

Impact of Suffragists Felt a Century Later
Finding a Home in Today's Feminism
Inspired by Our Feminist Foremothers

Volume 11, Number 1
Spring, 2004



THE AMERICAN FEMINISTSM

Feminists for Life of America[®]

Alice Paul

Author of the Original Equal Rights Amendment

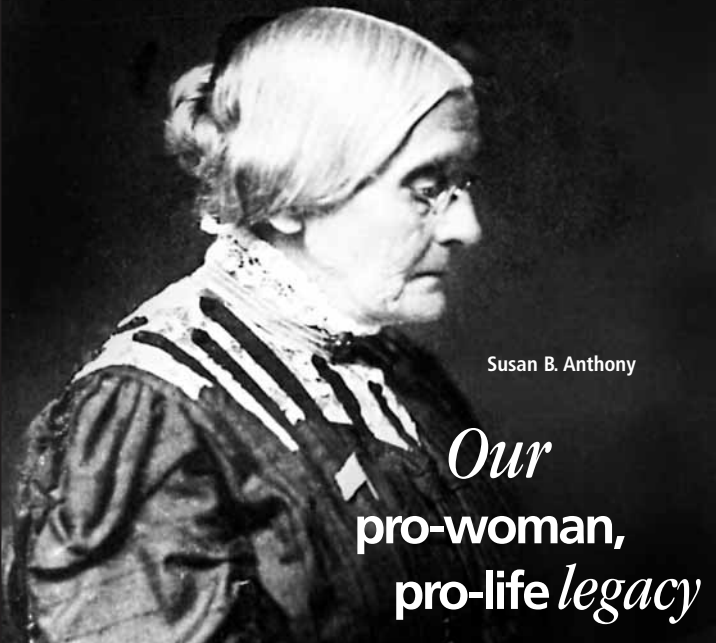
Our **pro-woman,
pro-life** *legacy*

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Feminists for Life of America

"When a man steals to satisfy hunger, we may safely conclude that there is something wrong in society - so when a woman destroys the life of her unborn child, it is an evidence that either by education or circumstances she has been greatly wronged."

Mattie Brinkerhoff *The Revolution*, 4(9):138-9 September 2, 1869



Susan B. Anthony

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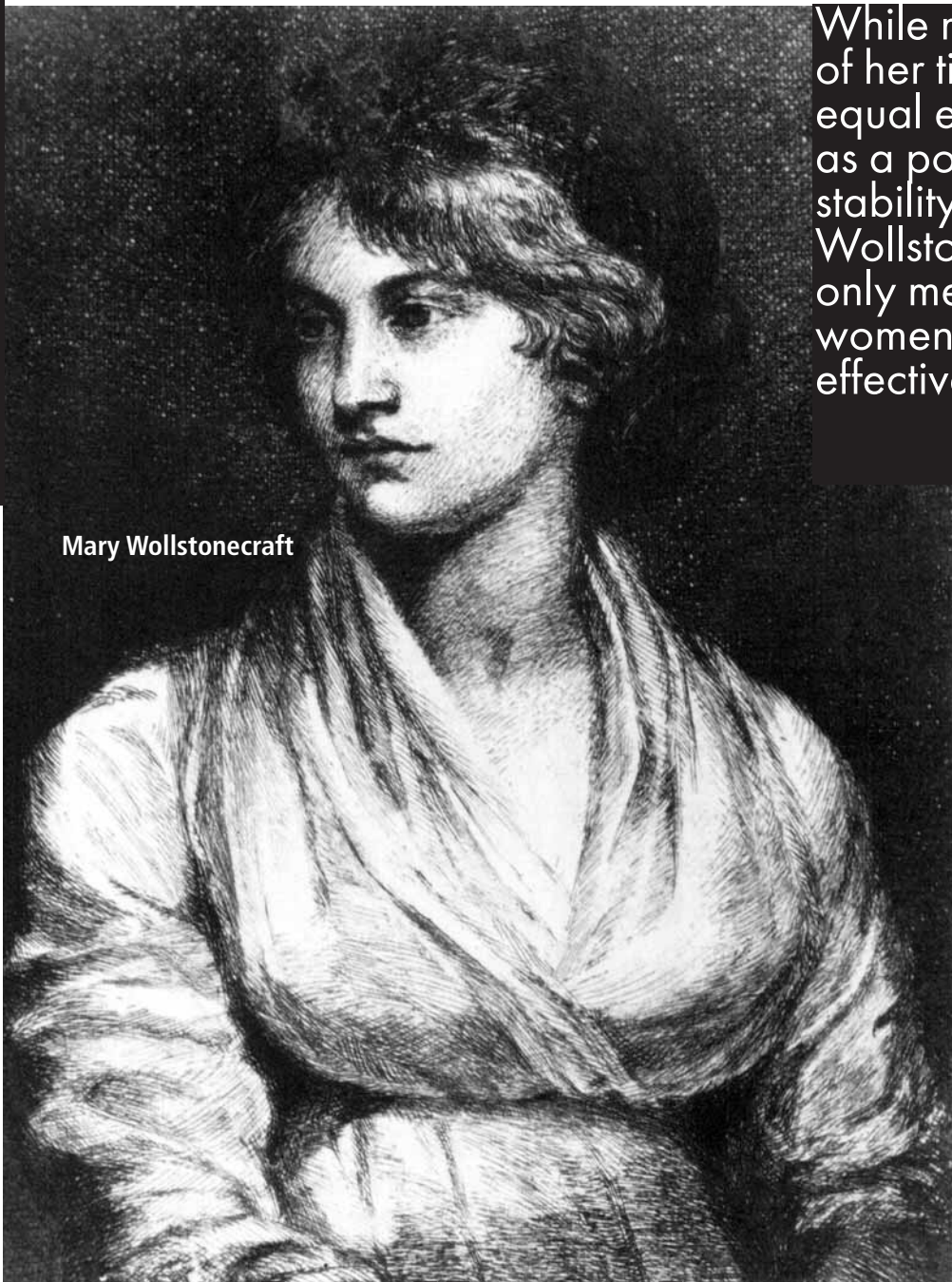
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THE AMERICAN FEMINIST™ The quarterly magazine of Feminists for Life of America **Editor** Laura Ciampa **Editorial Board** Cat Clark, Maureen O'Connor **Copy Editors** Donna R. Foster, Linda Frommer, Coleen MacKay **Art Director** Lisa Toscani

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Established in 1972, Feminists for Life of America is a nonsectarian, nonpartisan, grassroots organization that seeks real solutions to the challenges women face. Our efforts are shaped by the core feminist values of justice, nondiscrimination, and nonviolence. Feminists for Life of America continues the tradition of early American feminists such as Susan B. Anthony, who opposed abortion.

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Mary Wollstonecraft

While many male leaders of her time argued against equal education for women as a potential threat to the stability of home and family, Wollstonecraft saw it as the only means by which women would ever be effective mothers.

Great thinkers during the Age of Reason in the eighteenth century inspired major social and political revolutions. A philosopher whose work made an indelible mark on this era was Mary Wollstonecraft. In 1790, she published *A Vindication of the Rights of Man*. It inspired Thomas Paine's classic *The Rights of Man* and introduced Wollstonecraft to a circle of eminent writers including William Blake and William Godwin (her future husband).

A Vindication of the Rights of Man was followed two years later by her most famous book, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. Focusing on the emancipation and education of the female sex, this book reflected Wollstonecraft's wider political and social views about the inherent dignity of the human person, regardless of sex, race or rank. An ardent supporter of the American Revolution, Wollstonecraft regularly compares patriarchy with monarchy in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. She writes, "Who made man the exclusive, if women partake with him of the gift of reason? In this style argue tyrants of every generation from the weak king to the weak father of a family."

A Vindication of the Rights of Woman

by Mary Wollstonecraft
reviewed by Elise Ebrhard

It is the "gift of reason" and natural law that form the thematic heart of her book. She celebrates the natural differences between women and men, but rails against the idea that these differences deprive women of the capacity for self-reliance. While many male leaders of her time argued against equal education for women as a potential threat to the stability of home and family, Wollstonecraft saw it as the only means by which women would ever be effective mothers.

"And have women who have early imbibed notions of passive obedience, sufficient character to manage a family or educate children?" she asks.

Later she asserts, "To be a good mother, a woman must have sense, and that independence of mind which few women possess who are taught to depend entirely on their husbands. Meek wives are, in general, foolish mothers."

Wollstonecraft places much of the blame for female oppression on male "libertines" and their sexual objectification of women.

"...tyrants and sensualists are in the right when they endeavor to keep women in the dark, because the former only want slaves, and the latter a plaything."

Wollstonecraft bluntly addresses controversial issues few would dare mention in public, including prostitution, rape and abortion. In decrying the tragedy of abortion, she again looks to natural law. "Nature in everything demands respect and those who violate her laws seldom violate them with impunity."

She celebrates the natural differences between women and men, but rails against the idea that these differences deprive women of the capacity for self-reliance.

She demands equal responsibility by both men and women for their parental duties. "Many men attend to the breeding of horses...who would, strange want of sense and feeling! think themselves degraded by paying any attention to the nursery."

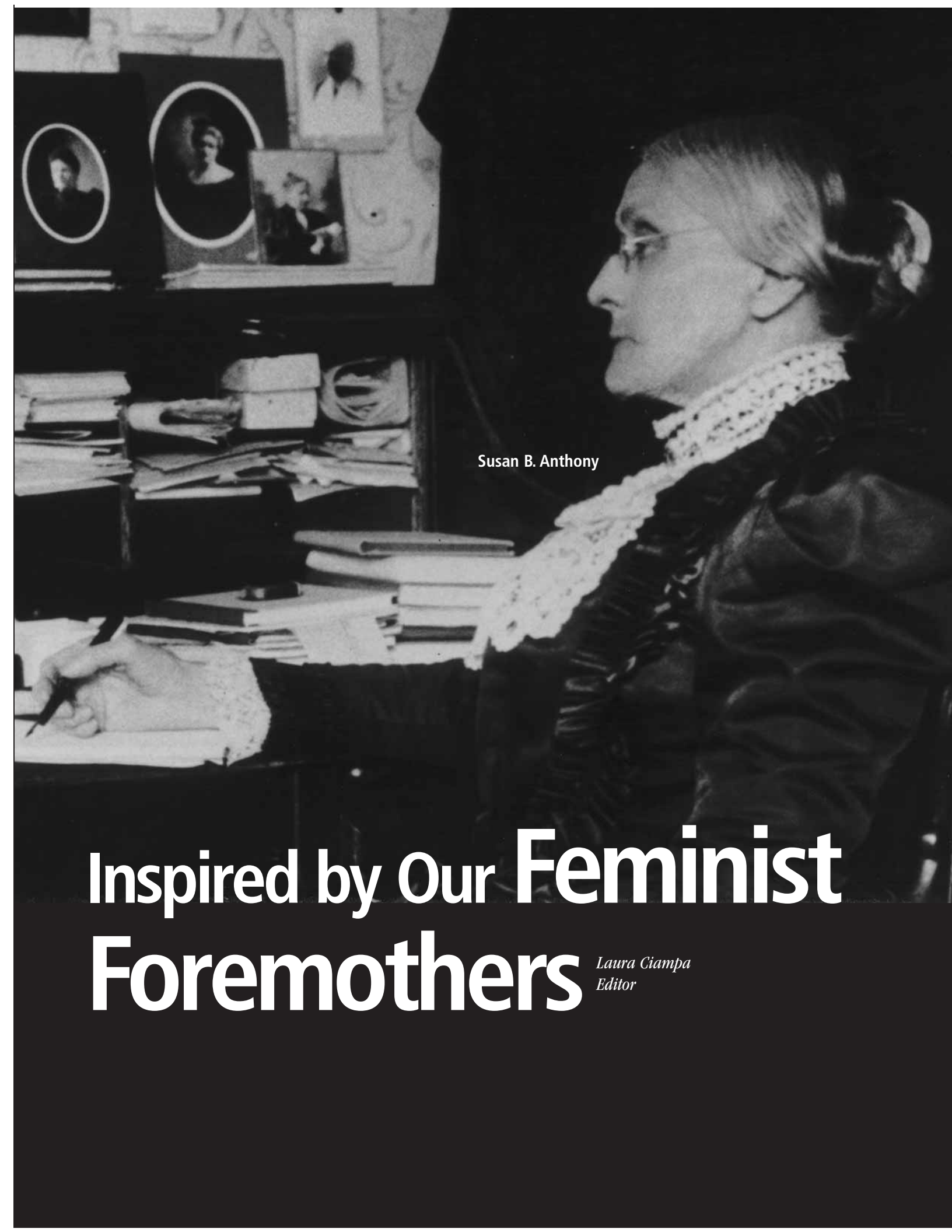
Abortion would later occupy Wollstonecraft's thoughts in her final unfinished novel, *Maria: or the Wrongs of Women*, in which a servant girl is seduced by a master and then coerced into an abortion.

In 1797, Wollstonecraft died from complications after the birth of her child, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, the future author of *Frankenstein*. Decades later, suffragists like Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony looked to Wollstonecraft's work for inspiration, serializing *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* in their newspaper, *The Revolution*.

Today, Mary Wollstonecraft is considered the "mother of feminism" and *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* is part of the great eighteenth-century intellectual canon. *

Elise Ehrhard has written fiction and articles for numerous publications, most recently the *Chicago Tribune*. She is past editor of the *American Feminist*.

Nature in **everything** demands respect and those who violate her laws seldom violate them with impunity.

A black and white photograph of Susan B. Anthony. She is shown in profile, facing left, seated at a desk. She is wearing glasses and a dark dress with a prominent white lace collar. Her right hand is holding a pen, writing on a piece of paper. The desk is cluttered with various papers, books, and a small container. On the wall behind her, several framed portraits of men and women are visible. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows.

Susan B. Anthony

Inspired by Our Feminist Foremothers

Laura Ciampa
Editor

Have you ever wondered what would happen if a group of pro-life feminist historians, writers and leaders got together in one room and talked about the pro-life feminists who had inspired them? Picture a group of women enjoying tea in a cozy room with a fireplace and comfortable chairs, or perhaps sitting around a conference table in a board room, or sipping cool drinks in a Japanese garden... Unfortunately since the busy schedules of these women would not permit an actual roundtable discussion; we decided to create a virtual one instead. We asked our experts to tell us via e-mail about the feminists who inspired them and created a roundtable discussion from their reflections and observations.

Lisa Bellecci-st. romain is the author of three books, a public high school social worker and adjunct professor of psychology for Baker University. She served as the first president of Feminists for Life of Kansas and has written numerous columns about feminist history for various publications.

Debunking the myth that nineteenth-century women's rights supported abortion is a constant challenge, especially for historians faced with prejudice and political correctness.

Rosemary Oelrich Bottcher, Ph.D., is the Immediate Past Board President of Feminists for Life of America, and has authored numerous articles and opinion pieces on contemporary pro-life feminism.

Mary Krane Derr is coeditor of *Prolife Feminism Yesterday and Today*, compiler of "Man's Inhumanity to Woman Makes Countless Infants Die," and a contributor to *Historical and Multicultural Encyclopedia of Women's Reproductive Rights in the United States*, ed. Judith Baer (Greenwood, 2003). She is also an award-winning poet and a biomedical, environmental, and social service writer.

Serrin Foster is President of Feminists for Life of America. Her speech, "The Feminist Case *Against* Abortion," has been presented internationally and has been included in an anthology on *Women's Rights* entitled "Great Speeches in History." She serves on the advisory boards of American Collegians for Life and the Susan B. Anthony List and has been recognized by Marquis *Who's Who in America* and *Who's Who of American Women*.

Ellen Kennedy Johnson teaches English Literature at Arizona State University and has a forthcoming article about Sarah Grimke's unpublished letters and essays.

Rachel M. MacNair, Ph.D., is the director of the Institute for Integrated Social Analysis in Kansas City, the research arm of Consistent Life; co-editor of *Prolife Feminism Yesterday and Today*; and the author of *Perpetration-Induced Traumatic Stress: The Psychological Consequences of Killing* (Praeger, 2002), which examines several groups that kill, including abortion clinic staff and executioners. MacNair served as national president of FFLA from 1984 to 1994, and originally founded the Susan B. Anthony List.

Suzanne Schnittman, Ph.D. in American History, currently serves on the Board of Directors of Feminists for Life of New York, teaches history at State University of New York at Brockport and writes on women's issues. She is writing a book on nineteenth-century women using previously unpublished letters.

Sally Winn is a mother of two and serves as Vice President of Feminists for Life of America. She has served on the boards of the Feminism and Nonviolence Studies Association, Democrats for Life and the Susan B. Anthony List and has presented her speech, "Refuse to Choose: Reclaiming Feminism," across the country.

All of these women have contributed to FFL's earlier newsletter, *Sisterlife*, and/or FFL's current magazine, *The American Feminist*. Krane Derr and Bellecci-st. romain are the primary authors of the column "Herstory," a favorite feature in *The American Feminist*.

A RICH LEGACY

Krane Derr: Despite the importance that the present day feminist movement has placed on abortion, little to nothing is said about the activism of earlier women regarding this issue. When it *is* mentioned, it's often downplayed, and attributed to motives that don't tell the whole story, or don't tell it at all!

Schnittman: Debunking the myth that nineteenth-century women's rights supported abortion is a constant challenge, especially for historians faced with prejudice and political correctness. My recent work demonstrates that more and more women's historians of this period are reluctantly recognizing that Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and their colleagues saw abortion as hurting women. The mere mention of abortion has been absent from most collections of sources.

I recently discovered some entries in Susan B. Anthony's diary, written during a speaking tour to Missouri (quoted in *The Selected Papers of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony*, Vol. III, ed. Ann Gordon, 2003. pp. 213-14):

Mar. 4, 1876, while visiting her brother Daniel while on a tour, notes this about her sister-in-law Annie: "Sister Annie in bed—had been sick for a month—tampering with herself—and was freed this A.M. what ignorance & lack of self-government the world is filled with." (The editor notes tampering was "inducing an abortion.")

Mar. 7, 1876, leaving her brother Daniel's: "Sister Annie better—but looks very slim—she will rue the day she forces nature—"

Foster: As I travel the country by train I cannot help but think that Susan B. Anthony traveled these same rails, going from town to town organizing support for women's suffrage. I relate to this childless woman who responded to a compliment by a man who said she would have made a wonderful mother. She answered, "I thank you sir, for what I take to be the highest compliment, but sweeter even than to have had the joy of caring for children of my own has it been to me to

help bring about a better state of things for mothers generally, so that their unborn little ones could not be willed away from them." All of us follow in her footsteps as we address the root causes that drive women to abortion.

Bellecci-st. romain: I have read about Elizabeth Cady Stanton's experience when first advocating for the vote for women at Seneca Falls in 1848—the only one of the 12 resolutions not to pass unanimously because it was considered ridiculous and outrageous. I love the wording: "Resolved: that it is the sacred duty of the women of this country to secure to themselves their sacred right to the elective franchise." That it was "sacred"—they would have to answer for it if they did *not* do something about the problem, a "duty" that they could not run from, and that the women had to "secure" it themselves, enough of counting on the men to give it over. How others thought her wild and far out-of-bounds to even voice the impossible: women voting!

Krane Derr: Stanton voiced another wild, out-of-bounds "impossibility": a world where women's social, familial, and economic circumstances do not compel them to such "degrading" (her word) practices as abortion and infanticide. [In this world,] because biological motherhood is so highly valued and actively supported by people of both sexes, and at the same time women—and men—aren't *mandated* to have as many biological kids as possible (or even any). [It is] an appealing vision to me as a woman who has borne and raised an unplanned child, then became infertile, and might not have chosen further bio-motherhood anyway. There are so many ways to mother, all of them sacred. Stanton's long-ago insight is badly needed in the current abortion debate.

Winn: Elizabeth Cady Stanton is a profound yet real role model to me. As the founder of the women's movement and mother of seven she suffered the same struggles so many of us face in boldly answering the call of duty to elevate the status of women while maintaining an unwavering dedication to her beloved role as mother. At a time when mentioning pregnancy and childbirth was something of a taboo, Stanton was truly a woman ahead of her time. Against society's norms, she went out visibly pregnant and raised a flag to

commemorate the birth of each of her children. She saw the beauty in women's awesome life-giving abilities and celebrated each new life publicly. The stork-in-the-lawn people should be paying royalties to her estate!

Stanton's views on the individuality of every human life, as reflected in her writings below, underscore for me the need to help women appreciate their unique abilities and fight against being molded into the wombless model of success society has foisted upon us. It is clearly also a reminder of the regrets of many women in abortion recovery who were told that they could always "get pregnant again later." Each life—both that of the woman and her child—is beautiful, unique, and deserves an opportunity to blossom in its own right.

We come into the world alone, unlike all who have gone before us; we leave it alone, under circumstances peculiar to ourselves. No mortal ever has been, no mortal ever will be like the soul just launched on the sea of life. There can never again be just such a combination of prenatal influences; never again just such environments as make up the infancy, youth and manhood of this one. Nature never repeats herself, and the possibilities of one human soul will never be found in another. No one has ever found two blades of ribbon grass alike, and no one will ever find two human beings alike.

Bellecci-st. romain: I have been inspired that Elizabeth Cady Stanton's amazing writings were accomplished while she raised SEVEN children! Oh, my goodness, and that was before word processors, electric washing machines and dryers, dishwashers... What energy! Her quote regarding her partnership with Susan B. Anthony is a favorite reminder that we don't have to do this work alone: "I am the better writer; she the better critic. She supplied the facts and statistics, I the philosophy and rhetoric, and together, we have made arguments that have stood unshaken through the storms of long years." What an incredible partnership! How productive they were!

Kennedy Johnson: Abolitionist Sarah Grimke, who with her sister Angelina was the first woman to speak in front of a "promiscuous" audience in 1836 (meaning one where men were in attendance), called the too frequent practice of abortion and self-induced miscarriage "the secret sorrows of women." She asserts: "And why I would ask this untimely casting of her fruit? Do the beasts of the field miscarry? Why

not? They are governed by instinct. Are the brutes safe during the period of gestation whilst women are not?" Grimke wanted women to understand that their hopes, dreams and desires were often subsumed by a social agenda that did not match their ideas of freedom, liberty, family and love. She revolutionized the conventional discourse of the female body from something weak and in need of man's control by validating its strength and uniqueness and by asserting a woman's right to control her own person. Only unlike today, this movement toward women's agency over her body meant the *embracing* of her life-bearing potential, not a further alienation from it.

MacNair: The very reason the early feminists opposed abortion was that they were against enforced maternity. Both unwanted pregnancy and abortion were caused by the same thing—that a woman had no right to control her own body. Her husband did. Susan B. Anthony was quite clear that this was the root of the problem. Elizabeth Cady Stanton was more inclined to the view that women needed economic power, since women would be less likely to engage in "child-murder" if they weren't relying on someone else economically. She was sure that having the vote would help put an end to the practice. When one of the first woman doctors, Dr. Charlotte Lozier, turned in a man to law enforcement for trying to get her to perform an abortion on a young woman, other feminists praised her. The *Springfield Republican*, a newspaper sympathetic to women's rights, said that this was a good reason to have more women in the medical profession—they would shield other women from this kind of victimization.

Bottcher: I was influenced by so many of the early feminists; they were such courageous and capable thinkers! Their ideas seem self-evident to us now, but at the time, they were considered to be dangerous heretics. If I had to pick one, it would be the first American female physician, Elizabeth Blackwell. She saw for herself the horrific damage that constant childbearing and abortions could inflict upon women, yet she was a fierce advocate for the unborn *because she knew that they are fellow humans*. She advocated elevating the status of women and educating them about their own bodies so that they and their children could be healthy.

Schnittman: I, too, am inspired by Elizabeth Blackwell, who never married but chose to adopt a daughter. The first [American] woman to receive a medical degree, she treasured motherhood in all its forms. In an autobiographical

sketch from 1845 Blackwell explained her regret that female physicians were identified with abortionists. She wrote, "The grose perversion and destruction of mother hood by the abortionist filled me with indignation, and awakened active antagonism. That the honourable term female physician should be exclusively applied to those women [like Madam Restell] who carried on this shocking trade seemed to me a horror. It was an utter degradation of what might and should become a noble position for women." (Quoted in *Pioneer Work in Opening the Medical Profession to Woman: Autobiographical Sketches by Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell*, Schocken Books, New York 1977, p. 30)

Foster: I feel the frustration of the lesser-known Eleanor Kirk who goes off on a tangent answering a question from a woman who wonders why women's suffrage is important since she and her husband "are one", and connects women's rights to the rights of the unborn. Her exasperation with women who only care about themselves, and her anger at doctors who perform abortion, are palpable. But her vision of strong, educated women who have political clout to protect the unborn is filled with hope for the future.

Now, just that little sentence caused every nerve in my body to quiver painfully. No true woman can shut herself up in a little Paradise of her own, and never look out into the great thoroughfare of life. Why, woman alive, or woman asleep, where there is one wife happy and contented in the love of a noble man, there are thousands of wretched ones... Think a moment. Suppose death, inexorable and strangely exacting, should claim his own; what then? ... What will become of your babies, madam, should you be suddenly deprived of the means of their support? Have you the courage, stamina, ay, ability, to fight the world single-handed? ... What will become of the babies? Why don't somebody ask—what has become of the babies? Ask Restell and thousands of physicians, male and female, who have been engaged in their work of destruction for years. Physicians who have graduated from our first medical colleges, physicians with high sounding diplomas, whose elegant equipages stand in front of Fifth Avenue mansions, who pocket a big fee and a little bundle of flesh at the same time, and nobody's the wiser! not even the husband in hosts of instances.

What will become of the babies —did you ask—and you? Can you not see that the idea is to educate women that they may be self-reliant, self-sustaining, self-respected? The wheel is a big one, and needs a strong push, and a push all together, giving it an impulse that will keep it constantly revolving, and the first Revolution must be female suffrage. After this, the ponderous affair will move regularly, and perhaps slowly; but education, moral, physical, and intellectually practical, will as surely follow as dawn follows the darkness and night... God speed the time, for the sake of the babies. Little ones will then be welcome.

(Kirk, E. "What Will Become of the Babies?" *The Revolution*, 1(21): 327, May 23, 1868)

Bellecci-st. romain: I would also include Jane Addams on the list of inspiring feminists. As a social worker, I am extremely impressed with the breadth of works that were accomplished by Hull House. She was the driving force of that social, political, economic and educational training ground, inspiring many others to join the effort, so that it seems that every idea they had was able to come to fruition. Wow. What energy must have zoomed in and through that house!

Krane Derr: Jane Addams and the other remarkable women affiliated with Hull House—Alice Hamilton, and my somethingteenth cousin Julia Lathrop, for example—were both opposed to abortion and actively involved in creating better options—for example, sex education and family planning clinics, improvements in the legal status of single mothers and their children, reducing infant and maternal mortality, including disabled persons in society, and guarding the reproductive health of women exposed to dangerous chemicals at work. The second and expanded edition of *Prolife Feminism Yesterday and Today* (XLibris, forthcoming 2004) will document their work in this vein. As a Chicagoan, I am proud to live in the city that the women of Hull House called home. Closer to our own time, the African-American civil rights leader Fannie Lou Hamer just knocks me out with awe and gratitude for her straightforward affirmation, in deed and word alike, of every life. A Mississippi sharecropper with a sixth-grade education, she really had what Gandhi called *satyagraha*, nonviolent soul-power.

Foster: When I speak on college campuses I think of Sarah Norton, the first woman who successfully argued for admission of women to Cornell University, who painted a picture for us that is eerily familiar, more than a century later:

Child murderers practice their profession without let or hindrance, and open infant butcheries unquestioned ... Is there no remedy for all this ante-natal child murder? ... Perhaps there will come a time when ... an unmarried mother will not be despised because of her motherhood ... and when the right of the unborn to be born will not be denied or interfered with.

(*Woodhull's and Claffin's Weekly*,
November 19, 1870)

Krane Derr: Matilda Joslyn Gage dug through endless tiny details of history to uncover and reconstruct the big hidden picture of herstory. Yet ironically she herself was deleted from the record because other feminists found her too radical. She spoke and acted most fearlessly and prophetically for the rights of women, the elderly, practitioners of Earth-based spiritualities, prenatal and postnatal children, disabled persons, the colonized Irish, African Americans, [Native Americans], and other-than-human sentient beings to live and flourish in a world run on compassion rather than violence. She was ahead of her time and ours, too. Her biography still shows that "all the struggles for life are connected" —and that the voices we find most discomfiting are often the ones we need to hear the most.

Kennedy Johnson: Both the first- and second-wave feminist movements labored to make gender politically irrelevant and feared that any emphasis on sexual difference impeded egalitarian ends. Yet, consciously or unconsciously, this approach validated the long-standing cultural representations that claimed women's unique way of experiencing the world is, indeed, inferior and something to overcome. Sadly, it's the underlying social structures making children the enemy of women's material well being that have gone unchallenged. People misunderstand how abortion rights actually further women's oppression and the rhetoric surrounding them limit women's freedom of choice. That's why a closer reading of the writings of our feminist foremothers is imperative to the real understanding of what accounts for equal rights for women. Unfortunately, many academics refuse to look at this side of the argument, fearing they will somehow appear conservative, religious, or anti-woman.

MacNair: So the very words that are used by today's abortion advocates were understood by the nineteenth-century feminists as reasons to understand abortion not as a woman's right but as a wrong against women. The movement always was one for women and children, since children were socially vulnerable the same way. Once a basic understanding of equal human rights and nonviolence are the important principles, then pro-life feminism is fairly inescapable. In the nineteenth-century, when they were struggling to establish those principles, they understood that more clearly. It's when people think they're following the principles, but don't have to struggle so hard to get others to agree, that they no longer pay close attention to the obvious implications.

Schnittman: If we honestly examine the words of our feminist foremothers, we see a dedication to the full woman in all her strengths and a celebration of life, born and unborn. Digging to find those sources provides us with a lifelong but joy-filled challenge.

Bellecci-st. romain: The very existence of Feminists for Life has served to anchor and enlarge my views, as my previous "amorphous grayness" of opinion found a foundation on which it could attach, gain substance and grow. I wonder how my frustrations and energy would have been channeled, had it not been for FFL finding me 13 years ago! I am grateful.

Foster: It is Mattie Brinkerhoff who to me best sums up what FFL is about:

When a man steals to satisfy hunger, we may safely conclude that there is something wrong in society—so when a woman destroys the life of her unborn child, it is an evidence that either by education or circumstances she has been greatly wronged. (*The Revolution*, 4(9):138–9 September 2, 1869)

Today we say, "Abortion is a reflection that we have not met the needs of women. Women deserve better than abortion." I can see them all nodding with agreement as they hear Feminists for Life's refrain, "Women deserve better." I can hear them cheering us on. *

For more on pro-life feminism, go to www.feministsforlife.org and click on Feminist History. Click on "Covetable Stuff" to order books such as *Prolife Feminism Yesterday and Today*, *Pro-Life Feminists: Different Voices*, *Swimming Against the Tide*, the booklet *"Man's Inhumanity to Women Makes Countless Infants Die,"* or the poster *"Voices of our Feminist Foremothers,"* or use the enclosed *Covetable Stuff* order form.



"Abortion is the ultimate exploitation of women." Alice Paul

Impact of Suffragists Felt a Century Later

For more than two hundred years pro-life feminists have recognized that the rights of women are deeply entangled with the rights of their unborn children and that abortion is harmful to women as individuals and as a group. Women deserve better, and the pro-life feminists of yesterday and today refuse to choose between women and children. Feminists for Life asked our members to e-mail us their thoughts on the pro-life feminists who have inspired them the most.

The ultimate exploitation of women comes when women give up what and who they are for a standard that is set by someone else... The lesson taught by Alice Paul and Susan B. Anthony and others is that what sets a woman apart from a man is her ability to bear and deliver new life. They knew that once a woman allowed herself to be compromised on this glorious ability, she would be open to the controls of men and society in a way which she had not been before, and that instead of moving forward, she would move backward into further slavery.

—Phyllis Deroian
Manalapan, New Jersey

As a male I find Matilda Gage's famous quote from *The Revolution*, in which she asserts the responsibility for this grave wrong "lies at the door of the male sex", especially insightful. In modern society we [men] have absolved ourselves from responsibility and accountability on the issue of sex and many of us simply think that if she gets pregnant, it's her problem... we aren't holding men accountable by allowing them to simply pay for an abortion... Women deserve our support, not \$600 and a supposed quick fix.

—Michael Sciscenti, President of Johns Hopkins' Voice for Life and President of American Collegians for Life

Their quotes give a profound sense of how abortion was both well understood as a social motive and as a means of the subordination of women... The quotes of Anthony and Stanton make clear that these more profound feminist thinkers recognized the innate value of unborn life and the inherent threat of that life to patriarchal visions of men unshackled from sexual responsibility.

—Dr. Ben Voth
Professor, Miami University

It is a sign, a symptom of the ailments that plague society when we as a people are unable to welcome and nurture all children... How can we let our fellow women make such decisions without trying to alleviate their circumstances first, give them options?

—Mary Bridget Gurry
Oxford, Ohio

My favorite quote from the early pro-life feminists comes from Elizabeth Cady Stanton. "***There must be a remedy even for such a crying evil as [abortion]. But where shall it be found, at least where begin, if not in the complete enfranchisement and elevation of women?***"

That is a positive solution!

—John Munnis, Jr.
Maineville, Ohio

Their words of wisdom are timeless and have helped me discover who and what I am... They are the epitome of what it means to be an authentic feminist and we are blessed to have them as our foremothers.

—Tish Farrell
Wilmington, Delaware

When I wonder if our attempts to reach women about the unique and creative gifts they bring to the political arena are getting through, I remember that [Susan B. Anthony] never saw her fight for women's suffrage to fruition. She believed in womanhood, acted to advance the best in it and trusted that it would prevail... the truth of Susan B. Anthony's mission sustained her... And it sustains me.

—Marjorie Dannenfelser
Chair of the Board
Susan B. Anthony List

I am most affected by Mary Wollstonecraft whose message is basically "You can't mess with Mother Nature and get away with it." Mary died birthing her daughter, Mary Shelly, who created *Frankenstein*, a metaphor for her mother's keen observation. It's a truth I wish I had embraced early on, but instead I was duped by the pseudo-feminist, abortion-supporting movement. It cost me a child and most of my self-worth. I believe that you can't be a feminist and "pro-choice," and I'm encouraged that the foremothers of the feminist movement understood this.

—Ashli E. McCall
Quincy, Florida

More than what she said, I am inspired by the actions of Susan B. Anthony... She published a newspaper called *The Revolution*. Then as now newspapers needed advertising to survive. Several companies manufactured concoctions that were supposedly abortifacients. Anthony refused to take advertising from such companies. It would have been very easy for her to take the advertising with a disclaimer but she adhered to her beliefs and refused the advertising and the income. What a woman!!!!

—Florence Scarinci
Franklin Square, New York

When I grew up and joined the pro-life movement, I became disenchanted with a great many feminists for their pro-abortion views. But I was gratified when I read a pro-life quote from Elizabeth [Cady Stanton].

—Maria Vitale
Pennsylvania Pro-Life Federation

Frederica Mathewes-Green is a prolific feminist writer who has impressed me a great deal. I'm always impressed by her clear thinking and articulate writing. I'm already pro-life, but if I weren't I'd have a hard time countering her arguments.

—Joanne Schmidt
Houston, Texas

Those who promote abortion rights in the name of justice and equality would do well to consider the words of Elizabeth Moore Sobo, "Abortion does nothing whatever to promote social and economic justice, nor does it compensate for the lack of it." If women think that their equality is contingent on their access to an invasive surgical procedure, then we have failed them.

—Katherine Quah
Bryn Mawr College

Pregnancy and childbirth are *natural*. The ability to bear children is the one thing that truly distinguishes women from men. Demanding the right to abort in order to achieve equality implies women must become males in order to compete and survive in a man's world. Rosemary Botcher points out that abortion reduces women to the status of sex machines which can be "repaired," if necessary. She refers to it as the "castration of women."

—Vasu Murti
Author and activist, California

A contemporary pro-life feminist that I have benefited from is Sidney Callahan... Her essay "Talk of 'Wanted Child' Makes for Doll Objects" highlights the dangerous implications of a philosophy of human dignity that can only find value in a person when that person is wanted by another... By spreading the notion that women should abort their babies if times are tough for them, our culture has essentially told women that they are not strong enough to overcome odds and are not capable of displaying heroic and sacrificial love for their child coming into less than ideal circumstances.

—Heath Bradley
University of Arkansas

Juli Loesch wrote: "We deserve, demand, have a right to—can create—something better than the abortion industry's 'cure' for our unique condition of impregnability, whether that abortionist be in the back alley or the plush front office." Her words are my daily motivation to envision a better world for women and make that vision a reality.

—Cat Clark
National Office Coordinator
Feminists for Life of America

When Serrin [Foster] appeared on my radar screen I sat up and took notice. Here is a dynamic and positive woman. She is media savvy, and has the ability to turn a phrase in a way that is unique and gets you thinking... Serrin is a woman for today.

—Geri Urrutia
Director, Shield of Roses
Glendale, California

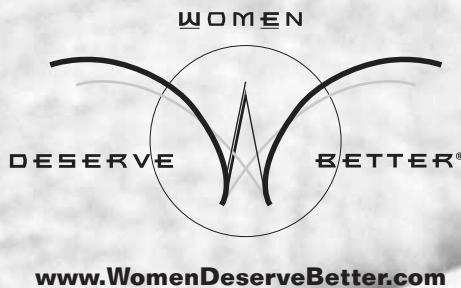
As an acting student, Patricia Heaton and Margaret Colin have had a great impact on me. They've made me believe that it's okay to be verbally pro-life in a pro-choice-heavy world.

—Alicia Jeanne Daigle
Woonsocket, Rhode Island

*

Abortion is a reflection
that we have not met
the needs of women.

Women deserve better
than abortion.



Women Deserve Better is a registered trademark of Feminists for Life of America

Finding a Home In Today's Feminism

Natalie Nardelli

In a 1990 essay entitled "Cassandra's Fate: Why Feminists Ought to Be Pro-Life," Anne Maloney related the story of the Greek mythological figure Cassandra, who was able to see the future, but was not believed by anyone. Maloney observed,

In the late twentieth century, we find ourselves in the frustrating and even terrifying situation of Cassandra—seeing so clearly the disastrous consequences of the current abortion ethic, consequences disastrous not just for the unborn women, who are aborted in far greater numbers than unborn men, not just for the women who abort, but consequences disastrous for all of society: all women, all children, all men. When we try to point out what awaits us ahead, we are usually ignored, sometimes laughed at, while our feminist credentials are questioned.

Despite having to face potential criticism, ostracism and ridicule, contemporary feminists—such as Mary Krane Derr, who has researched early American feminists' writings; Rosemary Bottcher, Immediate Past Board President of Feminists for Life of America; Frederica Mathewes-Green, former Vice President of Communications for FFL; and Serrin Foster, President of FFL, among others—proudly continue the legacy of our feminist foremothers in their research, writings and speeches.

Becoming familiar with these women and their thoughts can help bring an end to the myth that one must be in favor of abortion to be pro-woman. Here are some of the most fundamental arguments for today's pro-life feminism from the experts themselves.

Serrin M. Foster, President of FFL, conceived the "Women Deserve Better" theme for the 30th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*. "For the past thirty years we have been arguing about one of the worst things that a woman could experience. We need to elevate expectations for women and by women," says Foster.



Frederica Mathewes-Green



Rosemary Bottcher



Serrin M. Foster

Foster's landmark speech, "The Feminist Case *Against* Abortion," is a comprehensive description of pro-life feminism. In it, she says:

The anti-abortion laws that early feminists worked so hard to enact to protect women and children were the very ones destroyed by the *Roe v. Wade* decision 100 years later—a decision hailed by the National Organization for Women (NOW) as the "emancipation of women." The goals of the more recent NOW-led women's movement with respect to abortion would have outraged the early feminists.

Foster's speech has been included in an anthology on *Women's Rights*, part of a series entitled, "Great Speeches in History." She travels around the United States spreading pro-life feminism primarily on college campuses for FFL's flagship College Outreach Program.

After nearly a decade of fielding questions challenging her as a feminist, Foster recently wrote "Pro-Woman Answers to Pro-Choice Questions," for the spring 2003 issue of *The American Feminist*. Foster bases her answers on fundamental feminist principles. As she explains, "The basic tenets of feminism are nonviolence, nondiscrimination, and justice for all. Abortion violates all three."

Rosemary Bottcher, FFL's Immediate Past Board President, makes a similar point in her essay "Pro-Abortionists Poison Feminism," in which she remarks, "The pro-abortion stance of the orthodox women's liberation movement is poisoning the roots of feminism." Bottcher also points out that abortion has exchanged an oppressive patriarchy for an oppressive matriarchy:

Defending abortion requires defending the concept of discrimination...It is sheer hypocrisy to argue for equality for [women] and against equality for the unborn...The irony is excruciating. Establishing the personhood of women has been the ultimate goal of feminism...In denying the personhood of the unborn child, feminists have borrowed the very

same justifications that the patriarchs have used so successfully throughout history to deny full recognition as persons to women.

Not only does Bottcher believe that abortion discriminates against the unborn, but it also allows for pregnancy discrimination.

Those who advocate legal abortion concede that pregnant women are intolerably handicapped; they cannot compete in a male world of wombless efficiency. Rather than changing the world to accommodate the needs of pregnant women and mothers, pro-abortion feminists encourage women to fit themselves neatly into a society designed by and for men.

For reasons such as this, Bottcher believes abortion remains the number one threat to equality for women.

Pro-life feminist Daphne Clair de Jong is a full-time writer in New Zealand and has written widely on the connection between abortion and the continued subjugation of women. She comments in her 1978 work, "The Feminist Sell-Out":

Women will gain their rights only when they demand recognition of the fact that they are people who become pregnant and give birth—and not always at infallibly convenient times—and that pregnant people have the same rights as others. To say that in order to be equal with men it must be possible for a pregnant woman to become un-pregnant at will is to say that being a woman precludes her from being a fully functioning person.

Pro-life feminists across the board strongly agree that many changes must happen to make society accepting and supportive of women with their unique life-giving capacity—such as offering real choices for pregnant and parenting women and men. Flexible school situations, fairness in hiring, better prenatal and obstetric care, attractive adoption opportunities and help with child care and parenting are only some of the changes required. Although abortion-choice feminists may agree that action should be taken concerning these factors, they do not recognize that advocating the "quick fix" of abortion cuts women short of the long-term answers that they need and deserve.

De Jong continues in her essay, "Accepting short term solutions like abortion only delays the implementation of real reforms like decent maternity and paternity leave, job protection, high quality child-care, community responsibility for dependent people of all ages, and recognition of the economic contribution of child-minders."

A similar theme is reflected in the pro-life feminist work of Cecelia Voss Koch, who wrote:

Abortion is the destruction of human life and energy that does nothing to eradicate the very real underlying problems of women. The pregnant welfare mother begs for decent housing, a decent job and child-care or respect for her child-nurturing work. Instead, she gets directions to the local abortion clinic and is told to take care of "her problem." How convenient. Much less time and trouble than teaching her about authentic reproductive freedom and reproductive responsibility. Much cheaper than attending to her real problems: her poverty, her lack of skills, her illiteracy, her loneliness, her bitterness about her entrapment, her self-contempt, her vulnerability. After the abortion these problems will all be there...

Graciela Olivarez, a Chicana active in civil rights and anti-poverty work, likewise noted:

The poor cry out for justice and equality, and we respond with legalized abortion. I believe that in a society that permits the life of even one individual (born or unborn) to be dependent on whether that life is "wanted" or not, all its citizens stand in danger.... We do not have equal opportunities. Abortion is a cruel way out.

De Jong also compares abortion-choice feminism to male chauvinism in her essay "Feminism and Abortion: The Great Inconsistency":

The feminist claim to equality is based on the equal rights of all human beings. The most fundamental of all is the right to life. If women are to justify taking this right from the unborn, they must contend that their own superiority of size, of power, or of physique or intellect or need, or their own value as



Pat Goltz



Rachel MacNair



Cathy Callaban

a person, transcends any right of the unborn. In the long history of male chauvinism, all these have been seen as good reasons for withholding human rights from women.

Maloney agrees, contending:

In calling for abortion rights as the ultimate guarantee that women can control their own bodies, abortion advocates are viewing a woman's body as a kind of territory to be subdued, interfered with, dominated. This is not a feminist perspective, regardless of how many people maintain that it is. Abortion, if it is an act of control, is a violent act of control. . . . Traditionally, it has always been women who have realized that violence solves nothing and usually begets more violence, that violent solutions often wound the perpetrator as well as the victim. That is why women have historically been opposed to war, to capital punishment, to the rape and destruction of the environment. Why should women's traditional (and quite wise) abhorrence of violence stop at the threshold of their own bodies?

Frederica Mathewes-Green, past editor of FFL's previous publication *Sisterlife*, has been published in dozens of national publications. Her observation—"No one wants an abortion as she wants an ice-cream cone or a Porsche. She wants an abortion as an animal, caught in a trap, wants to gnaw off its own leg." —has been printed in mainstream and specialty publications that both oppose and support abortion. She comments in her 1994 book *Real Choices*, "Apparently there was something about this analogy that struck a nerve; apparently pro-choice partisans could agree with pro-lifers that, no matter what their political differences, abortion was a miserable choice."

Mathewes-Green believes that it is ridiculous to even call abortion a woman's choice. "We may choose to sacrifice our life and career plans, or choose to undergo humiliating invasive surgery and sacrifice our offspring. How fortunate we are—we have a choice! ...If we refused to choose, if we insisted on keeping both our lives and our bodies intact, what changes would our communities have to make? What would make abortion unnecessary?" She also laments the ramifications on culture and society:

In no sane country, are women and their own children assumed to be mortal enemies; any culture that does so is slowly committing suicide. . . . When we accept as normal the ripping of a child from her mother's womb, we violate something disturbingly close to the heart of the human story. In the land where women kill their unborn children, every lesser love grows frail.

As a civil rights advocate, she pronounces, "To our great-grandchildren it will be obvious that this was the civil rights challenge of our time, and we will be judged for our response. If we are not moved when they're killing children, nothing will ever move us."

Another feminist argument against abortion relates to the aftermath caused by the procedure itself and the pain, both physical and emotional, that is borne by the women and men who have suffered the personal tragedy of abortion. While some find the courage to speak publicly of their experiences and others gain strength through support groups, the number of people affected by abortion continues to grow. Yet all this is denied by many abortion-choice feminists, and women's voices go unheard.

Rachel MacNair, former president of Feminists for Life, concludes in "Is Abortion Good for Women?": "People who assert that women's voices must be listened to nevertheless announce that all women feel one way about 'reproductive rights,' belittling women whose opinion differs. Feminists who insist on sisterhood censor their sisters, over and over again." MacNair also comments on the controversy over whether or not abortion of the first pregnancy significantly increases the likelihood of breast cancer:

Abortion defenders vociferously deny the link, arguing that other studies dispute this. The debate con-

tinues and cannot be settled here. But women *need* it settled...Groups interested in researching breast cancer seem to find their support for abortion more important than their opposition to breast cancer at this time. The question must be asked: why does support for abortion keep interfering with women's rights?

MacNair also speaks to the issue of equality in her essay, "Parallel Cages: The Oppression of Men":

Abortion defenders say that women must have access to abortion in order to have equality with men. The pro-life feminist responds that there is no other oppressed group that requires surgery in order to become unoppressed. Abortion defenders suggest that we now have technology available to fix the inherent biological handicap of women. Pro-life feminists believe that Nature was never the source of the idea that our bodies are inferior due to their innate abilities.

Cindy Osborne sums up the pro-life feminist position in her essay, "Pat Goltz, Catherine Callaghan and the Founding of Feminists for Life":

We want equality. We demand liberty. But, as seekers of peace and promoters of justice, we know our road to freedom cannot be littered with the bodies of our own offspring. Having known oppression, we cannot stand by and allow the oppression of an entire class of weaker human beings. Having once been owned by our husbands, we cannot condone a position that says the unborn are owned by their mothers. Remembering a time when our value was determined by whether a man wanted us, we refuse to bow to the patriarchal attitude that says the unborn child's value is determined by whether a woman wants her.

These contemporary women have built upon feminist ideology that was eloquently articulated more than 200 years ago. Thanks to their work to bring this rich legacy into the 21st century, the wisdom of our feminist foremothers can be clearly heard today through the voices of pro-life, pro-woman people everywhere. *

Natalie Nardelli interned at Feminists for Life's national office the summer of 2003. She currently attends Seton Hill University in Pennsylvania.

We remember



Holly Patterson

1985 – 2003

On September 10, 2003, Holly Patterson's boyfriend took her to Planned Parenthood in Hayward, California. Seven weeks pregnant, she was given the abortion drug mifepristone, more commonly known as RU-486, and also given misoprostol vaginal inserts to use two days later that would produce contractions and cause her to miscarry.

After taking the second drug, Patterson went to Valley Care Medical Center complaining of severe bleeding and excessive pain. She was given painkillers and sent home. After two more days of cramping, she returned to Valley Care on September 17, 2003, where she died of septic shock and a massive systemic infection due to an incomplete abortion.

Holly's father lamented, "I think it's a sad day when a father has to bury his daughter because she suffered in silence. I think it was fear and shame that made her decide she could do this, that she could take a pill and make it all go away. If she could have just talked to us, things would be different."

In a letter to Congress dated November 6, 2003, Holly's parents, Monty and Helen Patterson, stated, "Holly has died from an RU-486 chemical induced abortion. There are no quick fixes for a pregnancy or magical pills that will make it go away...Holly was a strong, healthy, intelligent and ambitious teenager who fell victim of a process that wholly failed her, beginning with the 24-year-old man who had unprotected sex with her, impregnated her, and then proceeded to facilitate the secrecy that surrounded her pregnancy and abortion. In the weeks since we buried Holly's body we are now able to recall and share the memories of our daughter's brilliant blue eyes, engaging smile, laughter, unwavering determination and sheer gentle beauty that invoked our natural instinct to protect and love her, but we will never be able to forget those last moments of her life when she was too weak to talk and could barely squeeze our hands in acknowledgment of our words of encouragement. We love you, Holly."

The California Department of Health Services determined that Planned Parenthood failed to inform Holly on how to properly use the RU 486 abortion drug. A spokesperson for the Food and Drug Administration said they are "aggressively investigating [Holly's] death."

Source: LifeNews.com



abortion and

MODERN POETRY *by Elise Ebrhard*



In high school twelve years ago, I was flipping through my English book before class, casually glancing over the poetry.

A poem's title caught my eye—"the mother," by Gwendolyn Brooks.

Then the poem's words practically rocked me from my chair.

Abortions will not let you forget.
You remember the children you got that you did not get,
The damp small pulps with a little or with no hair,
The singers and workers that never handled the air.
You will never neglect or beat
Them, or silence or buy with a sweet.
You will never wind up the sucking thumb
Or scuttle off ghosts that come.
You will never leave them, controlling your luscious sigh,
Return for a snack of them, with gobbling mother-eye.

I have heard in the voices of the wind the voices of
my dim killed children.
I have contracted. I have eased
My dim dears at the breasts they could never suck.
I have said, Sweets, if I sinned, if I seized
Your luck
And your lives from your unfinished reach,
If I stole your births and your names,
Your straight baby tears and your games,
Your stilted or lovely loves, your tumults,
your marriages, aches, and your deaths,
If I poisoned the beginnings of your breaths,
Believe that even in my deliberateness
I was not deliberate.
Though why should I whine,
Whine that the crime was other than mine? -
Since anyhow you are dead,
Or rather, or instead,
You were never made.
But that too, I am afraid,
Is faulty: oh, what shall I say,
how is the truth to be said?
You were born, you had body, you died.
It is just that you never giggled or
planned or cried.

Believe me, I loved you all.
Believe me, I knew you, though faintly, and I loved,
I loved you
All.

Class began, but I barely kept track of the discussion. The poem's words still lingered in my brain.

Gwendolyn Brooks was the first African-American poet to win the Pulitzer Prize. She used traditional forms to address often-taboo topics of race and gender. Published in 1945, "the mother" was the first published poem to ever use the word "abortion."

Taboo topics broke wide open with the dawn of "confessional" poets like Anne Sexton in the 1960s. Sexton, also a Pulitzer Prize winner, struggled with mental illness her entire life, finally succumbing to suicide in 1974 at the age of 46. In "The Abortion" Sexton explodes her emotional anguish onto the page.

Somebody who should have been born *is* gone.

Just as the earth puckered its mouth,
each bud puffing out from its knot,
I changed my shoes, and then drove south.

Up past the Blue Mountains, where
Pennsylvania humps on endlessly,
wearing, like a crayoned cat, its green hair,

its roads sunken in like a gray washboard;
where, in truth, the ground cracks evilly,
a dark socket from which the coal has poured,

Somebody who should have been born is gone.

the grass as bristly and stout as chives,
and me wondering when the ground would break,
and me wondering how anything fragile survives;

up in Pennsylvania, I met a little man,
not Rumpelstiltskin, at all, at all...
he took the fullness that love began.

Returning north, even the sky grew thin
like a high window looking nowhere.
The road was as flat as a sheet of tin.

Somebody who should have been born is gone.

Yes, woman, such logic will lead
to loss without death. Or say what you meant,
you coward...this baby that I bleed.

The time I dropped your almost body down

Down to meet the waters under the city
And run one with the sewage to the sea
What did I know about waters rushing back
What did I know about drowning
or being drowned

You would have been born in winter
In the year of the disconnected gas
And no car
We would have made the thin walk
Over the genecy hill into the Canada winds
To let you slip into a stranger's hands
If you were here I could tell you
These and some other things

And if I am ever less than a mountain
For your definite brothers and sisters
Let the rivers wash over my head
Let the sea take me for a spiller of seas
Let black men call me stranger always
For your never named sake.

Like Brooks, Sexton does not shy away from the pain of abortion or the reality of the child's death. However, Brooks' work is more often juxtaposed with Lucille Clifton's haunting "The Lost Baby Poem." Both Brooks and Clifton were influential African-American voices. "The Lost Baby Poem," published in 1969, offers a deeply personal meditation on the circumstances surrounding Clifton's abortion.

At a Voters for Choice Benefit Concert in Washington, D.C., in 1997, rock artist Ani DiFranco read "The Lost Baby Poem" to the audience after telling the story of her own abortion. DiFranco fell into tears on stage. It is tragic and strange that the abortion rights movement knowingly makes an act of enduring pain and emotional devastation its bedrock of "liberation."

Three important female poets of the last half-century made the pain of abortion transparent. Their works were written before *Roe v. Wade*. Each woman saw her poem as a personal statement, not a political one.

Gwendolyn Brooks believed that poetry by its very nature took on a life of its own in the hearts of readers. "In here [the poem 'the mother'] I believe there is a little catalog of the qualities of motherhood," she said. "And of course you're free to take anything else from it that you need to use. That's one of the richnesses of poetry, that we take from the poem we read what we need."

Whatever the poets' intentions, their works leave us with a profound testimony to the tragedy of abortion. *



herstory

Worth Repeating

Cat Clark
National Office Coordinator

Pearl S. Buck believed "herstory" was worth repeating. In her 1941 collection of feminist essays, *Of Men and Women*, she wrote:

The truth has never been told about women in history: that everywhere man has gone woman has gone too, and what he has done she has done also. Women are ignorant of their own past and ignorant of their own importance in that past. In curiosity a few months ago I asked a haphazard score of women of my acquaintance if they had heard of Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Only one had even heard her name, and she had no recollection of more. Yet only a generation ago Elizabeth Cady Stanton was called the greatest woman in the United States, and by some the greatest in the world.... [I]f the aim of education is to be enlightening of men and women about each other, of course history must be taught truthfully about both, and truthfully rewritten.

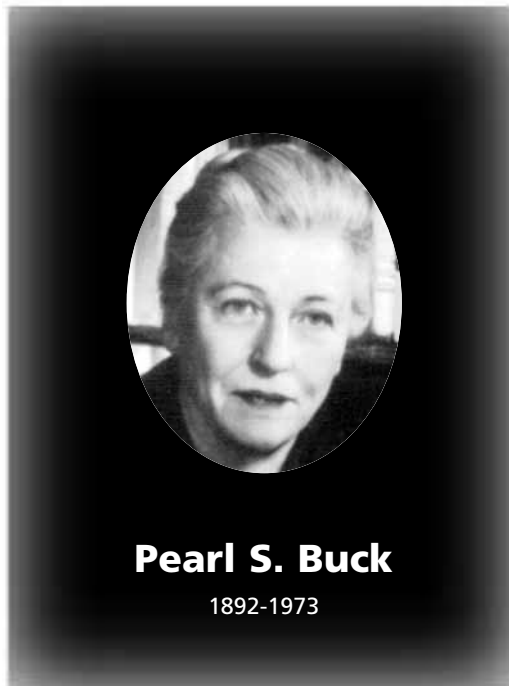
Many people know Pearl S. Buck as a prolific writer of best-selling and award-winning books, especially novels. The author of more than seventy books in a variety of genres, Buck was one of the most popular novelists of the 20th century. She was the first woman to win both the Pulitzer and Nobel Prizes for literature, and the first of only two American women to win the Nobel. She broke new ground

in American fiction, especially in her sympathetic and honest portrayals of Asian women.

Others know Pearl S. Buck as an ardent humanitarian activist and promoter of intercultural and interracial harmony. She believed "the test of a civilization is the way that it cares for its helpless members." For this reason Buck founded several organizations devoted to improving the quality of life and opportunities available to children, especially the displaced and refugees, orphans and impoverished children, the disabled and those suffering diseases, minorities, and other disadvantaged groups. One of these, Welcome House, was the first international, interracial adoption agency.

Buck was also a devoted civil rights activist, a lifetime member of the NAACP who served on the board of the National Urban League and as an active trustee of Howard University. She was a passionate advocate for Asian immigrants and better Asian-

American relations in her role as publisher of *Asia* magazine and as founder of the East and West Association. A pacifist and an outspoken campaigner for disarmament, Buck was a member of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.



Pearl S. Buck

1892-1973

Fewer people know or consider Pearl S. Buck, who was both a mother of eight and an independent public figure and leader among women, as a pro-life feminist. "Press steadily for human equality, not only for yourselves, but for all those groups who are not given equality," she told Howard University students in her 1942 commencement address. Buck's tireless efforts as a champion for people in need extended to both women and their unborn children.

Though she was not inclined to label herself a "feminist," Buck was a vocal supporter of the Equal Rights Amendment during a time when most organized women's groups opposed it. As a novelist she gave voice to the experiences of women in different cultures, as a pacifist she critiqued the devastating effects of war on women, and as a child welfare activist she showed particular concern for female children, who were among the especially vulnerable.

Her firm belief in the equal dignity and value of all human beings and her commitment to empower and aid the most vulnerable and helpless members of every society inspired her pro-life stance. The following essay, "Every Life Is a Gift," was written near the end of her life as a foreword to Robert E. Cooke's 1968 book *Terrible Choice: The Abortion Dilemma*.

As the mother of a child retarded from phenylketonuria, I can ask myself, at this reflective moment, if I had rather she had never been born. No, let me ask the question fully. Could it have been possible for me to have foreknowledge of her thwarted life, would I have wanted abortion?

Now with full knowledge of anguish and despair, the answer is No, I would not. Even in full knowledge I would have chosen life, and this for two reasons: First, I fear the power of choice over life or death at human hands, I see no human being whom I could ever trust with such power—not myself, not any other.

Human wisdom, human integrity are not great enough. Since the fetus is a creature already alive and in the process of development, to kill it is to choose death over life. At what point shall we allow this choice? For me the answer is - at no point, once life has begun.

At no point, I repeat, either as life begins or as life ends, for we who are human beings cannot, for our own safety, be allowed to choose death, life being all we know. Beyond life lie only faith and surmise, but not knowledge. Where there is no knowledge except for life, decision for death is not safe for the human race.

The principle thus established, I go to my second reason for rejection of abortion, in my own case. My child's life has not been meaningless. She has indeed brought comfort and practical help to many people who are parents of retarded children or are themselves handicapped.

True, she has done it through me, yet without her I would not have had the means of learning how to accept the inevitable sorrow, and how to make that acceptance useful to others.

Would I be so heartless as to say that it has been worthwhile for my child to be born retarded? Certainly not, but I am saying that even though gravely retarded it has been worthwhile for her to have lived.

It can be summed up, perhaps, by saying that in this world, where cruelty prevails in so many aspects of our life I would not add the weight of choice to kill rather than to let live.

A retarded child, a handicapped person, brings its own gift to life, even to the life of normal human beings. That gift is comprehended in the lessons of patience, understanding, and mercy, lessons which we all need to receive and to practice with one another, whatever we are.

*For this gift bestowed upon me by a helpless child, I give my thanks. **



Alice Paul Refused to Choose between women- born and unborn

Feminists for Life celebrated the memory of Alice Stokes Paul (1885-1977) in February as HBO premiered the original film "Iron Jawed Angels." The movie portrays Paul's bold and daring battle for the 19th Amendment, which granted American women the right to vote.

"The last seven years of suffrage were marked by peaceful protest, but the reactions were far from peaceful," said FFL President Serrin Foster. "Alice Paul was knocked to the ground and dragged down the street. Women were arrested, forced to disrobe in front of a company of men, incarcerated, fed infested food and rotting horsemeat. Their mail was cut off and they were forced to perform hard labor. The guards terrorized them - some tossed like dolls headfirst into their prison cells and rendered unconscious. One political prisoner was left handcuffed to a spot above the cell door all night long. But women became more resolved than ever to win the vote."

Foster looks forward to more women learning about our rich feminist history. "Most people have no idea how Alice Paul and other suffragists suffered for our right to vote. Even fewer know they opposed abortion."

Paul saw the 19th Amendment ratified on August 28, 1920. But her efforts on behalf of women were not ended. She penned the original Equal Rights Amendment and continued to work for the recognition of women's rights.

Yet the direction the women's movement took in later years was a source of frustration for Alice Paul, because she thoroughly opposed attempts to link the ERA with abortion.

In the mid-70s Pat Goltz, co-founder of Feminists for Life, had the honor of meeting Paul. Paul had known some of

our earlier feminist foremothers, and made it clear to Goltz that the early feminists were altogether opposed to abortion. She then related to Goltz her concern that abortion would destroy feminism if it were not stopped. Paul's long-time colleague Evelyn Judge also recalled that Paul called abortion "the ultimate exploitation of women" and asked, "How can one protect and help women by killing them as babies?"

FFL President Serrin Foster agrees. "The legacy of Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Alice Paul lives on in those who refuse to choose between women and children, who cherish the right of women to vote and who peacefully defend the right of children to be born."

More information about Alice Paul and our other feminist foremothers is available on Feminists for Life's newly redesigned website (www.feministsforlife.org).

Electronic Fund Transfer Form

Help FFL Help Women and Children! Your monthly electronic donations provide essential support as FFL works to bring about positive change for women and children. Electronic donors receive semi-annual President reports, detailing FFL's progress. To begin your monthly contributions, simply fill out the electronic transfer form and send it (along with a voided check) to FFL. It's that easy! Donations will be debited on the first business day of each month and will be put to work immediately by FFL. Your participation helps FFL continue the tradition of the early feminists—pro-woman and pro-life!

I want my bank to transfer monthly donations to Feminists for Life of America. My authorization to charge my account at my bank shall be the same as if I had personally signed a check to FFLA. This authorization shall remain in effect until I notify FFLA, or notify my bank in writing that I wish to end this agreement, and my bank or FFLA has had a reasonable time to act on it. A record of each charge will be included in my regular bank statements and will serve as my receipt.

\$_____ Amount of monthly pledge (\$5 minimum).

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Please enclose a voided check from your account to show the bank's address and your account number.

Send to: Feminists for Life,
733 15th Street, N.W., Suite 1100, Washington, D.C. 20005.
Electronic fund transfers will begin immediately upon receipt.
Thank you!

TAF 304



"When we consider that women are treated as property, it is degrading to women that we should treat our children as property to be disposed of as we see fit."

Elizabeth Cady Stanton

Elizabeth Cady Stanton

Founder of the Women's Movement

Another humorless
old biddy for life.

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