

## Women and Abortion

by *Georgette Forney, Executive Director of NOEL*

I recently had the unique opportunity to participate in a debate at the University College Dublin in Ireland. The pro-abortion side was represented by the Irish Family Planning Association (an affiliate of Planned Parenthood). The motion being debated was: "That this house would legalize abortion on demand." In addition to me, there was an ethicist and theologian for each side. I knew the moral and biblical reason abortion is wrong would be covered. Therefore I focused my comments on the women and why legalized abortion is a bad public health policy for women.

I came up with ten reasons why abortion is bad for women. I decided it would be good to share them with you, so you too can help people understand that in addition to the baby dying in an abortion, women also suffer.

### 1. Abortion is bad for women because personal experience shows it creates more problems than it solves.

After an abortion many women find themselves dealing with increased use of drugs and/or alcohol to deaden their pain, reoccurring insomnia and nightmares, eating disorders, suicidal feelings—many even attempt suicide. Difficulty in maintaining or developing relationships, loneliness, isolation, anger, fears of the unknown, indecision and a sense of self-hatred are also problems. Since 2001, 15 studies focusing on the psychological affects of abortion have been done. These studies underscore the fact that evidence does not support the conjecture that abortion will protect women from 'serious danger' to their mental health. It indicates the opposite!

a. For instance, after Kathy had a saline abortion, (a saline solution was injected into her fetus's body, poisoning him to death), she never grieved her abortion, and when she had children she began to experience intrusive thoughts about poisoning them. Very gentle and soft-spoken, Kathy was terrified. She sought counseling, and identified the root: her saline abortion. Her mourning over her abortion had mutated into these intrusive thoughts as a way to relieve her emotional experience. They stopped once she admitted her pain, and grieved her abortion. Though most women who have abortions do not act upon these intrusive thoughts, their torment affects their mental health and their relationship with the living children.

b. Consider Cathie, who related the following: "I was 14 yrs. old when I was coerced into having an abortion. The doctor lied to me at Planned Parenthood and told me my 2nd trimester baby was just a mass of flesh floating around my womb and they were going to stick a vacuum up me and suck the baby out! The doctors should also have to tell the patient the method used in the abortion from start to finish. They did not tell me that my baby would feel pain, or that the baby would first be cut

up into pieces before the doctor sucks it out. I found this out after the abortion from looking at an abortion booth at the fair. I could not look at myself in the mirror. I had self-loathing after this knowledge. I was addicted to heroin, alcohol and other drugs during the past 30 years, trying to mask what I had done to my baby. I am clean and sober now, but my life has been hell since that awful abortion ruined my entire life. I cannot have children; I had to have my fallopian tubes removed because of infections caused from the abortion."

2. **Abortion is bad for women because it creates physical problems.** Abortion advocates frequently assert that carrying an unintended pregnancy to term is more harmful to women than abortion. But all the research and women's personal experience says something else.

a. In the US, over 140,000 women a year have immediate medical complications from abortion. This includes problems such as: infection, uterine perforation, hemorrhaging, cervical trauma, and failed abortion/ongoing pregnancy. Consider that in 1998, Denise Doe (not her real name) left a Louisiana clinic with a 2-inch gash across her cervix and an infection so severe it sent her into a coma for 14 days. For the next six months, she could not even use the bathroom—she had to rely on a colostomy bag. An emergency hysterectomy at a nearby hospital ultimately saved her life. And in 2000, a woman in Bucks County, PA, went home from a clinic in pain—she called back because of painful bleeding and the doctor never responded. She went to the ER and had surgery to remove the fetus from the fallopian tube.

b. Long-term health risks include an increased risk of cervical and ovarian cancer, and a 30% increased chance of being diagnosed with breast cancer. Abortion can also lead to infertility due to hysterectomies, pelvic inflammatory disease and miscarriage. Finally, abortion can lead to complications in future pregnancies including premature birth, placenta previa, and ectopic pregnancy.

### 3. Abortion is bad for women because we are still dying from it. Death from abortion also proves that it is not safer than childbirth.

a. Women are still dying from the abortion procedure itself. In February 2002, 25 year-old Diana Lopez died at a Los Angeles clinic because the staff failed to follow established protocols before and after the abortion. If they had followed protocols, they would have realized she was not a good candidate for abortion because of blood pressure problems, and afterwards when her uterus was punctured during the abortion, they should have called for an ambulance. And in January 2004, a 15 year old girl died in Southfield MI from "uterine infarction with sepsis due to a second trimester abortion." The Coroner, Dr. Hlavaty told Ann Norton, who is also a nurse, that the "girl's death was normal." The doctor explained: "I rule it normal because these complications are expected with this type of abortion."



Photo courtesy of LifeNews.com

*In addition to the baby dying in an abortion, women also suffer. Personal experience shows abortion creates more problems than it solves*

b. **Women with abortion history have increased risk of dying from a variety of causes after abortion.** A study done in Finland shows that 94% of maternal deaths associated with abortion are not identifiable from death certificates alone. Proper tracking of pregnancy associated deaths requires linking the death certificates to the deceased women's medical records. Therefore with proper identification of pregnancy history, the research revealed that **the death rate associated with abortion is actually three times higher than that of childbirth.** The study was published in the *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*. Another study of 173,000 women's health records in California, showed that women who had abortions were almost twice as likely to die in the following two years and that the elevated mortality rate of aborting women persisted over at least 8 years. This study was published in the *Southern Medical Journal*.

### 4. Abortion is bad for women because it opens the door for subtle pressure and coercion by family, friends, employers, institutions of learning, sexual predators and the culture.

a. Jennifer O'Neill, the celebrity spokeswoman for the *Silent No More Awareness Campaign* and well-known actress, who starred in the movie "Summer of '42," was forced by her fiancé to abort the baby she wanted. He told her that he would sue for custody of her older daughter if she didn't abort their child.

b. In some cases, parents threaten to kick the girl out of the home, boyfriends and husbands threaten to leave, or women are told by well-meaning friends that having a baby will ruin their lives and they simply have to have an abortion. For a woman who is already facing a crisis situation, this kind of manipulation, intimidation and pressure is subtle coercion; it can be the final push towards making a decision that she would not have chosen if someone had offered her support during her pregnancy. One Elliot Institute survey found that more than half of women suffering from post-abortion trauma said they were pressured to abort. Their experiences are haunting: "A homeless woman was denied shelter until she submitted to an unwanted abortion... a teen was ridiculed by a school counselor and bussed to the abortion clinic... a daughter was pushed into an abortion clinic at gunpoint by her mother... a girlfriend was injected with an abortifacient outside a parking garage... a 13-year-old was returned to her molester after her abortion... three sisters were raped repeatedly by their father and forced into abortions for nearly a decade... a wife miscarried after her husband jumped on her stomach to force an abortion... a waitress was fired after refusing to have an abortion. Many of these women say they would have carried to term if they had been given support by someone close to them.

### 5. Abortion is bad for women because it has become a band-aid that allows society to abandon women.

a. Our culture has come to depend upon abortion so that individuals and churches don't have to get involved in caring for today's widows and orphans. It also frees many men from taking responsibility for their sexual promiscuity.

b. Abortion stops being one choice among many and becomes the only choice because the emotional and financial support dries up. Friends default to endorsing abortion so they don't have to be bothered. Pregnancy support should be emphasized instead of handing a girl \$300 and telling her to take care of her problem.

### 6. Abortion is bad for women because it is a form of racism against poor and ethnic women.

a. Margaret Sanger (founder of Planned Parenthood) said in 1922, "All our problems are the result of overbreeding among the working classes." [The IFPA is a member of the International Planned Parenthood

Federation.(IPPF)] Today Planned Parenthood identifies its core clients as young women, low-income women and women of color. Black and Hispanic women represent only a quarter of American women of childbearing age, yet account for more than half of all abortions in the US. Alveda King, niece of Martin Luther King, quotes her uncle who said, "The Negro cannot win as long as he is willing to sacrifice the lives of his children for comfort and safety." Today Alveda asks, "How can the 'Dream' survive if we murder our children?"

b. Legalized abortion doesn't help poor women; after their abortion they are still poor, [and, in addition, are now psychologically weakened and vulnerable.]

### 7. Abortion is bad for women because it negatively affects future relationships.

a. When we have abortions, we struggle with issues of trust afterwards—especially when those around us pressure us. How can someone love us and then make us go through this painful, violent procedure. I struggled to trust my husband for years.

b. It affects how we relate to children we have in the future. Sometimes we can't bond with them or we overprotect them. I was an overprotector.

c. Abortion is a secret we've kept from spouses, children, or parents; if we do want to seek healing, we must tell them. Telling others creates another set of problems and concerns. For instance explaining to my 8 year old that I aborted a baby when I was 16 was the most awful thing I ever had to do.

8. **Abortion is bad for women because it has led to increased violence against pregnant women.** According to one study of battered women, the target of battery during their pregnancies shifted from their face and breasts to their pregnant abdomens, which suggests hostility toward the woman's fertility. Women are literally being killed for refusing to abort. The leading cause of death during pregnancy is homicide. In one study of violent deaths among pregnant women, three out of every four were killed during their first 20 weeks of pregnancy.

### 9. Abortion is bad for women because it has created a \$400 million dollar a year industry that lobbies and litigates against the establishment of any clinic regulations or informed consent laws, both of which are designed to protect the woman.

### 10. Abortion is bad for women because women aren't empowered or made independent through the right to abort.

a. As human beings we are relational; we depend on one another whether we like it or not. As relational beings, we want to be loved; at least all the women I know spend most of their time discussing their relationships.

b. Women are violated in an abortion; we often describe it as 'sucking out our soul.'

c. Abortion proponents promised that reproductive rights would create equality between the sexes. After 33 years we know that promise hasn't been fulfilled; women are still paid less than men.

Clearly abortion isn't good for women or babies. The theory that abortion is simply a woman exercising her reproductive rights sounds nice, but 33 years of it in the U.S. has shown us that the reality is very different than the theory. Raising awareness about these facts is the goal of the *Silent No More Awareness Campaign* that NOEL cosponsors.

In Dublin, it was very encouraging to see the students think about abortion as a woman's health care policy. One girl came up to me after the debate and said that her friend walked in pro-choice but walked out pro-life after hearing me speak. That's why I'm talking about abortion from a woman's perspective and why I encourage you to be "silent no more" too!



## Associate Membership Application

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Enclosed is my fee of \$25.00 for membership as:  
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## Uniting For Life

Winter 2007

### Reflections on Gonzalez v. Planned Parenthood

By Dennis DiMauro, Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

In a packed courtroom, Chief Justice Roberts asked Eve C. Gartner, the attorney for Planned Parenthood, whether she felt there was a psychological health reason for the Partial-Birth Abortion procedure. Gartner replied that the answer to that question depended on the mother's choice of the type of "demise" she preferred for her "fetus." The mother might prefer to have a D&E abortion, where a child is torn piece by piece and then removed from her uterus, or the mother might prefer a partial-birth abortion where the child's brains are suctioned out while most of the child is outside of her body.

After an exhausting four-hour wait in the rain, and then finally arriving at the courtroom of the US Supreme Court for my five minutes of viewing of the trial, I felt as if I had been dropped into a surreal *Twilight Zone*. Was I hearing what I was hearing? Was the highest court in the land really discussing whether to keep a procedure which sucks out a child's brains because it might be considered psychologically "better" than a procedure that dismembers a child piece by piece? Was this what my beloved country had come to? But while I sat there in the courtroom viewing history being made, I finally realized that what I was really witnessing was "choice" run amok.

You may remember that a number of years ago, Robin Williams was in a movie called "Moscow on the Hudson." In that movie, he played a Russian circus musician who defected to the United States. After he was in the country for few days, he ventured into a grocery store to buy a tin of coffee. And as he walked into the coffee aisle, he was overcome by the abundance of coffee choices that were available. Unable to decide among the twenty-some brands that he could choose from, he had an anxiety attack and collapsed to the floor murmuring "Chock Full of Nuts."

This was a very funny scene, but it demonstrated an even more poignant point: Americans love choices. Not only do we love choices, but we measure our success on the number of choices that are available.

The more brands of coffee, soft drinks, and potato chips we can choose from, the better. To live without an abundance of choices is just *un-American*.

This love for choice was not missed by the pro-abortion movement. In fact, back in the 70's, they cleverly used it to support their goal of abortion on demand. The "pro-choicers" weren't *for* abortion, they simply wanted to give the public a "choice" to have an abortion or not. And who could be against choice? After all, "choice" was the proof of the success of our democratic and capitalistic system: it gave us the choice to decide who we wanted to run our nation, and the choice to decide which goods and services we wanted to buy. And of course, it also gave us a choice of whether a pregnancy would continue or be aborted.

But there are two rarely discussed negatives to "choice": 1) When we have a choice, the option we choose can sometimes be the wrong one, and 2) our first choice may simply fuel the demand for even more choices. And this is certainly the case with respect to abortion. Abortion is a bad choice: it kills a child in the womb - a child valued and loved by God. It also can deeply injure a woman both physically and emotionally. Not only that, but this "choice" can often lead to more disturbing choices, like the decision of whether to have a D&E or a partial-birth abortion.

After I left the courthouse, I discussed the case with a number of my friends in the pro-life movement who had some legal expertise. They felt cautiously optimistic that the court would uphold the Partial-Birth Abortion ban and that it would become law. And while I felt relieved at the prospect that our nation would be taking its first step to outlaw its most egregious abortion procedure, I still felt uneasy. How could a nation with so little respect for God's truth ever opt for his holy law over our selfish "choices"?

So I'll be keeping two prayers on my list until the court's decision is released next year. The first is that the court will come to its senses, and will outlaw this gruesome procedure that ends the lives of these precious children. And the second is that Americans will be able to look past their beloved "choices," and choose God instead.

### Save the Date! January 22

#### Monday Morning Prayer Service at the U.S. Capitol

The National Memorial for the Pre-born and Their Mothers and Fathers, an interdenominational prayer service, will be held on **Monday, January 22, 2007 starting at 8:45 AM in the United States Senate, Washington, DC.** (Doors will open at 8 a.m. The service will be held in a Senate Room to be announced--see [www.nprcouncil.org](http://www.nprcouncil.org).) NPRC is a cosponsor of this prayer service.

Let us pray together for an end to abortion, for our national leaders, and the victims of abortion. All are invited. No reservations are needed. There will be inspirational music, prayer and homily. Invite your pastors, youth ministers, Respect Life and Pro-life groups, Social Justice committees, and everyone to come with you! Young people are especially needed and welcome.



# Uniting For Life

A Christian Pro-Life Newsletter

Winter 2007

National Pro-Life Religious Council, PO Box 61838, Staten Island, NY 10306

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### National Pro-Life Religious Council

The National Pro-Life Religious Council (NPRC) is a Christian coalition which acknowledges Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and works to encourage every Christian denomination to affirm and witness to the biblical standard of the value, dignity and sanctity of human life, and to foster ministry to those vulnerable to the violence of abortion or euthanasia.

#### Member Organizations

- Alpha Omega Life
- Black Americans for Life
- Conservative Congregational Christian Conference (CCCC)
- International Communion of the Charismatic Episcopal Church (CEC for Life)
- Life Education and Resource Network (LEARN)
- Lutherans for Life (LFL)
- The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS)
- National Black Catholic Apostolate for Life
- National Clergy Council (NCC)
- NOEL for Life
- Presbyterians Pro-Life (PPL)
- Priests for Life (PFL)
- Religious Outreach,
- National Right to Life Committee
- Task Force of United Methodists on Abortion and Sexuality (TUMAS)
- United Friends for Life (UFL)

### SHE SAID GOOD-BYE

by Julie Woodley

I was never born. Ten thousand days ago, ten thousand days later.

My Mommy wanted to keep me; she was excited to see the bump of her tummy grow as I grew. Daddy said I couldn't be born, too much trouble; he had goals, dreams. He was studying to be a lawyer—I didn't fit.

We got in the car; Daddy was quiet; all he said was, "if you want to stay in this relationship, you must get rid of this problem."

Mommy, crying, rode the 90 miles to Minneapolis; she couldn't stop; she was queasy from my growing; we stopped, and she threw up; "maybe he will take me home, let me keep the baby," she hoped; she prayed, "please turn around!"

The air was turning spring; it smelled good, refreshing. Mommy noticed the flowers budding—a sign of hope, new life? "Maybe, maybe, someone will help," she pleaded inside; Mommy had no family, too many years of horror with her father; she ran away at 18—never to turn back. Now—nowhere to turn, nobody to help her, no one to be there with a new baby around. She stares at her new pink maternity top; it's pretty; she longs to grow

a new baby and fill it up.

The car ride is quiet, eyes cast down as she cries, and then she gives up and is quiet; she trembles. She remembers her last abortion—only three years ago; she tried to dismiss the thoughts, but they hit her hard today. She remembers the pain involved, the sucking noises, the smells, the regrets after.

They park; she is screaming inside (so am I!). He pulls her in, reminding her of a better day tomorrow. He pays the \$250 cash; they give her a number. A room full of quiet women—afraid. The day is long, yet too quick for me as I say good-bye....

"Please Mommy dearest, don't give up the fight; keep fighting for babies like me; there are millions.... Yes, my sister too. We know you miss us more than you can ever express—we long for you too..."

Twenty-five years ago, Mommy is still sad—thinking of what I would have been, looked like—she longs to hold me, love life with me! My name is Elizabeth.

Ten thousand days later, ten thousand days ago.

Julie Woodley is founder/director of Restoring the Heart Ministry. This article first appeared in *United Methodist Church's Life Watch*.

*"She remembers her last abortion—only three years ago; she tried to dismiss the thoughts, but they hit her hard today."*

### Vote on Unborn Child Pain Awareness Bill Falls Short of 2/3 Majority

The U.S. House of Representatives voted 250-162 in favor of the Unborn Child Pain Awareness Act, but this fell short of the 2/3 majority needed for the suspension of rules/fast-track procedure.

If it had passed, this legislation would have told women considering an abortion after 20 weeks of pregnancy that the unborn child has the ability to feel severe and intense pain at that time.

Rep. Chris Smith (R/NJ), chief sponsor of the bill, cited expert testimony that showed

that unborn children have "a developed system of pain perception and response by 20-22 weeks of pregnancy."

Douglas Johnson, NRLC's legislative director, commented: "It is no small thing that 60% of the House endorsed requiring abortionists to inform women that late abortion may be very painful to the unborn child. The other 40% will have to explain why they favor anti-pain laws for animals used for research or food, but not for unborn humans."