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Testimonies of Regret Decades of Legal Abortion

A Report by Sue Liljenberg

Founding Director of Healing Hearts Ministries International

Who should read this report?

People who care about women

Pro-choice Americans

Legislators

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Dear Karen,

For the first six years after my abortion I could have taken a pro-choice sign and marched with it if I had been a more vocal, public person. I felt that, although I questioned what I had done in my own situation, it wasn't fair to make women have to have back alley abortions.

Finally, I have become more aware of what abortion as a procedure does - to both people. I see the studies on fetal development and reality sets in. At first I was angry at not being told, I couldn't figure out why I had to ask to be informed. Then I realized I hadn't really been given a choice. My boyfriend, for as close as we were, pressured me not with anger, but with love, "If I loved him", "please", "It's the best thing for us both." The clinic really just performed a service - I didn't ask and they didn't tell.

So after seven years I find I have to live with other people's choices. I know my life will go on; but I will never be able to forget that I selfishly murdered my child.

I see the women screaming for their rights - even women who have had abortions sometimes. But I know from experience that time does not heal all wounds.

—Lisa

Introduction

In the course of our lives we all make mistakes. Instinctively, we try to find a way to deal with them. We may have to apologize, pay the fine or damages, or return the 'problem' to the place of purchase. To our great relief, a way can often be found to “fix” the mistake, which frees us to try again or just move on with life. These mistakes can usually be shrugged off. “No harm done,” we tell ourselves, vowing to learn from the experience.

Unfortunately, there is another kind of mistake, a mistake much harder to live with. These mistakes cannot be undone for they are irreversible. Try as we may there is no way to make things right again. Because they are final, they can have far-reaching consequences. For these mistakes there is often the consequence of regret and the terrible weight of personal responsibility. These mistakes are often called personal tragedies.

An irreversible mistake often begins with a decision, one usually made quickly and under great pressure or stress, the most tragic being a mistake resulting in the ending of a human life.

Abortion can be just such a mistake. For twenty years millions of women have exercised what they have been told is their constitutional right to choose to have an abortion. But what kind of choice is it? After twenty years of legal abortion, are women really content with their decisions? Do they still believe in a woman's right to choose?

While many women seem to have no trouble living with their abortions, there are many, many thousands of others for whom their abortion is a black and horrible mistake, one they wish they could undo or at least erase from their memory entirely. To say that these women now regret their abortions is an understatement.

These women now have something to say about how abortion has affected their lives. They desperately want their voices to be heard and considered.

Many now feel that they were kept deliberately ignorant or even lied to about many aspects of abortion. Others say they were not told about the babies developing in their wombs, or about the painful, violent, and traumatic nature of the abortion procedure itself. Few knew that they could hemorrhage or that infection might set in. Many claim that there was no mention of the possibility of damage to the uterus, cervix, or other internal organs during the abortion procedure. Still others say they were unaware of the increased risk of tubal pregnancy and miscarriage with later pregnancies. They did not know they could have problems carrying future babies to full term. None were warned that they could be rendered infertile or sterile. No one cautioned them that this could be their only chance at motherhood.

There was also no mention of post-abortion trauma and the many psychological problems which so often follow. Many women now charge that no one encouraged them to consider that their nature as women is lifegiver, and that severing the mother /infant bond that begins at conception could wreak havoc in their bodies and souls. No one warned them that guilt, grief, despair, anger and regret are common problems following an abortion. Most were only assured that abortion is 'safe and simple' and assured that they would have other children at a more convenient time in the future, continuing on with life like the pregnancy never happened. *(If this were any other kind of surgery, the patient would have been required to sign a release form informing her of even the most remote complications she may face following her surgery, but because abortion is considered a political issue and not a medical one, it is treated differently.)*

As a result of this ignorance, many women found themselves confused and overwhelmed by the complications that followed their abortions. Many found themselves unable to deal with feelings and problems they never expected to have. So many thought they had solved a “problem”, but in reality found they had created a whole series of new ones!

Physically, many have paid a high price for their abortions. Along with incomplete abortions, hemorrhage, and infections, some have suffered the loss of other internal organs, infertility, miscarriages, tubal pregnancies, pre-mature births and stillbirths. Some have never had another child. Sadly, some never will, as they have lost their wombs to “safe, legal” abortion. Emotionally, many began to feel alone, deserted, grief-stricken, or guilty.

Confusion came as many began to think that something was wrong with them, or that they were not “handling their emotions” like they should. Even though night after night, and day after day, we are all reminded that abortion is “accepted and necessary”, some women have plunged into periods of depression or have been overwhelmed with moments of profound grief. Some have been overcome with a burning desire to become pregnant again. Others have experienced recurring nightmares, alcohol and drug problems, and eating disorders. Still others have considered or attempted suicide. Tragically, some have succeeded.

So how do women feel about abortion today? That is a very painful question for many women who have had abortions and wish they never had. Some women now wish abortion had not been a legal option. In retrospect, many women now feel that they allowed themselves to be deceived. At a vulnerable and confusing time in their lives, abortion was presented to them on a silver platter as a solution to their “little problem”. Many now know in their hearts, however, that the responsibility for this horrible mistake rests only with themselves. Many now regret their abortions, but sadly, nothing can be done or said that will ever undo them. Their children are gone, and they are irreplaceable.

As a woman who has had an abortion, and who has been involved in post-abortion counseling for 12 years, I know firsthand how abortion affects women. My abortion took place in 1971 in California, where abortion laws had been liberalized to the point where anyone could have an abortion for almost any reason. At that time, I truly considered myself to be a compassionate, caring, and progressive person. Living together and caught up in the hippie, drug culture of that day, my boyfriend and I were both supporters of Greenpeace and vegetarians. We thought the killing of innocent animals was wrong, and thought it was hypocritical to eat an animal we couldn't kill ourselves. When I found out I was pregnant, I went to Planned Parenthood for counseling. There three options were presented to me. I could: (1) have a baby and give it up for adoption, which they said would be emotionally impossible, (2) have a baby and be tied down for the rest of my life, and probably lose my boyfriend, or (3) have a safe, simple abortion and go on with my life like it never happened. When I asked about the baby I was told that at eleven weeks, my developing baby was nothing but an indeterminable cluster of cells. Ignorantly, having no reason to believe otherwise, I scheduled an abortion for the following week. I thought I knew everything I needed to know.

That sunny morning in July there was no one outside the large white hospital in the San Fernando Valley, but there were twenty-five other young women gathered in the waiting room. I was nervous, but was reassured by the fact that twenty-five other young women had made the same decision I had. After having the procedure explained briefly to us, we were split up and led away, one-by-one, for the abortion itself.

When I awakened from the anesthesia, I asked the nurse if I was still pregnant. When she said “No”, I smugly thought to myself, “I will never think about this again. It's over and done with.” I didn't suspect that the course of my life had been changed. I thought everything would go on as before, with this little “mistake” erased. But within months I became anorexic and obsessed with having another baby. The following July I realized I was pregnant again, and my boyfriend and I married. When I gave birth to our son, I began to realize something was wrong. Mixed with feelings of happiness at being a new mother came the awareness that this baby was not my first child, nor could he ever replace him. I was now haunted by the uneasy feeling that the abortion had taken the life of my first child. For three years I was able to stuff this uneasiness down by reminding myself, “that's over and done with, there's nothing you can do about it.” But after the birth of my second child, a daughter, I became increasingly obsessed with my aborted child.

These two children looked nothing alike. Hardly a day went by when I didn't wonder who that baby would have been. I have always felt it was a boy.

It wasn't until 1976 that I fully realized what I had done. With my two precious children happily playing at my feet, and carrying yet another in my womb, I went to the mailbox where I found a mailing from a pro-life organization. Inside the envelope was a beautifully detailed photograph of an 11-week-old unborn child.

I will never forget my feelings as I stood staring at the picture of the tiny, perfectly formed human being before me. I was face to face with what could have been my own 11-week-old unborn child, and the harsh truth. Reality had at last caught up with me. In an instant the cold knife of death, grief, and guilt pierced my heart. Hypocrisy screamed at me. “You wouldn’t kill an animal, but you killed your own child.” I could stuff my feelings no longer. Anger overwhelmed me. I was angry at Planned Parenthood, the counselor the doctor, and my husband... but most of all at myself for being so stupid. I found myself increasingly aware of mounting feelings of guilt, grief and regret. In tears I came to the realization that I never would have done it if I had only known.

During this time I began to wonder about the other twenty-five young women who had also had abortions with me that July day six years ago. Were any of them experiencing these feelings? And what of the millions of other women who had had abortions? Did any of them now regret them? I knew in my heart I wasn’t alone. I read every book on abortion I could get my hands on. I began openly talking about my abortion and subsequent feelings. Responding to my openness, other women confidentially began admitting similar feelings to me. I was amazed at the number. My initial suspicions were correct. My feelings were not unique and I was not alone. This realization gave me a certain degree of comfort, but my guilt continued to grow. Deep in my soul I began to realize that the only way I could deal with these tumultuous and overwhelming feelings was with God’s help. Only He could forgive me.

In sincere repentance I laid my abortion at the foot of the cross. Peace came gradually as I slowly began to accept God’s promise of forgiveness. At this time my involvement began to broaden. Soon people began asking me to speak, first to small intimate groups, and eventually to large public audiences. Invariably at the end of each speaking engagement a handful of women would wait in the back for the room to clear. They would thank me for sharing, and in quiet tones confide that they, too, had had abortions and were suffering. At home my phone began to ring. I began to receive letters. Distraught women who knew I would understand began asking me for help. I began to see a great void in the area of post-abortion counseling.

At a meeting one night someone gave me literature from an organization called Women Exploited. This entire group was made up of women who had had abortions and regretted them. It seemed that these women were everywhere. Eventually I began working with WEBA (Women Exploited By Abortion.) That group seemed to be exploding. Women from all over the nation were involved and all had the same message. “Abortion hurts women”. We had hit a nerve. Several friends and I worked with WEBA for two years and then branched out with our own post-abortion support group called Open ARMs (Abortion Related Ministries). I served as the founding director.

Through my involvement in post-abortion counseling, it soon became apparent that great numbers of women were hurting, more than I had ever imagined. Each one had a story to tell. I realized there was a great void in the area of informed consent laws. How could anyone want women to make this choice in ignorance? My desire became to help bring the reality of abortion to light. I began to sense the value of each individual testimony and their potential collective impact in documenting how abortion can affect women. Compiling as many as I could, written, oral, and published, a pattern began to emerge. The same physical and psychological problems continued to be evident.

During the years 1981-1988, when I was most active in post-abortion counseling, I collected over 200 personal abortion testimonies – most handwritten. In this report, I have reproduced selected excerpts. Only a few have been printed in their entirety. They have been given to me for the purpose of proclaiming the truth about abortion, and the need for informed consent laws. I remember thinking that if my testimony could save one baby and spare one woman the trauma of abortion, then my baby had not died in vain. Others share this hope. One woman wrote,

“I feel I have to do what I can to prevent other women from making the same mistake I did, and try to stop this continued onslaught against unborn children. These abortion memories can be intensely painful, but they can also be positive when used to help others.”

The women sharing these testimonies range from all ages and all walks of life. Most are from the United States. Some women have used their real names and some an alias. Others have asked to remain anonymous. It must be said that most of these women underwent legal abortions, with only a few experiencing illegal ones. They have had anywhere from one to six abortions.

And so I offer these testimonies to you. The women represented here have poured out their hearts and relived painful memories in order that you may gain a clearer picture of what abortion can do to women. I am most grateful to each one for her courage in coming forward with their stories.

As you read this booklet, I ask you to allow these women to convey to you, in their own words, what abortion has meant to them personally. I believe you will gain a new understanding of what abortion is. It is not the “solution” its supporters and profiteers claim it to be.

(All testimonies included in this report are carefully kept on file for anyone wishing to verify their authenticity.)

“WHY, WHY, WHY? How could I have been so ignorant? How could I have fallen for such a lie? How could I have been so vulnerable? During a time of being fearful, confused, young, and ignorant, why wasn't I given any counsel at all? Why didn't someone explain the development of the little baby inside of me? Why wasn't I told that at 12 weeks after conception my baby could suck his thumb, breath, feel pain, and since the vocal cords are completed, he could even cry? Why wasn't I told about the psychological complications resulting from abortion? Why wasn't I warned about the many physical problems I could have had because of my abortion? I could have been left childless, sterile. Why was I kept in the dark? Why was the truth censored?”

—Sharon

“We did not discuss alternatives to abortion unless the woman forced us to. Our counselors were paid generously to sell a product, and that's what they did.”

— Carol Everett
Former abortion clinic director
and owner

Chapter One

Reasons

Abortion. The reasons women choose to have them are widely varied. The excerpts cited below represent some of the most common. But how do these women feel about their abortions now? While the circumstances leading up to every one were unique and each reason seemed justifiable at the time, the common denominator in every case is that initial relief has been replaced with profound and lasting regret. (See chapter 7)

Ignorance

"I knew an abortion would eliminate my 'pregnancy problem', but I didn't know that by three months the 'thing' inside of me was quite noticeably a little person, with fingers and toes and sockets for eyes. Since I didn't know it was a real person, I didn't think of what I was doing as killing anyone."

—Jane M.

It was legal

"I had an abortion at a low point in my life. If it had been illegal, I never would have done it...Abortion is legalized murder."

—M.D.

Liberated Woman

"I was a married but liberated woman, with my only goal being a successful career. I had already sacrificed a lot for that career, so at eighteen, with a two year college degree, I was on my way. A month after I graduated I was shocked to be told I was pregnant. I was on the pill... I couldn't believe it! This was not part of our 'no commitment marriage' and definitely not part of my career."

Why me? I didn't want a baby... but I carried my baby to full term and gave birth to a beautiful baby girl... I swore to myself that this was going to be my first and last child.

Then nine months later I discovered I was pregnant again. I was only nineteen years old! Two babies? No way!... Pregnancy termination was legal, so it must be right... the women's movement had made me aware of my 'rights' to do as I wished with my own body."

—Chris S.

Threat to Lifestyle

“I was just 30, and busy with a thousand and one activities, working part-time, running a home, considering training for a career. I was happily married with children who were already school age. My house was always full of kids, my own and others, and I enjoyed family life. We had a lot of fun with our children, cycling, swimming, camping, and roller skating. I did not want the pattern of my life to change.

Another baby seemed a threat. It would alter me, restrict me, exhaust me, and it would be a strain on my marriage. I imagined myself ill and tired; I remembered post-natal depression. I considered all these negative aspects, and rarely allowed myself to think of the joy a new child can be.”

— Jane Lewis
“Englishwoman’s Journal”

Reputation

“My father was a doctor... that is how my pregnancy (at 24 weeks) was discovered... ‘My God, don’t you know you’re pregnant’ was followed by plans set by my parents. Back then, abortions were easy if one had connections. Within days I had seen the required doctors and told them my coached story. ‘I’ll kill myself if I have to have this baby.’ Consequently the mother’s life was in danger and the abortion was legal. But it was a lie-the mother’s life wasn’t in danger-the grandparent’s reputation was in danger. It was not my decision. I could have been sent away and the baby put up for adoption.”

—BRH

Minister’s Daughter

“I am a minister’s daughter. When I was sixteen, my mother told me about another minister’s daughter who had become pregnant out of wedlock. Her father was removed from the pastorate; the family was disgraced. My mother said to me, ‘Don’t you ever do that to your father.’ When I found myself facing an unplanned pregnancy at nineteen, I knew I couldn’t go home.”

—Melanie

Family Embarrassment

“While attending a Christian high school in a large east coast city, I came across some pro-choice Literature (off campus). After reading all the clever slogans like ‘every child a wanted child’, and ‘a woman has the right to control her own body’, I foolishly began to promote the pro- choice position. No one at my school satisfactorily refuted this position.

To make my story short, I fell in love and got engaged. ‘What difference does a state marriage license make?’ I reasoned. It makes a lot of difference! We repented of our sin, but the natural consequences still had to be faced. I was pregnant. Because of my pro-choice feelings, I sought an abortion. We were too embarrassed to face our parents and afraid to scandalize our families with a hurry-up wedding. After the biased ‘counseling’ of the local Planned Parenthood Clinic, we were even more sure we were doing the ‘right’ thing. We made an appointment for an abortion. For the sake of the family honor, we sacrificed the life of the first member of it’s next generation.”

—‘Grace’

Bad Timing

"My doctor told me it would be unfair to put the stress of a pregnancy on my fiancé. A young marriage just starting out with the burden of an unexpected child didn't have a chance. Then he mentioned the divorce rate... My mother and fiancé both agreed with the doctor that this was a bad time to have a baby... We had the abortion, married in February, and later divorced."

—Suzi

High School Diploma

"I became pregnant the day after I stopped taking the pill. I was in my senior year of high school and saw the pregnancy as stopping my graduation. I was convinced abortion was the only answer."

—'Mae'

College Education

"My goal at that time was a college education, and I didn't want the bother of my pregnancy."

—C. D.

Financial Difficulties

"My husband had just quit his Job as a truck driver. I was working full-time cooking at a high school, bringing home under \$300 monthly. We had three children, ages 6, 5, and 3... My husband's job wasn't working out as good as he had hoped. His boss never seemed to have enough money to pay him for loads that he hauled. He felt pressured from me as well as inside himself. In January, when we suspected I was pregnant, he was very angry. He didn't see any way we could afford another child and told me to get an abortion... We fought and argued about it for a couple of months. He had given me an ultimatum - an abortion or a divorce."

—"Evie"

On Welfare

"On August 18, 1975, at 3:00 in the afternoon, I had an abortion. I was 18-years-old, a welfare mother of two. I didn't really want the abortion, but my welfare worker assured me that it was best for me and my husband, and that I would be irresponsible to have another baby on welfare."

—Lori

Scared

"I was so scared of my dad ranting and raving and having a fit when he found out I was pregnant. I was afraid of being hit. Being scared is terrible. I just had to get myself out of it. Abortion seemed like the only way."

—"Julie"

A Relationship and a Career

“When I got pregnant, I was 18-years-old and engaged to be married. My fiancé was a manager trainee for a major hotel chain and was within nine months of completing his training and a year away from an assignment. I loved him and he loved me, but when he found out about the baby he became frightened about his career, about us, and about his ability to handle all of it at the same time. He wanted me to have the abortion for the sake of our relationship and his career. He pressured me a lot. He said he wasn't ready for the responsibility. Within a few weeks after the abortion, our relationship just was not the same, and within a few months he was fired from his job.”

—Sue

To Save a Relationship

“My boyfriend hit the roof, refusing to acknowledge the child as his; he insisted, he pleaded, he arranged an abortion. I arrived at the decision to abort primarily to save our relationship and stay together. It did just the opposite. I hated him as fiercely as I hated myself. We broke up and moved apart within eight weeks.”

—Rebecca

“My boyfriend, for as close as we were, pressured me not with anger but with love. ‘If I loved him’, ‘Please, it’s the best thing for us both.’ The clinic really just performed a service. I didn’t ask and they didn’t tell.”

—Lisa

Living with Boyfriend

“Fourteen years ago I had an abortion. As an R.N. at the time I certainly cannot use the excuse of ignorance of my body, or unavailable contraceptives. The reason I got pregnant was because I was living an immoral life with my boyfriend. I ignored what I knew was right in my heart.”

—Barbara

Unstable Marriage

“In January of 1976, I was 19 years old, married and the mother of a 17-month-old baby. My husband was out of work and had been for some time. We were barely getting by financially. Our relationship was very unstable. My son had been born prematurely and we hadn’t had any medical insurance, so the state had paid for his medical bills. I found out I was pregnant again. I was extremely ill with morning sickness. It seemed to us the ‘easy way out’ was for me to get an abortion. All through the years there has always been a deep hurt but I’ve spent a lot of time pushing the pain away.”

—Leslie

Separated from Husband

“I was separated from my first husband and in college. I met a man and became pregnant. I was panic-stricken because I was married to one man and pregnant by another.”

—Beth

Divorced and Alone

“I was 29-years-old single, and trying to feed and clothe two children, and I was pregnant. The father of my child was a man with little or no scruples, and there was no question in my mind that he would offer no support paternally. I had had my last child alone and the struggle and heartache I had gone through was still very much in my mind. I became very frightened at the thought of going through it again. My friends and family were telling me that it would be selfish toward my two children and my unborn, should I decide to keep it. I was under extreme pressure to have an abortion.”

—“Anne”

Adultery

“I was having bad problems within my marriage. We had been separated twice. At this point I became involved in adultery. On this one and only occasion with this person I became pregnant. I was shocked and totally beside myself. My mother confirmed the ‘fact’ that if I told my husband, he would leave me and maybe take our children.”

—R. L.

Pressure from Boyfriend

“As I was ushered into the counseling room, I wondered what was going to happen to me. Because of my boyfriend’s insistence on having the abortion, I truly believed I had no other choice. I remember feeling very alone at this time in my life. I had no one to turn to who could be trusted or who would understand. Because I was afraid of being kicked out of school, I wanted the whole incident to remain a secret. The counselor didn’t help me in any respect. She never mentioned any alternative to abortion.”

—Patricia

Pressure from Husband

“When I returned home with the news of my third pregnancy, my husband Jell apart and insisted that we could not have this baby. Things had been very bad as far as his commitment to me in the marriage, and because we had gotten married so young and immediately had babies, I felt very trapped. I was absolutely stunned and shocked when I realized he was suggesting abortion and was actually making a date with a clinic for the following day. I felt that the control over my own body and baby had been completely ripped from me.”

—Mary

Pressure from Father

“I went to a clinic where I found out I was pregnant...I came to the conclusion that having an abortion wasn’t right for me. I didn’t want to take life away from my child because I was afraid of my parents. Just the thought of having a tiny baby, my baby, growing inside of me was so exciting, and nobody was going to tell me to give it up...NOBODY. Well, I was wrong. I figured that since I was going to keep the baby, I might as well tell my parents. My mom was very understanding and said that whatever I wanted was fine with her, but my dad was just the opposite. He got really drunk and wouldn’t speak to me for days. Then, he wrote me a letter saying that he was my father and I had to do what he said. I had to have an abortion or he would throw me, my mom, and ‘that thing’, out of the house. I was so confused and I didn’t want my parent’s marriage to break-up because of a mistake I had made, so I agreed to do what my father said.”

—D. A.

Pressure from Family

“Upon examination at a women's clinic, the doctor threw up his hands in rage and disgust. He blurted out something cruel and stomped out of the room after saying I was three months pregnant. I proceeded to ask for pregnancy aid centers, and adoption agencies. The girls there were so antagonistic and had such animosity. No one wanted to give me any information or tell me anything about the baby. But my mother and father wanted me to have an abortion. My mother kept tearing me down. She was totally deaf to my plans to adopt the baby out. Where can I go, what can I do? Oh, all night long I cried; I felt deserted by God. Oh, such confusion. I still can't remember when my strength gave out.”

—Anonymous

“Birth Control”

“I had had two abortions already so one more would be no problem. At this point I was having abortions as a form of birth control. Although I was not using any other birth control “method” I somehow never believed I would get pregnant again. It was a surprise every time. I always talked the father into agreeing to an abortion.”

—“Kelly”

Right to my body

“I was promiscuous and got pregnant. The father never wanted it. I suggested marriage. He didn't want marriage so I was very angry. My thinking was manipulated by suggestions that I had a right to my own body.”

—“Maggie”

Desperation

“I had always been a troubled teenager, and pregnancy seemed to me one more problem... When the counselor found out I was living at home, she advised abortion. After all why be in a ‘situation’ I didn't have to be in? She really appealed to my sense of desperation, and I could see sense in her ‘reasoning’.”

—Darla

Exposure to X-Rays

“About nine years ago, I broke my left shoulder while trying to ride a trail bike. I was 31 years old, married, with a boy five and a girl three. I was taking the pill consistently but nonetheless had conceived a child about a month before the shoulder fracture. During the course of the next month... the doctor said that abortion was the only sensible course as the chances of a birth defect were significant with the multiple x-rays. I bowed to my feelings of fear and anxiety, had the abortion.

There is some irony here. A boating accident as a teenager left me missing my left leg. With God's guidance and support I obtained my B.S. in nursing at the University of Washington. Life with a handicap can be a nuisance but, as I have seen firsthand, can be productive and full of much joy and satisfaction. Why did I think for a moment that it was all right to destroy a baby with the chance of a handicap, but would have not considered an abortion otherwise?”

—P. M.

Fear of Drug Related Deformity

“I had been heavily involved in drugs and was concerned the child would be deformed.”

—Donna

Handicapped Unborn

“I had an abortion because the baby was not developing correctly. It was an anencephalic infant. The baby was five and one-half months old. I did it because the doctors kept pushing me and said that I would die if I didn’t have this.”

—S. M.

Rape

“Sixteen years ago, at the age of 19, I became pregnant as the result of a violent rape. In the early months of pregnancy I ignored all indications that my body was giving me that I was pregnant. Finally, as I approached my fourth month, I saw a doctor. Upon learning I was indeed carrying a child, my first reaction was to have an abortion. I felt I had all the best reasons for having one. First of all I was carrying the child of a man who had committed a violent crime against me. I couldn’t stand the thought of carrying ‘his child’ and being reminded of the rape.”

—Jackie

Incest

“It took many years for me to admit to my abortion and acknowledge the circumstances behind it. I was a victim of incest most of my life. This abortion was the result of incestuous rape.”

—Donna

Life of the Mother

“We had the abortion because of my health. I had a stroke one year previously and was advised to have this done. The doctor said I probably wouldn’t live through the delivery.”

—Frannie

A Letter to the Editor

Dear Times Editor,

After reading your pro-abortion article (Seattle Times, May 13, 1984) I feel it's time another side be printed. I'm tired of hearing people say that pro-lifers don't understand because they haven't been there. I'm against abortion because I've been there. Between the ages of 15 and 25 I had a total of five abortions. I was in love with the same man for that ten-year span and got within days of marrying him three separate times. At that age, love, unfortunately, justifies many things.

I was never encouraged to keep my baby, only asked if I wanted it or not. I was never encouraged to have my baby and give it up to someone who really wanted a baby, but was less fortunate than I. As soon as I said I didn't want the baby, abortion was discussed and set-up with the ease of a dental appointment. Each time I was asked if I had had an abortion before and each time I lied... so I was never advised of any health risks. I generally went through Planned Parenthood. I never felt guilt then, but the guilt catches up with you. Every time you fill out a form on your medical history or the first time you carry and deliver your baby. But then again they don't say much about the guilt.

My problems were just downright carelessness and healthy love of self. My reasons for the abortions (the real ones) ranged from refusing to face the responsibility, not wanting to go through the embarrassment of carrying a child out of wedlock, to being afraid of losing my boyfriend... ME-ME-ME. Abortion is the epitome of selfishness.

Had anyone just once made me accept the responsibility of my actions I know I would have been 100% more careful, but it was just made too easy. As a mother, I know now that had anyone put me in a position of having that first baby, the following four abortions would never of happened. A hard lesson for a young girl to have to learn? Yes, but not as hard as the lesson our unborn children pay. Life is a very serious issue, death more so.

Now many would say I'm the exception, I'm the abuser of the system. But I wasn't the only one. Living near a major university, I met other girls who felt as I did. Why not? It was so easy.

The truth is that what most women are defending is the right to be selfish, even at the risk of another life. The right to escape consequences they are responsible for, the right to keep their figures, the right to continue to enjoy physical pleasures at the risk of a Life they know they have no intention of keeping. Since when has the right to the pursuit of happiness included premeditated murder or the right to escape self-imposed consequences and responsibilities? If this all sounds cold and unfeeling toward women, it's not meant to. It's the selfishness that I am cold and unfeeling towards; the self-centeredness that blinds us to the cold calculated part of our hearts that is constantly striving for 'number one' at any cost.

Women have the most influential job in the world and don't realize it. We raise the future generations. What we put into our children molds the future. None of us are just a housewife or mother. We hold the future in our arms.

I am not proud of my experiences. I know every day when I look into my daughters' big brown eyes how blessed I am to be able to have children. Mixed with the joy is the regret in my heart of the big brown eyes and tiny giggles that were lost because of one young woman's love for herself in spite of the incredible loss of life."

—Name Withheld

Without exception, all these women now regret their abortions no matter how 'good' their reasons seemed at the time. In fact, many now admit it was the worst mistake they ever made.

Chapter Two

Euphemisms

In practically every testimony represented here, women tell of a euphemism used by counselors and doctors to describe their developing unborn children. These euphemisms help give the impression that the baby is not really human. Only 5% of the post-abortion women we surveyed reported being shown a picture or told about the anatomical characteristics of her developing baby. Perhaps this account by a former abortion counselor will explain why so many women were uninformed.

“As a former abortion counselor, I know how women are talked into having abortions. Potential counselors undergo an intensive ‘orientation workshop’ in which they are told never to use ‘deceptive’ words like baby, unborn, or pregnant mother. We were told instead to use words like ‘uterine contents’, ‘products of conception’, ‘product of pregnancy’, or ‘uterine matter’ to describe the baby. We were never to call abortion ‘abortion’, but either the ‘procedure’ or the ‘termination of pregnancy.’ We must work to help our pro-abortion sisters to see how they are being brainwashed and used to betray other women.

We must help them also see that if they really believe in choice, as they say, they must live up to that. When I was an abortion counselor, we were given inaccurate photos of the unborn fetus to show women if they asked to see them. For instance, a photo of a one month fetus might be shown to illustrate a four month fetus. Is that giving women an informed choice?

As a young woman who has had an abortion, I feel deeply betrayed by my pro-abortion sisters. I feel that abortion is being presented by them as the ‘ultimate’ in liberation for women. For many years I believed that too. . . Until I had an abortion.”

—Annette

The truth is, many women wish they had been accurately informed as to the development of the baby. 90% of the post-abortion women we surveyed said they would have liked medically accurate information prior to their abortions.

“Why didn’t anyone care enough about me to show me the truth about fetal development before my abortion. I am the one living with what I did.”

—Nancy

“I really feel the reason so many young women have abortions is that they don’t know exactly what happens to the baby during an abortion.”

—Terri

“No one said anything about it being a baby or what it looked like at eleven to twelve weeks. If only they would have showed me a picture of my baby’s development, that would have been enough to stop me... but no one offered me one ounce of information!”

—Barbara

The euphemisms used for the developing baby are cold and impersonal. Obviously, the truth about fetal development would influence many women to choose life for their babies. The following are the most common euphemisms used to describe an unborn child:

“The word ‘baby’ was never mentioned. It was always; ‘We’re here to help you with your little problem’.”

—Diane

"I was told by the doctor and his nurse that my baby at six weeks gestation was not a child, only a few cells lumped together, and that neither the 'lump of cells' or I would feel any pain. As a nurse, I now know that the 'lump of cells' was a fine creation developing in God's perfect way from the moment of conception."

—Debbie

"I asked how big the baby was. She replied it was just 'a cluster of cells' about as big as the tip of my finger. I had been led to believe this 'cluster of cells' had no particular details, but here I was faced with a picture of a miniature, intricate human being. I got cold inside as I contemplated the implications of what I was facing."

—"Monica"

"I was told my baby was only a blob, like an insect."

—BHJ

"All I remember is someone telling me it wasn't a baby at this point. it was a mass. It made me think it wasn't a baby yet. I was so wrong."

—Vicki

"The nurse said, 'It's just a few cells now, don't think of it as life.' A friend told me that the doctor and nurses involved in abortion had to believe the embryos weren't life, otherwise they'd have to believe they were killing little children."

—Joy

"I went to Planned Parenthood and was told I was pregnant. I was also told that 'it' was nothing but a 'clump of tissue' even though I was already three months along. I was not shown pictures or anything."

—C.H.

"No mention was ever made about the baby. I was never made to feel like I was doing anything wrong, that I might later regret. I was told I was 'lucky' to be able to solve my problem pregnancy so easily."

—Robin

"I received no counsel at all at Planned Parenthood. They told me my baby was a 'clump of cells' and not a fetus yet. So with a very deceived mind, I called the doctor to get an appointment to have the abortion. I had told the nurse I had better get it done as soon as possible, thinking in my mind it was only a 'clump of tissue' and I had better have the abortion soon or 'it' would turn into a baby. I really believed it was this big chunk of pink flesh, so I could justify in my mind it would be fine. Why would this nice R.N. at Planned Parenthood lie to me?"

—Mary Beth

"I was told at Planned Parenthood that this little 'blob of tissue' would be as easily removed as a wart. 'Terminating a pregnancy', I was told, was no more significant than removing a tiny blood clot in my uterus."

—K. S.

"Planned Parenthood told me 'it' was only 'tissue'."

—Kathy C.

“I was told at Planned Parenthood, and believed, the fetus at 12-weeks was a ‘circle of cells’, a ‘frog’ going through evolutionary cycle of development.”

—R. B.

“The counselor assured me that at three months I only had a small ‘mass of spongy tissue and blood’ inside of me.”

—Julie

The Ultimate Euphemism

"I was sixteen, lonely, and ready for someone who cared. My mother and I had never been close, and when I met Steve it just added to the problem. Steve was wonderful, or so I was convinced. I had had other boyfriends but they never lasted too long, and Steve seemed so different. We had been going out for about two weeks when our 'innocent' relationship turned around. He wanted a more physical relationship to 'keep us together' and I was gullible enough to go along with him. Don't get me wrong. I am neither condoning my decision nor am I trying to put all the blame on him. I just wanted to have someone who cared, and Steve seemed to be it.

Time went by and I found myself once more alone, only this time with female problems. I always had them, ever since my first period. My mother had known but passed it on as 'another problem with me'. It was decided that I should go see my mother's doctor to decide what was going on. I had a period for six days, then it would stop for three to sixteen days and continue again.

My mom made the appointment to see the doctor and I went. He gave me a pelvic exam and told me I had a 'growth on my uterus' and that he could remove it in his office after hours for two-hundred dollars. It would be the solution to everything. He told me that 'the growth' was causing swelling of the abdomen and all the irregular periods and nausea. But... he never told me the truth - I was pregnant.

When I got home my mom had already talked to the doctor and the appointment date had been made. My mom told me the same thing the doctor had said, I had a 'growth' on my uterus that needed to be removed.

The day arrived for my scheduled 'after hours surgery' and I was instructed to go to work and do things normally, with the exception of having nothing to eat or drink all day.

When the time came for me to keep my appointment I remember being driven by my mother to the doctor's office. It was closed to regular business, but as we approached the office the nurse unlocked the door and showed us in. My mother was seated in the waiting room and was offered coffee as I was escorted by the nurse into the examining room, where I put on an examining gown and was prepared for the 'procedure'. I received a local anesthetic and my abortion began. I remember feeling as if the doctor was ripping everything inside of me out. The torment and pain my baby and I were going through seemed to go on for hours.

After he was through, the doctor placed my baby up on my abdomen, uncovered it, and replied, 'See, you were six months pregnant and would have had a boy. When will girls learn that if you are going to sleep with men, use the pill?'

I remember my mom trying to walk with me out of the office to take me home and how sick I got. During the night, my mother told me I was bleeding so badly she thought I was dead. She told me I was barely breathing and was as white as a sheet. I don't really remember anything that night.

Years later I was married to a beautiful and caring man and pregnant with a child we both wanted very much. During my son's birth a lot of complications occurred and it was decided by all that it was vital to not have any more children for health reasons. That could have been the ending of everything, but unfortunately it wasn't. Two years after God blessed me with my son's birth I was diagnosed as having cancer of the cervix.

I'm sure some of you are wondering if I hate my mother, the doctor or have any resentment toward anyone. I can tell you that by accepting Jesus Christ into my life and asking Him to forgive me, and others for the murdering of my baby, all the bitterness I had carried with me for ten years has gone. I have learned to understand what has happened, and realize that I serve a loving, and caring Lord, and by serving Him, He wants me and everyone who serves Him to forgive. I guess the scripture that keeps going through my mind is Ephesians 4: 32: "And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

I still think about my baby and cry a silent cry inside at times, but God has blessed me with a loving and caring husband and a wonderful son, who is now five. I know I could not have gotten through all of this without Jesus helping me and reaching out to me in my time of need for comfort.

Love in Jesus,
M. S.

Fetal Development

Scientifically (biologically, genetically, and embryologically), life begins at conception.

Growth occurs as follows:

21 days gestation	The child developing in its mother's womb has a beating heart.
40 days gestation	Brain waves can be detected and recorded.
8 weeks gestation	All body systems are present and the fetus is recognizably human with fingers, toes, and a face. It can even feel pain.
9-10 weeks gestation	Fingerprints are already evident in the skin. The fetus will curve its fingers around an object placed in the palm of its hand. It can squint, swallow and wrinkle its forehead.
11-12 weeks gestation	Urination occurs; muscle movements are becoming more coordinated. The fetus sleeps, awakens, and exercises its muscles energetically, turning its head, curling its toes and opening and closing its mouth. The palm when stroked, will make a tight fist.

Source: A Child Is Born, 1977 Dell Publishers

The majority of abortions are performed in the first trimester. Most women who have them are not aware of the above scientific information. Surely this information is relevant and important. It should be considered by a woman making an irreversible decision.

Chapter Three

Is Abortion Simple?

In this day and age, simple solutions to complex problems are highly desirable. We work hard to make everything in life as easy as possible. And when 'little problems' come along, we search for a quick fix to accompany them. We wish to control everything. Obviously in an unplanned pregnancy a woman's life is 'out of control'. Abortion lures them by saying, "We can fix this little problem for you... you can have a 'safe', 'simple', legal abortion, which takes very little time, money, or energy, and leaves no hindrances (no one even needs to know), or you can continue with the pregnancy which takes time, and money, and produces someone to support for the rest of your life." When choices are put like that, it is easy to understand why any woman would choose abortion.

"The counselor said; 'Abortions are quick and simple, and there is not more pain than your period. We give you several shots of Novocain and then we suction out the lining and any other contents of the uterus'."

—Karen H.

"The doctor told me it was a very simple procedure. She said, 'Think of it as having a growth that shouldn't be there. We're just going to snatch it right out of you. Believe me, you're doing the right thing.' I was led to believe that what I was having removed was not human and really not even alive... just a growth."

—Diane

"We were told there was nothing to be concerned with. It is a very easy procedure. The 'pregnancy tissue' is removed and that's all. You bleed for one week and just make sure you call back in three days to see if all the 'pregnancy tissue' has been removed... simple. Seven years later I learned that the so-called tissue actually is a completely formed fetus with arms and legs and feet and toes and a heartbeat and brain waves and fingerprints... all that in eight-weeks development. I was horrified... abortion is not the nice, easy, clean, ending of a 'mass of pregnancy tissue' the 'professionals' tell us about. As a matter of fact, the sight is so horrifying we cannot face the truth about abortion. We say it is not life only because we cannot accept the fact that such atrocities are being performed."

—Christina

"The doctor talked to me and asked me if the abortion was what I really wanted. I told him; 'NO', but it seemed my only choice. He said it was probably best anyway and had me sign a paper. I don't remember what it was. Then I was taken into the room where I was to have the abortion. It was cold and real bright, and there were a lot of machines and jars sitting around which frightened me to death. By now I was in tears, undressed, and on the table. The nurse came in and gave me a shot to 'relax' me, but I don't think it did a very good job because I kept shaking, and vomiting, and squeezing my legs together. The doctors had to be firm with me to get me to cooperate. I remember the tools were cold and I could feel tugging, pulling and my stomach looked like it was sinking; then I heard something catch and it was over. I felt like a zombie after that."

—Carol

"I'll never forget the whole procedure. It was like being on an assembly line. The nurses and doctors all seemed to be unemotional about it all. I felt like I was just another number to them. They explained the procedure very methodically. There was no real concern or care. I felt so afraid. They were going to move me in to get it done. My doctor never looked me straight in the face. I asked questions, but he just told me to be quiet. It would all be over in a few minutes. Easy. Plain. Simple. But it was anything but easy, plain, and simple. The pain was unbearable. The motor running and the sound of the suction was terrible."

—Teresa

"I remember I almost felt ashamed to have thought I could have had my baby. My doctor made me feel like I was a child, and when he asked me what my decision was, I said: 'Abortion'. I felt as if he approved of my decision. He acted like he knew what was best for my life and because he was my doctor I put my trust in him, even though I didn't really want an abortion.

The next morning when the doctor came in he noticed that my eyes were worn out from crying all night. I had no strength left. All he said was, 'This won't take long now.' I asked him what he was going to do. He said he would just put some fluid in right above my navel and it would bring on a miscarriage. I did not know or understand two things. First, the fluid would bum my baby, and second, my baby was more than a bunch of cells. As he started the tears just kept running down my face. Here is the physician that I trusted with my life. Even right after he did it I wanted my baby back and I still do, but I can never go back and change it."

—Shelly

"I asked her if the 'procedure' would hurt and she said, 'No, they will give you a shot'. She also told me it was as simple as removing a wart."

—Darla

"They made it sound as simple as drilling a tooth. They referred to my child as a 'product of pregnancy', and 'pregnancy tissue', never a child or baby or fetus."

—PEACE newsletter

"I now know a mother's instinct for the safety of her young is stronger than her will to live. When this instinct is displaced, whether by confused or forced emotion, the scars are deep and permanent. I compare the effects of abortion to that of 'Vietnam Veteran's Delayed Stress Syndrome', a slow crippling process that takes its toll over a period of time. Abortion is hardly simple."

—Karen H.

"I knew very little about abortion, but decided this was the easiest way out. I felt abortion was wrong, but I found out if you think on it long enough, you can justify your actions. When I went through the preliminaries of getting ready for the abortion, I had one particular lady tell me, 'Honey, it's like writing on a chalkboard, you can easily erase it and go on with your life'."

—'Tara'

"When I was admitted, we were put into dressing rooms to strip down and put on hospital gowns. During this time I felt as if I were a Jew in a German concentration camp about to be exterminated. We were being inspected like a herd of cattle and stripped of all dignity, modesty, and anything else. This was not the easy procedure I thought it was going to be."

—S.G.

"On the way out, while I was paying, the doctor said, 'You know, the way you screamed I'm surprised I have any patients left in my office. How will you ever have a full term baby?' I don't recall the screaming, but I'm sure it went with the dreamlike state from the anesthetic and my inner feelings of how wrong it was, and the loss of killing my child."

—Judy

An Account from Texas

"I was sixteen years old and pregnant. Planned Parenthood had presented the different methods of birth control to my high school health class, but I had chosen to go unprotected. Everyone knew how lenient they were on their rules, so I had no fear about going in and lying about my age. In fact, every shred of information I gave was a lie. I gave a false name, age (I said I was 21), marital status, address, phone number. When they came to my social security number, I was caught off guard; I hadn't expected them to want to know that. I gave too many digits. The lady said that I had given one too many numbers. I told her to just drop the last one. I was sure she knew I was lying, but I was never questioned in any way. The fake ID I had wasn't even asked for.

My pregnancy test confirmed what I already knew. I was pregnant. I was asked if I wanted prenatal care or an abortion. At the time, I had no idea what 'prenatal' meant. I had never even known anyone who was pregnant. For all I knew, it was just part of the abortion. That was the only time I was ever given the 'choice' and I was too young and ignorant to know what it meant. I was told that I was about twelve weeks along and that I needed to get to Dallas as soon as possible so I wouldn't have to stay overnight. I made the appointment. I was also told that I needed to have a certain income to get the government funded abortion. Of course, I simply incorporated this into my other lies. This is more proof that none of my information was checked; the false social security number would have been discovered.

I called Planned Parenthood back a day or so later and canceled my appointment. I just couldn't do it. My boyfriend put on a lot of pressure. He really wanted me to do it. I had been promised confidentiality at Planned Parenthood and I just could not face my parents with my problem. It was too painful; it would hurt them so much. It seemed so much easier to just get rid of the 'mass of tissue' causing the trouble. An 'embryo' didn't seem very important. I visualized an egg yolk. I never knew the truth.

I rescheduled the abortion about two weeks later. Because of the nature of my complications, I don't believe my records were checked. I think I was much further along than the people at the abortion clinic were prepared for. I was never checked at the clinic to see how far along I was.

We repeated our lies for a counselor in Dallas. I remember thinking at the time, 'Oh, God, she knows we are lying--they aren't going to do it'. But they did. I was not prepared for how painful the abortion itself was. We had been shown what they would do and told that some women had pain, but most didn't. It was so bad that I was throwing up. The doctor even asked if I wanted him to stop. I just wanted it to be over. To demonstrate my youth and immaturity, I can remember thinking I wanted my stuffed animal that I slept with, as comfort.

I can't say the doctor or nurse were uncaring. I felt they were very concerned about me, but as soon as I walked out of that tiny room (with help), I was totally alone. The recovery room had about ten women in it. All they did to treat us was ask if we needed an aspirin. I remember while I was lying there, the piped-in music played the Mac Davis song that was popular at the time, "You're Having My Baby". Several of the women cried. When I returned home I had very heavy bleeding and severe cramps for two days. I was so afraid something was wrong. I called Planned Parenthood. They said I was okay, that if I took my pills, I'd be alright. They didn't suggest an exam. I was trying to go to school and my after-school job to hide that anything had been wrong. I was at my after-school job at the dime store three days later when I had to go to the restroom because I was too weak to stand behind my cash register. That was when I found my baby on my sanitary pad.

I was horrified. Until that moment I didn't know I still had the baby inside me--I didn't know it even was a baby--I still thought it was an egg yolk!!! He had arms and legs with tiny hands and feet; he was only about three inches long. I could make out his little nose and there was a dark spot on his oversized head that I know now was his eye.

Feelings of remorse and sorrow overwhelmed me. I was hysterical. There I sat with a tiny dead baby in my hands...what could I do? I had no 'choices'. I wrapped up the whole package and threw it in the trash can. Rather, I laid it gently among the garbage. I stood looking at it for a long time.

What followed were years of turmoil, confusion, and emotional death. The boy I thought loved me couldn't handle what had happened to me. He was the only one in the world who knew about it and he wouldn't listen to me. The relationship dissolved. So did my belief in love. I felt worthless. I got my own apartment as soon as I was of age. I drank too much, did drugs, and entertained any man who would look at me. I was starved for acceptance and any man who found me worthy of his affection was welcome. This self-destructive behavior continued for four long years. I put myself in the most dangerous situations possible. I had a 'death wish'. I tried twice to do it the fast way...pills once and razor blades, another. But, I couldn't go through with it. So I tried the slow way...drunk driving, going to bars and the lake alone.

It is only the grace of God that has finally brought me out of my stupor. He gave me a wonderful husband, two beautiful daughters and the peace of heart that only He can give through unconditional forgiveness.

My story may sound melodramatic to some, but every detail is true and accurate. Even after ten years, it is very difficult to think about. I relive it in my nightmares very often. I agonize over babies like mine who are dying every day. Next time you think of an abortion as getting rid of a 'mass of tissue' or an 'embryo' similar to an egg yolk, think of me. What would you have done with that tiny dead baby?

Pray with me that God will use my sin to protect others."

—Kathy Bartlett

Chapter Four

Is Abortion Painful?

Pre-abortion counseling is designed to minimize the prospect of pain. All that most women are told to expect is “mild cramping”. As a result, they are ill prepared for the violent, traumatic, and painful nature of the abortion procedure itself.

A friend had a saline abortion at age 15. She did not know what to expect. Everyone told her they were going to “help” her. She told me the pain was excruciating, (childbirth was nothing in comparison). After hours of agony she finally “expelled the fetus”. She instinctively peeked under the covers, only to see her dead baby. She told me she screamed, and that she will never get that mental picture out of her mind, or erase the memory of that awful day. Unfortunately, no one prepared my friend for this experience. The reality of abortion was ignored again.

“The doctor said, ‘Honey, it’s just like removing a wart. You won’t feel a thing and then you can get back to living without this ever bothering you again.’”

—Diane

“The doctor gave me a shot to dilate me...I have never felt such pain. The nurse turned the machine on and the pain was almost unbearable. Tears welled up in my eyes and it felt like they were tearing my insides out. It felt like the baby was kicking and fighting for its life. I heard a few plops, which must have been my baby in pieces. Through all of this no one ever told me what happened to my baby...never mentioned my baby or anything about it.”

—Terri

“The shot made my mouth go numb and I thought... ‘This is it, I’m going to die...I’m doing the wrong thing’. It was the most painful physical experience I have ever felt. Afterward I started vomiting. I had terrible cramps and I was bleeding.”

—Diane

“The abortions were both more painful than I could ever have imagined. I have never felt such pain. As I left the clinic my boyfriend helped me into the car. I laid down the rest of the way home because the pain was so intense”.

—Vicki

“I was told abortion was no more painful than having a period, but that I would be given several shots of novocain before the ‘lining of the uterus’ was sucked out. They ended up giving me many more shots of Novocain than they said. My baby was much bigger than they had thought. The pain was absolutely excruciating.”

—Karen H.

“During the abortion the doctor was abusive to me, right on the table. He slapped me on the backside and on my legs. I couldn’t take the pain. I started crying and asking for help. But he just called me names; He kept saying dirty things and calling me dirty names. The pain killer for the abortion did not take. I tried desperately to get off the table but he kept slapping me. The nurse who was standing next to me looked shocked at the doctor’s behavior. It truly was a nightmare.”

—Teresa

"They used the suction technique to rip my baby from me. The pain was horrendous and when I told the nurse I had never experienced such pain before she said, 'Well have you ever had a baby before?' Between that and wondering what pain the baby had felt. I was crushed."

—Debbie O.

"My third abortion was the most painful one physically. The right side of my uterus was not numb at all from the anesthetic. I felt every scrape and I was screaming from the pain. Later that day I passed a large lump of tissue."

—BHJ

"When the suction aspirator was turned on I felt like my entire insides were being torn from me. Three-fourths of the way through the procedure, I looked at my right and there I saw bits and pieces of my baby floating in a pool of blood. After I screamed, 'I killed my baby', the counselor in attendance told me to shut up. Suddenly, I felt very sad and alone."

—K.S.

"I remember feeling like an animal. The first thing was that they took my money. When I was on the table the doctor was so rude. While he was dilating me he said, 'If you don't relax we're not going to be able to do this.' I remember snapping back, 'I'm a small person.' I remember that it hurt terribly. I thought I was going to squeeze the nurse's hand off. Afterwards I saw the container my baby was in. The attendant was labeling it and putting it on a shelf with lots of others. I remember wondering why they were doing this...The whole experience was so inhumane. I was treated like an animal."

—Patti G.

"The feeling that I was about to do something terribly wrong intensified as the date for the abortion drew near. But I figured it was all in my head. After all, wasn't abortion legal and accepted by society? Wasn't my mother behind me 100%? Finally, the date for my abortion had come. I trembled as I entered the office. They gave me a valium to calm me down and help me relax, but I wanted to just run out. At that time the nurse came for me. I remember the shot was so painful and unexpected I almost jumped off the table. The doctor yelled that I had to lie still. I started to cry. A young nurse stood next to me and tried to get me to talk about my job, but the pain from the abortion was too bad. I remember barely being able to move afterwards."

—Darla

"The abortion by suction was very painful. It was worse emotionally. I couldn't believe I was killing my baby. The machine seemed so brutal and loud; the sound haunted me for years after."

—Connie

"My contractions (saline abortion) were violent. They were so painful I asked for painkillers and they gave them to me, but then they would give me something else to increase contractions. They did this about three times. It seemed like torture. I wanted to die. I didn't think I deserved to live. Then, about three in the morning, I felt my dead baby slide out of me. He (she) felt hot between my legs and felt very big. I was too petrified to look. I knew I would be mortified. I called for the nurse. She came. She looked. She didn't say a word. She took my baby away. I never saw him (her)! I cried and cried."

—Christine

"I was in the hospital having a saline abortion. I woke up to sharp pains in my uterus in the middle of the night. I rang for a nurse and asked for some kind of help. She could do nothing for me. She was very busy and seemed annoyed with me for bothering her so much. I wished there was someone who could have stayed with me just to hold my hand... this was so painful. Finally, after many long dark hours the baby came forth along with the placenta. What a mess all over the bed. Of course, I knew the baby was dead and immediately rang for the nurse. When she came in, she looked at my bed with disgust and told me the day crew was coming and would clean me up in a few minutes. I laid on my side with my back to the mess on my bed... waiting.

"I was too nauseated to even look to see if the baby was a boy or a girl (I still don't know) and I didn't want to know. Forty-five minutes later, a nurse finally came, looked at me, and gasped. She apologized for taking so long and immediately took the baby and put it in some type of receptacle and then helped me get cleaned up."

—C.C.

"I was examined and told I was too far along for a D&C abortion (22 weeks/5½ months). The doctor came to my room and explained that he was going to introduce saline into the uterus through my abdomen. It hurt so bad. The needle was so long and fat. Hours later, contractions began and grew stronger and stronger for nearly 17 hours. I screamed and cried and begged God to please make it stop. I hated everybody. The nurse treated me like I deserved this for my punishment. I kept saying, 'I'm not a whore.' I was so dumb I didn't know what was happening to me and my little baby. All of a sudden I began pushing, and it came out of me. I felt something big, warm, still. The pain had stopped. I didn't move, I just froze, feeling that warm, big lump between my legs. The nurse came, cut the cord, put my baby in a bed pan, covered it with a cloth and rushed out. Abortion is anything but safe and painless. I was only told things as they occurred, not before when I was being counseled. Later the nurse told me that induced labor has multiple times more pain than natural childbirth."

—Marlane

"The abortion was the most severe pain I had ever experienced. Even childbirth wasn't this bad. They had told me to call if I had any questions or problems. So I called them. They said to take a couple aspirin and go to bed. Well, I laid in bed for three days that seemed like an eternity with the agonizing pain. I will never forget it."

—Diane A.

Patty's Story

"In September of 1975, shortly after my 15th birthday, I realized I was pregnant. I was terrified, and not knowing where to turn, I called a local 'clinic' for advice. I was told over the phone that my only choice was a 'safe and simple abortion'. I didn't really know what an abortion was but they made it sound so easy.

Two days later I went to that clinic for an abortion. At the clinic I asked about the baby...how big was it, would it feel pain? A nurse told me it wasn't a baby at six and one half weeks, it was nothing more than a 'fertilized egg in the beginning stages of cell division.' She told me I wasn't really pregnant yet. I was then taken into the room where the abortion would be done. The doctor came in and said I would feel some mild cramping, would bleed a few days, and everything would be fine. The physical pain of the abortion was almost unbearable. Afterwards as I went to get dressed I began to hemorrhage. I stood in a puddle of my own blood and screamed for the nurse. She came and said to clean up and go home, that I was fine. I continued to bleed heavily for over a month.

Two days after my abortion I returned to school and as I was looking through a biology book I came across a picture of a six and one-half week old fetus. I was devastated. I felt so cold and numb inside. At that moment I knew in my heart I had murdered my own child. That night began a series of nightmares that still come back at times. I began taking large doses of valium in order to sleep without dreams. Finally I decided I could not live with what I had done so at the age of 15 I attempted suicide.

For about five years after my abortion I had continued infections related to the abortion. Six years after my abortion, on Christmas Eve, I miscarried my only other pregnancy. I have been told by doctors that because of damage done to my cervix during the abortion, and permanent damage done to my fallopian tubes from the following infections, there is a chance that I will never have children.

After suffering many years of physical and emotional torment, I have finally found peace with Jesus Christ. The Lord is helping me forgive all those involved with my abortion. The healing is a long, slow process but it is happening. It still hurts deeply. There are still times when I reach out to hold a baby that isn't there. There are still nights that I cry until there are no more tears to cry. The Lord is walking each step of the way with me, and during the hard times He brings me the peace and reassurance that I am loved and forgiven. He has given me the strength to talk to others about my abortion and it is my hope that someone will learn from my tragic mistake and a baby will be spared the slaughter."

—Patty

Abortion can be very painful. In a suction D&C, or D&E abortion, the abortionist must first paralyze the tightly closed cervix and then, using dilators, force it open. The baby and rooted placenta are then cut to pieces with a curette, or sucked to pieces with a knife-edged hollow tube. In a saline abortion, a long needle is inserted into the mother's abdomen. Amniotic fluid is withdrawn and replaced with saline. It takes over an hour to kill the baby. The mother goes into hard labor and delivers a shriveled, burned, dead or dying baby.

Source: [Handbook on Abortion](#) - J. C. Willke pp. 29-31

Chapter Five

Physical Complications

The slogan of the abortion rights movement is ‘keep abortion safe and legal’. But how safe is it? Unfortunately, immediate and long-term complications are far more common than usually thought. Many women have physically never been the same.

Those championing ‘reproductive freedom’ fail to point out that abortion may leave women damaged, infertile, or sterile. Generally, women are falsely assured that they will have ‘another baby at a more convenient time’. This false assurance becomes a cruel joke when month after month passes without the occurrence of a planned and, very much hoped for, pregnancy. No one can guarantee any woman she will ever have another baby following an abortion.

Many have not.

(These testimonies are representative of various physical complications. Space does not permit the inclusion of all excerpts reflecting physical complications.)

IMMEDIATE COMPLICATIONS:

Perforated Uterus

“My abortion was free, legal, and performed at an abortion facility recommended by Planned Parenthood. The abortion I had at 4:00 lead to severe complications. The ‘doctor’ that performed my abortion perforated my uterus, cut an artery, and traumatized my colon. After all the other patients had left the hospital I was rushed by ambulance to a hospital for observation, blood transfusions, and to save my life, a total hysterectomy. Since then most of my colon has been removed. I was misled into believing abortion was a simple procedure with no complications.”

—‘Jan’

Medical Research / Perforated Uterus:

The rate of uterine perforation in legal abortions has been reported as high as 0.4%¹ to 1.0%². Perforation may lead to internal hemorrhaging, bowel or bladder injury, peritonitis, and occasional death. All too frequently emergency removal of the uterus may be necessary to save life.

1. Heisterberg L•. Kringelbach M. Acta Obstet Gynecol Scand 1987:66
2. Amicus Curiae Brief. U. S. Supreme Court, 1971. Horan et.al.

Incomplete Abortion/ Hemorrhage

“I had what is called an incomplete abortion, but it didn’t become apparent until almost three weeks later. One night I just started hemorrhaging very badly and had to be rushed to the clinic. I was examined and told I had to be re-aspirated, meaning, go through the abortion procedure all over again, because there was still some of the ‘pregnancy tissue’ inside my womb. I couldn’t believe it was happening, yet I felt I deserved it.”

—Susan

“Three months after the abortion I began having regular contractions and eventually passed a mass of ‘tissue’. I became hysterical and along with the ‘tissue’ was taken to my family practitioner. I was reassured I was not miscarrying, but passing some of the ‘contents of the uterus’ from the abortion. What the abortion itself had not torn down, was not totally fallen.”

—Tori

“Not all of the baby was removed from my uterus. I began to run a high fever after my return home, was hospitalized. underwent a D & C and hemorrhaged for almost a month.”

—Vicki

“My abortion was incomplete. I had terrible, painful cramps and heavy bleeding. I called the clinic and they told me it was normal and hung up. That weekend I passed a huge clump of tissue and I again called the clinic. They were closed so I got no information or aid. I called the first day they were open and was told to come in. The doctor examined me and sent me home as ‘OK’. I had a high fever, intense cramps, pushed out a huge blob which I put into a jar, and took in to a clinic. Diagnosed as septic and incomplete, I had a D & C the same day. I had no periods for months. I was on antibiotics for months as well. Planned Parenthood put in an IUD while I was still fighting infection which made the infection even worse and it was removed two weeks later.”

—Rebecca

“The abortion was not complete. I delivered my baby’s head a week later.”

—Lori

“Soon after my abortion, my husband took me fishing and I started having severe cramps...they grew worse as time went on. I went to a nearby bathroom and discovered I was losing clots by the hundreds...I was so tired. The next day I called the doctor to question him about it. There was no feeling in his voice as he explained it was Ju.st excess scar tissue he probably didn’t get all out, and that it would all expel itself. He told me to call my regular doctor if I had any more problems.”

—Anonymous

“I immediately started hemorrhaging, but they didn’t seem concerned. They told me I was on my own from then on. They reminded me of the consent form I had signed. It stated that the doctor was not responsible for anything that happened to me directly after the abortion. So I was told to go. I could hardly move. I was bleeding so bad they gave me extra sanitary pads and showed me out the door. They told me to come back in two weeks for a check up. That was it. For two weeks I bled something awful. I was passing huge clots and the pain was unbearable. I went back for my two week check up. I was fully expecting to be sent to the hospital. That was not the case. The doctor didn’t even check me out. He had a nurse do it. She said not to worry about it. So I went home. When the bleeding wouldn’t stop I went to a hospital.”

—Teresa

Medical Research / Incomplete Abortion/Hemorrhage:

In a study of 5,851 induced first trimester abortions, between the years 1980 and 1985, Heisterberg reported the rate of excessive bleeding was 4.2%. Repeat curettage had to be done in 2.9%. 6.1% had complications requiring hospitalization With a mean hospital stay of 5.3 days.¹

1. Heisterberg L•. Kringelbach M. Acta Obstet Gynecol Scand 1987:66

Infection

"I remember going to the bathroom and aborting the baby in a cup. I was crying and screaming with no one around. The nurse came running in with a pair of scissors and saw that everything had come out and told me I was damaged. The doctor confirmed the damage and told me it would probably be my last pregnancy. I felt so guilty. My infection was severe and I ended up sending a week in the hospital. I was advised I probably would not be able to bear children."

—Donna L.

"It wasn't two days after my abortion that I had to return to the clinic. I had such intense pain that I could hardly even walk. I also had a high fever. The doctor said I had an infection and prescribed anti-antibiotics and pain pills. She also repeated the suction again to help empty my uterus. It was a nightmare going through that again."

—Connie

"Sometime during the abortion I was infected by trich. I went to see if they could help me since I was broke. They refused to look at or examine me, so I walked around for three months with a very bad infection that went into my uterus, bladder, and kidneys. I finally had to go to the hospital. I did not have a period for six months. When my period did come the pain was as bad as being in labor. I was then informed I had a massive pelvic infection. I was also told I had blocked ovaries and polycystic disease."

—BHJ

Medical Research / Infection:

Medical reports cite the following rates of pelvic infection after 1st trimester legal abortion: 4.4% (Burkman, 1977)¹, 9.5% (Heisterberg, 1985)², 10.4% (Krohn, 1981)³, 10.9% (Sonne-Holm, 1981)⁴, 12% (Duthie, 1987)⁵, 12.7% (Westrom, 1981)⁶, 12.8% (Meirck, 1981)⁷, and 20.4% (Heisterberg, 1985).⁷

1. Burkman, RT, Atienza MF, King, TM Culture and treatment results in endometritis following elective abortion. *Am J Obstet Gynecol* 1977; 128:556
2. Heisterberg L. et.al., Prophylaxis with Lymecline in induced first-trimester abortion: a clinical controlled trial assessing the role of *Chlamydia trachomatis* and *Mycoplasma hominis*. *Sex Transm Dis* 1985; 12(2):72
3. Krohn K. Investigation of the prophylactic effect of Tinidazole on the postoperative infection rate of patients undergoing vacuum aspiration. *Scand J Infect. Dis. Suppl.* 1981;26:101
4. Sonne-Holm S. Heisterberg L. et.al., Prophylactic antibiotics in first-trimester abortions; a clinical controlled trial. *Am J. Obstet Gynecol* 1981;139:693
5. Duthie S. J. et.al., A clinical double-blind study on the effect of prophylactically administered single dose tinidazole on the occurrence of endometritis after first trimester legal abortion. *Scand J. Infect. Dis. Suppl* 1981;26:104
6. Westrom L. et.al., A clinical double-blind study on the effect of prophylactically administered single dose tinidazole on the occurrence of endometritis after first trimester legal abortion. *Scand J. Infect Dis. Suppl* 1981;26:104
7. Meirck O. Nilsson S., Nygren KG, Vaginal application of a chemotherapeutic agent before 1 legal abortion. A way of reducing infections complication? *Acta Obstet Gynecol Scand* 1981;60(3);233

LATER COMPLICATIONS:

Menstrual Disorders

"For six months after the abortion I never had a period. They finally gave me a shot to bring on my period. About ten days after this shot my period started. I passed clots as being as golf balls, and the pain was as bad as labor. It took me five years to get pregnant again."

—Darla

"My periods have not been normal since my abortion five years ago. I don't know if I will ever be the same. My hormones are totally off."

—'Victoria'

"Since then I have had a lot of trouble with my periods. They are very heavy and there is always a lot of clotting."

—Anonymous

"I don't think I have ever been the same since my abortions (2). Since the abortions, I have had chronic pelvic infections, which continue to this day. My tubes have gotten so infected I almost lost them in 1977."

—Vicki

"I had two D and C's and a blood transfusion within two months of the abortion. The heavy bleeding and painful periods lasted for years."

—Donna

"After my second abortion in 1975, I experienced severe menstrual cramps. Prior to my second abortion I had very easy periods. I've always suspected the second abortion for causing my severe physical discomfort during periods. For 10 years I had such severe cramps during my period that I would pass out. Other complications since my second abortion include symptoms of endometriosis and what is recognized today as PMS and whatever they are calling uncomfortable menstruation."

—Anonymous

Medical Research / Menstrual Disorders:

One study showed a 400% higher incidence of pelvic infections, menstrual disorders, and other gynecological complications.¹

1. Some Consequences of Induced Abortion to Children Born Subsequently... Margaret and Arthur Wynn, 1972, Foundation of Education & Research in Child Bearing, London

Tubal Pregnancy

"Because of my abortions, I had a tubal pregnancy in which my tube burst almost costing my life."

—M.C.

"Two months after my second abortion, I had a tubal pregnancy that I was unaware of. It cost me my left tube because it was detected too late. I believe it was due to my abortions... possibly from infection that had set in the tube."

—Jane

"Eight years after my two abortions, I succeeded in getting pregnant on the day I had planned, right on the button. I thought everything was perfect, but soon after I started bleeding and had severe pain. I went to three different doctors and none properly diagnosed my problem. I had a tubal pregnancy in the sixth or seventh week which ruptured. I lost my right fallopian tube and my third baby. The doctor who did my surgery had never in her life seen a fetus survive as much intact as mine, so perfectly shaped. She even took a picture for her personal file. This child was a little boy. I sued the doctor who had told me it was not a tubal pregnancy and the picture taken by the doctor who did my surgery was used in court to show how large my baby was. I will never forget the day a 15 X 30 inch glossy picture of my little baby boy, lying in a pool of blood, staring me directly in the eyes, was held up in court. I died inside as I faced reality, realizing I had aborted two more of my previous children and they were fully developed. I knew because I was looking at my own 6-7 week fetus and he was very real."

—Mary Beth

"I have had one tubal pregnancy following my abortion and live in fear every day that I will have another one and be sterile."

—P.C.

"After my abortions I had one miscarriage and one tubal pregnancy."

—D.J.

Medical Research / Tubal Pregnancy:

Following induced abortion, a woman's risk for ectopic pregnancy is increased by 2½ times¹, to 10 times². Others report ectopics to be increased by approximately 1/2 times³, and after two abortions 2½ to 4 times⁴.

1. Marchbanks PA, Annegers JF, et.al., Risk factors for ectopic pregnancy: a population- based study. JAMA 1988;259(12):1823

2. Panayotou PP, Kaskarelis DB, et.al., Induced abortion and ectopic pregnancy. AM J Obstet Gynec 1972;114(4):507

3. Chung CS. et. al., Induced abortion and ectopic pregnancy in subsequent pregnancies. Am J. Epidem 1982;115:897

4. Levin AA, Schoenbaum SC, Stubblefield PG et.al. Ectopic pregnancy and prior induced abortion. Am J Public Health 1982;72:253

Miscarriages

"I had my abortion in 1973. Since that time I have had five miscarriages."

—Amy

"After my abortion I had four miscarriages which were very traumatic. One of my babies died at three months inside my womb before I finally miscarried."

—Carol

"I have tried for seven years to have a child with no success. Once I did conceive, but miscarried that child at the same time in my pregnancy I aborted. Coincidence? You will never convince me of that."

—D.B.

"I ended up getting pregnant again... I told my mother no matter what she said I would have this one. No one would make me ever have an abortion again. But then I miscarried in my fourth month."

—Vicki

"Following my abortion I had a miscarriage and expelled a four-week embryo after going to the bathroom."

—L.Y.

“After my abortion I had a miscarriage. Six months later I became pregnant with my son. I was going to abort him also. My doctor warned me that having a second abortion could cause me to miscarry and seriously jeopardize my reproductive health. His concern led me to rethink my decision to have another abortion. Six months after my son's birth I became pregnant again. This time I had a miscarriage. Following this miscarriage it took me two years of trying before I again conceived. It started to occur to me that my abortion had something to do with my miscarriages.”

—Becca B.

“Physically I suffer from repeating cramps all month long as well as continual infections. I have had four miscarriages.”

—Lou

Medical Research / Miscarriages:

Women who legally abort their first pregnancy are especially at increased risk of subsequent miscarriage. A study from the United Kingdom found the miscarriage rate to triple.¹ Most authors also agree that women who have two or more abortions are at increased risk of subsequent first trimester miscarriage. Levin et al reported a two- to three-fold (200-300%) increase in risk.² Madore et al found the risk of ectopic pregnancy, spontaneous abortion, and fetal or neonatal death to be increased by 45% in women who aborted their first or second pregnancy.³

1. Richardson JA, Dixon G. Effects of legal termination on subsequent pregnancy. BR Med J 976;1:1303

2. Levin M, Schoenbaum SC, Stubblefield PG, et.al. Association of induced abortion with subsequent pregnancy loss. JAMA 1980;243(24):2495

3. Madore C, Hawes WE, et. al., A study on the effect of induced abortion on subsequent pregnancy outcome. Am J Obstet Gynecol 1981;139(5):516

Prematurity/Stillbirths

“My next pregnancy was very risky and my doctor expected me to have the baby prematurely.”

—Anna

“Problems arose during both pregnancies at six months along. With my first I started bleeding, with the second I went into early labor.”

—Faith

“Eleven years after my abortion I became pregnant again. I had no other pregnancy in between the abortion and this planned pregnancy. Both my husband and my obstetrician were aware of the abortion. I went in to premature labor and delivered a three-pound, one-ounce baby girl at 29 weeks gestation. She survived and is a healthy three-year old today.”

—June

“I was married four months after my abortion. A year and a half after that I became pregnant, and we were all so thrilled. However, at six months I went into labor and my baby boy died two days later. The months of grief are indescribable. My only hope to escape the ensuing days of black depression was to become pregnant again. That was not to be. Over four years have gone by. After a series of tests, it was determined I am infertile.”

—Renate

Medical Research / Prematurity / Stillbirths:

The risk of prematurity is higher in women after abortion, and especially after abortion of a first pregnancy. Prematurity is almost 2 times (increased 72%¹) and 2 1/2 times² the rate of those who did not abort. Another study showed that women who have abortions have twice the chance of having premature babies later.³ The risk of stillbirth may be doubled in those women who have had a previous abortion.⁴

1. Stater P. E., Davies A.M., Harlap S. The effect of abortion method on the outcome of subsequent pregnancy. J. Rep Med 1981;26(3):123
2. Levin AA, Schoenbaum Sc, Stubblefield PG et.al. Ectopic pregnancy and prior induced abortion. Am J Public Health 1982;72:253
3. Papaevangelou, U. Hosp. Athens, Greece, J. Ob-gyn br. Commonwealth 80:418-22, 1973
4. Madore C, Hawes WE, et. Al, A study on the effect of induced abortion on subsequent pregnancy outcome. Am J Obstet Gynecol 1981;139(5):516

Placenta Problems

“After giving birth the year following my abortion, I had an adherent placenta. I was taken to a nearby hospital emergency room (because I delivered my baby at home), where the doctor yanked on it until it came out. I now realize after studying abortion complications, that the adherent placenta was due to the abortion I had the previous year.”

—Karen C.

“Between the fourth and fifth abortion I gave birth to a child... The baby came four weeks early and my placenta would not release causing heavy hemorrhaging. I went into shock and narrowly escaped death.”

—Darlene

“I married and became pregnant. After a long labor I had to have a C-Section due to placenta previa.”

—Chrissa

“With both of my children I experienced bleeding during the first three months of pregnancy. Ultrasound revealed a condition known as placenta previa. This usually occurs in 1 / 1,000 pregnancies. I now know I experienced this unusually rare condition twice because of two previous abortions. After my second daughter was born the doctor realized I had a prolapsed uterus. Eight months later, I had a hysterectomy at age 23.”

—Debbie O.

Medical Research / Placenta Problems:

A recent study of over 5,000 deliveries revealed that those women with prior induced abortions had a 7-15 fold increase of placenta previa.¹

1. American Journal of OBGYN .. Dec. 1981 141:769-72.

Infertility

"Following my abortion, I had a miscarriage, a tubal pregnancy, and one stillbirth at six months. I have not been able to conceive for three years. We are seeing a fertility specialist at the University of Washington. My husband and I are trying to adopt."

—Judy

"I have been married for five and one-half years. We have tried for five years to start our family, but with no success. Last year my doctor took X-rays and found scar tissue blocking my fallopian tubes. I believe the scar tissue is a result of my abortion. Last July I had an operation but it's been a year now and nothing has happened. God forgives us, but He often leaves the circumstances of our actions for discipline and growth."

—"Joanne"

"We have tried to conceive for four years with no results. Now I am believing God for a baby."

—BHJ

"I have not conceived in seven years but trust God who is bigger than any physical circumstance."

—Donna

"No one ever told me when I had my abortion that I would be killing what might be the only child I would ever conceive. I have tried desperately for 13 years now and still have not conceived. Only a miracle from the Lord will end this nightmare for me."

—Sue

"After my abortion I had to have surgery because of erupting cysts on my ovaries. Two years later my right tube was removed. I lived in constant agony to think that I might have killed the only child I might ever be able to have. I began to feel less than a woman because I wasn't able to get pregnant. We started adoption proceedings and I was going through infertility tests at the same time. My doctors said there was no reason we couldn't have children. I never once told my doctors that I had had an abortion because I was too ashamed for anyone else to know."

—M.H.

Medical Research / Infertility:

Following legal abortion, 5-10% of women may be unable to become pregnant again.¹ And they experience 30% greater chance of infertility.

1. Reardon DC. Aborted Women: Silent No More, CH 1 Crossway Books 1987, Westchester IL.

2. Daling JR, Spadoni LR, Emanuel I. Role of induced abortion in secondary infertility. *OBstet Gynecol* 1981;57(1):59

Sterility

A young hairdresser I recently talked to told me about the abortion she had when she was 19. She said; “My insides never felt quite right afterwards. It hurt whenever I laughed.” Shortly following her abortion she had a tubal pregnancy. A year later she had a second one. SHE IS NOW STERILE.

“After my abortion I developed peritonitis which left me sterile. I was never able to conceive again.”

—Jean

“To make things worse, six months after the abortion, due to complications I had to have a hysterectomy.”

—Anonymous

“I’ve had three miscarriages after my second abortion starting one month afterwards and PID until July 1983 at which time I had to have a complete hysterectomy. Women out there... that means no more children EVER. I never thought it would happen to me.”

—Cathy F.

“After my abortion my periods started getting longer until they took up three out of four weeks. I ended up needing surgery twice as I had gotten infections following my abortion which caused me to form adhesions around my reproductive organs. I was told I was STERILE.”

—“Marla”

“After two abortions, I had an ectopic (tubal) pregnancy in 1982. At that time I discovered that my uterus was one large mass of Adenomyosis and very misshaped, not allowing cavity space for the development of the fetus. Which brings me to my eventual hysterectomy in 1984. My problems with my reproductive system are NOT hereditary. There is no evidence from grandmothers, mother, or sister that would suggest heredity... No, I believe my problems originated from the abortion.”

—Anonymous

Kathy's Story

"To Whom it may be concerned,

It is my sincere desire to have the truth known to all. On March 1, 1972, I had a state funded, legal, suction abortion. I was seven weeks pregnant, just turned 19 years of age and was going to Spokane Falls Community College. My boyfriend and I were 'high school sweethearts'. He had asked me to marry him. I wasn't ready for marriage... then I found out I was pregnant. With that new revelation, my boyfriend walked out on me.

I went to Planned Parenthood for counsel as to what to do. The counsel seemed correct then. The counselor magnified my problems; the idea of having to drop out of school, telling my parents, facing the shame, losing my boyfriend and my figure, and how would I support a child? What I was offered was a 'safe, simple, quick, and easy' abortion.

I was not educated at all about what abortion was. I was told my baby was just a clump of cells, a mass of tissue, without form or life. 'It' could be removed as easily as a wart, it was safer than removing tonsils, and less painful than period cramps. No one would need to know. The state would even pay for it.

In a day where there are instant answers to immediate needs, and in my state of deep vulnerability and emotional instability, sounded like the only thing to do.

The abortion was very painful. I was awake... I will never forget it. I felt my heart break as my child was torn from within me. I will never be the same.

I would like to say at this point of my letter to you, that I do accept responsibility for not looking for other counsel, for not going to my parents or even my friends for another opinion... for not finding out more about the truth about abortion and its effects on women. I accept the responsibility for killing the only baby I would ever have.

You see, I began having serious complications after my 'safe, legal' abortion. An infection set in immediately that caused me to have multiple complications. At times I would pass out from abdominal pain. I won't go into all the gory details about all the tests, weeks of bleeding, infections, and scars my body has had to suffer from one misguided decision I made as a young girl, but I will tell you this: I had to have four major operations, the last being a total hysterectomy.

I dropped out of school anyway. Emotionally and physically damaged from the abortion, I found it impossible to keep up with the pressures. My boyfriend and I never could make it work. The guilt we felt overruled any love we may have shared.

I hated myself. I was depressed, angry, and afraid. I couldn't finish any project I started. It was difficult for me to hold down a job. For four years, I began a self-destructive life style in an attempt to bury my guilt and self-hate. That lifestyle included drugs, drinking, promiscuous relationships, constant thoughts of suicide and ultimately an attempt to end my life.

Two weeks later I visited a small community church where I heard the gospel message the Christ died for sinners. I accepted Jesus as my savior that day and my life has been changed. He has freed me from drugs and suicidal thoughts. I now work with Open ARMs, a Christian post-abortion ministry, and have been given many opportunities to share with other women about the comfort that God has given me. Open ARMs has been a major factor in my own healing. It is a comfort to know that I am not alone in the physical and psychological trauma I have experienced."

—Kathy C.

Medical Research / Sterility:

In the book Aborted Women, Silent No More, Reardon referred to a survey of aborted women which discovered that 8% were sterile and that another 6% subsequently had to have hysterectomies (total 14% sterility)¹ Medical reports from other countries showed the following rates of sterility: Czechoslovakia 20-30%², Poland 6.9%. Japan 9.7%³

1. Reardon DC. Aborted Women: Silent No More, CH 1. Crossway Books 1987. Westchester, IL.
2. Kotasek A. Artificial termination of pregnancy in Czechoslovakia. Int J Gynec Obstet 1971;9(3):118
3. Hilgers TW, Shearin RPN. Induced abortion: a documented report. Presented to Oregon State legislature, 1972

“The girl I shared my room with hemorrhaged and died as the result of her legal abortion.”

—Debbie

Former abortion clinic and director, Carol Everett, reveals:

“The abortions we performed had a high rate of complication. Our clinics completed over 500 abortions monthly, killing or maiming women at the rate of one per month.”

Source: Carol Everett. Blood Money, Multnomah Press; 1992

Chapter Six

Emotional Problems

Dr. Julius Fogel, a Washington obstetrician-gynecologist and psychiatrist who has performed many abortions, recently had this to say about the negative emotional effects of abortion:

“Often the trauma may sink into the unconscious and never surface in a woman's lifetime...(But) a psychological price is paid. I can't say exactly what. It may be alienation, it may be pushing away from human warmth, perhaps a hardening of the maternal instinct. Something happens on the deeper levels of a woman's consciousness when she destroys a pregnancy. I know that as a psychiatrist.”

The Washington Post,
February 5, 1989

In every testimony I have collected, there is an honest admission of emotional problems following an abortion. Emotional and psychological problems are so common that psychologists and psychiatrists have now recognized this phenomenon by giving it a name. It is called Post-Abortion Syndrome (PAS). It can surface at any time in a woman's life. It often doesn't surface for many years after the abortion.

Feelings associated with PAS include guilt, grief, anger and remorse and commonly manifest themselves through anti-social, self-destructive, and other abnormal behaviors. Depression, lowered self-esteem, and self-hatred are common. So are eating disorders. Many women find they have trouble making decisions. Preoccupation with the aborted child can become obsessive.

Because so many women develop a sense of loss after an abortion, many desire to become pregnant again. One-half of these women will become pregnant again within one year. This baby is commonly called “the atonement baby.” One young girl I know was so guilty after her abortion that she sought out the same boy so she could get pregnant again. This time she put the baby up for adoption. It was her way of trying to go back and undo the abortion.

Another problem many women have to deal with is dreams and recurring nightmares of both the abortion and her aborted baby. For these women there is a terrible dread of sleep, for it so often brings the memory of the abortion back to haunt them. Abortion can truly disrupt a woman's emotional health.

Often times the pain is so great following an abortion, that many women reveal a desire to kill themselves. Some admit to having tried. Tragically, some have succeeded

Sometimes women have a profound need to apologize to their unborn children. The following letter was written by a woman to her aborted baby. Following her abortion, she had a miscarriage, a tubal pregnancy, and a stillbirth. She has never had a baby. She is infertile.

Dearest Baby,

I love you. You're probably thinking, 'If you loved me so much, mom, why did you have me murdered?' I'm so very sorry, baby. I really do love you. I can't even ask for your forgiveness. I do not deserve it. If only it (the abortion) were something I could take back, but it's not. Baby, maybe you are a martyr (an unwilling one) for the babies that may be saved by your dying. I've already told God that as long as I live on this earth I will fight against abortion. I know, baby, that desire could never bring you back. I wish it could. I also know that your other brothers and sisters are with you also. I wish I felt that I deserved to be with all of you some day, but right now I feel that hell is too good of a place for me. Most killers are put in prison or put to death, but not baby killers. They have made that legal. I'm sorry, baby, for burdening you with all this. I will write you a much nicer letter someday when I have worked through all my pain and guilt. Baby, my whole being aches for you. I don't think you will ever know just how much I really do love you.

*All my love,
The mom who never was*

"I expected that life would go on (following my abortion) and that I would forget the whole incident. I have never been more wrong. The following April, when the baby would have been born, I suffered the first deep depression of my life. I really did not understand what was happening to me. I laid awake at night thinking of the baby who might have been. I considered leaving my husband. I could hardly junction during the day... Every September I mourn the death of my first baby. I have suffered agony and grief over this tragedy, I have cried in the night too many times to count... but alas, abortion is irreversible."

—"Grace"

"After the abortion I was a mess. I had nothing left of the baby's father. I had dreams every night for two years about that baby. I began drinking more and dating real creeps. I regretted the abortion and became self-destructive. My feelings of guilt stayed with me."

—Gail

*"The very next day I was exceedingly depressed. I cried for days. I cried myself to sleep every night for almost a year. I longed to have my baby back inside. I had nightmares of killing my baby. I had nightmares of having another baby, only to have it die at two years of age. I lost all sexual desire for my boyfriend. I wished I would die. I felt really, really guilty. I was obsessed with pregnant women - intensely jealous and guilty whenever I saw a baby. I always thought about the due date. Every year on November 2nd I would think of my child and how old it would be. Every April for several years I would dread the death of someone close to me. The incomplete abortion devastated me because I was convinced the baby was clinging to my uterus to avoid being sucked out. I saw the movie *A Baby is Born* three months later and was devastated when I saw what my 12 week baby looked like. I had intense hatred for myself and for the father. I felt illness and pain were punishment for my abortion. I saw myself as a murderer. I could not take a pro-life position for years because I had an abortion myself...how could I tell someone else they couldn't. I denied to my friends the abortion was traumatic."*

—Rebecca

"Guilt began to set in right away. I cried and was hostile with my parents and boyfriend for weeks. A couple of weeks later I was driving home with my boyfriend, crying and upset. All of a sudden I heard a voice in my head (not mine, it was a male voice) say, 'You killed your baby.' It scared me to death, I felt very close to a breakdown. When my due date came I experienced a lot of depression. I had broken up with the father of the baby, and was involved with my future husband. Anytime we would get close and he would hold me, I would push him away. It was such a strange feeling, one of panic and confusion and loss."

—Debbie

“As I came to (following the abortion) I began screaming for my baby. My screams exhaustedly turned to sobs as I sat in the hall watching the babies being wheeled out to their mothers, knowing my baby was gone forever...The next morning and more composed, I asked the doctor if it had been a boy or girl? His reply cut me to the bone. ‘What difference does it make? It’s down in the lab in pieces.’...For years, unknowingly, those words echoed back to me in nightmares. At eighteen I began seeing a psychologist because my vivid dreams of being an ax murderess chopping people into pieces, had me fearing I was a latent murderer. In therapy I realized that the murder had already been committed, and the people I was killing in my sleep were young mothers I knew... I still tend to confess my sin when making friends, even 14 years later, because if people can’t accept this deepest, darkest thing I’ve done, they can’t accept me.”

—‘Tina’

“When I discovered only days after my abortion that what I had ended was not a ‘pregnancy’ or the ‘products of conception’ but a life the size of my index finger, I crumbled. I rocked a child not there. I sang. I screamed. Once able to work, I found I could not make decisions, could not comprehend. Eventually I was so insecure and self-destructive I quit my position.”

—Tori

“The next few weeks were terrible. I felt dirty. I felt depressed and that I didn’t deserve to live... I didn’t understand why! I tried suicide twice and failed... After my second abortion the depression started. I had destroyed another one of my babies. How could I ever be forgiven for anything so horrible? I will never know whether it was a boy or girl. I will never hold those babies in my arms or see them grow into fine young people. I prayed somehow that God would forgive me... Just after my second abortion, my oldest son, then 12 years old, developed an inoperable brain tumor that was cancerous. I convinced myself that was God’s punishment for what I had done.”

—Diane M.

“After my abortion I became physically destructive and extremely depressed. I drank and turned to drugs to escape. I got kicked out of school (college) and I didn’t care... I had a bad habit of punching windows out with my fist. I have more glass in my hand now than a window does. I wasn’t quite suicidal, but borderline... I re-established a relationship with the father and we married in July. Within three months I had attempted suicide, seriously. It was very well planned and only accidentally (thank you, God) found out. I signed myself into a psychiatric clinic to avoid state admittance (suicide is against the law). I settled in comfortably and wanted to stay forever. I finally showed signs of wanting to leave in six months. When I got out, my husband and I used drugs. I hurt so much inside that I’d have to hurt myself physically to release the pain. I have scars on my arm from it. I continued in therapy, but never talked. I hurt so much I took anti-depressants. I twice again tried suicide with the same intensity as before, but failed due to accidental discovery. I was always unhappy when I woke up.”

—Barbara

“Inordinate fear overwhelmed me and seemed to control my life. This fear stemmed from guilt over my previous abortion. I was afraid God would punish me by taking the life of one of my living children.”

—Becca

“I was told ‘It’s no big deal to have an abortion. You can get on with your life and not have to think about it again. It’s the reasonable thing to do’... After my abortion I floundered through despair and guilt and mourning and nightmares. I still find myself aching for my children who were never born. The emotional pain was severe, but was heightened when I married and began desperately to want children (partly from wanting to fill up the ‘empty’ part in my heart).”

—‘Cindy’

“This great grief surprised me - I could not get free from it. Then the grieving process must have started. I saw pictures of unborn babies the realization I had killed my baby, not a bunch of cells. Why didn’t they tell me? They UED...I felt guilt and feared someone would find out.”

—Chris

“All of those guilt feelings and fears stayed locked up deep in my soul. They never resurfaced until years later after I got married and we decided to conceive a child. We tried for eight months before we finally did conceive. But each month I wasn’t pregnant was a time of grief and torment for me. I felt I was being punished for the murder of my first child. I was afraid I would be barren for life.”

—Maryanne

“Through the years I tried to escape from reality by getting into drugs and alcohol I had tried them before, but now it was for a different reason...I was always reminded of my abortion and my baby which was now dead. I always backed off when I was around any babies.”

—Anne

“When I realized what I had done I was grief-stricken, depressed, guilty - really hysterical. It took me years to forgive myself for my selfishness. My self-esteem plummeted - and remains low. Abortion is the choice of a frightened woman. We need to help each other - not offer abortion as a cure-all. True feminism would be to share this overflow of children, not destroy our ‘extras.’ So many women would give anything for our ‘unwanted babies.’”

—Kathryn

“Six months after my abortion. I started breaking down physically. I became anorexic, I stopped eating, and kept losing weight. Next came severe migraine headaches, nausea, pneumonia, a bladder infection... my entire defense system was affected. An internist and a neurologist put me into the hospital to see what was wrong with me. They did cat scans, body scans, spinal taps, put tubes in my stomach and took blood from my toes, because there were no good veins left anywhere else. I had so many shots they started putting them in my legs. They kept looking and retesting but they found no explanation for why I was so sick. All the while, my health continued to deteriorate. The doctors did not expect me to live. At this point I was curled up in a fetal position in a totally blackened room. As a last resort they brought in a psychiatrist. I confessed to him that I had had an abortion. I started having nightmares about dead babies. The connection was made linking my illness to severe guilt over my abortion. Finally, my physical condition began to improve, but my psychological condition worsened. When I finally came home I started to feel emotions I had never felt before. I became suicidal I went into severe depression, and I had to deal with incredible feelings of anger and rage. It seemed I was angry at everyone I knew, most specifically the father of my aborted baby, myself, and God. I sought help from a Christian psychiatrist and for the next nine months I was in and out of a mental hospital four times. The healing process has been gradual. I never thought I’d be able to trust anyone again and I have had great difficulty trusting myself to make decisions. If I had not experienced this first hand. I never would have believed that somebody could get so physically sick from something psychological... from guilt.”

—Diane

“After my abortion I felt intensely numb. I went through periods of time when I was able to suppress my true feelings, mainly because I didn’t want anyone to know and I kept stuffing them back into my head. More and more I could see my personality change and through alcohol, divorce, and one disappointment after another, I no longer felt like the same person. I was always thinking that people had something against me, that they were all out to get me. My outgoing personality became suspicious and introverted. The real me was chained up inside and could not come out. I cried myself to sleep at night because I could not understand why I could not be the old me. I didn’t understand why I felt like I was in a cage. I was very suicidal and always sought relationships that were emotionally destructive. I felt like a social reject.”

—Sue

"Right after my abortion I had a lot of guilt. I was an emotional wreck. I got married nine months later. I really thought my husband could make everything all right. It didn't take too long to realize he couldn't make everything all right. I really think I had an emotional breakdown, I was really self-destructive. I played with knives, cutting my wrists and body. My husband would call several times a day to see if I was OK. I gradually grew catatonic. I couldn't move. I didn't respond when spoken to. I couldn't handle daily living. Cleaning house would cause deep depression. Almost three years after my abortion I was well enough to take myself to a psychiatrist (\$50.00 per visit). It didn't do any good. For seven years after my abortion I dealt with guilt, regret, remorse."

—Melanie

"After my abortion I lost everything. I was going straight downhill slowly. I lost all my respect for myself and I set out to destroy myself... I began taking full strength heroin in California. The bottom of my life had dropped out, there were very few things holding me together."

—Shelley

"After the abortion I bled for a long time. I felt so dark, alone, sad,...I began to die that day. I wanted to be assured our baby was in heaven, and began to regret it, and was overwhelmed with the fact I couldn't undo it. We got married six weeks later. There was something so dark between us where at one time there was so much love. Our honeymoon was one of the saddest nights of my life. I wanted to be numb...I couldn't drink enough. I used alcohol more and more through our five year marriage. I wanted another baby so badly. All of our arguments and depressions always went back to the abortion. Part of me wanted to die so badly that I was afraid the rest of me would eventually bring it to pass. The pain became so unbearable, and my husband and I separated."

—Marlane

"My need to have another baby was so great. I was so empty after my abortion. I wanted another baby to take my aborted baby's place."

—Patti C.

"Speaking from personal experience, it has taken me nine years to deal with my pain. During those nine years I have gone through traumatic changes. I have gone through anorexia and bulimia. This, I have discovered, is not unusual for young women in my same situation."

—Patty

"I became hateful toward the idea of having another child, because I had so much guilt. Two weeks later I had my tubes tied because I didn't ever want to be reminded of the abortion or take the chance I might get pregnant. I felt I was not worthy to be a mother to any more children."

—Robin L.

"The following months (after the father broke off with me), I felt increasing anger and bitterness toward him for making me go through all this and then not love me anymore. I tore up a year's worth of memories and pictures of him and smashed every present he had ever given me. I somehow felt by destroying it all I could erase those awful memories of the abortion."

—Gina

"During the course of nine years I had six abortions. Most of them out of fear and not knowing what to do. I knew each time I was wrong, but not to what extent. I always felt guilt, but because I had to survive I would push it down and go on. I got deeper into drugs and alcohol and went from one relationship to another looking for love."

—Darlene

“After the abortions I became very depressed, crying constantly. It was even worse after my first baby was born. After Annie, the guilt and shame were so heavy. When I brought her home I was actually losing my mind. I would stare at her and cry, I couldn’t eat, I had nightmares about my previous abortions. If God had not saved me, I believe firmly I would be in a mental institution.”

—Maria

“During the years following my two abortions I became very self-destructive... a teenage alcoholic - a lot of drug abuse and promiscuity. Eventually I got tied into a drug ring, couldn’t cope and tried to commit suicide twice. I would have succeeded if I had not been discovered. I realized recently that all my self-destructive behavior was tied to my abortions.”

—R. G.

“What happened to me afterwards is a horror of its own. First drugs. then drinking, attempted suicide and finally a complete breakdown. Will I ever be whole again?”

—D.B.

“The morning following my abortion, I got up, went in the living room, looked out the window and in my inner most pan I was aware of a voice telling me, ‘You have murdered your child’. At this point I was totally aware of what I had done. It was nobody else’s fault, all mine. I couldn’t handle the guilt. I called the doctor for sleeping pills but he said that wasn’t the answer. I asked him if other women felt guilt, he said ‘some’. After that I lived a hell on earth...For the next four and a half years I kept it inside. I couldn’t handle my emotions; I thought I was going crazy. I finally went to a counselor and it helped a little. I had never known a married woman who had had an abortion. That was for teenage girls. All married women had their babies. I was the world’s worst mother. I hated Mother’s Day. I didn’t deserve nice gifts or cards. I’d sit and cry.”

—M. M.

“I began to drink heavily and use drugs after my abortion. I had severe depression in which I contemplated suicide. I had and still have horrible nightmares involving babies and people trying to kill me. I still get depressed and cry a lot...I pray at night that God will let my baby know that I didn’t kill him because I hated him. I long to hold him so much now that it hurts, and I want him to know that.”

—Dee

“I can’t believe I killed our own child. It was a rotten thing for me to do. I sometimes have nightmares, especially when I watch movies about abort ion. On certain days I can talk about it and do just fine, and other days I’m a mess.”

—‘Rhonda’

“Before my abortion I tried to rationalize it to myself by saying, ‘It’s legal so it must be right; it’s safe and simple. He’s a doctor, he wouldn’t do something wrong.’ Two years later, I was becoming a very cold, hard person. I developed a real self-hatred which manifested itself into very low self-esteem, overwhelming nightmares, a preoccupation with death and bizarre eating habits. I was subconsciously punishing myself for being such a terrible person. What kind of person would destroy her own child? Even animals protect their young.”

—Chris S.

“I feel our divorce two years later was a direct result of the abortion decision. I denied that I loved my husband, and transferred all the blame onto him. I figured I didn’t deserve a good marriage.”

—Anonymous

"I suffered from bulimia as a result of not being able to forgive myself for having three abortions, one was a saline abortion at five months. I have just spent eight weeks in a hospital for counseling and still have a hard time forgiving myself."

—Anonymous

"Following my own abortion in 1970, I suffered guilt-induced psychosis which resulted in my undergoing psychiatric therapy for a period of three years, as well as spending a total of 32 weeks in a psychiatric unit of a local hospital and undergoing a series of shock treatments. All of this treatment served only to help me live with the agonizing reality that I had killed my unborn child."

—P.McKinney

"After my fourth abortion, I had no self-respect left, and I did not treat anyone with respect. I had fits of rage. It angered me to see anyone happy. I couldn't look at a happy couple. If I was around toddlers I would devote all my attention to them as if they were substitute children. The loss and emptiness could not be filled. I replaced those with drugs, alcohol, and finally cars. I replaced my children with things; objects. In May of '82 I shot myself in the stomach and was very angry that I lived... A few years later I went to the ocean and tried suicide again with drugs and alcohol."

—Donna L.

Medical Research / Emotional Problems:

Research indicates that a majority of women suffer significant psychological distress after abortion. and the condition worsens with the passage of time. One study done approximately 10 years after their abortions discovered that 62% of aborted women became 'suicidal' with 20% actually making suicide attempts, 30% began drinking heavily, and 40% experienced nightmares.¹ A University of Minnesota study by Dr. Bany Garfinkel finds a significant increase in depression in teens after abortion.² Another study showed the incident of serious, permanent, psychiatric aftermath from abortion is variously reported as being 9-59%. These psychological problems range from guilt, anxiety, depression, anger, regret, nightmares, and flashbacks, to suicide.³ Many women develop a deep sense of loss following an abortion. Approximately 1/2 of these women will become pregnant again within one year.⁴

1. Reardon DC. Aborted Women: Silent No More, Crossway Books 1987. Westchester, IL.

2. Moore M. Teen suicide: searching for answers to a growing tragedy. Univ of MN Med GBulletin 1988: Spring:8

3. Council, Royal College of OBGY, England 1966

4. Richardson JA, Dixon G. Effects of legal termination on subsequent pregnancy. Br Med J 1976;1:1303

Often we hear how much easier it is for women to have abortions than to give their babies up for adoption. Two women have experienced both.

"I have experienced both an abortion and the relinquishing of a child as an unwed mother. Truly, the abortion has had more negative, long term insidious effects- mental, emotional and physical... After marrying, I faced the ugly truth of abortion and was tom apart by the guilt of what I had done. Also I was unable to conceive for four years which only added to my growing, constant torment. Our marriage was suffering from this act I had allowed myself to be talked into...I could only say, 'How could I have been so weak and wrong?' I actually murdered my child. Who from the list of 'pro-choice' advisors was there to grieve with me? No one. Giving up a child for adoption is hard, but the anguish overwhelms you when you take the life of your child. In an adoption your child will have a chance at life, but the aborted child, the non-child, the non-person ends up lying tom to shreds somewhere."

—G. B.

“After my abortion I was labeled suicidal by both Planned Parenthood of Bellevue , and a psychiatrist who worked closely with them. I went through four months of hell that culminated in healing by God’s grace...Because I have both given up a baby for adoption, and had an abortion. I feel I have a unique perspective. I have nothing but the fondest memories of giving my baby up for adoption. There is some pain, but it is bittersweet, because I know I gave selflessly. It wasn’t easy, but it was good.”

—‘Mae’

Many people justify abortion in the case of rape. Here two women express their post-abortion feelings.

“Because I became pregnant as a result of rape, somehow abortion seemed justifiable. After my abortion I realized I was no better than the man who raped me...in fact I was worse. He had taken 10 minutes of my life, but I had taken my innocent baby’s entire life. Who perpetrated the worse crime?”

—Debbie

“I was raped, conceived, and had an abortion. What an ordeal to have on one’s mind every day. I have much empathy for those women in China who are dragged and forced to have their babies killed. We are all so helpless, just like the babies. Personally, I don’t like being a scapegoat for pro-abortion advocates who say a baby should be killed due to rape. By killing a rape victim’s baby, society is just trying to victimize rape victims by now turning us into offenders guilty of murder.”

—‘Kate’

This chapter ends with a letter about one who could not tell her story.

Jane’s Story

“Jane was a friend of mine. Her husband was employed by my husband. During the time of their employment we learned a lot about this young couple. She was a very pretty girl and was 19 when we met. She could hardly eat because she was battling anorexia and was depressed, sad, and angry. She couldn’t be around crowds. Eventually we learned that she had had two abortions.

She had been abused in her childhood, too, and abandoned by her mother. Her self-esteem was very low. I don’t think she ever forgave herself for the abortions, and I’m not sure that she held a pro-life view. While we knew her she became pregnant and was so happy. The baby was born prematurely and died within a few minutes. The doctor on call delivered their son. Since then, we have discovered that he does abortions and we participate in picketing his office.

Jane mourned over that baby’s death. It was the second baby they had lost. The first one was only a couple of months along. The doctor said that the placenta pulled away from the uterus (placenta previa). Jane said that God was punishing her for the prior abortions. Later they moved to another city.

Maybe I can’t put the total blame on the abortions because Jane had an abused childhood, but she had so many of the symptoms listed on the Abortion Information Sheet. She had such remorse and so much guilt that last weekend she shot herself in the heart.

Now she’s dead! Jane... I loved her... she was a pretty, young girl, and God could have made something beautiful of her life. May God help us in our endeavor to save the children and the women. Forgive our country for legalizing death!”

Signed,
A concerned friend

Medical Research / Suicide:

A report from Suiciders Anonymous indicates that almost 1/2 of the young women who attempt suicide have had an induced abortion.¹ Adolescents are particularly prone to suicide attempts on the approximate date that their baby would have been born, the so-called “anniversary reaction.”² Other studies show a 400% greater increase of suicide in women who have had abortions as compared to women who have not.³

1. Uchtman M. Suicide-and abortion aftermath: A report from Suiciders Anonymous of Cincinnati. Heartbeat 1981: Winter:6.

2. Tishler, CL. Adolescent suicide attempts following elective abortion: a special case of anniversary reaction. Pediatr 1981:68(5):670

3. Margaret and Arthur Wynn, Some Consequences of Induced Abortion to Children Born Subsequently.

Chapter Seven

Regret

Regret. If there is one emotion in the world that is filled with dread, it is regret. Regret can bring with it sadness and despair. It can become obsessive and truly affect the rest of a person's life. Abortion seems to violate something very basic in a woman's nature. The tragedy is that so many women do not know what they are doing when they have abortions. But truth will catch up with them at some point in their lives.

It should be noted that regret following an abortion settles in at different points in a person's life. Some women are overcome by regret immediately. Gloria Swanson, writing in her autobiography at the age of eighty, eloquently expressed the immediate regret she felt over her abortion.

"The greatest regret of my life has always been that I didn't have my baby, Henri's child, in 1925. Nothing in the whole world is worth a baby, I realized as soon as it was too late, and I never stopped blaming myself."

—Gloria Swanson

There are also others who initially say they have no regrets, but many of these women speak prematurely. Time will tell and, as many of us have experienced, time does not heal all wounds. In fact, time is often the enemy. There is no time limit for regret following an abortion.

"After my abortion I encouraged other women to have them. I purposely voted for its legalization when it came on the ballot. But I did not divulge my actions to my family. Now, I regret my abortion deeply. I can look back and see that I was not as trapped as I believed. There were alternatives, lots of them, but they meant facing my actions and my parents with the truth instead of seeking the easy way out."

—"Bea"

"I feel it will be a long time - maybe never - before I will get used to the idea that I killed my baby. Women need to be educated before they make this decision that will last a lifetime."

—S.G.

"I feel awful about what I have done, and I don't think I can forgive myself, but I'm trying. A friend of mine showed me a book with some pictures that about made me vomit. I realized what I had done and that abortion has to stop. The poor babies are innocent and they don't have any rights. I am damn angry about it. I am finding this hard to write and will have to stop. I'm sorry for what I have done and hope that all is forgiven."

—Debbie B.

"I am looking forward to my future, but I will spend the rest of my life regretting my past."

—Melanie

"I take responsibility for my actions no matter how influenced I was. I keep wanting to change my abortion decisions- that's the hardest thing-one doesn't realize what a final decision abortion is... I will always grieve for my babies."

—Karen B.

"I still feel a lot of hatred. Sometimes the abortion bothers me so much that I feel like I'm going crazy. Sometimes I don't believe I'll ever be peaceful inside again."

—Theresa

"I felt a real need to let my unborn child know how sorry I was. So I wrote a letter. I will always remember the child I killed (to be able to say this has taken eight years.) To say, 'I had an abortion' seemed a lot easier than to face the fact and be able to say I killed someone."

—M.H.

"That day I realized I had been taken in, lied to, and deceived. I felt like a fool believing I had aborted two babies, thinking they were little nothings. I then realized Planned Parenthood lied and they had deliberately lied to me."

—Mary Beth

"That whole time of pregnancy I don't think I ever thought of that form inside of me as 'my baby'. Not until years later when I found out that at three months a baby is well-formed, then I felt the loss of that baby. Nobody showed me pictures of a baby forming! I never knew that my baby was a life, a human being that had fingers and toes and looked like a baby. The problem is that professionals want the young girls to be ignorant and be moved about like pawns on a chess board, or at least it seems that way. They need to hear and see all sides of the situation."

—Joanne

"Even now, more than ever, I know that abortion is wrong. My abortion was the wrong decision. I am still ashamed that I went through it. It is a sadness to my soul. To deal with abortion, to care, makes it a constant hurt. I just can't sit back and ignore that other girls are being faced with this decision daily."

—Jacqueline

"I now feel very bad about my abortions. I wish I had those babies and I hope when I see them in heaven they'll know I was a confused, mixed-up eighteen-year-old who didn't know what she was doing."

—Cindy

"The full realization of what I had done hit me and has never left me. I can attest to the fact that some of us never cease regretting our abortions and must live with and deal with our pain as long as we live. I know that God has forgiven me, but my hurt will remain until I die."

—"Lisa"

"Most people assume you get over an abortion in a few days, weeks, or months, giving time for the body to adjust. I wish it worked that way. I know from experience that you don't just 'get over it'. The guilt, regret, depression, and bitterness are elusive and move into all areas of our lives. You can't get a hold of it and deal with it once and for all. You deal with it over and over. You don't hear much about the consequences of abortion because they are so personal and we try to suppress them. Every month as a woman's body goes through it's normal cycle we are reminded, as the moods swing you remember and you cry, and you ask God to take the pain away, and He does and you know He forgives you and you cry some more... and hope that someday you will be able to forgive yourself."

—Renee

"I will regret my past for as long as I live."

—Nina

"I am sorry for my abortion and have suffered greatly. I need to turn a bad thing into something that will save lives. I want to counsel others."

—Terri

“Until we know the truth we are never making free choice decisions. We exercise free choice only when both sides of the story are known. Get the facts, investigate, don’t end up like me. The remorse I feel of knowing the development of that child I carried and then the technique used to withdraw that child from my womb is absolutely unbelievable. This remorse comes like whiplash in a car accident. You think everything is all right until you wake up in the morning. Only I took seven years to wake up.”

—Christina

“If someone back then would have told me about the horrible guilt feelings I have had to live with. I wouldn’t have done it. Or if someone had shown me pictures I would never have done it.”

—Michelle

“For anybody who thinks abortion is just an easy way out, a simple solution, they are wrong. I will live with this pain the rest of my life.”

—Leslie

“I wish I had known then all I know now and could change all that has been done.”

—Judith

“God knows if I had not been so ignorant and had been more informed about abortion, there’s no way I would have gone through with it. Now I must no longer be silent. People must know the damage abortion causes to everyone involved.”

—Deborah

“I would never have an abortion again. I still feel sad and regret my baby’s death.”

—Sue

“The abortion was by far one of the most wrong decisions I have ever made in my life! The decision was based on emotion, not fact. I traded one set of bad emotions (anxiety and fear) for another (guilt, shame, and anger.) The guilt and shame are normal results of going against one’s moral values.”

—Dee

“I regret my abortion more than anything I have ever done. An inside feeling awakened in me the knowledge of the error and sinfulness of abortion. I have been a public high school teacher, but this subject has been very painful for me. Some companionship would help.”

—“Katrina”

“My experience with abortion was probably one of the most sorrowful and traumatic experiences of my life. It certainly was not an ‘exercise in my rights as a woman.’”

—Mary

“I felt guilt after my abortion when I realized what I had done. If I had it to do over again, I’d have the baby. I feel grief that my children aren’t with me and that I never knew them.”

—Carol

“The agonizing pain of guilt and regret were overwhelming. They were destroying me, my life, and my marriage. I was horrified to finally face what I had done. The first time I saw a picture of a ten-week-old perfectly formed unborn child (the same age as the one I terminated.) I felt I had been the subject of a grotesque joke. It wasn’t a clump of cells, but a perfectly formed miniature human being. I can’t describe the pain I felt; the depression, the helplessness. Why hadn’t someone told me or shown me what my child looked like before? Why wasn’t I given the facts? Why? Why?”

—Chris

"Eleven years ago I had an abortion. I want you to know how I feel now. Those years have passed, but the pain in my soul lives on, and the horror of what I did grows. The tears of shame and sorrow flow as I write. Please, why didn't someone show me what my baby looked like? Why didn't they tell me what it was doing inside of me? Why didn't they tell me what the abortion process really was removing from me, and how it tears that beautiful creation apart? Pro-abortionists say 'free choice for all.' Why wasn't I given a free choice? Why wasn't the other life involved, my baby, given a choice? I didn't know then what I know now. After childbirth classes and the miracle of childbirth, I came to realize the horror of abortion. I grieve for the baby I murdered. Now, eleven years later, I long to hold and comfort the one I destroyed."

—Julie

"I know I will never be able to change the fact that I let someone take a child from me. It's a shame it took an innocent child's life to make me realize how wrong abortion is, and how mislead we allow ourselves to get."

—Darla

"My heart all along tried to warn me not to have an abortion but I didn't listen. Afterwards I admitted it was a human life, but I still didn't know any biological facts. When I did see pictures of the fetus it was years later, and it hit me all over again. And again, when I saw what abortion really did to the baby, it was devastating. Now I am utterly opposed to abortion and would do whatever I could to help anyone in an unwanted pregnancy. I learned abortion was not the easy way, and definitely not a choice we should have the right to make. My abortion will haunt me forever. I must live with the truth that I gave death when I should have given life."

—Debbie S.

"The ache from my abortion is still present, and I expect it always will be in some degree. An area I still need help in is that I wish someone could share some sadness for my baby; that I wouldn't be the only one to say that my baby was special; that someone would say to me, 'I wish he/ she was still alive.' I get tired of hearing, 'You did what you had to do,' without any thought for the value of my baby's life."

—"Amber"

"I continued to regret having that abortion and almost became obsessed with my lost baby. I thought and calculated the baby's birth, and every time I'd see a baby that age I'd think about him. I have always felt it was a boy and I even named him."

—"Jannie"

"I now feel very strongly that I committed a very serious sin against God by killing a human life he chose to create within me. The baby was conceived through no fault of it's own. It had every right to live. Now, I have had no other pregnancies."

—Margaret

"I finally found out the medical facts. I found out that at ten weeks my preborn baby was a fully formed human being who could even feel pain. I had the abortion thinking that the little embryo inside me was mere tissue. I felt as though I had been deceived - that my ignorance had been exploited. If only someone had been there to give me the facts about the child inside me. If only someone had been there to point out alternatives that would help me to accept and handle the responsibility instead of escaping it at the expense of my baby's life. I could have been spared the haunting grief and guilt. My baby is dead. My soul still grieves and there is nothing that can retrieve that precious little one lost."

—Sandra

"About four years after my abortion, I began to undergo infertility studies, and at this time I learned about fetal development. I realized the lies and deception that I had been fed, and I began to go through the various stages of the grieving process: anger, remorse, grief, and depression, etc. This was made doubly hard by the fact that I was going through the same steps concerning my infertility. The toughest part for me was that no one would allow me to grieve for my baby. No one understood. I was also grieving for my infertility, for the children who would never be. I still do, and always will regret my abortion."

—Robin S. Woodrow

"I would not have had to suffer as much if abortion were illegal, because I would not have sought out an illegal abortion. I would have a child getting ready to celebrate it's thirteenth birthday. I lost so much with my decision."

—Linda W.

"Right after the abortion, I was repulsed by what I had done."

—Connie

"After I realized what I had done I cried continually with no one to share my grief. Months went by before I could even look at an infant or an expectant mother. The worldly saying 'time heals' isn't totally true. 'The wages of sin is death' and I was still dying inside years later."

—Donna

"After the abortion, when I was alone, I would cry and scream, 'I want my baby back,' wishing I could do it all over again and make a different decision. Maybe it was 'my body,' but what about that sweet little body that was torn to pieces as it was vacuumed out of me? I got pregnant very soon after that trying to fill up the empty space in my heart. I have three children who give me all the joy a mother could hope for, but now, six years later, they still cannot replace the child I will never know. I think about that baby every day of my life. There are times, like now, that I just can't stop crying, remembering and knowing that I murdered my first baby."

—Twyla

"It was almost twenty years before I began to talk about my abortions. The ultimate truth was hard to face. I had not solved 'four problems.' I had not simply removed four growths of 'tissue' from my womb. The truth was I had murdered four innocent babies who were helplessly dependent upon me for their lives. I had chosen to give them death. I had sought to live my life the 'normal' way-for myself. And I had succeeded. The result was death. But not only for four babies. I was dead, too."

—Ila

"But now I look back on the whole experience with great sadness. After having three more children... I cannot help turning back to the first child I had so briefly and then threw away. Who was he? A little person whose light will never shine, whose individual quirks will never be appreciated, at least not in this world. I have cried bitter tears over this loss, and the sorrow I feel in my heart at the thought of what I've done to my first child is immeasurable. I have my own ignorance to blame for that fatal mistake, but I can't help thinking that if abortion had been illegal at the time, if my counseling had been less deceptive and single-minded in presenting me with my options, the tragedy of abortion would not have touched my life."

—Robbin

But how about those women who had abortions for the most widely accepted reasons; for rape, incest, and life of the mother. How do these women feel now? Do they have regrets?

“I soon discovered that the aftermath of the abortion continued a long time after the memory of the rape had faded with time. Nobody told me about the emptiness and pain I would feel within, causing nightmares and deep depression. As the years hastened by, the pain and regret of my abortion became buried deeper and deeper within. Even after becoming a Christian I justified my abortion to myself because of my circumstances. It wasn’t until learning that I had cancer of the cervix that the guilt of my abortion surfaced. I had been married for quite some time and had been blessed with two beautiful sons. Now I desperately wanted another child, a girl. It had been diagnosed by several doctors that I needed an immediate hysterectomy. . . After the hysterectomy I went through a deeper time of depression and loneliness than I remember experiencing immediately after my abortion, thinking that I would never have the daughter I longed for.”

—Jackie

“(Even though my second abortion was because of incest) I wouldn’t do it again . . . I lost all self-respect and was unable to have a relationship with anyone. Nobody could get through the barrier I had built. I didn’t want anyone to touch me; to care for me. Now I would like to prevent other women from experiencing what I have.”

—Donna

“After my abortion, even though it had been to save my life, I went into deep depression and felt much remorse. For some reason I had lost respect for my husband, myself, and my family altogether. I then decided to fill it with booze. I got pregnant again but told everyone I wouldn’t go through an abortion again, even though my life depended on it. I had the baby; a beautiful daughter was born on my birthday. The whole family was so happy; everyone except me. I couldn’t get the other baby out of my mind. Now my whole family is very against abortion whether it be for health or any other reason.”

—Frannie

Because of January 22, 1973

"Today is January 22, 1992, the anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision that legalized abortion on demand throughout the United States. Because of Roe v. Wade and its companion decision, Doe v. Bolton, abortion is now readily available throughout all nine months of pregnancy for any reason whatsoever. Women can have abortions for reasons such as sex selection, bad timing, or convenience. They can even use abortion as a birth control method... whatever they like. Parents have no say over whether or not their minor daughters will undergo abortion surgery. Abortion ends the lives of more than 4,000 American babies every single day.

As I reflect upon this anniversary date today, my heart is heavy. Were it not for January 22, 1973, my little girl would probably be with me today... only she wouldn't be so little any more, she would be 13 - a teenager. It's hard to believe that my abortion was that long ago. But I still think about her. I would call her my firstborn, only I never gave her the chance to be born. But she was still my first child.

Because of January 22, 1973, I still get a catch in my throat whenever I look at my family portraits. I imagine a lovely beautiful daughter, with dimples in her cheeks, and she's smiling as she stands next to me. I think she would have had dark hair like I do!

Because of January 22, 1973, Christmas is a painful time. Each year as I carefully select Christmas treasures for my family, I think to myself, 'Daughter of mine, what would you have treasured? What kind of things would you have held dear in life? Honey, if I had the chance I would cherish you. I would hold you dear. I would pour my whole life into yours. Oh daughter of mine, you would be my treasure.'

Because of January 22, 1973, my life was forever altered. When I made the decision to have an abortion in 1978, I thought it was all right. Abortion had been legal for five years. What could be so wrong about something that was legal? But they never told me the hurt that it could bring. They never told me that I might be making the biggest mistake of my life. They never told me she was my baby.

January 22, 1973, my little girl - daughter of mine - I wish I'd known you."

—Diane Lucas

Out of 200 post-abortive women in our survey 94% of them said that they would not have their abortions again. 90% said that they would not have had illegal abortions.

Chapter Eight

Men and Abortion

It has recently been recognized by those studying the after effects of abortion that women are not the only ones to suffer; fathers of aborted babies can suffer from some degree of Post Abortion Syndrome as well.

Something very basic is violated in a man when his baby is aborted. While women were designed to give life to their children, men were designed to protect their young. Abortion thwarts this instinct. The feelings men deal with are often similar to those felt by women who have had abortions... guilt, grief, regret, anger, etc. Men tend to respond differently but often with the same degree of intensity. Let us never forget that they were more than just men who got their women pregnant...they were fathers.

“The abortions affected the quality of our subsequent marriage, which lasted 10 years before divorce. I now feel very, very sorry - and it becomes harder to deal with my mistakes.”

—David

“After we were married and had our first child, we bought an excellent book entitled ‘A Child is Born’. The book showed the development of the unborn child from conception to birth. It was while looking at those astounding photographs that I realized we had paid someone to kill our child. Perfectly unique and unrepeatable, this baby was the union of our love. Nothing could ever bring him or her back, and nothing could ever undo what we had done to our precious son or daughter. I was deeply grieved, remorseful, and also angry at my own lack of knowledge of what abortion really is.”

—Randy

“I didn’t want my wife to have the abortion. After it was over, our marriage began to go downhill. I started abusing her verbally, stabbing her with condemnation every chance I got. I started going into depression.”

—Steve

“In the days that followed the abortion my wife and I never talked about that day. We buried the act, but our hostilities towards each other grew. We carried out our roles as husband and wife and parents, but never lost that inner contempt and anger... with the help of Jesus Christ we have found forgiveness.”

—Tom S.

One Man's Story

To whom it may concern,

My wife (then my fiancé) had an abortion five years ago (1981). If you had asked me six years ago, I would have told you that I was pro-life. That was before I found myself in the position I was in. I felt that abortion was wrong but it seemed like the easy way out.

I took my fiancé (Lynne) to the abortion facility and paid cash to kill my child. They told me nothing about the procedure and the very brief counseling they let me sit in on was hardly accurate. I sat in the clinic for about eight hours for a procedure that was to take only ten minutes. I knew while I was sitting in the waiting room that I was making a very big mistake and that this was not the end of it.

When Lynne came out of recovery, I couldn't help but notice the wall that had come between us the past few hours. We didn't talk about it for four years. The only exception was when she would wake up from nightmares. I had so much pain inside, but I was afraid to talk to her because I knew she felt the same pain. I couldn't talk to our friend or family because they couldn't possibly understand. My wife has been pregnant again, but had a miscarriage (a side effect from abortion). She was home alone and lost a lot of blood. It wasn't until four years later when we counseled with two women who had had abortions, that we could release four years of pain with someone who had been there. Although the guilt for what I did is gone, the pain will never go away. I will always miss my children. I cannot hug them or give them love. I only hope that someone else will not do what we did.

We are working to help other women who are experiencing the same pain. We are also doing public speaking trying to educate the public. The list of side effects from abortion, both physical and emotional, is very long. The abortionists have done a good job of fooling the masses. They say abortion is a safe procedure, but if it is, why don't they inform the women of possible side effects, abortion techniques, fetal development, and pain? Why do women have to be informed about possible complications for all other surgery, but they can be lied to about abortion?

Why did Florida insurance companies make a new category for abortion malpractice insurance, a rate higher than brain and heart surgery? Why did the Pennsylvania Supreme Court just declare an informed consent law unconstitutional? Maybe because it's not so safe. Maybe if women knew the truth they wouldn't have them.

*Respectfully,
Jack Latham*

A Childless Father Looks Back
by Rick

*Few questions were asked, no alternatives were mentioned,
No one seriously questioned "Why?"
It's their decision, they know what they're doing
so why should we even try?"*

*I wasn't there, right in the room, to witness what was done.
She explained to me later, in the recovery room,
what we'd done to our little one.
The mechanical whir, the torn up limbs,
The suction tube kept prying.
The nurses smiled, in the recovery room,
where both of us sat crying.*

*Medically speaking, it's a simple procedure,
thousands are done each day.
But the aftereffects are never explained;
the deep pain that won't go away.*

*Why no smiles, no great relief?
Dear God, What did we do?
We've killed our child, our precious child,
a loving gift from you.*

*Time has passed, many memories remain;
those involved each gone their way.
Now only two remain.*

*That precious smile, those little hands,
that tender kiss of love;
I'll never share that with my child,
till finally we meet above.
When that day comes, please understand, I didn't realize,
that on that day, I'd killed my child. God's living, loving prize.*

*Many questions arise, like "What would she have been?"
A mother, a teacher, maybe just a good friend.
Or maybe a boy, a strong stout son,
Who could have been a doctor, maybe even a congressman.*

*I must live with the fact, I'll never really know,
what my child would be like today.
If we hadn't chosen to take his life,
that dark and painful day.*

*I look at children still today, and think of what I've done;
And think in silence "He could've been just like you",
Forgive me my little one.*

*I try to forget it, God's forgiveness is mine;
His Son has paid my due.
But I'll never fully forget you my child,
Please believe me. I do love you.*

*I close with a plea and ask that if ever you're in the position to
choose:
Take your time, get the facts, think carefully, you've got so much
to lose!*

*There's only one answer to the choice you must make.
In God's eyes your baby is His too:
He gave you this child, a precious gift of love,
LET HIM LIVE... Do what God wants you to.*

Professor Art Shostak from Drexel University said, "Men hurt a lot more than they're given credit for. Counseling for men, to give them a chance to express bottled up feelings, is very important."

"Abortion is a far greater dilemma for men than researchers have even recognized... Many men are victims of abortion along with the women and children. For now they are often silent sufferers, bewildered and frustrated by their responses to abortions."

—Vincent Rue. Ph.D,
"Forgotten Fathers"

Conclusion

On behalf of all the women represented in this book, it is my conclusion that through legal abortion a mockery is being made of women in this country today.

While abortion supporters claim that abortion gives women “control over their lives,” too many claim that it did just the opposite. Many women now say that they had abortions because others, particularly the men in their lives (fathers, husbands, and lovers) pressured or threatened them. To quote a father, “If you don’t have an abortion I’ll throw you, your mother and that ‘thing’ out of the house.” Abortion can be a man’s convenience and a woman’s nightmare.

At a time when everyone is demanding that women be treated with dignity, equality, and respect, too many are being treated as sex objects with the fruit of sexual intercourse, the baby, an obstacle to be gotten rid of. It’s no wonder that more men than women support legal abortion.

When it comes to sexual harassment, many women claim that degrading sexual comments were made to them while they were having their abortions. When an abortionist can say to a woman, “If your husband saw you in that position you’d get pregnant all over again,” we realize that sexual harassment can extend even into the abortion clinic.

But the biggest mockery of women centers around the “choice” to have an abortion itself. Women are routinely not informed when making one of the biggest decisions of their lives... the decision to have an abortion - all amid endless talk about “rights” and “choice”. How in the world can anyone expect to make an informed choice when critical information is continually withheld and laws guaranteeing access to this information are declared “coercive”, “anti-choice”, or “unconstitutional”?

Those of us represented in this book believe that informed consent laws are critical when it comes to abortion. It is high time to guarantee that women are informed as to what abortion really is, what it does to their unborn children, and what it may do to them. Informed consent laws offer the only form of “protection” a woman has when making this irreversible decision.

This year marks the anniversary of 20 years of legalized abortion. Over 30 million abortions have occurred in the years since *Roe v. Wade*, and the vast majority have taken place in states where no informed consent laws were in place. In a country where “pro-choice” is the anthem of those promoting abortion rights, we have to ask ourselves what kind of a choice are the women of this country really being given when it comes to abortion?

Various surveys indicate that many women would have chosen not to have abortions if they had been presented with all the facts beforehand. But you can’t expect those making a profit from a half-billion-dollar a year industry to voluntarily offer such information... that would be bad for business. And you can’t expect those, crusading for abortion rights to provide such information... that would be bad for the “cause”, abortion numbers would most definitely decline.

So where does that leave women caught in the middle struggling with unplanned pregnancies. Currently it seems we are at the mercy of both abortion profiteers and crusaders, who often take advantage of distraught, confused, and desperate women in crisis pregnancies.

For years those of us who have had abortions and now regret them have tried to have our voices heard. But to no avail. It seems that no one listens despite the fact that our numbers increase every year. Did you know that many people adamantly opposed to abortion and active in the pro-life movement are those who have had abortions? But our change of heart is not politically correct. No exposes are seen about women damaged by legal abortion on our nightly media, or read about in our daily newspapers. Women who now regret their abortions are routinely censored or dismissed simply as “turn coats” or “pro-lifers”, rather than hurting women with something to say.

How can people, especially leaders of the women’s movement, claim to care about women and allow this to be. Don’t they care about us, too? Are we not all women? Do abortion rights advocates really want us to continue to ignorantly have abortions, and then be left alone to deal with the pain that so often follows?

If leaders of the women's movement continue to ignore us or pass us off as "traitors" they should not be allowed to continue as the self-appointed spokespersons for the well-being of women. If they continue to oppose informed consent laws, they certainly should not continue to call themselves "pro-choice", but rather pro-abortion.

It is high time to honestly consider the reality of abortion. That reality will not change or go away by ignoring it. Truth has a funny way of finding all of us. Whether it happens when a woman goes in for an ultrasound with another pregnancy, when she sees a picture of a developing fetus in a biology book, or when she sees a picture of an aborted baby, truth is truth. It will be seen sooner or later.

And the truth is abortion kills babies and hurts women.

Those of us represented in this book believe that abortion betrays everything it means to be a woman. We do not think any woman should have a right to kill her unborn child. We wish we lived in a country where life was both revered and protected. We wish that abortion was not a legal option.

But because we live in a democracy, we also recognize that differing views on the subject of abortion do exist. This is one issue that will continue to be volatile and emotional. Most likely the legal status of abortion will continue to be debated for a long time to come. It is our desire that our voices will be heard.

We will continue to raise our voices in opposition to legalized abortion.

We will continue to tell how abortion harms women.

We will continue to speak out against the onslaught of unborn children.

Once pro-choice, we now remain women unequivocally pro-life.