



THE AMERICAN FEMINISTSM
Feminists for Life of America[®]



the
bitter
price of
choice

Twenty-five years after *Roe v. Wade*, millions of women and men mourn our missing children.

THE AMERICAN FEMINIST

Feminists for Life of America

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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO TAKES ON OBSTACLES FOR PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS

Wendy Harrison
Public Education and Outreach
Coordinator

The University of Chicago Pro-Life Association co-sponsored a trailblazing Pregnancy Resources Forum in November with the staff of "A Women's Guide," the directory for all incoming female freshman. The forum was the third of its kind to occur in the country.

University officials from housing, student health, counseling, and administration came together with student leaders from both sides of the abortion debate to develop necessary services and communicate life-saving information to students facing unplanned pregnancies. The director of AID, a local pregnancy care center, provided expertise on off-campus resources and FFL's executive director, Serrin Foster, served as moderator.

The forum began by tackling an issue of primary importance to women on campus—the counseling they receive immediately after discovering they are pregnant.

Audience member Mary Krane Derr (FFL-Illinois), who had become unexpectedly pregnant 10 years ago at the University of Chicago, clearly moved university administrators and the audience as she shared her experience. The counselor who broke the news to Mary automatically assumed that she wanted an abortion. She offered her no other options. Mary advised counselors to allow a woman who has just learned that she is pregnant to feel the range of emotions that are washing over her and to be there for her. "Once you are told you are pregnant, you are irrevocably

THEY SAY I HAVE A FREE
CHOICE.



But without housing on campus for me and my baby, without on-site daycare, without maternity coverage in my health insurance,

it sure doesn't feel like I have much of a choice.



changed no matter what you choose." Mary, who is now a trained counselor herself, said, "Counselors should ask the woman, 'What would be the best possible outcome of this pregnancy?' and then help her to make that dream possible." Her daughter, Sarah, now 10, was by her side.

The university director of counseling and the women's clinic nurse practitioner each emphasized that women who have just learned that they are pregnant need to take their time and not rush into a decision. The director of counseling noted that she was seeing more women months after their abortion who were experiencing feelings of regret as well as men who had no rights in the decision, mourning the loss of their children. Many of these students believed that it would not be possible to continue both their pregnancy and their education.

Amy, a graduate student in the audience, described the difficulty of parenting while in college. Amy did not know of any on-campus practical support—she had to figure everything out on her own. Fortunately, Amy's family provided the help she needed to keep her child and remain in school. "But make no mistake," Amy advised, "parenting under any circumstance is hard."

As panelists discussed available services, it soon became apparent that graduate students had more support systems than undergraduates, with university housing being the biggest contrast. The University of Chicago offers graduate apartments and housing to married and parenting students. The residential director said the university is able to find affordable, off-campus housing for undergraduates in need, but few students know that such assistance is offered.

In the area of child care, however, undergraduates do have some options. Babysitting services are available for the entire student body through university-coordinated lists. But, once again, the lists are not publicized and few students are aware that they even exist.

The assistant dean of student affairs estimated that full-time students at the University of Chicago had about 15 hours per week for themselves—not much time for parenting, also a full-time job. One audience member, a graduate student and father, asked for guidance about keeping his fellowship as the demands of fatherhood took time away from his school responsibilities.

In response to these dilemmas, student groups participating in the forum spoke with one another afterwards to plan a way to publicize available assistance to all students and to develop additional services.

Students agreed to pool their resources and organize cooperative child care on campus. Staff from "A Woman's Guide" took copious notes of all suggestions from panelists and audience members. The fall 1998 edition of "A Woman's Guide" will now feature a new pregnancy resource section for women who want to carry their children to term (it currently only details abortion services). Plans are also under way for a special website to reach students who do not receive "A Woman's Guide" as freshmen.

By identifying the problems that unexpectedly pregnant women face at the University of Chicago and working toward a cohesive plan of action, the forum made possible the first necessary steps toward realizing the dreams of Chicago's pregnant and parenting students. FFL Executive Director Serrin Foster said, "Businesses have begun to support families, but colleges and universities have a long way to go." ○

College Outreach Program

Send a **Kit** to **Campus NOW!**

FEMINIST MESSAGE, FEMINIST SOLUTIONS FOR TODAY'S COLLEGE STUDENTS

Colleges and universities participating in Feminists for Life's College Outreach Program are encouraged to host an FFL speaker. Having a live presentation of FFL's unique pro-woman, pro-life message propels campuses into action. After an FFL presentation, students challenge their campuses to provide practical resources for pregnant and parenting students, as well as call abortion into question. FFL speakers have done just that—on campuses from New York to Wisconsin.

University of Wisconsin at Madison: In October, Serrin Foster, FFL's executive director, presented *The Feminist Case Against Abortion*. Though Foster spoke to a crowd of 165, FFL's pro-woman, pro-life message reached all 40,000 students as Foster's presence was headlined in both major campus papers.

Loyola University of Chicago: In November, Foster spoke to a group of 175 pro-lifers. Despite the presence of protesters, Foster's message won lengthy applause.

Northwestern University: Foster's presentation persuaded even staunch abortion advocates to work with pro-life students on housing and other issues of concern to pregnant and parenting students.

Cornell University: In November, Kerri-Ann Kiniorski, FFL's communications vice-president, shared FFL's message along with FFL of New York's past president, Suzanne Schnittman. Students plan to work with Birthright to provide services that promote life-affirming alternatives on campus.

Spring Lectures

FFL Executive Director Serrin Foster will present "The Feminist Case *Against* Abortion" at the following locations. Please contact the FFL national office at (202) 737-FFLA (3352) for more information.

January 24
American Collegians for Life National Conference
Catholic University of America,
Washington, D.C.

February 9
University of Connecticut

February 11
Trinity College, Connecticut

February 12
Fairfield University, Connecticut

February 24
Right to Life of Akron, Ohio

February 25
Kent State University, Ohio

March 3
College of William and Mary, Virginia

March 17
Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.

April 2
Duke University, North Carolina

April 18
Ivy League Coalition for Life Conference
Harvard University, Massachusetts

Upcoming Pregnancy Resources Forums
Moderated by Serrin Foster

February 10
University of Hartford, Connecticut

March 24
Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania

March 25
Villanova University, Pennsylvania



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the aftermath of abortion

Kerri-Ann Kiniorski
Communications Vice President

Maria cries when she sees newborn babies. Rachael is overwhelmed by feelings of grief and guilt each year on the anniversary of her abortion. Claire has not been able to have a relationship with a man since she aborted her child.

Intense feelings of guilt, shame, and anger are reported by many women who have had abortions. Some women act out their severe emotional anguish through alcohol and drug abuse, irresponsible sexual behavior, or eating disorders. Some women even attempt suicide.

Psychologists generally agree that about 10 percent of the 1.6 million women who have abortions each year experience severe emotional trauma following the procedure. There is no consensus, however, about how many women experience less severe symptoms, collectively known as post-abortion syndrome or post-abortion emotional distress.

A study published in the *American Journal of Psychiatry* indicated that 50 percent of women who have abortions experience post-abortion emotional distress. Another study conducted by Dr. Phillip G. Ney and reported in *The Psychological Aspects of Abortion* found feelings of anxiety in 43 percent of surveyed women, depression in 32 percent and feelings of guilt in 26 percent. Some psychologists deny that post-abortion distress exists, arguing that women go through periods of depression regardless of whether they have had an abortion.

Even though abortion is the most common surgical procedure in the United States, few scientific studies have been conducted to document its psychological impact. Both the American Psychological Association and the American Psychiatric Association support legalized abortion and neither recognize the existence of post-abortion stress. As a result, there have been no long-term studies tracking the emotional impact of abortion on women. Abortion clinics may provide counseling immediately after the procedure or a few weeks later, but oftentimes women do not acknowledge any negative feelings about an abortion until months or even years afterward. The expected due-date of the aborted child or the

anniversary of the abortion often triggers feelings of guilt and anger. Follow-up studies that occur only a few weeks after the abortion do not capture these experiences.

Psychologists on both sides of the abortion debate have found that a woman's feelings about an abortion resurface years later when the woman enters therapy. Pro-choice therapists Candace DePuy, Ph.D., and Dana Dovitch, Ph.D. wrote *The Healing Choice: Your Guide to Emotional Recovery After an Abortion* after encountering women who were still dealing with abortions that had occurred years earlier. "The idea for this book arose out of our clinical relationships with female clients whose lives had been touched by abortion," wrote DePuy and Dovitch. "As mental health professionals, we were concerned to find how few had discussed the life-changing decision they had made. When they began to share their stories, nearly all were surprised by the depth of emotion they still felt."

The lack of awareness of post-abortion emotional distress and the fact that women and men suffering from symptoms do not know assistance is out there is a problem pro-life feminists must tackle. Theresa Burke, Ph.D., director of the Center for Post-Abortion Healing in Bridgeport, Pa. says many women do not initially connect their symptoms to the abortion. According to Burke, learning that post-abortion distress is a real problem that many women suffer "gives them some sense of control—a sense of validation to know that their feelings are not abnormal. What they're experiencing is grief from loss. This is an area where Feminists for Life can help—by letting women know there is help available."

Symptoms of post-abortion distress are most prevalent in women who felt that having an abortion compromised their beliefs or desires to keep the child. A report conducted by a group of psychologists headed by Dr. C.M. Friedman and published in a book, *Every Woman*, identified certain situations in which a woman was likely to experience post-abortion syndrome: if the woman was coerced into having an abortion; when the abortion was performed to save the life of the mother or because the child was handicapped; or when the woman wanted the baby, believed the fetus was her baby and viewed herself as a mother; and if the woman who had an abortion believed that she did not have a choice.

Teen-age women are especially likely to experience post-abortion distress. One study found that one out of every three teenagers who aborted showed signs of emotional aftermath. Another study reported that less than one-fourth of teens who aborted were able to cope with the aftermath of their abortion

We can no longer ignore the psychological toll that abortion has had on the lives of women and men

in an undestructive manner. "Because of their limited experience, their greater dependence on others, and their youthful idealism, teenage women are extremely vulnerable to coercion, deceit, and compromised decision-making," writes David Reardon in *Aborted Women: Silent No More*.

Although there has been some exploration of abortion's effects on women and girls, virtually nothing has been done to understand how abortion affects fathers. Because abortion is portrayed as a woman's issue, men often feel powerless when their partner decides to have an abortion. "Not all men are disengaged from the process of giving life," says Dr. Aaron Kipnis, author of *Knights Without Armor*, who counsels men suffering from post-abortion aftermath. "Men naturally feel a biological imperative to parent. When a man feels he doesn't have any say in the decision to be a father it causes an additional psychological stress." A small number of men have spoken out about their feelings of grief and loss following the abortion of their children. For the most part, however, abortion's impact on men has been ignored (See "Remembering Thomas", page 10).

The data and analysis regarding post-abortion emotional distress remains sparse, yet more and more people are beginning to recognize that the agony of abortion does not end when a woman leaves an abortion clinic. Support groups are forming to meet the emotional needs of women who have had abortions and men who have lost unborn children. At present most of these groups are Catholic and evangelical ministries. Non-Christians must look to professional therapists who are beginning to acknowledge the significant impact abortion can have on women's and men's lives. And women are slowly starting to heal from their past abortions.

"We can no longer ignore the psychological toll that abortion has had on the lives of women and men," said FFL Executive Director Serrin Foster. "More long-term research must be done to further understand the psychological aftermath of abortion. And most importantly, we must reach out with compassion to these women and men who continue to feel the pain of past abortions." ○



WE REMEMBER



Mary Doe

1956 - 1986

Jane Roe

1972 - 1986

Mary Doe was 30-years-old when she died after having an abortion performed by Ernest Wyman Garrett in Newark, N.J. Jane Roe was only 14-years-old when she suffered the same fate at the hands of the same abortion provider. Garrett failed to provide Jane proper care when she experienced complications from her second-trimester abortion. After Jane died from these complications, Garrett altered her medical records to protect his practice.

Unfortunately, Mary and Jane were not Garrett's only victims. Garrett was ultimately charged with gross malpractice and other offenses for providing substandard care to about 30 girls and women on whom he performed abortions. The New Jersey Attorney General's Office brought charges against Garrett for other offenses. Garrett pleaded no contest to performing an abortion where the baby survived; leaving a fetus' head inside a woman's uterus after an abortion; leaving the dead fetus inside a woman's abdominal cavity after an abortion; and falsifying medical records by recording that no complications had occurred when women had suffered uterine ruptures and massive blood loss.

Judge Sybil Moses, who presided over the administrative hearing, said Garrett, a former Newark school board member, had a "cavalier attitude toward patient safety." In his testimony, Garrett referred to complications as being "frivolous" and called his patients "pachyderms" and "actresses." Judge Moses fined Garrett \$170,000 and called upon state medical authorities to revoke his doctor's license.

We remember the nameless girls and women whose deaths from abortions have been disguised to protect the abortion industry.

Source: Newark Star, February 1987, and several documents from the state's license action against Garrett.

Services for Women Experiencing Post-Abortion Syndrome

We offer these numbers for women and men who need counseling to deal with past abortions. Many pregnancy care centers have trained post-abortion counselors on site. Look under "abortion alternatives" in your Yellow Pages. In addition, individual therapists in private practice may provide post-abortion counseling. However, we understand that people seek therapy and counseling for a variety of reasons and not every therapy program meets an individual's needs.

Center for Post-Abortion Healing

P.O. Box 145
Bridgeport, PA 19405
(610) 626-4006

Offers weekend retreats in states throughout the country for healing after abortion.

H.E.A.R.T.

P.O. Box 54783
Cincinnati, OH 45254-0783
(513) 528-6040

Independent Christian outreach that provides resources to relatives and clergy affected by abortion. Provides workshops on post-abortion healing.

National Office of Post Abortion Reconciliation and Healing Referral Line

P.O. Box 07477
Milwaukee, WI 53207
(414) 483-4141
(800) 5-WE-CARE

Referral line linking callers to post-abortion support groups, counselors, or Project Rachel programs in their area of the United States or Canada. Operates Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Silent Voices

P.O. Box A0
Chula Vista, CA 91912
(619) 422-0757

Holds post-abortion syndrome healing and recovery workshops. In addition, a team from Silent Voices is available to help set up workshops in areas lacking post-abortion care.

Victims of Choice

P.O. Box 815
Naperville, IL 60566
(708) 378-1680

Christian ministry providing international referral and training service for post-abortion professional counselors and clergy.

Women Exploited by Abortion

Rt. 1, Box 821
Venus, TX 76084
(214) 366-3699

Provides group therapy sessions in states throughout the country.

Reading Materials

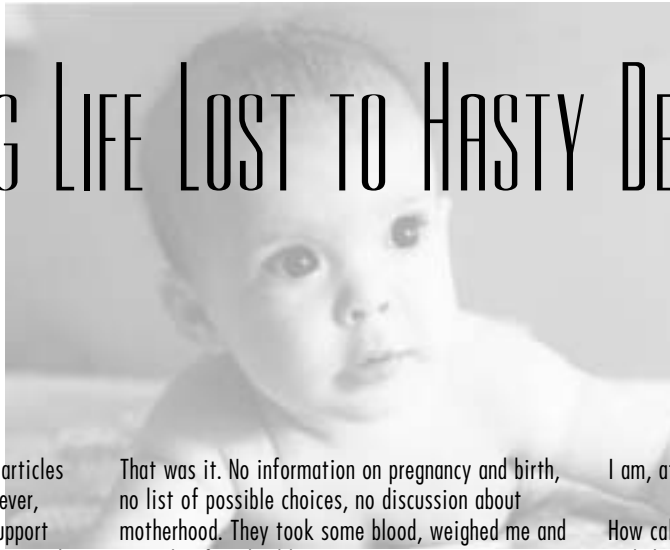
Burke, Theresa, Ph.D. *Rachel's Vineyard*. Staten Island: Alba House. 1995.

De Puy, Candace, Ph.D. and Dana Dovitch, Ph.D. *The Healing Choice: Your Guide to Emotional Recovery After an Abortion*. New York: Fireside. 1997.

Mannion, Michael. *Abortion and Healing: A Cry to Be Whole*. New York: Sheed and Ward. 1992.

Reardon, David. *Aborted Women: Silent No More*. Chicago: Loyola University Press. 1987.
Editor's Note: This book is a useful overview and reference source, not an emotional healing guide.

MOURNING LIFE LOST TO HASTY DECISION



Susan A. Walders

In the newspaper I have read many letters, articles and essays from women who could “never, ever, ever!” choose abortion, from women who support other women’s right to choose and from women who, after long hours of soul-searching, have chosen one of various forms of abortion.

I am one of those people who didn’t think abortion through in advance. Perhaps by sharing the story of the worst decision I have ever made, I can help other women to make that choice less frequently.

It was the spring of 1985, my sophomore year in college, and I came back from winter break sick as a dog. I ended up spending two weeks in the infirmary, suffering from flu symptoms.

Even after I went back to the dorm, I continued to have problems keeping food down. The doctor at the health center decided on one more test. “Bring me a urine sample and we’ll see if we can find the problem,” he said.

My next meeting with the doctor was one that I am sure is repeated on college campuses all over America every day. The doctor told me in a nonjudgmental way that I was pregnant. “What would you like to do?” he asked.

“I want to get rid of it,” I said, without even blinking an eye.

He quietly wrote down the phone number and address of the local Planned Parenthood and assured me he would be available if I needed him for anything. I assumed he meant counseling. What I wanted was an appointment for the abortion.

I was irritated to find out I needed to schedule a preliminary appointment for counseling before I could arrange what they called the “procedure.” The “counselor,” and I use the term loosely, asked me if I was sure that I wanted an abortion and I said yes.

That was it. No information on pregnancy and birth, no list of possible choices, no discussion about motherhood. They took some blood, weighed me and got a brief medical history.

The day was set. I wasn’t nervous; there was too much to do. I needed to arrange discreet transportation back to campus. My boyfriend couldn’t be bothered to make himself available. I needed to think of an excuse to miss my morning classes. I needed to find the money to pay for the abortion.

My mom, bless her heart, was surprised to learn that I was pregnant. I had no problem asking her to help with the money. What I didn’t ask her was what she thought I should do, what her choice might have been in my shoes or how she felt about my choice.

I didn’t hear her concern for me when we talked on the phone. It was there, I just wasn’t listening. We didn’t even take the time to talk about it until afterward. Then, I found out she was against abortion. She would have supported me through the pregnancy and taken the child if necessary. This conversation came way too late.

To this day, I don’t really know what my boyfriend thought about it. I didn’t care. I didn’t give him the chance to care. That may be why he distanced himself so from what I did.

It rained the day of the “procedure.” It was surprisingly simple and relatively painless. Afterwards I felt immediately 100 percent better. The nausea ceased. There was strong cramping, but I could handle that.

If someone had asked me right then how I felt about what I had just done I would have said, “Wow, this is great! I have my health back, I have my life back!”

Go ahead, ask me now.

I am, at this moment, crying.

How callous I was. Just a kid, really. Self-centered and shallow. There were, and are now, so many other alternatives.

I am humbled by my two amazing living children. My six-year-old son wishes he had an older brother. Sad; he almost had one. He and my daughter are the sweetest little people I have ever known.

Most of all, I am humbled by my friend Amy. She felt so strongly for her unborn child that she gave the child she miscarried a name and a funeral. I didn’t even give mine a second thought—until I grew up.

To any woman who finds herself in the position I was in, please, talk to everyone who is important to you. Talk openly, honestly and consider other viewpoints besides your own.

To pro-life activists who think that scare tactics and bombing will help, I say try bringing together prospective adoptive parents with abortion providers. Prospective adoptive parents should not have to resort to placing personal ads to find a baby.

To abortion providers, I say give better information and counseling to young women. I can’t say for sure, but I might not have made the mistake I did if I had known that morning sickness goes away and there might have been someone who wanted my child.

Moms, talk to your daughters and sons about how you feel. Be prepared to make your feelings known before it is too late. Make absolutely sure they know your stand on sex, pregnancy and abortion. Whether they ask or not, they will look to you for guidance. ○

Reprinted with permission from the Rochester, NY Democrat and Chronicle.



REMEMBER

RESPONSIBILITY, GUILT AND A CHILD WHO NEVER WAS

This year's March for Life, in which 45,000 abortion opponents picketed the Supreme Court, didn't have the emotional impact on me that these events often do. I was on my way out of town on business, and scarcely noticed. Looking at news reports later, it seemed that everyone had been on his or her best behavior. The abortion opponents were making it plain that they opposed the use of violence to close clinics. And counter-demonstrations by abortion rights advocates, as we're careful to call them, were rare.

It's all a little confusing to me. I don't know anyone who—in his or her heart—doesn't hate abortion. And it seems odd to see Christian conservatives so eager to force their will through the armed authority of the state when they already have at hand the far more powerful weapon of prayer.

Anyway, I like prayer. It's all I have left.
And pain.

When the abortion was performed, I was out of town on business too. I made sure of that. Whatever physical, emotional and spiritual agony the woman suffered, I was not by her side to support her. I turned my face away. My behavior was in all respects craven, immoral.

For some instinctual reason, or just imaginatively, I've come to believe that it was a boy, a son whom I wanted killed because, at the time, his existence would have inconvenienced me. I'd had my fun. He didn't fit into my plans.

His name, which is carved on my heart, was Thomas.

My feelings of responsibility and guilt are undiminished by the fact that the woman had full legal authority to make the decision on her own, either way, without consulting me or even informing me. In fact, she consulted in an open fashion reflecting our shared responsibility, and I could have made a strong case for having the child. Instead, I urged her along the path of death.

And skipped town.

It's not a lot of help, either—emotionally or spiritually—that the high priests of the American judiciary have put their A-OK on this particular form of what I personally have come to regard as the slaughter of innocents. After all, it's the task of government to decide whom we may or must kill, and not necessarily to provide therapeutic services afterward. In the Army I remember being trained at public expense in the "spirit of the bayonet," which is, simply put, "to kill." The spirit of abortion is the same, in my view, though the enemy isn't shooting back.

I feel like a murderer—which isn't to say that I blame anyone else, or think anyone else is a murderer.

It's just the way I feel, and all the rationalizations in the world haven't changed this. I still grieve for little Thomas. It is an ocean of grief. From somewhere in the distant past I remember the phrase from Shakespeare, "the multitudinous seas incarnadine."

When I go up to the river on vacation this summer, he won't be going boating with me on the lovely old wooden runabout that I can't really afford to put in the water but can't bring myself to discard, either.

He won't be lying on the grass by the tent at night, looking at the starry sky and saying, "What's that one called, DAD?"

Because there was no room on the Earth for Thomas.

He's dead.

The latest numbers show abortions in America have been running at about 1.5 million annually. That's a lot of pain.

Secular men's groups have tended to be focused on the "no say, no pay" issue. "These men feel raped," says Mel Feit of the National Center for Men. "They lose everything they worked for all their lives. In many cases they had an agreement with the woman not to have a baby and when she changes her mind they call me up and say, 'How can she do this to me? How can she get away with it?'" Feit plans to bring suit in federal court.

I'm more interested in the traumatic pain that many men, as well as women, often feel after an abortion. A healing process of recognition, grieving and ultimately forgiveness is needed.

"There's a lot of ambivalence for men when they get in touch with their pain," says Eileen C. Marx, formerly communications director for Cardinal James A. Hickey of Washington and now a columnist for Catholic publications. "They didn't have the physical pregnancy, so often they feel they're not entitled to the feelings of sadness and anger and guilt and loss that women often feel."

She tells of one man, a friend, whose wife had an abortion. "He pleaded with her not to have it. He said his parents would raise the child, or they could put it up for adoption. The marriage broke up as a result of the abortion and other issues. He was really devastated by the experience."

Marx has recently written about a post-abortion healing ministry called Project Rachel, in which more men are becoming involved—husbands, boyfriends and even grandfathers. There are 100 Project Rachel branches, including one in Washington.

I found it helpful just talking with Marx, a caring person, on the phone, though it was a little tough when she mentioned being pregnant and hearing the heartbeat and feeling "this wonderful celebration of the life inside you."

She said not to be too hard on myself, that healing is about forgiveness and God forgives me.

I said sure, that 's right, but some things are still hard.

Like looking in the mirror. ○

Reprinted with permission from The Washington Post (2/3/95).

Editor's Note: The National Parks Service provided the estimate for the number of participants in the March for Life.



ING THOMAS

A LITTLE BLANKET *Lambs*

Jeanne Pryor

When I was in high school, students were taught about the hardships of being too young to care for a child—sleepless nights, loss of social life, expenses, and life plans put on hold—as part of an effort to prevent teen pregnancy. I never forgot those lessons. But no one taught me about the impact of just becoming pregnant. I had to learn those painful lessons on my own.

I had been in graduate school for about a month when I was faced with an unexpected pregnancy. Everything I learned in high school about parenting too soon became real. I had no support systems—I lived far from family and had not had a chance to make new friends. My relationship with my long-time boyfriend was falling apart. I had not found a job yet. I shared a small, dumpy apartment with two other people because I could not afford rent on my own. If I kept my child, where would I live? Student housing did not really accommodate parents. Who would watch my child while I was in class? How would I afford to pay for it? I'd sit on the quad going through these questions in my mind while my thoughts were interrupted by the noise of construction crews building a new multi-million dollar athletic complex.

Everything I dreamed of felt threatened. I wanted nothing more than to turn back the hands of time and undo this pregnancy and reclaim my old life. So I started dialing abortion clinics.

What they never told me in high school was that you cannot turn back the hands of time and go back to who you were before. Many women have told me that they just knew they were pregnant right after conception. I knew too. The fatigue and missed period were not surprises for me. Whether I liked it or not, I had become the mother of a child—my first child, a child who would be like no other.

Nobody tells you the intense feelings you will have about this little person. You feel terror at losing what you want in life at the same time that you envision cuddling a baby. One minute I'm getting a rate for a first-trimester abortion; the next I'm buying a baby rattle, booties, a little blanket with lambs on it, and a onesie.

It was a terrible rollercoaster ride, and in the end, my baby made the decision for me. I had a miscarriage. I remember once telling a friend how lucky she was to have had a miscarriage rather than to have had to pay for an abortion. Those words came back to haunt me. No one told me how painful the cramps are or how bloody it is. No one told me that it lasts for what feels like an eternity while there is little that anyone can do. No one told me the fear I would experience, or the powerlessness and desperation I would feel as this little life slipped away from me. I did not realize that I would cry every time

I saw a little one for months afterward. Mother's Day and the baby's due date hurt for years to come. The loss of this child left a hole in my life. No one told me that I would never be the same person again.

And finally, I did not know how little comfort or support there would be for me. Only I had the opportunity to bond with that child. So no one could understand my grief, particularly since it was an unplanned pregnancy. It was my turn to hear a friend tell me how lucky I was to have had a miscarriage and be spared the cost of an abortion. Most of my friends forgot that I was ever pregnant. When we discussed abortion, I wondered about the pain a woman who experiences the tragedy of abortion must go through. But I was told that I did not know what it was like to face a crisis pregnancy. Well-meaning friends would tell me that I would have another baby at a more convenient time. But I have a little blanket with lambs on it and the baby it was intended for is not here.

Over the years, I have found comfort in talking with other women who have had miscarriages or abortions. We are joined by loss. My husband and I are expecting a baby this spring. This baby can't ever substitute for my first child, but at least motherhood for me now can be associated with joy rather than sorrow. So I will tell you what no one told me—that if a woman you know has had a miscarriage or an abortion, give her a hug, let her cry, and tell her that you are sorry for her loss. It is simple but it means so much. ○

Jeanne Pryor serves as FFL's Public Policy Vice President.





A PLACE FOR HEALING

Earlene Meyer
FFL of Montana

A woman or man affected by the loss of a loved one often has a “special place” to mark or remember the loss. It provides a vital component in individual healing. When the tragedy of loss affects a nation, this “special place” is created in the form of a memorial.

For the past two decades, small communities in cities and towns throughout the United States have erected local memorials to the unborn, often in the form of tiny crosses.

In 1995, however, a national memorial to the unborn was constructed in Chattanooga, Tenn. at the site of a former abortion clinic.

The Pro-Life Majority Coalition of Chattanooga outbid the doctor of the Chattanooga Women’s Clinic for the building in which the clinic was located when the landlords sold it as part of bankruptcy proceedings. The Chattanooga Women’s Clinic was demolished and replaced with the pro-life Imago Dei Foundation’s National Memorial for the Unborn in order to provide a place for emotional healing for those who had suffered the tragedy of an abortion.

The memorial combines the stylistic elements and simplicity of both the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington and Yad Veshem, a Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem.

Hundreds of people visit the memorial to the unborn in Chattanooga each year. Visitors come from all over the United States and Canada. According to an article

in the Oct. 5, 1997 edition of *The Washington Times*: “People come mostly at night to this place, walking past an unlocked gate to a 50 foot-long polished granite wall to lay bouquets and baby dolls on a small ledge.”

A wall containing more than 700 plaques to name the aborted marks the centerpiece of the memorial. Individuals place brass plates with new names on the wall daily. Cards and messages are left by mothers who come to the memorial to grieve for their aborted children and to find healing in their pilgrimage. Norma McCorvey and Sandra Cano, the two plaintiffs in *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton* who now speak out prominently against abortion, both placed permanent markers at the site.

Last year, memorial organizers hosted an exhibition of “Baby Memorial Quilts,” constructed from squares designed, sewn, painted, written or cross-stitched by women and men affected by abortion. With their small piece of artwork, each person was able to give tangible expression to the memory of a little one who, although never born, touched his or her life.

The National Memorial to the Unborn has a powerful effect on all those who have participated in an abortion, either as a patient or a facilitator, as well as those who have not. Memorials such as this, whether local or national, provide a vehicle for healing, discourse and concrete reminders that every abortion takes a human life. ○



When I was in college the bumper sticker on my car read “Don’t labor under a misconception—legalize abortion.” I was one of a handful of feminists on my campus, back in the days when we were jeered at as “bra-burning women’s libbers.” As we struggled against a hazy sea of sexism, abortion rights was a visible banner, a concrete, measurable goal. Though our other foes were elusive, within the fragile boundary of our skin, at least, we would be sovereign. What could be more personal than our reproductive lives? How could any woman oppose it?

I oppose it now. It has been a slow process, my path from a pro-choice to a pro-life position, and I know that unintended pregnancy raises devastating problems. But I can no longer avoid the realization that legalizing abortion was the wrong solution; we have let in a Trojan Horse whose hidden betrayal we’ve just begun to see.

A woman with an unplanned pregnancy faces more than “inconvenience”; many adversities, financial and social, at school, at work and at home confront her. Our mistake was in looking at these problems and deciding that the fault lay with the woman, that she should be the one to change. We focused on her swelling belly, not the discrimination that had made her so desperate. We advised her, “Go have this operation and you’ll fit right in.”

What a choice we made for her. She climbs onto a clinic table and endures a violation deeper than rape—the nurses’s hand is wet with her tears—then is grateful to pay for it, grateful to be adapted to the social machine that rejected her when pregnant. And the machine grinds on, rejecting her pregnant sisters.

It is a cruel joke to call this a woman’s “choice.” We may choose to sacrifice our life and career plans, or choose to undergo humiliating invasive surgery and sacrifice our offspring. How fortunate we are—we have a choice! Perhaps it’s time to amend the slogan—“Abortion: a woman’s right to capitulate.”

If we refused to choose, if we insisted on keeping both our lives and our bodies intact, what changes would our communities have to make? What would make abortion unnecessary? Flexible school situations, fairness in hiring, more flex-time, part-time and home-commute jobs, better access to prenatal and obstetric care, attractive adoption opportunities, a whole garden of safe family planning choices, support in learning how to handle our sex lives responsibly, and help with child care and parenting when we choose to keep our babies: This is a partial list. Yet these changes will never come as long as we’re lying down on abortion tables 1.6 million times a year to ensure the status quo. We’ve adapted to this surgical substitute to the point that Justice Blackmun could write in his *Webster* dissent, “Millions of women have ordered their lives around” abortion. That we have willingly ordered our lives around a denigrating surgical procedure—accepted it as the price we must pay to keep our life plans intact—is an ominous sign.

continued on page 16

THE BITTER PRICE OF CHOICE

**Frederica
Mathewes-Green**





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Too often women are
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disabled, abused.
Do we really want
to say that ...?

For over a hundred years feminists have warned us that abortion is a form of oppression and violence against women and their children. They called it “child-murder” (Susan B. Anthony), “degrading to women” (Elizabeth Cady Stanton), “most barbaric” (Margaret Sanger), and a “disowning (of) feminine values” (Simone de Beauvoir). How have we lost this wisdom?

Abortion has become the accepted way of dealing with unplanned pregnancies, and women who make another choice are viewed as odd, backward, and selfish. Across the nation 3,000 crisis pregnancy centers struggle, unfunded and unrecognized, to help these women with housing, clothing, medical care and job training, before and after pregnancy. These volunteers must battle the assumption that “they’re *supposed* to abort”—especially poor women who hear often enough how much we resent our tax dollars going to feed their children. Pro-choice rhetoric conjures a dreadful day when women could be forced to have abortions; that day is nearly here.

More insidiously, abortion advocacy has been poisonous to some of the deeper values of feminism. For example, the need to discredit the fetus has led to the use of terms that would be disastrous if applied to women: “It’s so small”; “It’s unwanted”; “It might be disabled”; “It might be abused.” Too often women are small, unwanted, disabled, abused. Do we really want to say that these factors erase personhood?

A parallel disparaging of pregnancy itself also has an unhealthy ring. Harping on the discomforts of pregnancy treats women as weak, incompetent; yet we are uniquely equipped for this role, and strong enough to do much harder things than this. Every


woman need not a bear child, but every woman should feel proud kinship in the earthy, elemental beauty of birth. To hold it in contempt is to reject our distinctive power, “our bodies, ourselves.”

There is a last and still more terrible cost of abortion, one that we have not yet faced. We have treated the loss of our fetuses as a theoretical loss, a sad-but-necessary loss, as of civilians in wartime. We have not yet realized that the offspring lost are not the enemy’s, nor our neighbor’s, but our own. And it is not a loss of inert, amorphous tissue, but of a growing being unique in history. There are no generic zygotes. The one-cell fertilized ovum is a new individual, the present form of a tall blue-eyed girl, for example, with Granddad’s red hair and Great-aunt Ida’s singing voice. Look at any family, see how the traits and characteristics run down the generations in a stream. Did we really think our own children would be different?

Like the gypsy in Verdi’s opera, “Il Trovatore”, our frustration has driven us to desperate acts. Outraged by the Count’s cruel injustice, she stole his infant son and, in a crazed act of vengeance, flung him into the fire. Or so she thought. For, in turning around, she discovered the Count’s son lay safe on the ground behind her; it was her own son she had thrown into the flames. In our desperate bid for justice, we have not yet realized whom we have thrown into the flames; the moment of realization will be as devastating for us as it was for her. Until that time, legal abortion invites us to go on doing it, 4,500 times a day. And, with ruthless efficiency, the machine grinds on. ○

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Frederica Mathewes-Green, formerly served as Feminists for Life’s communications vice president.



the abortion- breast cancer connection

An Interview With Joel Brind, Ph.D.

by Janet Podell

In January 1997, the *New England Journal of Medicine* published a study by a team of Danish epidemiologists that claimed to prove beyond all doubt that having an abortion does not increase a woman's risk of developing breast cancer. The study, which examined computerized medical records of 1.5 million Danish women born between 1935 and 1978, was hailed as definitive by abortion proponents.

But Joel Brind, Ph.D., professor of endocrinology at Baruch College of the City University of New York, exposed serious flaws in the Danish study. The researchers failed to obtain abortion histories for thousands of older women in the study—precisely the women who would be most likely to show a correlation between abortion and breast cancer. In addition, fully one-fourth of the women in the study were under 25, too young for a meaningful comparison because breast cancer is unlikely to develop in women that young.

Together with three biostatisticians from Pennsylvania State University, Brind gained attention in October 1996 as the co-author of a meta-analysis of 23 studies of the abortion-breast cancer (ABC) link. Their analysis, published in the British Medical Association's *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, found a 30 percent increased risk of breast cancer among women who had aborted or miscarried over women who had not. In spring 1997, Brind began publishing an informational newsletter, *Abortion-Breast Cancer Quarterly Update*.

In a recent interview with FFL, Brind spoke about the highly charged politics of abortion research, which, he said, stands in the way of sound health and science policy. "If not for politics, the ABC link would have been acknowledged years ago. The weight of evidence is at least as much and as consistent as for other things universally acknowledged to be risk factors." Of the 30 studies done internationally since 1957, he noted, 24

show increased risk, including 10 of 11 studies done in the United States.

Brind, who became interested in cancer research at a young age, is now working to gain access to what he calls "the best database in the world," that of New York State, where some 100,000 abortions take place annually and where fetal death certificates have been collected since 1970. So far, he has been blocked by state health officials. In fact, noted Brind, a study published in 1989 showed "an almost doubling of breast cancer risk before age 40 in women who had undergone an induced abortion. This study was performed by the New York State Department of Health. Yet the New York State government keeps funding abortion and not issuing any sort of warning."

Despite the massive denial that greets any evidence of illness caused by abortion, it is possible, Brind said, that the risk of liability will eventually cause medical practitioners and government health officials to pay more attention. He recently presented his findings to a group of obstetrician/gynecologists in California, including several who perform abortions. "It was very sobering for them. Predictably outspoken people were uncharacteristically silent. If people actually doing the procedure associated with increased risk are willing to listen to evidence, then it's got to be that they're willing to give it some consideration, if for no other reason than their own liability down the line." Physicians in a number of states, including Florida and Oklahoma, have brought the issue before their state legislatures in the hope of obtaining informed-consent laws that require abortion providers to explain potential breast cancer risks to their clients.

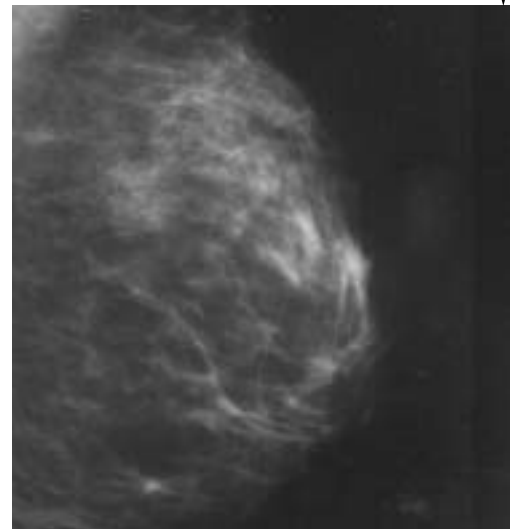
In fact, Brind would like to see the issue pursued at the national level. "It would be enormously useful to generate things like public hearings and to have the hierarchy of the National Cancer Institute have to defend their horribly unscientific, anti-women's

health behavior before a congressional committee and before the American public."

Brind, who has been attacked because he contributes articles to pro-life publications, stressed that the members of his research team hold a variety of views about abortion, none of which interfere with their objectivity as scientists. "As far as my own leanings are concerned," he said, "I believe in the tenets of Hippocratic medicine. The purpose of medicine is to save human lives, not destroy them. Saving human lives means young women who may be pregnant or not pregnant, older women, unborn women, men at any age. All these human lives are valuable. The very idea that the protection of life before birth and after birth should be decided by some kind of political agenda rather than a consistent ethical standard shows you just how far down the slippery slope we've slid." ○

If you would like to obtain information about Dr. Brind's newsletter, please contact: Abortion-Breast Cancer Quarterly, P.O. Box 3127, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603.

Janet Podell is the editor of Abortion (1990), a reference collection of articles and interviews.



A SENECA FALLS REVOLUTION:

Marking the 150th Anniversary of the First Women's Rights Convention

This July, American feminism will celebrate the 150th anniversary of its inaugural: the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848. This gathering of 300 visionaries (including 40 men) marked the formal beginning of a movement that had been brewing for some time, a movement whose defining tenet was the then-preposterous notion that *women* are entitled to the same “natural rights” as men.

The concept of “natural rights,” that is, inherent rights that are “endowed by the Creator” and cannot be bestowed or withheld by mere human beings, was responsible for the “Age of Reform” that swept Europe and the United States in the 18th and 19th centuries. The American and French revolutions and the drive to abolish slavery were consequences of the determination to squelch political tyranny and secure personal freedom for all *men*.

In the United States, many women were active in the abolitionist movement. Their efforts to secure freedom for slaves had an unexpected consequence: Some began to realize that their status as women was in many ways similar to that of slaves. Simply because they were born female, they had virtually no social identity; the law considered them to be the property of their fathers or husbands. Women were excluded from most aspects of adult life—their educational opportunities were limited, they could not enter many professions, the property and even wages of women belonged to their fathers or husbands, and, of course, they were not allowed to vote. To these women, their social status began to look a lot like genteel slavery.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, who had met in London at the World Anti-Slavery Convention in 1840, decided to organize a similar convention to discuss the issue of rights for *women*. In 1848, they and three other women met to plan such a convention at Seneca Falls, N.Y. They decided to develop a list of resolutions demanding that the rights of women be recognized. Stanton used the American Declaration of Independence as her guide in creating the Declaration of Sentiments to be presented to the convention delegates for approval. The resolutions in the Declaration of Sentiments denounced laws that discriminated against women and



Elizabeth Cady Stanton

demanding that women be recognized as the full equals of men, having equal rights and equal responsibilities.

Three hundred people showed up in the tiny town of Seneca Falls early in the morning of July 19, 1848, to witness and participate in the launching of what was to become one of the most significant social movements in the history of man and *woman*. Frederick Douglass, the great abolitionist leader, was one of the convention participants. Susan B. Anthony unfortunately could not get time away from her work (she was a teacher) and was unable to attend. Ironically, the meeting was chaired by a man—Mott's husband, James. (It was unthinkable at the time for a woman to serve as chairperson.)

Elizabeth Cady Stanton, overcoming her terror at speaking in public (it wasn't *proper* for a woman to do so), read the Declaration of Sentiments, and then delivered a remarkably polished speech urging the adoption of the Declaration and a list of resolutions she had also prepared. On the following day, the convention voted upon the Declaration and the Resolutions. All items passed unanimously, except the suffrage resolution.

It was feared that the idea of women voting was so extreme that such a demand would arouse great antagonism and derision, which would crush the whole movement in its infancy. “Oh, Lizzie!” exclaimed Lucretia Mott. “Thou will make us ridiculous!” But Stanton insisted with great passion that suffrage was essential to accomplishing equality for women. She prevailed, and the resolution passed by a small margin. One hundred women and men signed the Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions. One of the signers was Charlotte Woodward, a young woman

from Seneca Falls. Of all the people at the convention she was the only one still alive to vote 72 years later, when the Nineteenth Amendment granting suffrage to women was ratified.

As expected, newspaper editorials widely denounced the convention as “the most shocking and unnatural incident ever recorded in the history of womanity.” Articles declared that equal rights for women would “demoralize and degrade” women and result in “monstrous injury to all mankind.” But slowly, ever so slowly, the then-radical ideals of the Seneca Falls Convention have become self-evident truths.

The National Park Service recognized the importance of this convention in 1993 when it opened the Women's Rights National Historic Park and the National Women's Hall of Fame at the site of the Seneca Falls Convention. Declaration Park contains displays chronicling the history of women's struggle for full personhood.

This summer, American women will celebrate the great gift presented to them at Seneca Falls. Feminists for Life will participate, and we resolve to remind our fellow beneficiaries that the courageous women who initiated our claim to freedom were, without exception, pro-life feminists. ○

Some say FFL's recently trademarked logo is reminiscent of a woman reaching out to a child, or a child to her mother. We all agree that it is a joyful interpretation of the classic women's symbol. FFL's stunning new logo pin is sure to be admired. Available in sterling silver or sterling silver plated in 24 carat gold, it measures 2 1/4 by 1 3/4 inches, and comes in a navy-blue gift box. It's a perfect gift for the dedicated volunteer, public servant—or treat yourself! Each is available for \$75.00. (See order form on page 27.) Please specify gold or silver. If you can't decide, get both!

Herstory

Worth Repeating

“Vinegar-visaged virago.” “Stiff.” “Cold.” “Aggressive.” “Constantly howling.” “A dangerous, undermining effect on the characters of the wives and mothers of our land.” “Laboring under strong feelings of hatred towards men.” “What will become of ... that healthful and necessary subordination of wife to husband?” “Taking women down from that pedestal where she is today.” “Will man be consigned to nursing the babies, washing the dishes, sweeping the house?”

These charges against feminists could have been made today, but they were made over a century ago against Susan B. Anthony. As Lynn Sherr points out in her wonderfully eye-opening book, *Failure Is Impossible*, Anthony was actually “selfless, diplomatic, elegant, charming, generous, friendly, determined, polite, curious, open, amusing, self-possessed, and, once again, selfless.” Anthony tirelessly campaigned for suffrage, poor and professional women’s employment rights, the liberation of prostitutes, children’s rights, abolition of slavery and the death penalty, and temperance (this last because substance abuse caused much family violence). She illegally voted, took part in the Underground Railway, and sheltered a domestic-violence victim and her child. Anthony, a Quaker, had a gift for befriending women—and men—of different races, economic backgrounds, religions, and political affiliations and drawing them into activism.

Though happy with her personal choice not to marry or have biological children, she was told that as a single, childless woman she had no right to speak on matters of family and motherhood. Anthony praised egalitarian marriages, and described sexuality as “the highest and holiest function of the physical organism.” Thus she often decried in plain language the ways in which a male-dominant culture forced women to “sell themselves cheap” in marriage, sex and motherhood. She helped raise the seven children of her beloved friend, Elizabeth Cady Stanton. She doted on her nieces, writing that “a child one loves is a constant benediction to the soul.” She called younger feminists her “nieces” too, and they called her “Aunt Susan.” Anthony supported one “niece’s” choice to adopt a baby while single.

Anthony took on laws that denied mothers’ wishes in custody decisions. During the 19th century, if a child were still unborn at the time of the father’s death, the child could be forcibly taken from the mother at

birth and given to a guardian previously appointed by the father - even though this arrangement traumatized both mother and child. Anthony once remarked: “Sweeter even than to have had the joy of caring for children of my own has it been to me to help bring about a better state of things for mothers generally, so that their unborn little ones could not be willed away from them.”

Anthony referred to another violent rupture of the mother/child bond: abortion. *The Revolution*, the radical women’s paper she published with Stanton, editorialized against abortion, terming it “child murder” and “infanticide” while compassionately addressing its root causes in women’s oppression and advocating family planning. Anthony, the paper’s proprietor, spurned a lucrative revenue source for most periodicals of the era: ads for patent-medicine abortifacients. The lost income eventually forced her paper into bankruptcy.

Her 1875 speech “Social Purity,” reprinted in Ida Husted Harper’s 1898 *Life and Work of Susan B. Anthony*, specifically discussed abortion and postnatal infanticide—along with rape and prostitution—as male wrongs against women. Anthony argued that laws pertaining to these matters, made and enforced exclusively by men, further victimized women while absolving men of all responsibility. Yet she declared: “The work of woman is not to lessen the severity or the certainty of the penalty for violation of the moral law, but to prevent this violation by the removal of the causes which lead to it.”

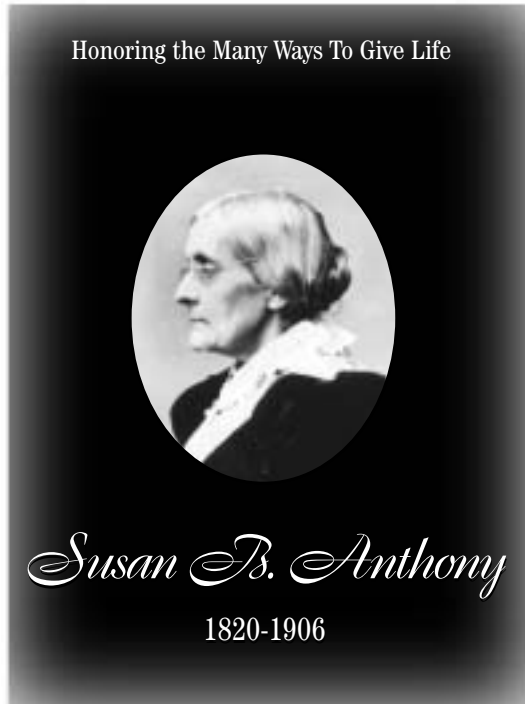
“Social Purity” is remarkably similar, even identical in places, to an earlier piece focusing specifically on abortion: “Marriage and Maternity” (*The Revolution*, July 8,

1869). Anthony was almost certainly the author of this piece, which was signed “A.”

Anthony was often called “Miss A.,” and *The Revolution* staff commonly signed articles with their initial (if they signed at all).

Anthony showed that feminism has never been about destroying the fabric of human relationships. It was and is about empowering women and men—whatever their marital or parental status—to give life to one another and to children, including the unborn. In honor of her birthday, Feb. 15, let us remember and commemorate her work. ○

Mary Krane Derr is co-editor of the anthology *Prolife Feminism: Yesterday and Today*.



FFL allowed me to stiffen my spine and gain the courage to come out of the pro-life closet.

When I was in college I felt enormous pressure to support abortion. I bought all those stereotypes about pro-lifers being “anti-choice fanatics” who wanted women to be butchered with hangers. I knew I would be ostracized if I told anyone that I felt abortion was inconsistent with other principles I held dear—justice for the oppressed, empowerment to the disenfranchised, addressing the root causes of problems faced by society. So this closet pro-lifer kept mum.

The first time I felt the power of the name “Feminists for Life” was when an ad appeared in *The New Republic*. I saw quotes from the feminist foremothers about abortion, and I instantly recognized that I was “home.”

I was still not prepared to deal with the reaction of my peers, so I did not join Feminists for Life right away. But I clipped the ad and put it on the bulletin board on my dorm wall, and it cost me a relationship. When men say “pro-life,” women hear “women-hater.”

Later I saw Nat Hentoff’s article, “Pro-Choice Bigots,” in *The New Republic*. It focused on the intolerance among current echelons of liberalism towards anybody who is both liberal and pro-life. That is when I began to think about the *phony* multiculturalism

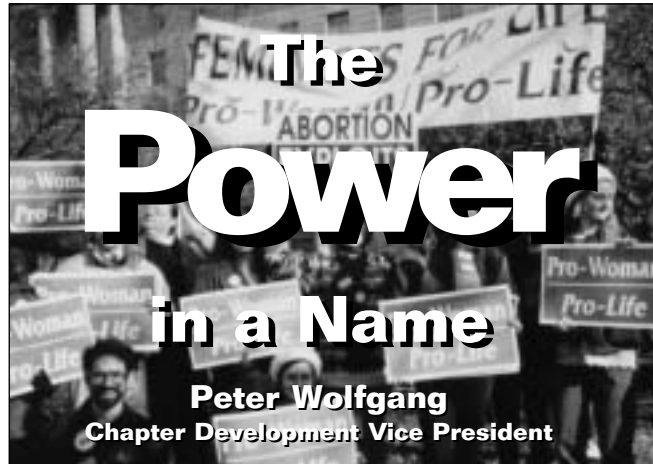
that is pervasive on campuses across America—the cultural hostility toward all pro-lifers that requires everyone to think alike in the name of “diversity.” Abortion is the issue that indicts the current left. How can they speak about compassion when they give up on the unborn? Hentoff’s praise for FFL was the closest thing I had seen to a decent hearing for pro-lifers. FFL allowed me to stiffen my

spine and gain the courage to come out of the pro-life closet.

The biggest gift of feminism that we can pass on to others—especially college women and men—is the knowledge that FFL exists. How many times have we heard, “I wish I had known you were there?” How many of us have known for years in our hearts that abortion was wrong, but were afraid to speak out?

In celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Seneca Falls Convention, let us carry on the tradition of pro-life activists such as Susan B. Anthony and

Elizabeth Cady Stanton who spoke out proudly and publicly of their support for women and children—by declaring our consistent opposition to violence and discrimination and enlisting others to help make our vision a reality. ○



FFL NEEDS MORE ACTIVISTS TO ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS. YOUR HELP IS NEEDED:

- Make a commitment to ask 10 friends, family members, co-workers and neighbors to join FFL.
- Tuck a brochure on the windshield of a car whose owner has a pro-life or pro-woman bumper sticker.
- Copy and keep FFL brochures with you and distribute them at every opportunity.
- Place your FFL “Pro-Woman, Pro-Life” bumper sticker on your car.
- Proudly wear your FFL pin.
- Copy and post FFL ads.

You Promised!

Pledges towards FFL's
1998 Public Education
and Outreach Campaign
are due by March 31.
Thank you!

GIVE THE GIFT OF FFL

Surely you know someone who would relish the unique viewpoint of Feminists for Life. Use the envelope provided to give a gift that opens hearts and minds to a nonviolent, inclusive view of the world. Student memberships are only \$15; regular gift memberships are \$25. Gift members receive a full year of *The American Feminist*, as well as our “Pro Woman, Pro Life” bumper sticker.

Give the gift of Feminists for Life today!

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Forced Abortion in China Condemned

The U.S. House of Representatives passed the Forced Abortion Condemnation Act in November by a vote of 415-1. The legislation would deny visas to Chinese officials who carry out forced abortion or sterilization practices in the People's Republic of China. The one representative to vote against the measure was Rep. George Brown, Jr. (D-Cal.).

Chinese Prisoners Shot —Organs Harvested

U.S. Reps. Linda Smith (R-Wash.) and Frank Wolf (R-Va.) have called on U.S. Att. Gen. Janet Reno to investigate possible U.S. involvement in the harvesting of organs from Chinese prisoners. The official letter from the representatives followed an Oct. 15 ABC News report that prisoners in

Chinese jails are tested for matches as potential organ donors. When a buyer is found, the prisoners are executed and their organs harvested for transplant. According to the report, U.S. laws were violated when buyers were procured in the United States.

Foster-Care Adoption Process Accelerated

In November, the U.S. House and Senate approved legislation to speed up the adoption of abused and neglected children waiting in foster care. Currently, children spend an average of two years in foster homes. The House voted 406-7 in favor of the bill and the Senate followed with a unanimous vote. President Clinton has said he will sign the legislation. The bill emphasizes child welfare over family reunification. Under the bill, state termination proceedings of birth par-

ents' rights must begin after a child has spent 15 months in foster care. Proceedings must begin immediately if parents have abandoned, tortured, chronically physically or sexually abused a child or murdered a child's sibling. Concerns remain, especially for infants and young children, whose development is impaired without proper nurturing in earlier years.

Death Penalty Narrowly Averted in Massachusetts

The Massachusetts state legislature narrowly defeated an initiative to reinstate the death penalty in that state. The state's House and Senate had earlier passed separate versions of the legislation and needed to vote on a compromise bill crafted by a House-Senate conference committee. The compromise measure was defeat-

ed after Rep. John P. Slattery, who had originally voted the House version, switched his vote over concerns that the bill did not contain adequate protections against the killing of juveniles and bias against minorities.

Right to Kill Passed Again in Oregon

The "Death With Dignity" Act is now in effect in the state of Oregon after citizens there voted for a second time —by a 60-40 percent ratio—to allow doctors to give terminally ill patients life-ending drugs if they request it. The law had never been put into effect after its first passage in 1994 due to legal challenges. However, the federal Drug Enforcement Administration has warned that physicians who help someone commit suicide will risk their licenses to write prescriptions.



The Coast long-distance program is proudly associated with Feminists for Life of America. Your participation in this program will provide you with monthly savings of up to 15 percent over AT&T, MCI and Sprint. In addition, Coast International, Inc. donates an amount equal to eight percent of your monthly charges to Feminists for Life of America at no cost to you.

IT'S A GREAT "WIN-WIN" OPPORTUNITY!!

- You save money on your long distance calls.
- Feminists for Life of America will receive an eight percent donation.
- There are no sign-up fees OR monthly minimum charges.
- You just keep calling the way you always do.

Simply fill out this form and mail in the enclosed envelope. For more information, please call CII at 1-800-848-2661.

YES, I want to join the Feminists for Life of America Phone Club Network and support their cause. I authorize Coast International, Inc. (CII), the provider of this program, to notify my local phone company of my decision to change my long-distance service to this program for the telephone number(s) listed on this form. I understand my local telephone company may charge a fee for this selection, which will be credited to my account by CII.

Please Print

Name: _____
(as shown on your local phone bill)

Address: _____

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LETTERS to the EDITOR

Thanks so much to all of you who take the time to write. As space is limited, we have room for only a portion of the mail we receive. Please write concisely (250 words or less)! Longer letters will be edited. Please include your phone number with your submission so we can verify authorship.
Editor

Parental Consent Laws Protect Young Women From Abuse

I was shocked by the story of "Mary Jean Doe," a victim of child abuse by her older brother and family friend, in the winter 1997-98 issue of *The American Feminist*. It reminded me of a similar situation I read of in the Sept. 29, 1997, issue of *National Review*. A 37-year old high school teacher in Illinois sent his 13-year old student to Planned Parenthood to get birth control injections. He was molesting the student and did not want to be caught in the abuse. Because the clinic was not obligated to acquire parental consent before issuing birth control, it, in effect, helped the teacher abuse this young girl. It frustrates me that abusers and molesters are able to take advantage of girls with the assistance of agencies that claim to "help" women.

Slowly but surely at the state level, efforts to pass parental consent laws are succeeding. It is of dire importance that states everywhere pass parental consent statutes so that innocent children are protected from sexual predators.

Katherine Halloran
St. Louis, Mo.

Editor's note: Since this case made the news, Reps. Don Manzullo (R-Ill.) and Ernest Istook (R-Okla.) have co-sponsored an amendment to an appropriations bill that would require health providers to notify parents before dispensing birth control to minors and to comply with state laws that oblige them to report cases of statutory rape, child abuse, molestation or incest.

A Fine for Life

My friend, Penny Salazar-Phillips, contacted me with a challenge. She was listening to a report on NPR about Susan B. Anthony's arrest in 1872 for casting a vote. Susan B. Anthony was fined \$100,

which she never paid. Penny challenged me to pay the fine to Feminists for Life in honor of Susan B.'s life-affirming activism, which I am doing.

I have also passed on the challenge to an Internet discussion group to which I subscribe ("Leftout") and have instructed anyone who takes up the challenge to mark their checks or send an accompanying note identifying the \$100 as payment of "Susan B.'s fine."

Linda Naranjo-Huebl
Aurora, Colo.

Editor's note: Linda Naranjo-Huebl is co-editor of ProLife Feminism: Yesterday and Today.

Pro-Life Feminist Wins Presidency

I read with delight Imelda Franklin's review of the book *Swimming Against the Tide: Feminist Dissent on the Issue of Abortion*, recently published in the United Kingdom. The author of the foreword to the book, Prof. Mary McAleese of Trinity College in Belfast, was recently elected president of Ireland by an overwhelming vote. Her foreword brilliantly elaborates the consistent principles of life-affirming feminism. As she states in her conclusion, "There is a day coming when we will hear the voice from inside the womb, when its own authentic pain will be undeniable, when we will know with certainty that it is saying, 'I want to live. I have a right to live. I do not need your permission to live.'"

Maura Glasson
North Providence, R.I.

Editor's Note: Swimming Against the Tide: Feminist Dissent on the Issue of Abortion, edited by Angela Kennedy, is now available through FFL. See page 27.

FFL and the Consistent Ethic of Life

My sister Meg was a wife and mother of three who made a profession of caring for her family and her community. She battled depression for years, but ultimately lost the battle and took a lethal dose of painkillers and alcohol, which led to brain damage. After several weeks in intensive care, she began to improve, but the hospital staff decided to withhold all treatment, as the progno-

sis was a persistent vegetative state. All food and water was cut off, but the morphine was continued (in case the process of starving her to death caused her discomfort). My beautiful, generous sister died at the age of 32 because, as someone tactlessly put it, it was "good business." We had no say—our opinion that she should die a natural death was disregarded.

I have long been active in the pro-life movement, but until now I always focused on those who are vulnerable at the beginning of life. I now know how important it is to speak up for those at the other end of their lives. FFL, please continue to proclaim the dignity and value of all human life, no matter how compromised. Please continue to speak out against the taking of human life in the name of "good business." Please urge your family members to consider their wishes concerning treatment at the end of life.

Mia Petree
Arlington, Va.

Hard Cases Make Bad Laws

Rape has become the abortion debate's most effective wedge issue. Because most people can imagine themselves or someone close to them being impregnated by rape, raising this specter renders the humanity of the prenatal child irrelevant, regardless of ethical principles. As with other "hard case" wedges, it is only the power to control one's own situation that matters when such emotional possibilities are presented.

The nature of the unborn baby is unchanged by rape. The child is actually a second victim of the crime. Exceptions for rape call for a sellout on principle. These children are the primary victims of the wedge. But those who have morally degraded themselves by falling for such ploys are also victims.

From the false claim of rape in *Roe v. Wade* to the federal government's coercion of the states over Medicaid, the rape wedge has been standard operating procedure for abortion advocates. Those who deal in wedge issues know that they can count on many to spurn principle and revert to outcome-based morality.

Alfred Lemmo
Dearborn, Mich.



ABORTION RATE DECLINES SHARPLY IN U.S.

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released a study in December showing that the rate of abortions in the U.S. dropped significantly in 1995 (the latest year for which figures are available). Abortions were down from 1.4 million in 1990 to 1.2 million. The rate dropped 5 percent over 1994 and 20 percent since 1980.

Source: *The Washington Post*, 12/5/97

COLLEGE FRESHMEN INCREASINGLY PRO-LIFE

The thirty-first annual report of the UCLA Higher Education Research Institute (HERI), sponsored by the American Council on Education (ACE), found a continued decline in support for abortion among college freshman for the fourth straight year in a row. The number of freshman who believe abortion should remain legal declined to 56 percent compared to 65 percent in 1990. This figure approaches the all-time low of 53 percent reported among freshman in 1979.

Source: *The American Freshman: National Norms for Fall 1996, 1997*.

GIRL HIDES BABY BOY AFTER SECRETLY GIVING BIRTH

A Suffolk County, N. J. high school student is being charged with endangering the welfare of a minor after her mother discovered a four-pound baby boy hidden in the girl's room. The 17-year-old had secretly given birth in October in her bedroom at home. The girl hid the baby boy in her room each day while she went to school. The mother said that she did not know that the girl had been pregnant or had given birth.

Source: Reuters News Service, 10/8/97

BREEDING A "SUPERIOR RACE"

The Swedish government sterilized more than 60,000 women between 1935 and 1976 to rid society of "inferior" racial types and to encourage Nordic features. The Japanese government sterilized more than 16,500 handicapped women from 1949 to 1995. Now, both the Swedish and Japanese governments have apologized to thousands of women who underwent forced sterilization. Sweden is considering amending its laws, which say that damages cannot be paid to these women because the sterilizations were legal and suppos-

edly voluntary. However, sterilized Swedish women say they were ordered to sign permission slips or risk losing their other children and all benefits. Most of the Swedish victims were considered "inferior" or of "poor or mixed racial quality," meaning people with learning difficulties or from poor families. Japan legalized sterilization in 1948 as a way to "improve" the human species.

Source: *The Washington Post*, 9/18/97; *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 8/25/97

MIND YOUR CHILDREN

Teens who feel they are understood and paid attention to by parents and teachers are less likely to use drugs, drink alcohol, smoke or have sex, revealed a study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. The study found that feeling loved helps teenagers avoid high-risk activities regardless of whether a child comes from a one- or two-parent family. "Many people think of adolescence as a stage where parents become irrelevant and powerless," said J. Richard Udry, professor of maternal and child health at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. "It's not so that parents aren't important. Parents are just as impor-

tant to adolescents as they are to smaller children." Positive relationships with teachers were the most critical factors in determining school performance—even more powerful than class size or the level of teacher training. Interestingly, teens with part-time jobs who work 20 hours or more a week are more likely to use alcohol and drugs, smoke cigarettes, engage in early sex, and report emotional distress. The study used data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, which surveyed over 90,000 students in grades 7 through 12 across the country. This is the largest study of American adolescents ever conducted.

Source: *The Washington Post*, 9/10/97

LOVE YOUR BABY

Researchers at Emory University in Atlanta and McGill University in Montreal found that rats whose mothers licked and groomed them a lot during their first 10 days tended to respond to stress much better and produced significantly lower levels of potentially destructive "stress hormones." Scientist Robert M. Sapolsky of Stanford University questions whether this study is applicable to humans, but he does note that more research needs to be done to determine how early experiences

The American Feminist Guidelines for Submissions

The American Feminist welcomes well-written articles. Submissions should be typed and double-spaced and no more than 1,000 words in length. The next deadline is March 15, 1998.

Send your submissions to FFL, 733 15th Street, NW, Suite 1100, Washington DC; 20005; Attention: Editor, *The American Feminist*. Please enclose a daytime phone number (including area code) and a self-addressed, stamped envelope with your submission.

Photographers may submit photos for future issues (preferably black and white). Please give your name, daytime number (including area code), name of individuals in the photo from left to right, the activity, date, and your permission to use the photo in any FFL publication. Do not send negatives. Photographs and articles become the property of FFL and will not be returned.

affect later development. "We are in an era filled with parental quandaries, such as the type of day care to provide, the inner-city specter of the dissolution of the family, teen pregnancy, and low spending on social services during critical periods of brain development," says Sapolsky. "Today's anxious parent is convinced that one lullaby sung off-key ensures that child will not only one day be a sociopath, but will also never use dental floss."

Source: *The Washington Post*, 9/15/97

NEW THREE-DIMENSIONAL ULTRASOUND

Thanks to the increased development of medical imaging, three-dimensional ultrasounds are now available to women internationally. TomTec Corp., a German-based company, is taking the lead in offering a product line that enables a woman to view a three-dimensional image of her unborn baby.

Source: *Business Wire*, 11/26/97

PUNISHMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT THINKER

In a recent issue of *Crisis*, Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, professor of history, literature and women's studies at Emory University in Atlanta, describes some of the ideological "sins" that forced her resignation as director of Emory University's Institute of Women's Studies. Among her cardinal "sins"—addressing the Rochester, N.Y., chapter of Feminists for Life.

Source: *Crisis*, 11/97

TOUGH TO BREAK TRADITIONS IN UNTRADITIONAL JOBS

While the numbers remain small, more and more women are working in construction, plumbing, carpentry and other technical trades that are disproportionately dominated by men and associated with higher wages. But women who take such nontraditional positions quickly learn that these workplaces

are anything but female-friendly. According to *Chicago Women in Trades*, 57 percent of women surveyed reported being touched or propositioned on the job, and 60 percent said they were given the heaviest or dirtiest assignments. However, women should not lose hope. Work is being done across the country to ensure that women have access to a safe work environment in nontraditional jobs. Organizations are sponsoring workshops for trade association employees to foster respect for women in the workplace. And the Women in Apprenticeships and Nontraditional Occupations (WANTO) Act, passed in 1992, is providing funding to ensure that the number of women in nontraditional occupations continues to increase.

Source: *Louisville (KY) Courier-Journal*, 5/6/96

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