years after the abortion, women tend to remember the regretful experience. They usually

wonder what the baby would have looked like and its birthday. Thirty-three year old Michelle Urbain of south Florida has had five abortions so far. She realizes now that they all left emotional scars on her that are unbearable. "It wasn't just a mass of cells it was children I was killing." (Kovaleski c-7) It maybe a month or a year but feelings do catch up with the mother. Symptoms like nightmares, panic attacks and flashbacks are signs of a recently discovered Post Abortion Syndrome (PAS). According to a study published by Association for Interdisciplinary Research in Values and Social Change, one in five women studied had diagnosable stress disorders. (Lyons d-11) Also two in five had sleep disorders and flashbacks following an abortion.