



Rape and Incest... Is Abortion Ever Okay?

Many advocates for life are challenged with myths and tough questions. Is abortion the answer in some cases? No! All life has value and therefore should be respected and protected. Much of the truth about abortion receives little attention in public discourse, for it exposes what we, as a nation would rather not see. Following are myths and questions frequently raised by abortion proponents, and facts about the "hard cases" in the abortion debate.

ACCEPTING ABORTION FOR HARD CASES SUCH AS RAPE AND INCEST IS ONLY SENSIBLE. DOESN'T ABORTION NEED TO BE AVAILABLE FOR THESE DIFFICULT SITUATIONS?

Pro-lifers must emphasize that no matter the circumstances of conception; there should never be embarrassment about bringing a child into the world. The value of a person is not determined by the circumstances of his or her conception. Rape and incest victims need support and compassion, not a "quick-fix solution" like abortion. Abortion only adds to the trauma and injustice already inflicted upon the mother.

ABORTION IS USED MAINLY AS A LAST RESORT, MOSTLY FOR PREGNANCIES THAT RESULT FROM RAPE OR INCEST.

In a study conducted by the pro-abortion Alan Guttmacher Institute, entitled "Why Women Have Abortions," women were asked to give specific reasons why they had an abortion. The top three answers were:

1. Unready for responsibility
2. Can't afford baby now
3. Concern about how having a baby would change her life.

The three reasons, which came in last place and were tied at 1 percent included:

1. Was a victim of rape or incest
2. Husband or partner wanted the abortion
3. Didn't want others to know she has had sex or is pregnant.

Studies and statistics consistently show that pregnancies due to rape and incest are rare. According to Guttmacher that 1% due to rape and incest is 14,000 babies per year. Therefore, abortion is not mainly used as a last resort.

ABORTION MUST BE ALLOWED IN ORDER TO SAVE THE LIFE OF THE MOTHER.

"There are rare instances where a choice has to be made to save the mother's life over a child's," according to Kathleen M. Raviele, M.D. Dr. Raviele specializes in adult and adolescent gynecology and practices in Tucker, Georgia.

Physicians now have the ability to treat the mother and child separately as the two individuals they are. Considering today's medical technology, it is extremely rare that an unborn baby's life must be sacrificed to save the mother's life. A very important distinction must be made between abortion, and removing an ectopic (tubal) pregnancy or inducing early delivery. While the former intends to destroy a life the latter seeks to preserve it.



WHAT ABOUT FETAL DEFECTS? WHY WOULD PRO-LIFERS PUNISH MOTHERS BY FORCING THEM TO HAVE BABIES WITH DISABILITIES?

The value of human life cannot be measured by one's abilities or lack thereof. As human beings, we have unalienable rights despite any physical, mental or emotional disabilities we may have. Denying another's humanity on the basis of some concept of productivity or "perfection" is a very dangerous proposition. The door is then open to other forms of "mercy killing."

IF SAFE AND LEGAL ABORTIONS ARE NOT AVAILABLE WOMEN WILL BE DRIVEN TO DANGEROUS BACK-ALLEY ABORTIONS, RESULTING IN NEEDLESS INJURY AND DEATH.

It should be remembered that a death occurs every time an abortion is performed - the death of an unborn child. It should also be emphasized that abortion is a surgical procedure, and though legal, it puts many women at serious physical, mental and emotional risk. Increasing attention is being focused on the fact that many women suffer post-abortion complications. While abortion proponents allege that thousands of women died from abortions prior to Roe v. Wade, such numbers were actually made up by individuals and groups pushing for abortion's legalization. The truth is that no one knows exactly how many women died from illegal abortions for the simple reason that illegal abortions were not reported. What we do know is that women - and their children - are suffering and dying now from legal abortion.

WHAT IF STATES PASS ABORTION-RESTRICTIVE LAWS THAT ALLOW FOR RAPE EXCEPTIONS?

- 1. Laws permitting abortion for pregnancy resulting from rape illustrate well the legal dictum "hard cases make bad law."** Exceptions seem to make the rule.
- 2. Laws allowing abortion for impregnating rapes are unenforceable and easily abused.**
- 3. Legislation allowing this exception has historically led to abortion on demand.** Former President Reagan has attested to widespread abuse of the rape exception in his home state of California while he was governor. That exception became a legal loophole leading to abortion on demand due to overly broad interpretations of the law. Likewise, in England, the 1967 Abortion Act was passed to allow abortion for 'exceptional' cases. The outcome has been abortion on demand.

It is noteworthy that an entire U.S. Supreme Court case was predicated on **the lie** of a gang rape. That case, the now notorious Roe v Wade, brought us abortion on demand in this country.



SHOULDN'T ABORTION AT LEAST BE AVAILABLE TO VICTIMS OF RAPE AND INCEST?

The last thing a woman who has been through the trauma of rape needs is the added trauma of an abortion. Rather than mitigating the original shock of the attack, abortion compounds it. Clinical studies demonstrate this. A study done at the University of British Columbia's Department of Psychiatry, as reported in the March 3, 1978, issue of Psychiatric News, a publication of the American Psychiatric Association, showed that abortion often exacerbates a woman's psychological stress. That study concluded in part: "Whatever may be the case at the conscious level, at a much deeper level abortion is regarded by many women as infanticide."

Abortion advocates have used the rape and incest exceptions as a smokescreen - first to legalize, then to promote abortion on demand.

STILL, CAN'T ABORTION BE THE TRULY COMPASSIONATE RESPONSE TO RAPE?

A cornerstone of the 'pro-choice' movement is that abortion is the treatment of choice for rape. Yet pregnancy rarely results from rape; the vast majority of abortions (over 99% according to the Alan Guttmacher Institute statistics-1.3 million per year in the U.S.) are for far more convenient reasons than rape or incest. Vicki Seitzer in Volume 32 of the Journal of the American Medical Women's Association stated:

"Perhaps more of a gross exaggeration than a myth is the mistaken and unfortunate belief that pregnancy is a frequent complication of sexual assault. This is emphatically not the case, and there are several medically sound reasons for it. Honesty requires us to say that it is unjust that a woman carry to term a child conceived through rape, but that it is a far greater injustice to kill the child. This is a rare situation in which injustice cannot be avoided; the best thing that can be done is to reduce it. The first injustice lasts for nine months of a life that can be relieved, both psychologically and financially. The second injustice ends a life, and there is no remedy for that."

WHAT ABOUT INCEST?

Abortion actually **protects the perpetrator** of the crime by concealing the incestuous act. Returning the girl to the same environment after an abortion does nothing to solve the primary problem. By taking away the result of the incest, abortion advocates think they can take away the act itself. Consider the example of Edith Young, a 12-year-old incest victim, who writes 25 years after the abortion of her child:

Throughout the years I have been depressed, suicidal, furious, outraged, lonely and have felt a sense of loss...The abortion which was to 'be in my best interest' just has not been. As far as I can tell, it only 'saved their reputations,' 'solved their problems,' and 'allowed their lives to go merrily on.'...My daughter, how I miss her so. I miss her regardless of the reason for her conception.

IF PREGNANCIES FROM RAPE AND INCEST ARE UNUSUAL, WHY CAN'T PROLIFERS COMPROMISE ON THIS ONE ISSUE?



It is absolutely indisputable that the life within the womb is a unique human being. To say that this irreplaceable life can be destroyed for a crime its father committed is to deny the intrinsic humanity of the unborn. **Civilized societies don't stoop to routine violence in an effort to conceal their social problems.**

Abortion doesn't stop rape! Abortion stops the life of the unborn child!