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THE AMERICAN FEMINIST

Feminists for Life of America

®

PRO WOMAN
ANSWERS



PRO CHOICE
QUESTIONS



what about rape?

how dare you call yourself a feminist?



FOR ALMOST NINE YEARS, I have been fielding hard questions. Even before I joined FFL, people couldn't accept that I was both pro-woman and pro-life.

It is so easy to get caught up in unproductive arguments that pit women against children. I am often asked how I can stay calm and noncombative when verbal attacks are posed as questions.

We must see the humanity of every person who challenges us. Look at the question from the perspective of a person who embraces "choice." See the pain of the woman who was abandoned by those she counted on the most and was driven to abortion. Understand the well-meaning friend who offers a quick fix, not realizing that pain cannot be diminished through abortion. Grasp the embarrassment of a parent who wants to protect a daughter from a grandchild that might "ruin her life." Feel the fear of a young man who is suddenly faced with fatherhood, and realizes that he is totally unprepared. Recognize the betrayal behind questions from those under age 30 who have never known a day without legalized abortion.

Acknowledge them while offering unwavering hope that we can work together for better outcomes for women and children.

Every choice has a story. Thirty years after Roe, we mourn our missing children alongside women who feel betrayed.

Increasingly, the hard questions are being redirected at abortion advocates whose unfulfilled promises have left us with 40 million missing and 25 million women suffering in silence. Let them be silent no more, and let us be willing to listen.



Serrin M. Foster
President
Feminists for Life



who are **you** to tell

me what to do?

mission

Feminists for Life is dedicated to securing through nonviolent means basic human rights for all people, especially women and children, from conception until the natural end of life.

PRO-WOMAN

vision

PRO-LIFE

- We believe society should recognize the inherent value and dignity of every woman and girl.
 - We oppose all forms of violence, including abortion, infanticide, child abuse, domestic violence, capital punishment, and euthanasia, as they are inconsistent with the core feminist principles of justice, nonviolence and nondiscrimination.
 - We advocate the prevention of physical and emotional violence against, and sexual exploitation of, all human beings, especially women and children.
- We also believe that there is no justification for the destruction of human life at the end stages of life.
 - We advocate the creation of a supportive environment within our society to enable families to care for their children and other dependents.
 - We advocate the creation of a supportive environment within our society for the care of the elderly.
- We believe that parents have the obligation to be responsible for their children before and after birth.
 - We believe in enhancing women's and girls' life-decision-making skills and their perceived worth in society.
- We support the economic empowerment of disenfranchised groups, especially women.
 - We believe in the peaceful, nonviolent expression and advocacy of the above principles.
- **We believe the above principles are universally true.**

Talking Points

A black and white silhouette of a woman's face in profile, smiling, on the right side of the page. Her hand is visible at the bottom left, with fingers slightly curled as if gesturing. The background is a light, neutral tone.

■ Refuse to choose. SM

Refuse to choose between women and children.

Refuse to choose between sacrificing our education and career plans and sacrificing our children.

■ Abortion hurts women.

■ Women deserve better. SM

■ No woman deserves to have an abortion.

■ Our body. Our choice. Our problem. SM

■ No compassionate person wants a woman to suffer through the personal tragedy of abortion.

■ Abortion advocates pit women against children. Lack of resources and support are the real enemies.

■ Abortion is a last resort, not a free choice.

■ As women, we need to love and empower each other and ourselves.

■ We refuse to give up on women.

■ Don't underestimate the ingenuity of women.

■ We need to systematically eliminate the root causes of abortion—primarily lack of practical resources and emotional support.

For more information, go to FFL's website, www.feministsforlife.org. There you can find:

Pro-life feminist history
Back issues of FFL's magazine
The American Feminist on
a variety of topics

FFL President Serrin Foster's speech, "The Feminist Case *Against* Abortion," which is included in an anthology on *Women's Rights* edited by Jennifer Hurley, as part of the "Great Speeches in History" series by Greenhaven Press.



What about rape?

What if it was your daughter who was raped?

I would love her and my grandchild unconditionally, and I would do everything in my power to prosecute the perpetrator to the fullest extent of the law.

Out of our desire to save someone from suffering, it is normal to wish we could erase a painful memory such as rape. Unfortunately, the hard truth is that as much as we want to, we can't.

Abortion doesn't erase a memory. Think about it. Could anything ever erase your memory of September 11, 2001?

Abortion is a second act of violence against a woman who is raped. At one of my lectures, a Vanderbilt medical student told other students that her "abortion was worse than the rape."

Both victims—the woman and her child—deserve our unconditional support.

One student at a midwestern university who was raped by her third cousin and became pregnant said she would never pass on the violence that was perpetrated against her to her own unborn child. Now *that* is the strength of a woman!

Pregnancy is not a punishment. Julie Makimaa's mother ("Victory Over Violence," *The American Feminist*, vol. 5, no. 3) told her that she was the "only good thing to come out of the rape."

Did I deserve the
death penalty?

My "crime" was being conceived through rape. So the next time

* **Stay Focused**

Keep the focus on eliminating the reasons that drive women to abortion — primarily, lack of financial resources and emotional support. Both sides can come together and find real solutions when we look at women's needs.

When someone asks about exceptions for rape and incest, we must think of how that makes those feel who were conceived through sexual assault. Well-meaning statements can hurt. As one Berkeley grad student said to her pro-choice peers, "I have a *right* to be here."

Can you imagine if we ranked the value of people based on the circumstances of their conception? We don't discriminate based on parentage—that's not equality! You are valuable no matter who your parents are, no matter the circumstances of your conception.

Could you look at someone conceived in violence and tell her she never should have been born? Rebecca Kiessling, a young attorney and mother who was conceived through sexual assault, asks, "Did I deserve the death penalty?" People used to value a woman based on who her father or husband was. It is similarly medieval to value a child by the actions of her father. That way of thinking is patriarchal and anti-feminist, and it should have gone out with the Dark Ages.

We need comprehensive support for rape victims who become pregnant. Did you know that in most states the rapist still has paternal rights and even if convicted can demand visitation from jail? Did you know that if the rape victim is poor and can't prove the paternity of the father, she could have problems collecting welfare benefits? We should ask women who conceive through rape how to help them in the long term, and help their children as well.

Abortion after rape is misdirected anger. It doesn't punish the perpetrator of the crime.

Feminists for Life is a proud supporter of the Violence Against Women Act. We need harsh sentences for sexual assault without possibility of parole.

Aren't you condemning women to back-alley abortions? How can you say you are pro-life when you are willing to put women's health back into the hands of butchers?

No one wants that. It isn't a choice between legal and illegal abortion. Women need viable nonviolent choices—marital or single parenthood and adoption options with support that women want, need and deserve.

What about "the life of the mother"?

Since we are both pro-woman and pro-life, we refuse to choose between women and children. Sometimes doctors advise abortion because they are unaware of other options or because they are pressured by fear of malpractice suits. We believe that physicians and other medical personnel should treat both patients, and do what they can to save both lives. This is what was done before the *Roe* decision was handed down. Thankfully, medical advancements continue to save more lives.

Situations in which the pregnancy threatens the life of the mother are extremely rare. Late-term abortions are never medically necessary—despite the claims of abortion advocates! Emergency C-sections are often the medically appropriate response to save both mother and child. Viability at this stage of the child's development is generally very good, especially with advances in neonatal care. Babies that weigh just a pound are surviving!

e

When you hear people talking about "exceptions" to abortion for rape and incest, think of me. **I am that exception.**

Rebecca Kiessling

THEY SAY I HAVE A FREE CHOICE

As for first-trimester scenarios, most first-trimester abortions to save the mother are for ectopic pregnancies. Since the child has no chance of survival, and the mother can survive if the pregnancy is terminated, we must do what we can to save her. To let both die would not be pro-life. At this time uterine transplants to re-implant the baby into the womb are not possible. (But if this becomes a viable option, it would have enormous ramifications for the entire abortion debate, since becoming un-pregnant would not be the same as having an abortion!)

While pregnancy can be a stressful experience and sometimes bring on or exacerbate depression, psychological stress should not be “treated” by abortion. Psychiatrists and psychologists need to treat mental health issues directly.

A two-year study on abortion revealed that out of 400 women who had an abortion at a Buffalo, New York, clinic, women who suffered from clinical depression were twice as likely to regret their abortion (30% versus 15%). This surprised doctors who assumed that pregnancy and motherhood would exacerbate their depression. In addition, several large studies (in Finland, Great Britain, Canada and the U.S.) indicate a link between abortion and suicide and psychiatric admissions.

Finally, more medical research must be dedicated to pregnant women who are faced with life-or-death situations, and alternatives must be found to drugs and other therapies that result in complications for the woman or child. In addition, ongoing education must be provided to physicians about alternative care. Meanwhile, we encourage physicians to adhere to the original Hippocratic oath, which rejects abortion, and return to the treatment of both patients.

I agree that we should do what we can to reduce the number of abortions and provide resources for women, but why should we make it illegal? It's still a woman's body. It should still be her choice.

Have we learned nothing? After decades of having men build their success on the backs of women, are we going to repeat the injustice by building ours on those of our children?

The last time we advocated “choice” was in an effort to justify declaring an entire population as sub-human. Now the rhetoric of “choice” is no longer used in regard to African-Americans, but for our children.

Becoming the new bully in society doesn't make us equal, it makes us as unjust as those who have gone subjugating populations before us.

As for it being her body, we have other laws against prostitution, illegal drugs and suicide to protect people's bodies. Just as the early suffragists wanted to protect women from abortion, we, too, want to see all women legally protected from the physical and emotional scars of abortion. ○

**But without housing
on campus for me and my baby,
without on-site day care,
without maternity coverage in my
health insurance,
it sure doesn't seem like I have
much of a choice.**



What if her partner, friends or family abandoned her?

Lack of support often coerces women into abortion. As pro-life feminists, we choose to support and empower women rather than abandon women.

A woman who is pregnant needs to know that there are perfect strangers who will care for her even if the people she counts on the most have let her down. She needs information about child support laws that prohibit coercion by the father either by physical force or by threats to withhold child support.

Universities should support marital and single parenting choices as well as adoption options. Feminists for Life's College Outreach Program focuses on resources—housing, child care, maternity coverage in student health care, telecommuting options, financial aid, etc.—so women aren't forced to choose between sacrificing their education or career and sacrificing their children.

What if she is poor?

We do not eliminate poverty by eliminating poor women's children. It is degrading to poor women to expect or imply that their children aren't welcome. We believe that poor women deserve the same support and life-affirming alternatives as wealthy women.

A woman who is pregnant needs to know that there are pregnancy care centers listed in the "abortion alternatives" section of the yellow pages that provide direct assistance and coordinate public and private assistance.

Abortion is not an enriching experience. An abortion won't get her a better job or get her out of a bad (i.e., abusive) situation.

you're not alone



a n y m o r e

If you're pregnant and don't feel like you have

much of a choice, call these people.

They don't want your money, they just want to help.

They'll stand by you when no one else will.

Birthright: 800-550-4900

Care Net: 800-395-HELP

Catholic Charities: 800-CARE-002

Heartbeat International: 888-550-7577

Life Center: 800-848-LOVE

Nurturing Network: 800-TNN-4MOM

pregnancycenters.org

What if she just doesn't want it?

It's more complicated than that. We can address each of her concerns working together for peaceful solutions.

Alan Guttmacher Institute statistics show that there are reasons, often financial or emotional, why a woman feels she must have an abortion. We must work towards the systematic elimination of the reasons that coerce women into an abortion.

We oppose abortion in all cases because violence is a violation of basic feminist principles.

Adoption is one way to affirm the early feminists' position on voluntary motherhood. If a woman chooses not to parent, there are a variety of adoption options that she can explore (open or closed, direct or indirect updates with photos). She should know, for example, that agencies in some states offer more comprehensive benefits (i.e., compensation for lost scholarships, housing and other living expenses, health care, moving expenses, etc.) to birth mothers.

What if she has every resource and all the support and still doesn't want it?

We don't always know at the beginning how things will turn out. Many women report that their feelings change throughout the pregnancy.

Two-time Emmy award winner and FFL's Honorary Chair Patricia Heaton said, "Women experiencing an unplanned pregnancy also deserve unplanned joy." Feminism demands justice for all, especially those most vulnerable. Women are capable of overcoming the unexpected, and making nonviolent choices. We need to support their life-affirming choices—including adoption options, marital or single parenthood. ○

“Women experiencing an unplanned pregnancy also deserve unplanned joy.”

*Patricia Heaton
Two-time Emmy winner and
FFL Honorary Chair*

You are anti-woman.

Abortion is a reflection that we have failed women—and women have settled for less.

We insist on a world in which women have access to all nonviolent options, which is hardly an anti-woman perspective. Think about the consequences of such a world for the workplace, schools, etc. We encourage woman-centered and parenting-friendly policies including distance learning, which allows a new mom to be with her child while continuing her education and saving on child-care costs; affordable family housing near campus; campus and workplace child care; health care plans for students and employees that include maternity coverage; telecommuting and job sharing; a living wage; and child support when one parent is absent, etc. We have to approach this holistically.

Pro-life feminists demand that society support the unique life-giving capacity of women, so that no woman feels she has no choice other than abortion.

You want to criminalize women.

The early feminists enacted laws against abortion as consumer protection for women.

FFL has never advocated prosecuting women seeking abortion, although we believe that women are capable of following the law. Why doesn't the law

hold accountable those who threaten or coerce a woman into an abortion by withholding financial resources and emotional support? Abandonment is a powerful form of coercion.

We should criminalize anyone who withholds child support, fires a woman from her job because she is pregnant, refuses to accommodate her pregnancy, expels her from school, or threatens

violence—any act that forces her to choose between sacrificing her child and sacrificing her education, career plans, or safety from violence.

We believe that we should hold responsible those who profit from women's pain—especially the abortion industry.

Most important, we need to jump into hyperdrive to provide resources and solutions that will support women.

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another
anti-choice
fanatic

**"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 their unborn
little ones could
not be willed away
from them."**

Susan B. Anthony

**The woman who fought
for the right to vote also fought
for the right to life.
We proudly continue her legacy.**

P R O W O M A M



Susan B. Anthony

In her publication, *The Revolution*, was written:

"Guilty? Yes. No matter what the motive, love of ease, or a desire to save from suffering the unborn innocent, the woman is awfully guilty who commits the deed. It will burden her conscience in life, it will burden her soul in death; but oh, thrice guilty is he who...drove her to the desperation which impelled her to the crime!"

Abortion was referred to as **"child-murder."**
The Revolution 4(1):4 July 8, 1869

Elizabeth Cady Stanton

She classified abortion as a form of **"infanticide."**
The Revolution 1(5):1 February 5, 1868.

"When we consider that women are treated as property, it is degrading to women

Emma Goldman

"The custom of procuring abortions has reached such appalling proportions in America as to be beyond belief...So great is the misery of the working classes that seventeen abortions are committed in every one hundred pregnancies."
Mother Earth, 1911

Mary Wollstonecraft

As early as 1792, Mary Wollstonecraft wrote *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, which Susan B. Anthony admired enough to serialize in *The Revolution*. After decrying, in scathing 18th century terms, the sexual exploitation of women, she said:

"Women becoming, consequently, weaker...than they ought to be...have not sufficient strength to discharge the first duty of a mother; and sacrificing to lasciviousness the parental affection...either destroy the embryo in the womb, or cast it off when born. Nature in everything demands respect, and those who violate her laws seldom violate them with impunity."

Matilda Gage

"[This] subject lies deeper down in woman's wrongs than any other...I hesitate not to assert that most of [the responsibility for] this crime lies at the door of the male sex."

The Revolution 1(14):215-6 April 9, 1868



that we should treat our children as property to be disposed of as we see fit."

Letter to Julia Ward Howe, October 16, 1873, recorded in Howe's diary at Harvard University Library

Stanton and Anthony's newspaper, The Revolution, and most other feminist publications of the last century refused to join in the common practice of printing advertisements for thinly-disguised patent medicine abortifacients.

Mattie Drinkerhoff

"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

Victoria Woodhull

The first female presidential candidate was a strong opponent of abortion.

"The rights of children as individuals begin while yet they remain the foetus."

Woodhull's and Claflin's Weekly 2(6):4 December 24, 1870

Susan B. Anthony



Elizabeth Cady Stanton

of our Feminist Foremothers

Sarah Norton

"Child murderers practice their profession without let or hinderance, 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 Claflin's Weekly November 19, 1870

P R O

Alice Paul

The author of the original Equal Rights Amendment (1923) opposed the later trend of linking the E.R.A. with abortion. A colleague recalls her saying

"Abortion is the ultimate exploitation of women."

Feminists for Life

Feminists for Life was founded in 1972 by two women, one who was expelled from the National Organization for Women's meeting in Ohio for distributing antiabortion literature.

We proudly continue the feminist tradition of working for a society in which women can make life-affirming choices for themselves and their children.



FEMINISTS FOR LIFE
OF AMERICA

WOMEN DESERVE BETTERSM

L I F E

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Avoid diversions from what's important

* **Don't fall for it**

Most often abortion advocates pit women against children. Don't fall for it. Unborn children are not the enemy—lack of financial resources and emotional support are the real enemies.



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How can/dare you call yourself a feminist?

We stand on more than two hundred years of pro-life feminist history. It wasn't until the 1970's that the women's movement accepted abortion as a way to achieve equality in the workplace.

Feminists for Life believes that we have a right to be women in the workplace and in school. Women shouldn't have to pass as men.

A society that promotes women and the violence

There are many forms of feminism. Who are you to say that true feminists must be anti-abortion?

The basic tenets of feminism are nonviolence, nondiscrimination and justice for all. Abortion violates all three.

Isn't feminism about a woman having rights equal to those of a man?

No, it's much more than that. For 200 years, feminists like Mary Wollstonecraft, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Alice Paul worked to protect the rights of all and did not discriminate based on race, religion, gender, size, age, disability or parentage.

The early American feminists did not work to replace a patriarchy with a matriarchy.

Feminism is not about women passing as men. Women should celebrate our life-giving capacity.

Furthermore, abortion has hurt women by diverting feminist attention from other issues, particularly those that help mothers, such as affordable child care, comprehensive health care, and a living wage.

We should refuse to choose between our education and career plans and our children.

"When you consider that women have been treated as property, it is dumb to think we should treat our children as property to be disposed of."

abortion as a "necessity" or "necessary evil" underestimates of abortion and disregards what women really want.

How dare you impose your values and morality on others? What gives you the right to tell women what to do?

Abortion is discrimination based on age, size, location, and sometimes gender, disability, or parentage. Once a woman is pregnant, she is forever changed, no matter what the outcome—marital or single parenthood, adoption, abortion or miscarriage. As pro-life feminists, our values are woman-centered and inclusive of both parents and child. I simply believe that we can do better for women. Don't you?

Don't women need to control their own lives?

No one has complete control over his or her life. Once a woman is pregnant, the question is, "What is the best possible nonviolent outcome for her?"

Don't you respect women enough to allow them to make a choice?

Most women do not have abortions as a matter of "choice," but because they feel they have no resources to support a different choice. A coerced decision is not a free choice—it's a last resort.

We support nonviolent choices—single motherhood, fatherhood, grandparenthood, marriage and various adoption options—along with practical resources and support.

A society that promotes abortion as a "necessity" or "necessary evil" underestimates women and the violence of abortion and disregards what women really want.

If you don't trust me with a choice, how can you trust me with a child?

If by "choice" you mean abortion, say it. All choices aren't equal, but all people are. We reject violence against women and children through abortion, and promote peaceful alternatives that benefit both woman and child.

Feminism has long championed the strength and dignity of women and equality. Women are capable of making the decision to parent or place a baby for adoption.

It's not about trust—it's about condemning violence.

So you believe that a tiny speck—a zygote, blastocyst, embryo or fetus—has rights over a woman?

Women aren't stupid. We know it's a baby that is growing just like we did in our mother's womb. That is why most women who feel they have emotional and financial support don't have abortions.

I don't believe in discrimination based on size, age or location. Do you believe that a child has less of a right to exist because he or she is small? Are large or tall people more valuable than small or short people? By that logic, most women would have fewer rights than men!

For years, abortion advocates have been pitting women against their unborn children, dehumanizing the growing child with misleading phrases like "blobs of cells" and "products of conception."

Fetus is a Latin word meaning "young child" or "young one." But in practice fetus has become a clinical, dehumanized term for an unborn child. Imagine if some group tried to deny medical care for gravidas. Once someone figured out that was the Latin word for pregnant women, the bewilderment would quickly shift to outrage.

You are anti-choice.

Actually we support all nonviolent choices: marital parenthood, single parenthood choices—including fatherhood and grandparenting options—and the adoption options.

Most importantly, we challenge the status quo by supporting the resources women want and need to make nonviolent choices. ○

*regarding to women that
posed of as we see fit."*

Elizabeth Cady Stanton, 1868

Avoid diversions from what's important

* Don't forget compassion

Sometimes you are talking to a woman who has had an abortion. She may assume that you are choosing a baby over women or condemning her. Let her know that we are here for her and working for better outcomes for women, and that there is post-abortion healing available. Remember, women most often have abortions because they lack resources and support—not for "convenience."

IF SHE'S IN TROUBLE



HE'S IN TROUBLE, TOO.

When you conceive a child, you both enter into an invisible contract to care for your daughter or son for the next 18 years.

Thanks to legislation that strengthens paternity establishment and child support enforcement, no longer can the father threaten a woman or abandon his child by saying, "Hey, I'll pay for an abortion, but I won't pay for child support."

Non-custodial parents who refuse to pay for the children they conceive now face stiff penalties including loss of a driver's license.

What about contraception?

Since FFL's mission is based on life beginning at conception, there is no FFL policy on contraception except when it presents a threat to a woman's health. Some FFL members support the use of contraception as long as there is no abortifacient effect, while others oppose it. Some oppose all or some forms of contraception for health reasons, others for religious reasons; others prefer natural methods to plan a family; and still others want to incorporate new medical technologies that track a woman's fertility to be used in conjunction with natural family planning methods. FFL's mission begins at conception, not before.

Our membership has a broad spectrum of opinion that reflects the diversity of opinions among the public.

In the time of the early American feminists, sex between married couples was

not always consensual, and many women bore 20 or more children, of whom only half survived. In order to space children, most feminist foremothers promoted "voluntary motherhood," whereby women would participate in the decision to have children.

FFL focuses on the problems that women face during a pregnancy, planned or unplanned.

The "morning after" pill, so-called "emergency contraception" — what do you think about that?

We are concerned about potential abortifacient effects as described by the manufacturer and long-term repeat use of hormones.

How about RU-486, aka mifepristone?

Rather than being a simple, private alternative to surgical abortion, it actually requires three or four visits to a doctor.

Women are required to sign an agreement to have a surgical abortion if the series of treatment doesn't result in an abortion.

For the first time, women will not be separated by a surgical sheet from witnessing the aftermath of abortion. Women may suffer the trauma of aborting at home or work.

One abortion doctor reported during the "fast track" trials that one of his patients lost half of her blood as a result of taking RU-486.

If a miscarriage is one of the worst things a woman can experience, then intentionally inducing an abortion is a reflection that we have failed her. Making abortion "simpler" with a pill doesn't address the root causes that drive women to abortion, nor does it eliminate the painful consequences.

How will a pill heal her pain? ○

no justification

Disability—what if the fetus is or could be disabled?

Persons with disabilities are devalued now as women once were.

If actual or potential disability is a reason to devalue children before birth, what cruel message does this send to persons with disabilities who are already born?

How many artists, musicians, writers with disabilities or no-fault brain disease have enriched our world? Would artist Toulouse-Lautrec's paintings have had a bigger impact if he were taller in stature? What would our world be like without the contributions of artist Van Gogh, musician Beethoven, or writer Sylvia Plath?

Population—aren't there enough children in this world?

Genocide is not the answer to population concerns. Women have abortions because of unmet needs—not because of population concerns. Women in developing countries ask for clean water, nutrition, the ability to own land, immunization and other health care services, education, etc. Their children are not their enemy—or ours.

The population in this country has increased because of legal and illegal immigration and longevity—not births.

What about those in foster care?

Many of the children waiting to be adopted are waiting because of legal processes, not a lack of loving homes. There are two million preapproved American couples awaiting adoption. Two million women want to be mothers right now, and many of them want more than one child.

Isn't abortion safer than childbirth?

Statistics on abortion are highly suspect. While abortion is the most common form of surgery, there are no standard regulations and reporting requirements. This is because of strong opposition from the abortion industry and their advocates.

Using statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the abortion industry has said that only first-trimester abortions are safer than live birth. But one reporter did a simple database search for "mortality resulting from abortion" and found twice as many cases reported in newspapers as by the CDC—putting CDC statistics into serious question.

The mortality rates for pregnant women are lower in Ireland, where abortion is illegal. American women deserve better.

Even abortions that cause no physical scars can cause emotional damage.

Partial-birth abortion can save women's lives.

If her life is truly in danger from pregnancy, then a doctor can perform a C-section to terminate the pregnancy, but not the child. Neonatal units have saved children as small as 10 ounces born three months prematurely.

According to the American Medical Association, this procedure is never medically necessary. Furthermore, partial-birth abortion can have devastating effects on women emotionally and psychologically. It requires three days of induced labor. Women are awake during the delivery and witness their baby's brains being removed from its skull. The procedure can also damage the cervix, contributing to future miscarriages. Women deserve better than this. ○.



IS THIS THE FACE OF THE ENEMY?

Abortion advocates pit women against our children.

**But lack of emotional and financial support
are the real enemies.**

**Feminists for Life believes that women should not
feel forced to sacrifice our children for
an education or a career.**

common comments

Make abortion rare

They say they want to make abortion rare but available. Why would you want to make something rare unless it is bad? We want to make abortion unthinkable. We also want to eliminate the coercive conditions that contribute to a perceived “need” for abortion.

Personally opposed

Why are you opposed to it? If it is not good enough for you, why do you think it is good enough for other women?

I wouldn't wish an abortion on my worst enemy.

“It” can't feel pain.

Neonatal pain experts have testified before Congress that the younger a person is, the more sensitive she or he is to pain—and the unborn are the most sensitive of all. The nervous system develops at 4 weeks—just about the time a woman learns she is pregnant and begins to bond with her child.

An unconscious patient can't feel pain, but we don't terminate them because of that.

Babies feel pain. And women feel the emotional and physical pain from an abortion, too.

Young girls should have the right to choose.

Children have the right to be protected. One doctor, who used to perform abortions and still believes that they should be legal, told me that teens need their parents. He explained that pregnant teens seeking an abortion often wait too long and seek riskier and more dangerous second-trimester abortions, don't get proper follow-up care, may not take antibiotics, and may wait too long to seek medical attention if a complication occurs.

Judicial bypass—going before a judge to get an abortion without parental permission—is a disservice to teens. If the girl is in an abusive situation, she needs to have social services intervene, not give her an abortion and send her back home for continued abuse. Teens in abusive households sometimes get pregnant thinking that if they have a baby of their own, they can escape the situation, only to realize that they are not prepared to parent. Some who have an abortion get pregnant soon after in an attempt to replace the baby they aborted. If the girl is not in an abusive situation, she needs to work with her parents to find the best nonviolent choice for her.

Kate Mulgrew, famous for her role as the first female captain on “Star Trek,” placed her baby for adoption when she was 15 years old, and said, “I survived it.” She was reunited with her daughter two decades later. ○

About the author: Serrin Foster has championed the needs of women and children since 1994, first as FFL's Executive Director and currently as President.

Avoid diversions from what's important

* **Don't ignore. Acknowledge.**

Acknowledge the reasons that drive women to abortion, but emphasize that abortion is not the answer. Women need holistic solutions and deserve real support.

* **Springboard from agreement.**

Don't be surprised if, once you've made your case, those who expected to differ with you end up saying, “I agree with 95% of what you are saying.” This is your opportunity to begin discussing holistic solutions to the problems women face.

been there .

done that .

HATED IT .

**No one wants to have an abortion,
much less a second one.**

**But if you have had an abortion,
you are at an even higher risk of experiencing
the tragedy of abortion again.**

**If you need help,
please visit www.womendeservebetter.com.**





Voices

OF WOMEN WHO MOURN

AT AGE 16, I found out that I was pregnant, and I had an abortion to hide the truth that I was sexually active. The day after the abortion, I woke up and decided to pretend that the previous day had never happened. After that, I became sexually promiscuous, began smoking pot and sedating myself with alcohol.

At age 32, I realized that I had played God when I aborted my baby and, for the first time, I truly knew that I had taken the life of my baby. But my thoughts stopped there.

At age 34, I got sick and began a time of deep searching and seeking to understand the drive I had to be a perfectionist. One day while cleaning out my basement, I picked up my junior-year yearbook. When I opened it to look at my fellow classmates, I didn't see them. Instead I felt the weight and physical-ness of my aborted baby in my arms. Immediately I knew it was the baby I aborted and I instantly became aware of all I had missed out on in being her mother (yes, it was a baby girl in my arms). No one was more shocked by this experience than I, and I started weeping and crying for what I lost.

At age 35, I went through an abortion recovery program called Forgiven and Set Free. I knew for the first time in my life the real meaning of peace, and I finally forgave myself.

At age 36, I began to consider this issue of abortion from another angle.

At age 38, I got involved in counseling other girls online. That's when I truly understood the depth of pain experienced by many women, and I knew then that abortion hurts more than it helps and the truth needed to be told.

At age 42, I stand here because, after 5 years of counseling women who have been hurt by abortion, I can be silent no more. Women deserve better than abortion and until our sisters are no longer forced to suffer the physical and psychological consequences, I will speak the truth: Abortion hurts women. And if you are hurting there is help. We will be Silent No More.

Testimony by Georgette Forney, Executive Director, NOEL, co-founder of Silent No More Awareness Campaign. More information can be found at www.womendeservebetter.com.

WE REMEMBER



Louchrisser Jackson

1954 - 1997

IN HER TWELFTH WEEK of pregnancy, Louchrisser Jackson, a twenty-three-year-old mother of five, went to Reproductive Services in Dallas, Texas, on November 4, 1977.

After her abortion, Louchrisser began to hemorrhage. Her doctor ordered a blood transfusion, but it did not arrive. Finally, about an hour before her death, he attempted to give her a transfusion with his own blood. His blood turned out to be an incompatible blood-type match.

A private ambulance was called but was not informed of the nature of the transport. In that jurisdiction private ambulances were only permitted to transport stable patients; they were not allowed to respond to emergency calls. Since the ambulance service had no reason to expect an emergency, they did not respond promptly, nor did they refer the transport to the fire department's ambulance service.

When the ambulance crew finally arrived, Louchrisser had gone into cardiac arrest. The crew discovered that they had actually been called to the center for an emergency transport and rushed Louchrisser to the hospital immediately. Louchrisser died that day.

The doctor who performed her abortion requested that her body be released without an inquiry. Another physician at the hospital learned of the case and requested an inquiry.

Dallas Morning News 7-28-78, Autopsy Report Case No. 2262-77-1103



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50 for \$5; 100 for \$10; 250 for \$20
 - "What Women Really Want" brochure:
Free with a self-addressed stamped envelope
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Would you say that to my face?

Would you tell me that I never should have been born?

That is the message sent when people talk about aborting "gross fetal anomalies."

People who overcome adversity inspire, challenge and enrich our world.

It's time to question abortion. SM

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