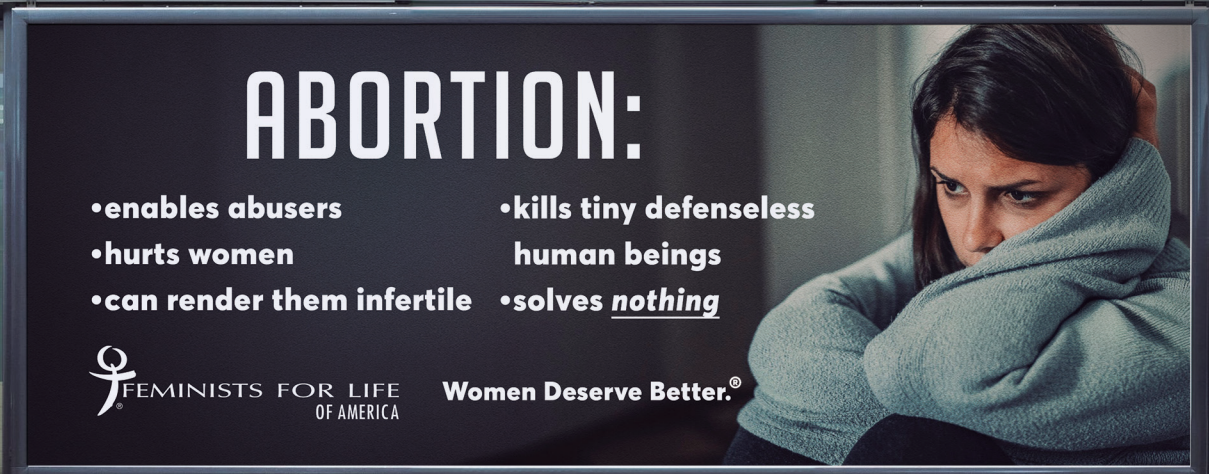




THE  FEMINISTS FOR LIFE
OF AMERICA

THE AMERICAN FEMINIST

What
about
MEN?



ENVISION THIS

Now, more than ever, our divided country needs our pro-woman, pro-life feminist messages. Envision billboards in towns and cities, everywhere you go, reminding us of the realities of abortion. Envision billboards declaring that Women Deserve Better® than Abortion and that babies deserve life and love. Thanks to supporters like you, we have an impressive record of accomplishments to back our message up, making it all the more powerful.

How many billboards and transport signs—how many hearts and minds we can reach—will be up to people like you.

And now with our year-end match, your efforts can make an even bigger impact as we:

- inform, equip, and inspire future leaders in high school and college;
- help those at highest risk of abortion through our helpsite;
- work with legislators and activate our supporters;
- and reach people daily on Feminists for Life, Women Deserve Better, and Girls Deserve Better® via social media and websites.

THREE WAYS TO HAVE YOUR GIFT MATCHED, DOUBLED, OR MORE!

Your single tax-deductible donation made by December 31st will qualify for our year-end match led by the FFL Board and Friends (including former Board members).

- Make a new or increased monthly gift, and your first gift will be *double*-matched!
- If your employer matches donations, please include a corporate matching form to double your gift yet again!
- Gifts of stock are also appreciated.

The matching gift campaign ends December 31, 2024, so please go online right now to www.feministsforlife.org/support, or use the enclosed envelope. On behalf of those we serve—future leaders and women at high risk of abortion—we thank you!



**Women Deserve Better[®]
than Abortion.**

Babies Deserve Life and Love.

 **FEMINISTS FOR LIFE**

A pregnant woman with curly hair, wearing a pink long-sleeved shirt and a grey skirt, is smiling and holding a small ultrasound image to her belly. The billboard is set against a background of trees with autumn foliage.

THE AMERICAN FEMINIST®

A publication of Feminists for Life of America

Editor-in-Chief/President **SERRIN M. FOSTER**

Editor **JOYCE MCCAULEY-BENNER**

Editorial Board **MAUREEN BAILEY, CHERYL BLAKE, SERRIN M. FOSTER, CAROLINE JARBOE, JOYCE MCCAULEY-BENNER, MOLLY PANNELL, SHARON SERRATORE, SUSAN SCHOPPA, AND REBECCA WEBB.**

Copy Editors **BELLA FECHTER, CLARE HETTICH, JOYCE MCCAULEY-BENNER, COLETTE MORAN, BETHANIE RYAN, AND CYNTHIA J. WOOD.**

Layout and Design **ROBERTO CHUMBIMUNI**

Board of Directors

Chair **KARA A. SORENSON-SMITH**

Vice Chair **PATRICK A. O'KANE**

Treasurer **MICHAEL A. SCISCENTI**

Secretary **REBECCA WEBB**

Member-at-Large **SUSAN SCHOPPA**

President **SERRIN M. FOSTER**

FEMINISTS FOR LIFE OF AMERICA

PO BOX 151567, ALEXANDRIA, VA 22315

WWW.FEMINISTSFORLIFE.ORG

Tax-deductible donations may be given online at www.feministsforlife.org and www.women-deserve-better.com.

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

Feminists for Life of America recognizes that abortion is a reflection that our society has failed to meet the needs of women. We are dedicated to systematically eliminating the root causes that drive women to abortion—primarily lack of practical resources and support—through holistic, woman-centered solutions. Women deserve better than abortion.

Feminists for Life of America is a 501(c)(3) organization. All donations are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

The opinions expressed in *The American Feminist* by individual authors are their own and do not necessarily reflect the policies, views, or beliefs of FFL's Board of Directors, President, or *The American Feminist* editorial staff.

Fall/Winter 2024

Copyright 2024. All rights reserved. ISSN 1532-6861

WHEN A MAN STEALS TO SATISFY HUNGER, WE MAY SAFELY CONCLUDE THAT THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG IN SOCIETY—SO WHEN A WOMAN DESTROYS THE LIFE OF HER UNBORN CHILD, IT IS AN EVIDENCE THAT EITHER BY EDUCATION OR CIRCUMSTANCES SHE HAS BEEN GREATLY WRONGED.

—Mattie Brinkerhoff,
The Revolution, September 2, 1869

CONTENTS

- 5 Introduction**
Serrin M. Foster
- 8 Empty Hearts: Fathers Grieving Abortion**
Cheryl Blake
- 10 Abortion Hurts Men, Too**
Tommy Kearns
- 12 Supporting Men After Abortion**
Bella Fechter
- 14 When Choice Is An Illusion**
Joyce McCauley-Benner
- 17 Rewarding Fatherhood**
- 21 The Invisibility of Fathers on Campus**
Clare Hettich
- 26 Men Have a Feminist Heritage, Too**
Damian J. Geminder and Eric Hollenbeck
- 29 The Complexities of Child Support:
An Interview with Sharon Long**
Joyce McCauley-Benner
- 32 Women Deserve Better Helpline**
- 34 New Girls Deserve Better Website**



**FEMINISTS FOR LIFE
OF AMERICA**

HASTEN THE DAY



Dear Feminists for Life,

For over half a century, the debate has gone this way:

“What about the woman?” shouts one side. The other answers, “What about the baby?”

In this issue we ask, “**What about men?**”

When I opened the FFL office in 1994, I inherited an FFL brochure titled “Abortion Liberates Men.” It was the first thing I put into the recycling bin.

Sure, there are some juvenile types who think they could escape paternal responsibilities if they coerced her into an abortion. But that isn’t all men. I have heard too many men share stories that they wouldn’t tell anyone else. And yes, many accounts have come from men who were devastated by the deaths of their children.

There was the young man who unexpectedly came into my office and melted down, tearfully telling me it was the tenth anniversary of the death of his son—and that he was a coward. He was at a military academy, and she was at a women’s college. His parents said he couldn’t support a baby if he married and dropped out of school. (To this day, it is still a requirement to relinquish the child to another adult.). Her brother said she could have other children. She was into her fifth month when she went to New York for an abortion.

They had never married. They never had other children. He told me that he would return the next day to volunteer. And I never saw him again.

Another time, a neighbor told me that he learned his wife had an abortion while in college, and it was his child. He had no idea. It ate away at him and destroyed their marriage. They divorced.

There was a guy in the seat next to mine on a flight to speak at a college. After asking me what I do for work, he told me his story of great loss for the rest of the journey.

And a repair man shared that his wife had an abortion against his will. They had two daughters, and she didn’t want any more kids. And today, he still imagines what his son would be doing, what he would look like.

I asked, “Have you named him?” He replied, “No.” I said, “You can, you know.”

For every woman who mourns, there is a man who has also lost a child, whether he knew it then or learned about it later.

How much pain will satisfy abortion providers and their surrogates? The fact is, men deserve better than abortion, too.

So those of you who mourn—including men who had no choice or who regretted assisting or even coercing a woman into an abortion—you know the truth:

Abortion does not liberate men. It haunts them.

But men can liberate women from abortion.

A man could be that dad—or even a friend—who supports her to have that child. He can stand up. And he will get far more joy and pride out of his relationship with this child than he ever dreamed.

We believe in the strength and dignity of women, the potential in every human life, and the importance of fathers. We honor them, too.

And while we rightfully focus on the humanity of the unborn child and the needs of the mother, we remember the men who mourn as well. We want to let them know that there is hope and healing for them, too. The pro-life community understands and supports them, and they are welcome at Feminists for Life.

But this is only part of the story.

There are many more men who respect women, support the mothers of their children, and love their kids.

We champion those men who are real-life heroes, like those *Time* magazine recently recognized, including a dad who donated part

of his liver to save his son's life, another dad who fought off a bear to save the life of his daughter, and yet another who saved his baby from a burning building.

We celebrate extraordinary men and fathers, including everyday heroes whose small acts of care are their language of love.

“
We celebrate extraordinary men and fathers, including everyday heroes whose small acts of care are their language of love.
”

It is also important to remember that it was one vote by a man who read a letter from his mother that gave women the right to vote. Just. One. Vote.

Many question the existence of any difference between moms and dads. Yes, there are some women who are larger and stronger than some men. Yes, there are men who have amazing skills doing jobs historically led by women.



Hasten the Day

Yes, women can also bravely protect their children. And some men have been cowards. So what is special about men? What about fathers?

Maybe this story from nature can provide some insight.

There were some well-meaning scientists in the 1970s who wanted to save the elephants that were being slaughtered for their ivory. They decided to take the younger ones and older females with their babies. They were easier to capture than the adult males.

But to their horror, once in the protected area, the young males started fighting. Then they became hyper-aggressive, jostling for a position in the pecking order, and they began killing white rhinos. Over fifty carcasses were discovered.

While some thought chemical castration would be the solution, it occurred to one of the scientists that they had left the bull elephants behind. So they introduced them into the herd, and the young male elephants straightened up. It was the natural solution. These teens needed a leader.

They got the message: *Dad's back.*

For decades, men have been told to suppress their opinions. After all, "It's her body. It's her choice." *So don't stand up for her or your child. Suffer in silence while your child is sacrificed. This is your new duty.*

Men have been diminished. It has gotten to the point where men are the butt of every joke, every ad on TV. Enough.

Women don't just have little girls. We have boys, too. It's time we stood up for them. They are equally important.

Most men, especially good dads, want and deserve respect. As Feminists for Life, we honor you.

Because men deserve better, too,



Serrin M. Foster
President



Get Your Daily Feminist Fix!

-  /FeministsForLife
-  /Feminists4Life
-  /FeministsForLifeOfAmerica
-  /FeministsForLifeOfAmerica
-  /FeministsForLifeOfAmerica



EMPTY HEARTS: FATHERS GRIEVING ABORTION

BY CHERYL BLAKE

Abortion complicates life. In addition to the death of the baby, as well as potential consequences for the mother's health, there are psychological, emotional, and spiritual aspects of coping with an abortion. No matter how abortion is characterized, it is an end, a loss, an experience of death. Both parents face that grief.

Fathers of aborted babies report a myriad of emotions and psychological problems ranging from sadness to post-traumatic stress. These difficulties can manifest themselves in several ways. Some men say they find themselves marking the passing time with thoughts of what the child would have become in each new stage of life. Sometimes these thoughts have triggers like anniversary dates, while other times there seems to be no specific reason for thinking of what might have been. In some cases, trying to cope with the loss leads to other tragic circumstances, like addictions or broken relationships.

“
**Some men say they find themselves
marking the passing time with
thoughts of what the child would have
become in each new stage of life.**
”

Two situations increase the burden on fathers trying to cope with their partners' induced abortions: either the father has no say in the decision, or he learns of the already completed procedure after the fact. Given no choice in the decision to abort, a father is indeed powerless. No matter how much he wanted the baby nor how prepared he was to be a dad, the opportunity was lost. He loses the baby and the chance to be a father. Other possibilities may come later in his life, but he can never be a father to the child he has lost. If a dad who is not even aware of his partner

choosing to end the life of their child later becomes cognizant of the fact, he must try to cope with a completed act that he did not choose. Will he feel sadness about a child he never met? Does he feel ineffectual? If he is angry, where can he go with that emotion?

“
Two years after his partner’s abortion, one man continued to feel the pain of losing the child and his chance to be a father. He was particularly hurt because his partner told him that she had miscarried. Discovering the lie when he was phoned by the abortion clinic, he was overwhelmed by his powerlessness.
”

If a father was not considered in the abortion decision, he does not necessarily escape guilt and regret. Even if he did not play a part in the decision, the loss can plague him for years. Blame and what-ifs are difficult to shake from a person’s psyche. Add to that the imagined growth of the child year after year, and many men need external support. Some men turn to a spiritual route to find a forgiveness and peace they cannot seem to bestow on themselves. Others try to alleviate their pain through counseling. Serious consequences of not facing the grief include sexual problems, depression, a feeling of not having the right to grieve, and an increased threat of suicide. The road to healing is a difficult and often arduous one. Resolving the turmoil the dads feel takes patience and guidance.

Two years after his partner’s abortion, one man continued to feel the pain of losing the child and his chance to be a father. He was particularly hurt because his partner told him that she had miscarried. Discovering the lie when he was phoned by the abortion clinic, he was overwhelmed by his powerlessness. In another case, several years passed before a father learned that his ex-partner had aborted their child. Time had passed, but his grief was very current and real. He then had to work through a loss that was remote in time but existed in his present, involving both his mind and his heart.

There is nothing easy about fathering a child who winds up being aborted. Some may assume that the father would feel relief. After all, the responsibility is gone—but so is the child he helped create. All the possibilities and opportunities have been taken from the father, and he must find a way to work through the emptiness. □



Cheryl Blake
Author

Give the Gift of FFL





Abortion Hurts Men, Too.



FEMINISTS FOR LIFE
OF AMERICA

BY TOMMY KEARNS

As my friend said, we drove quite a bit to be here today. Before I get into my question, I just wanted to say my daughter's name is Clementine. She was five months along when she was aborted in New Jersey. My daughter was healthy. I begged her mother not to go through with the abortion. For five months, we went back and forth. I don't hate my ex. I love her and I'm working on forgiving her. She was confused. She was uncertain and she had doubts. Mike Tyson has doubts before he gets into the ring. This was an option and she took that option and she regrets it. Now, why do you think—and this is just a thought that just came into my head—why do you think that people will dehumanize my Clementine? Why wasn't she human enough for people to help me mourn? Why wasn't she human enough for people to talk about?

My mother was born prematurely at 5 months. My daughter was 5 months.

“
**My question is really for society: Why
doesn't my daughter matter?**
”

I didn't get to say goodbye to my daughter. I didn't know about the abortion until after it happened. I begged her not to do the appointment. She told me that she canceled it. My daughter was 5 months old and she was ripped apart. My daughter doesn't get a funeral. My daughter doesn't get respect.

My girlfriend didn't pay for the abortion, the clinic did. How much money did they make off of my daughter's body? How many other babies did the doctor kill since she's been dead? This has been a month and 3 days. This happened March 12th and 13th. My daughter was conceived October 25th. She was supposed to be born July 20th. My

daughter was a person. My daughter is an angel and I pray for her every single day. I talk to her. I feel like she's there. I feel like on July 20th, my daughter is going to be there. She doesn't get a funeral. I have her sonogram picture, the first time I heard her heartbeat, and I bring this up to people and I say, "Well, she had a heartbeat. Wasn't she a person?"

And I'm being told she's a fetus, which, by the way everybody, that's Latin for offspring. Okay? So I don't know why we're speaking Latin. I speak English and my daughter not only matters but I do not want my daughter to be forgotten. I want my daughter's story to be talked about. I want her to be remembered. I'm told by my friends I'm crying over somebody I never met before. I'm told by people, well, she wasn't even a person. She was just a fetus. She wasn't even a baby. She wasn't fully developed. My daughter was still growing and my relationship with my daughter was going to grow for the rest of our lives. Why isn't my daughter human enough for people to care? Why isn't my daughter woman enough for her to have a body and for her to have a choice?

My original question when I was coming up here was can I see the...can I see the clamps. I don't want to see the clamps no more. I've heard enough about it and I've seen the pictures... It's out there. I did, I wouldn't recommend it. I still have nightmares. My daughter was going to be beautiful, but now I don't know where she is. I'm just so confused. I get it. I'm just a man. You know what I mean, but men, we're not supposed to have feelings. As a father, because I'm still a father, as a father, I'm just supposed to forget. I'm just supposed to move on and I'm confused.

So my question really isn't for you because you understand. My question is really for society:

Why doesn't my daughter matter? Why wasn't she enough? Why didn't she get a chance to live and, ultimately, no, I'm not blaming my ex. She had doubt and she regrets it. Ultimately, this is our government's fault. We've stopped evil laws in the past in America, in Germany, and you guys know what I'm talking about. We came together and we stopped evil laws. This is an evil law that killed my daughter. Her mother did not kill her.

I don't know who did this to my daughter. I wish I could ask him was my daughter beautiful. That's all I want to know. What did her face look like? My daughter matters and I really hope that everybody remembers Clementine and I hope you think about Clementine as much as I do. She is loved and she is not forgotten and I hope that everybody can keep her memory alive, too. Thank you. ☐

Editor's Note:

This is a transcript of a video of Tommy Kearns sharing his story at a pro-life speaking event. Printed with permission.

**LIVE THE LEGACY
LEAVE A LEGACY**

We who refuse to choose between women and children live the legacy of Susan B. Anthony and the other early American feminists. Please consider leaving a legacy by including Feminists for Life of America as a beneficiary of your estate so that our work may continue. Let us know so that we may properly acknowledge your gift.



SUPPORTING MEN AFTER ABORTION

BY BELLA FECHTER

Fatherhood wasn't part of Ron's plan. He was building his career, while his wife was working towards a teaching degree. Additionally, her doctor had notified them that their baby would most likely be born with birth defects. So Ron convinced his wife to have an abortion. This "uncomplicated, easy" procedure cost them their marriage and left them both with serious mental health issues. Ron tried to avoid his emotions through excessive work, drinking, and a second marriage, which also failed.

Four decades later, Ron found healing in a support group through the nonsectarian organization Support After Abortion. Abortion claims many victims: a baby, a mother who has been physically and emotionally hurt, and a father who has lost a child, sometimes with no say in the matter.

The trauma of abortion doesn't only affect women. Research from Support After Abortion

reveals that one in five men will experience a partner's abortion by age 45. Men also feel the pain of abortion, though they are often overlooked or ignored. Along with a hotline for chat and email, Support After Abortion offers a free online program that provides tools for growth and recovery for men as well as women. Their book entitled *Unraveled Roots for Men* discusses the many issues that may be related to abortion regret, such as abandonment, addiction, abuse, and codependency. These resources for men who are struggling in silence are incredibly important, because rarely is abortion regret for men and its side effects discussed.

“
I used to consider post-abortion healing only a woman's issue. As you know, men grieve too... but I never knew that.
”

Supporting Men After Abortion


“I used to consider post-abortion healing only a woman's issue. As you know, men grieve too...but I never knew that. I can't tell you how much the presence of men on the Rachel's Vineyard Retreats has helped me to heal. Abortion divides us. It divides mother from child and severs the love in many relationships. Through journeying with men in Rachel's Vineyard, I finally realized that I can forgive the many men in my past who had let me down. I have been able to accomplish this because of the strength and courage I have witnessed in men who come and share what they went through. I never realized that men suffer deep grief from this. I think we need each other to fully reconcile what this pain has done in our lives and to our relationships. The men who attended my retreat helped to restore my faith in men....And that is a miracle!”

This testimony from Rachel's Vineyard identifies the important role of post-abortive healing for both women and men. Along with healing retreats for post-abortive men and women, Rachel's Vineyard also offers email buddies for men to meet others who have experienced the pain and loss of abortion. This allows men to share their stories and grieve together.

“Immediately, I wanted out of this problem that I thought could be easily fixed through a simple abortion. I became part of the 85% of men that initiate the thought of abortion in a mother's mind. I blamed her father, who is a fire captain, using his own words, saying if she ever got pregnant she would be cut off, etc. I convinced her this was our only option as we were barely 18 and unable to be parents. We went to Planned Parenthood Pasadena where we had received faulty contraceptives so they could help us abort our child, thinking it wasn't a big deal if we took care of it in the first trimester. I thought it was her body her choice, and it really didn't have anything to do with me.”

Steven wrote this after he found his healing journey with Silent No More, an organization that provides post-abortion support to men and women. Along with sharing many resources for women and men, they compile and share testimonies from fathers of aborted children. Steven has since participated in a post-abortive healing Bible study and is now a full-time missionary for the unborn. He turned his hurt and pain into hope and healing for so many others. Powerful testimonies like his shed light on the experiences of men and help others to realize the impact abortion has on everyone involved.

Women, babies, *and men* deserve better than abortion. Fortunately, there are many resources and support systems for men experiencing trauma and emotional struggles following a partner's abortion. Post-abortive healing gives men their voices back and fosters mending of relationships. There is healing and forgiveness for all people involved in abortion, if they are open to it. □



**If you or someone you know
is struggling after an abortion,
know there are resources
to help you.**

**Visit these websites for
more information and
non-judgmental support:**

supportafterabortion.com
silentnomoreawareness.org
hopeafterabortion.com



WHEN CHOICE IS AN ILLUSION

BY JOYCE MCCAULEY-BENNER

Choice is fundamental to being an American. Our experiences of choices are extensive, from grocery store options to the fanciest multiple-directions coffee, from the practical and mundane to the bewildering.

It is no wonder that abortion advocates have championed the word “choice” and the illusion behind it—that every woman choosing abortion is doing it the American way, freely.

Those who “chose” abortion have told us fifty years worth of their experiences. Wishing there was a better time for the child to come to them. Needing more support, more resources, more help meeting financial and basic needs. Making the choice to end one life in hopes of bettering another’s. Fifty years of society failing to meet the real needs of women and children.

This raises the question, what kind of “choice” was it?

Coercion is defined as “the practice of persuading someone to do something by using force or threats.”

Many recognize abortion by coercion—whether by threats of violence from the father or threats to withhold child support—as clearly wrong. There are countless stories of intimate partner violence during pregnancy—in fact, homicide is the leading cause of death in pregnant women.

But there are the non-life-threatening instances of coercion as well. Stories of parents and partners threatening to kick women out or withhold support for education, housing, and basic needs. There are also emotional threats. Consider this story told to us:

“The 16-year-old daughter of a woman I know got pregnant. The daughter was white and the father of the baby was black. The woman’s husband threatened to divorce the woman if the daughter didn’t get an abortion because the baby would be biracial. The daughter got a late term abortion to try and ‘save’ her parents’ marriage.”

When Choice Is An Illusion

Another person shared his story of hearing his parents fight about an abortion:

“I first heard the word abortion in a terrifying shouting match between my parents when I was twelve. Shortly thereafter, my father convinced my mother to drive to Montreal with him to curette my little sister out of existence. My chilly grandmother – my mom’s mother – came to stay with us kids for a few days while my parents were gone. When they returned, my mother was a changed woman. Where she had once been lively and carefree, she now cried all the time. Where her eyes had once been cheerful and tender, they seemed haunted and unable to see us. She disengaged from us kids for many long months and she no longer loved my father with playful affection. I heard my grandmother tell her, ‘You know he’s right, Cindy. Four kids is enough. You can’t feed five kids on a professor’s salary.’ My mother’s spirit never fully recovered from that terrible weekend.”

An anonymous post on the Shout Your Abortion website described another woman’s frustration at coercion:

“I was angry [at] my mother for encouraging me to get an abortion. I was mad at my boyfriend for (unwillingly) giving me the feeling that he didn’t want this child and therefore also encouraging me in the direction of getting an abortion. I was mad at people who would have liked it if I had the child but didn’t pressure me enough.”

Although women have been repeatedly told that “it’s your body, your choice,” this mantra fails to recognize that relationships matter to us.

Whether we have fallen for the right guy or the wrong guy, and whether we have a rocky or stable relationship with our parents, to say that we won’t consider others’ thoughts on a decision where our support system is affected is ignorant at best. Their own insecurities affect how and if they will support us. Coercion creeps in when fear is present.

Did you know:



95% of reported assaults on spouses or ex-spouses are committed by men against women.



#1 Homicide is the leading cause of death during pregnancy and the first postpartum year, with African-American women under 25 and unmarried being at highest risk.



63% of female homicides were women killed in domestic violence by current husbands, boyfriends, or ex-husbands.



#1 Most family annihilators are men in their 30s or 40s who kill their entire family before attempting or committing suicide. They may be experiencing financial problems, relationship issues, and/or mental health struggles.



15 million children in the United States are impacted by childhood domestic violence today.



40 million adults were impacted as children.



275 million children are growing up with domestic violence around the world.

A study titled “The Effects of Abortion Decision Rightness and Decision Type on Women’s Satisfaction and Mental Health” showed that of women who had abortions, 24% described them as “unwanted, or coerced.” Another 43% described them as “accepted but inconsistent with their values and preferences.” Of the approximately one million abortions that happen per year, 67% were in some way unwanted.

This is not to say that coercion cannot be overcome. Indeed, there are countless stories of women standing up to partners, families, workplaces, and schools, showing them the strength of a mother.

Often, when someone takes that first step of strength to say “But I can do this,” others will follow. But first, we need to remind women that they have immense power inside of them. We must tell them that even when they can’t feel it, there are those around them who can help. And then we have to stop letting fathers off the hook. Bringing children into the world is an awesome responsibility both in its effort and in its reward. There are supportive people everywhere—from pregnancy care centers and counselors to campus pro-life groups—if we are open to them.

Real choice combats coercion. When, in tough times, all nonviolent choices are examined, including adoption, (open, semi-open, and closed), kinship and guardianship options, and single, married, or co-parenting, life starts to become *possible*. Coercion ends when there is enough support, enough resources, and enough of us believing that pregnancy is a detour, not a dead end. □



Joyce McCauley-Benner

*Editor
Author*

HELP US HELP HER.

Designate *Feminists for Life*
in your workplace campaign.

Choose FFL in the CFC 10499.

If you are a federal civilian employee, employed by the postal service, or in the U.S. military, please contribute to Feminists for Life via the Combined Federal Campaign. We are listed in the Women, Children, and Family Service Charities portion of the directory. **Feminists for Life’s CFC number is 10499.**

If your workplace participates in a different **state or local campaign**, you may also designate **Feminists for Life** by filling in **FEMINISTS FOR LIFE OF AMERICA** in a section for other charities not listed by the United Way.



REWARDING FATHERHOOD

Three Great Fathers

I have been blessed to have known three wonderful fathers. I have learned much from watching their example, and I am so grateful to have seen how committed, responsible men behave in both good times and bad.

My father was the most faithful of men. No sacrifice was too great for him to make. He did without so that my brother and I could have a solid education—something he should have had himself but could not afford.

Then there is my brother. A busy lawyer with a family to support. Yet he always made time for the baseball games and Boy Scout events. He delighted in his two young sons. They gave his all-too-brief time on this earth so much purpose and meaning.

But the father who wins the Olympic gold is my father-in-law. His two sons meant the world to him. He managed their Little League baseball

“
My father was the most faithful of men. No sacrifice was too great for him to make.
”

team. He not only attended father/son events, he organized them. He is without an equal when it comes to highly involved, respectful parenting. HE TALKED TO HIS CHILDREN. Long, deep, meaningful conversations. Is there any substitute for that quality of time spent with a caring parent?

So, hats off to Orlando, my dad, Dominic, my brother, and James, my father-in-law. You have enriched so many lives by reaching deep within yourselves and delivering it all to your children. I pray you now realize the enormous impact that has had on those you love.

—Maria Marlowe

Championing His Girls

While many men are excited to find out they are having sons, my dad was the anomaly. He would always go around beaming and telling everyone, “I have *three* girls!”

He loves to live life through and with us. Although he was busy running his tax business with my mom, they always found time to take us places and support our interests.

I was an avid basketball player. My dad would come to every game and cheer me on. When, in an important game, my shoestrings broke, he ran out to the store to get me new ones, heartbroken he would miss the final quarter of the game but considering my safety and needs to be paramount.

My dad would always say he got to experience the best things because of—not in spite of—his daughters. When I started writing poetry, he and my mom found a way to take me to New York City for a writing convention. He had never been there before. Later in my adult life, he was able to experience Disney World for the first time when I started working there. He will tell you he loved hanging out by the pool on my December birthday, something we never got to do living in the North.

My dad sees his daughters as gateways to learning more about the world.



Editor Joyce McCauley-Benner’s dad, Terry McCauley, delivers her 16th birthday cake to her.

He even became a Feminist for Life when I first found and joined FFL.

Dads are the first men to champion their girls, and my dad demonstrates that this is not only a great responsibility but is fulfilling and worth it in every way.

Joyce McCauley-Benner
Editor

A Precious Lesson

As I grew into manhood, I absorbed many of my father’s social and political leanings. Like him, I became staunchly pro-abortion. I don’t know why. I think many of my generation internalized the radioactive fallout of Paul Ehrlich’s *The Population Bomb*. We didn’t want to see the resources of the Earth gobbled up by too many mouths to feed. We saw children almost as an apocalypse of the natural world. Ironically, I married someone like my mother—a devout woman who believes that children are the greatest gift life can bestow.

I wasn’t wholly convinced that we should have children, but my reluctance and my equivocating didn’t matter. We became pregnant, in due course, thanks to expired contraceptive gel. I started to warm to the idea of being a father. One child. The world could handle one child. We purchased a crib and started to nest. But four months along, as I was settling into dreams of sagacious fatherhood, my wife started cramping in the middle of the night. As the cramps grew more intense, I called our doctor (who we found out later was one of the city’s leading abortionists).

He told us to sit tight, that there was nothing we could do. “Go to the emergency room if things get bad,” he said. There was no compassion or concern in his voice. Every live birth was a rebuke to his life’s work.

“
**Seconds after I hung up the phone, I
was delivering our stillborn baby on
our living room floor.**
”

We didn't have time to go to the emergency room. Seconds after I hung up the phone, I was delivering our stillborn baby on our living room floor. I got to hold my daughter for a few minutes only, but the sight of her convinced me that she was indeed “fearfully and wonderfully made.” My benighted ideas about babies and humanity were overturned in an instant. I was a changed man...and if I could have done anything to rescue that sweet girl, moved heaven and earth, I would have done it. I wept hard—for the first time since I was twelve when my parents were quarreling over that word *abortion*.

Today, I'm the proud father of three beautiful kids, and I have one grandchild on the way. I'm so grateful that I too have come to realize that a baby is a gift: incomparable, precious, priceless—always a gift.

—Anonymous

Dr. William Anthony Foster: A Real Foster Child

My father was born a month after the market crashed. The Great Depression was an especially difficult time for a very young widow. So Billy was passed around to resentful family members and brutal foster care parents.

He was beaten so hard that he had high heel marks embedded in his skin for the rest of his life. When his mother wouldn't rescue him, the woman getting federal funds for him literally waterboarded him. My father took showers, not baths. I never saw him go into a pool or ocean.

When my dad was upset about anything, he would ask for a ketchup sandwich. It was his comfort food. That was the best meal of the week from one of his foster parents. Her family ate better thanks to the money the government provided while he would be hidden from view in a chair behind the refrigerator.

He would steal change from the basket at church to buy some fruit.

An elderly couple took him in for a while when he was four. Sergeant Hammond and his wife Eva would find food under his pillow. When I was working with Gov. Bob Casey years later, my dad told me that he never felt secure because his mother refused to relinquish him for adoption. He explained that he always felt he had to be good to be loved.

Years later my “foster grandparents,” (no pun on our last name), learned that he had still not been taken back by his mother. She married another man who refused to raise “another man's son.” By then they had retired in upstate New York. They took him in for the rest of his childhood.

They were poor and Dad had to save money to go to college. He supervised women sorting peas to freeze for Birdseye. When he was promoted, the women were upset, but they understood his need for the raise. So they pooled their money to compensate.



My parents met after my mother graduated high school and while my father attended the University of Maryland as a nontraditional older student. He graduated with me in his arms. My sister, Lulu, was in my mother's womb.

Knowing what he needed and didn't get from his biological mother, but learned from loving foster parents, my father did all he could to be responsible for his parents as well as his children.

He would build a duplex to take care of us and his foster parents for the rest of their lives. After they died, we returned to the Washington, D.C., area where my parents and I were born.

He was hired as a young manager for the U.S. Post Office. That year they released a new stamp, a first to celebrate Christmas. My father was not pleased. Wreaths were a pagan symbol, so he asked the Postmaster General for a "real" Christmas stamp. My mother remembers the letter from him. He agreed and would enact his idea. Two years later, the first Madonna and Child stamp was released, but was my dad happy? No. He said they always forget the father. Two years later Joseph was included.

This reminds me how important it is for us to speak up. Just one letter has resulted in billions of stamps being sent around the world.

Education was a priority for my father. He would go back to earn his Masters and Doctorate while mom studied special education and my sisters and I were undergrads. He would become a professor of Public Administration.

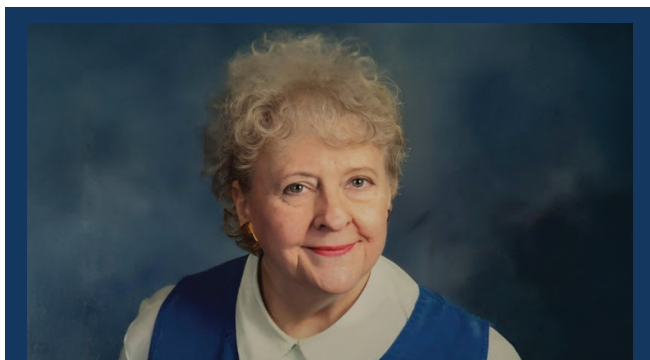
Dad, (or Dr. Dad as we started calling him), was a great communicator. When he was loaned to the US Postal Service Management Academy, he received a standing ovation from his peers. Later, when he was sent to Chicago to help resolve management issues with the rank in file, he warned that if measures he recommended would not be taken seriously, something bad was going to happen. Six months later the first workplace shooting took place. That sadly inspired the expression "going postal."

In 2005, my charismatic dad would be hospitalized from celiac disease, something I inherited. A man who was a great communicator could not speak when they intubated him and gave him a feeding tube. Pope John Paul II was also septic and dying while Terry Schiavo was legally killed at her husband's behest. I realized it was no coincidence that as a pro-life leader I would be watching this fight for life in person and on TV.

When they removed my father's feeding tube, his speech therapist said I needed to be there when she was. His last words to me, one word, one breath at a time, were, "I. Love. My. Daughters."

Love you too, Dad. You and mom inspired me to work for mothers, fathers, and their babies born and unborn, for foster parents who make "unwanted" children wanted, and for college parents. I can't ever thank you enough.

Serrin M. Foster
President



We remember Donna Hayden Foster. Serrin's mother was an early Birthright volunteer and inspired her first speech in college against abortion. She served as an FFL volunteer for 30 years, including as a copy editor, and was able to see Serrin's tribute to her in the most recent issue of *The American Feminist*, "Strong As A Mother."

Serrin's mother never complained when she was dying from metastatic cancer. Not once. Donna was visited by family and friends to say goodbye and met her great-grandchildren. She and Serrin had time to share precious memories and exchange a hundred more "love you's."

A photograph of a man in a graduation cap and gown holding a young girl on campus. The man is seen from the back, looking towards the girl. The girl is smiling and looking at the camera. In the background, other graduates in gowns are visible, slightly out of focus.

THE INVISIBILITY OF FATHERS ON CAMPUS

BY CLARE HETTICH

“Don’t let Christian leave school,” said his mother, Mrs. Ortiz. It was her dying wish, but it seemed impossible for an eighteen-year-old who had been struggling to finish high school even before becoming a single father. Yet Christian was determined to fulfill his mother’s desire, for the sake of her legacy and his daughter’s future. As he labored through a GED program and college, he could have abandoned his daughter or his education—but he did neither. Somehow, the noble efforts of student fathers like Christian are often completely overlooked.

“
While fifty-two percent of student mothers graduate, only thirty-nine percent of student fathers do.
”

One student father summed up this problem by saying, “[w]hen you think of the word parent, you think of mothers.” His comment points to a current crisis: fathers make up thirty percent of parenting students, but they are severely underserved. While fifty-two percent of student mothers graduate, only thirty-nine percent of student fathers do. To seek explanations for this surprising statistic, student-parent support organization Generation Hope recently conducted a study called “EmpowerED Dads,” which sparked discussions about available resources and necessary steps. The first step towards addressing the problem, of course, is seeking to understand why fathers drop out of school.

Many fathers leave college because of generally insufficient support for parents. Drayton Jackson, for example, was a student father who dropped out due to the lack of childcare. Fewer

than half of public colleges had on-campus childcare in 2022, and when parenting support exists, it can be financially inaccessible or simply hard to discover. In a 2018 study, FFL President Serrin M. Foster and Jillian Shea reported that while most Ivy League campuses offer childcare, only a third of these childcare centers are advertised. Student fathers are even less likely to discover parenting resources since organizations typically market them to women. Lilah Burke of *The Hechinger Report* also suggests that since student fatherhood has not been normalized, men are less likely than women to feel comfortable requesting parenting resources.

...since student fatherhood has not been normalized, men are less likely than women to feel comfortable requesting parenting resources.

Indeed, many argue that social stigma and stereotypes are the main inhibitors of student fathers' success. People often assume that student parents are mothers, which leads colleges to presume that men do not need parenting aid. Also, the fathers who participated in Generation Hope's study seemed to feel that this weakened their self-esteem. One commented, "people confuse me as a babysitter... but I'm the provider." Unsupportive stereotypes decrease student fathers' motivation, leading them to abandon their educational plans. The study noted that Black fathers are more likely to be stereotyped as absent, contributing to even lower graduation rates.

One commented, "people confuse me as a babysitter... but I'm the provider."

Even with some support, however, many fathers drop out of school to find immediate jobs. *The Hechinger Report* noted that men often have more access than women to trades that do not require a college degree, which could explain why they drop out of college at higher rates than women. Some men freely choose this route, but others believe they have no choice. They may feel that instead of paying for an education, they should get paid for working. As Jesus Benitez put it, "I grew up in the streets, so me being in college, it was just, like, 'What am I doing here?'... I was, like, 'Man, I'm losing money, I should be going to work.'" Immediate paychecks seem more appealing than potential long-term benefits, especially for fathers who lack support.

Whatever the reason for it, the crisis of fathers leaving college demands attention. Some organizations have adopted measures to support this neglected population. The City University of New York, for example, founded the Fatherhood Academy in 2012 to help fathers get a GED, college degree, or job. This program gave Jesus Benitez the support he needed to earn a degree, and his gratitude motivated him to become a mentor in the Academy. Christian Ortiz, whose mother dreamed he would graduate college, credited Benitez with being instrumental in his success. Ortiz also returned to the program as a mentor, continuing a beautiful cycle of positive outcomes. By spreading parenting resources, normalizing student fatherhood, and encouraging individual fathers, The Fatherhood Academy counteracts the various obstacles fathers face. Thus, founding more such programs could raise student fathers' graduation rate.

“
Student fathers’ sacrifices may feel natural to some, but they require extraordinary courage.
”

An increase in student fathers’ graduation rate would prove that family and education are not opposed, empowering more men to stay with their families. As a result, more women would feel the support they need to choose life, and more children would know a father’s love. Yet supporting student fathers is not just important because it raises these statistics, but because it acknowledges individual men. “As parents,” said Ortiz, “we do what we have to do for our children, hardly ever stopping to think about what it is we do so

naturally.” Student fathers’ sacrifices may feel natural to some, but they require extraordinary courage. And it requires unnatural blindness for society to overlook these men any longer. It is time to ensure that student fathers, the hidden providers, are provided for. □



Clare Hettich

Author

Estelle Sylvia Pankurst Society

Recognizes monthly donors of all giving levels who provide core support to achieve our vision:

“It is grievous indeed that the social collectivity should feel itself obliged to assist in so ugly an expedient as abortion in order to mitigate its crudest evils. The true mission of Society is to provide the conditions, legal, moral, economic, and obstetric, which will assure happy and successful motherhood.”



Feminists for Life Giving Circles

Honor the legacy of our foremothers.

In the tradition of our feminist foremothers, Feminists for Life continues to work toward justice and equal rights for all people.

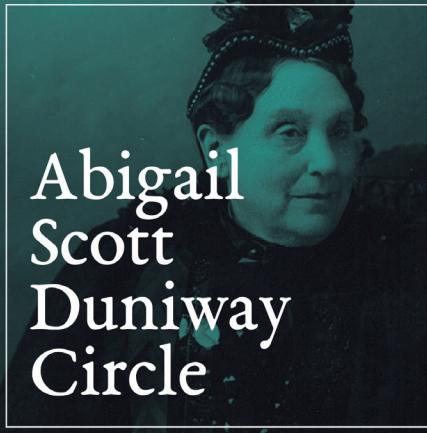
We seek to fulfill the unrealized vision of Susan B. Anthony and other first wave feminists who envisioned a better day for women through better circumstances.

Help us address a poverty of spirit, reclaim feminism, and raise expectations in schools and in the workplace, along with paternal support.

Imagine what your support can accomplish, because Women Deserve Better®.



Mattie
Brinkerhoff
Circle



Abigail
Scott
Duniway
Circle



Eleanor
Kirk
Circle

\$100

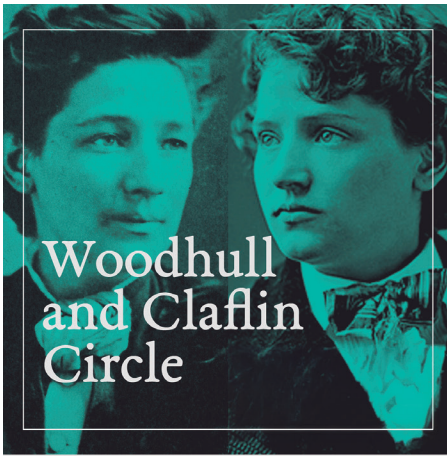
“When a man steals to satisfy hunger, we may safely conclude that there is something wrong in society—so when a woman destroys the life of her unborn child, it is evidence that either by education or circumstances she has been greatly wronged.”

\$250

“If mothers only knew the natural consequences of abortion... they would stop awe-struck before committing the awful act.”

\$500

“Can you not see that the idea is to educate women that they may be self-reliant, self-sustaining, self-respected?... God speed the time, for the sake of the babies Little ones will then be welcome...”

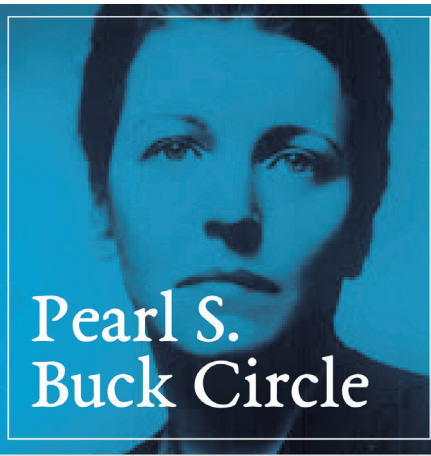


Woodhull
and Claflin
Circle

\$1,000

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

“Childbearing is not a disease but a beautiful office of nature.”



Pearl S.
Buck Circle

\$2,500

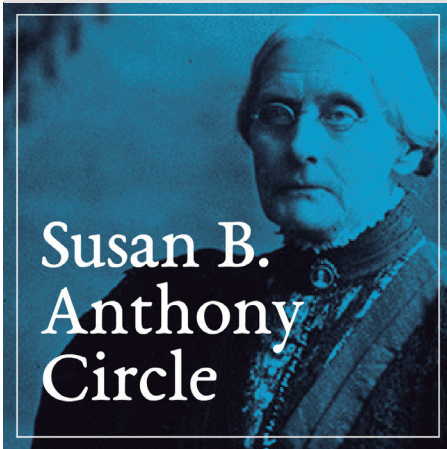
“...in this world, where cruelty prevails in so many aspects of our life, I would not add the weight of choice to kill rather than to let live.”



Elizabeth
Cady
Stanton
Circle

\$5,000

“There must be a remedy for such a crying evil as this. But where shall it be found, at least where begin, if not in the complete enfranchisement and elevation of women?”



Susan B.
Anthony
Circle

\$10,000

“Sweeter even than to have had the joy of caring for children of my own has it been for 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.”



The
Revolution
Circle

\$15,000

Owned by Susan B. Anthony and co-edited by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, they provided the megaphone for suffragists who condemned abortion calling it “child murder”, “infanticide”, and “foeticide.”



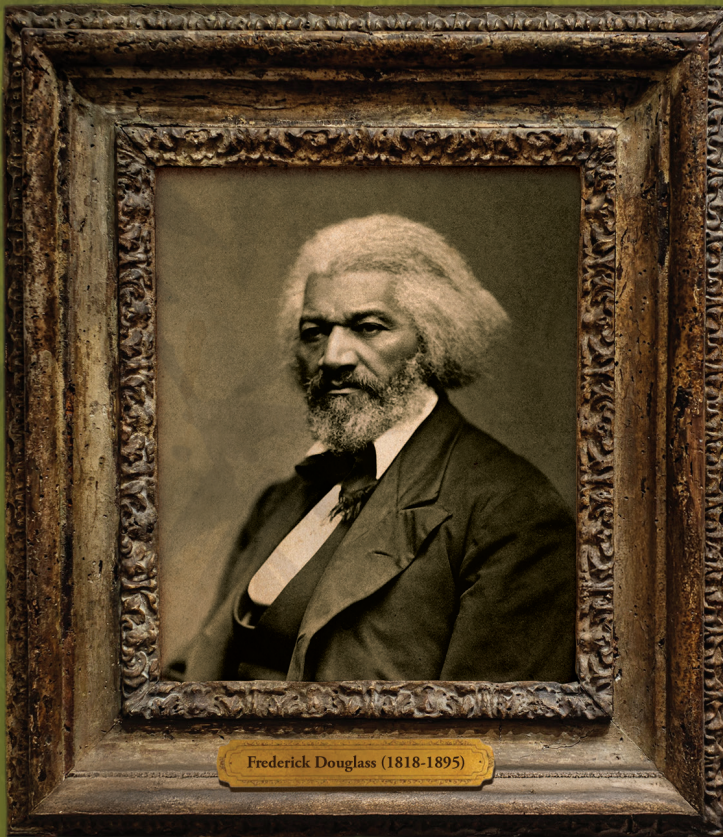
Alice Paul
Circle

\$25,000

“Abortion is the ultimate in the exploitation of women.”

MEN HAVE A FEMINIST HERITAGE, TOO

BY DAMIAN J. GEMINDER AND ERIC HOLLENBECK



Men have always played a vital role in the pro-life movement and in the feminist cause. As we approach the Centennial Celebration of the 19th Amendment* establishing women's right to vote, we acknowledge the contributions of men who sought equality for women through suffrage—including some who also worked to protect women and children from abortion.



William Lloyd Garrison
(1805-1879)

As FFL President Serrin Foster explained in her op-ed published by *The Washington Examiner* on the 99th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, "When male abolitionists attending the World Anti-Slavery Convention in 1840 decided that females in attendance," including Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, "would be silent, William Lloyd Garrison decided that if women could not be heard, he would not speak."

“
If women could not be heard, he
would not speak.
”



Daniel Read Anthony
(1824-1904)

Similarly, when Susan B. Anthony was denied the right to speak at a Quaker meeting in support of temperance, there were men who supported her.

Anthony also had a major supporter within her own family. Her brother Daniel Read Anthony was a staunch abolitionist and a supporter of full suffrage. He was known to be very fiery and hot-tempered; he fought against the Confederacy as a lieutenant colonel and fiercely resisted President Andrew Johnson's policies after the war, which almost landed him in prison.

Men Have A Feminist Heritage, Too

Like William Lloyd Garrison, Frederick Douglass also correlated abolition with the demands of feminism, recognizing that equality with human beings in bondage was linked to equality of the sexes.

Douglass openly supported the suffrage movement, proclaiming in 1848, that because "that government is only just which governs by the free consent of the governed, there can be no reason in the world for denying to women the exercise of the elective franchise."

Born a slave who became a major figure in the abolitionist movement, Douglass was an adviser to President Abraham Lincoln and a dear friend and ally to suffragists.

Douglass parted ways with Susan B. Anthony for a time when he determined that black men should achieve suffrage first, and Anthony, who had earlier signed a declaration in support of universal suffrage, chose to pursue women's rights. Later in life, after the 14th Amendment was added to the Constitution, they reunited as Douglass returned to champion women's suffrage.

The New York Times reported that on the day Douglass died, he had attended a suffrage meeting and was allowed to stay during the secret business session. He was honored by the National Council of Women for being the only man invited to share the dais with the officers, and the Rev. Anna Howard Shaw and Anthony were asked to escort him to the platform. Later that night as he excitedly recounted the activities of the day to his wife, Douglass suffered a heart attack or stroke at their home in Anacostia Heights in Washington D.C. Upon hearing the news, Anthony was visibly shaken.

Another prominent suffragist, Henry Blackwell, even had his own wedding vows changed so that he could include the enfranchisement of women's rights as a promise to his wife.



Henry Browne Blackwell
(1825-1909)



Thetus W. Sims
(1852-1939)

Male suffragists were not limited to the North. In 1918, Thetus W. Sims, a representative from Tennessee's 8th Congressional District, had injured himself severely prior to a vote on suffrage. Despite his suffering, Sims managed to attend the vote and lobby his House colleagues to vote yes for women's rights after a lengthy hearing, and indeed, it was Tennessee that put the 19th Amendment over the top, as the 36th of the then-48 states to do so. Sims' incredible dedication to suffrage despite his pain is emblematic of the type of passion necessary to fight for the needs of women.

Later on in the movement, as Alice Paul and Lucy Burns were marching for the right to vote, they experienced terrible vitriol from male counter-protesters who called the women brutes, threw bottles at them, and even had the police called against them. Some men, however, turned out to be unlikely allies. **The Men's League for Women's Suffrage walked in support of suffrage when it was unpopular or thought of as emasculating to do so.**

Author Max Eastman was one of these men. He keenly observed, "People who demand neutrality in any situation are usually not neutral but in favor of the status quo."



Max Eastman
(1883-1969)

“
People who demand neutrality in any situation are usually not neutral but in favor of the status quo.
”

In today’s society, where sexual assault, economic disadvantage, racial disparity, and the promotion of abortion as a solution to women’s crises are seemingly everywhere in the news, it is time for men to step up as those before and to stop being neutral.

American men were not the only male suffragists. English philosopher, abolitionist, and supporter of women’s suffrage John Stuart Mill wrote in *The Subjection of Women*, “I consider it presumption in



John Stuart Mill
(1806-1873)

anyone to pretend to decide what women are or are not, can or cannot be, by natural constitution.” Mill recognized that society had no right whatsoever to assume that women by their nature were not capable of independence and autonomy. He, too, sternly reproached those

who ignored the plights of both women and slaves in what was supposed to be a free new world.

“
Quack Medicine venders [sic], however rich, proud, and pretentious, Foeticides and Infanticides, should be classed together and regarded with shuddering horror by the whole human race.
”

Abolitionist and suffragist Parker Pillsbury, co-editor of *The Revolution*, explained the reason why the publication chose not to accept advertisements—including those for thinly disguised abortifacients, the most lucrative form of income for a periodical at the time: **“Quack Medicine venders [sic], however rich, proud, and pretentious, Foeticides and Infanticides, should be classed together and regarded with shuddering horror by the whole human race.”**

Rather than betray their feminist principles when *The Revolution* fell into debt, Anthony filed for bankruptcy after just four years. But by then, Pillsbury along with Woodhull & Claflin’s Weekly and others, had documented the first wave feminists’ strong opposition to abortion.



Parker Pillsbury
(1809-1898)

Today, many of the male advocates of women’s suffrage have been forgotten, but their message lives on as we celebrate the centennial of the 19th Amendment. In the United States, feminism remains a core philosophy whose definition is often obscured, denied, and debated. Yet men like Douglass, Garrison, Pillsbury and so many others remind us that upholding the tenets of equality between the sexes necessitates change in our own lives, including standing up for the vulnerable—and standing up to our peers. □

**Reprinted from the Spring/Summer 2020 issue of The American Feminist titled “Pedaling Towards Freedom” published during the Centennial Celebration of the 19th Amendment.*



Eric Hollenbeck
FFL’s Co-Author



Damian J. Geminder
FFL’s Late Editor and Co-Author

Child Support



THE COMPLEXITIES OF CHILD SUPPORT

BY JOYCE MCCAULEY-BENNER

Editor's Note:

We interviewed former nurse and FFL board secretary Sharon Long from New York, now a child support enforcement caseworker, to get an insider's viewpoint of the complexities of collecting child support from non custodial parents who are often fathers

Providing real choices for women involves providing real economic choices for men also. Can you expand more on that?

In my professional experience, many if not most of the non-custodial parents, mainly fathers, who do not pay court ordered child support are unemployed. They tell me that they cannot find jobs because they do not have reliable transportation, and because jobs are unavailable or difficult to obtain, especially when they are over 35 or have criminal records (even when the charges are minor or when the father might actually be innocent of the charges).

Child support guidelines were based on estimates of the proportion of household income that is used for supporting a child in an intact family, including housing costs. However, this is a huge amount of money for a low or even middle income man who can barely support himself. Those living in urban or suburban areas on both coasts, where housing costs are very high, struggle even more to make ends meet and pay obligations. However, moving to a lower-cost area can mean fewer employment opportunities and increased transportation costs for driving longer distances to work. In addition, he might be further away from his children.

Thus, a non-custodial parent, knowing that he will not have enough money to live on if he has to pay child support, will sometimes either flee the area or try to hide his income—for example, by deliberately “working off the books,” meaning he will work for cash only or take jobs that do not report income.

So does child support enforcement encourage the involvement of fathers?

Only sometimes.

Part of the problem is that child support is generally sent to the child support enforcement office first, not paid to the custodial parent directly. The advantage is that there is a neutral record of how much child support is actually paid, decreasing arguments. Furthermore, the child support enforcement office has access to numerous databases that can locate an absent parent and his income and assets.

The disadvantage is that sending money to a government agency first instead of to the custodial parent and children directly may help sever or weaken a man's emotional relationship with his children in some cases.

In addition, child support agencies often collect up to 65% of the non-custodial parent's net pay. In fact, if a non-custodial parent has children by more than one woman, even 65% may not cover the full amount of the obligation.

Women Deserve Better[®]

BETTER CHOICES > BETTER LIFE



**What You Need
to Know about
Paternal
Support**

WomenDeserveBetter.com

However, the knowledge that child support is available may give a woman in an unplanned pregnancy a real choice, enabling her to prevent abortion and choose life. Knowing that she has a legitimate right to help from the father can reduce anxiety and allow her to "exhale."

Do you find that those fathers who do not have the economic means to pay child support help out in any other way?

Increasingly I have seen this.

Many fathers take advantage of their visitation orders by having the children with them during the specified times, which frequently means that the child is in his home during the weekend with the father paying the expenses at that time. Other fathers give money or other material assistance, like clothes, to the mothers or children directly. Many also help with transporting the children to daycare, school, and sports events. It seems that they often take on the majority of the child care responsibilities while the mother works. I am also seeing increasing numbers of cases where men are custodial parents.

We understand child support can be a difficult and sometimes depressing topic. What are the successes you have found that keep you going?

Why do I do it? Partially because I know that I have kept many women and children out of homeless shelters and many children out of foster care.

Unlike workers in many social service jobs that are basically just giving "information and referral," I am actually providing real money to custodial parents that they desperately need. This is not money from the state but money from the non-custodial parents, who were partners in creating the children and have a sacred responsibility to support and nurture them.

“
As a pro-life feminist, I believe child support enforcement is the most effective thing I can do as an individual to prevent abortion.
”

I acknowledge that there are very serious bureaucratic problems and economic injustices which sometimes pit poor parents against each other. However, I help empower both custodial and non-custodial parents by enabling them to stand up for their rights and the rights of their children and feel good about taking that responsibility.

As a pro-life feminist, I believe child support enforcement is the most effective thing I can do as an individual to prevent abortion.

I am thanked daily for the work I do by both my custodial and non-custodial clients. In addition, I keep a file folder with all the unsolicited thank you notes and Christmas cards that I have received from my clients. It is my most cherished possession. ☐



Paternal Support

A father can be incredibly important to the mother of the child as well as their child. His active participation in their lives can enrich everyone's on many levels—including his own. In many cases, without his financial support, women and children are more likely to live in poverty.

Of course, every situation and relationship is different, and there may be circumstances in which both the mom and baby are better off without the father in their lives. These are important decisions, a trusted adviser can help families think through all of the decisions and emotions that are ahead.

- Like the mother, the baby's father has both rights and responsibilities.
- If you are married to each other, family counseling is available through both private and government sources.
- When the mother and father are single and do not plan to marry before the baby is born, the father should voluntarily establish paternity at the hospital when the baby is born. This will provide the basis of financial support for the child and visitation rights for the father.
- If adoption is considered, talk to a local adoption agency about what the biological father may need to do, whether he has been informed of the pregnancy, and how his actions may affect the adoption plan.
- If the father will not accept responsibility for his child, the mother should get as much information about him and his family as she can, including his Social Security number, home address, work and home phone numbers, medical history, his parents' address, and his mother's maiden name. This will assist her in securing child support should she choose to parent, and doctors should have this information for medical purposes. And one day, when the child has questions, answers can be provided.
- The father of the child may try to say that he will pay for an abortion but will not provide child support. The law prohibits this. Remember, no one has a right to coerce anyone into having an abortion—not the boyfriend, husband, or parents.

Child support cannot be enforced until paternity is established. Consider contacting an attorney to protect the child's rights, or call the local Office of Child Support Enforcement and local Legal Aid organization.

Women Deserve Better: Feminists for Life's helpsite now features over 340 articles helping women to WORK, LEARN, LIVE, and LOVE better. Check out the newest additions!

WORK:



LEARN:



LOVE:



RELATIONSHIP SAFETY:



- How to Apply for a College Scholarship
- The Best Colleges for Student-Parents

LIVE:

- How to Help Your Newborn Sleep with White Noise
- Fun with Art and Your Child
- How to Reduce Your Screen Time
- Helpful Tips for Choosing TV Shows for Your Kids
- Tips to Walk More Everyday
- How to Keep Your Kids Safe from Outdoor Pests
- Celebrating the Holidays with Foster and Newly Adopted Children



HOW YOU CAN HELP:

Download and post the free ad in your community! It is available at Women Deserve Better.com under Support Us.

Post with permission at:

- pregnancy resource centers
- campus dorms
- women's restrooms
- doctors' offices especially ob/gyn providers, pediatricians, and family practices
- YWCA
- social service centers
- houses of worship
- community bulletin boards

Share our website online!

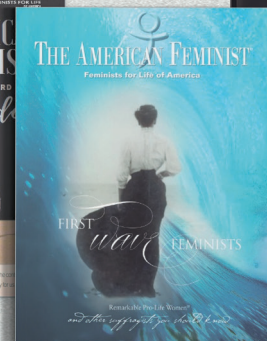
And if you have a tip, send it to [info@WomenDeserveBetter.com!](mailto:info@WomenDeserveBetter.com)

ORDER YOUR COVETABLE STUFFSM NOW!

PERFECT FOR GIFT-GIVING SEASON



The American Feminist[®] Get Your Curated Collection! Feminist History



INTRODUCING THE NEW GIRLS DESERVE BETTER® WEBSITE!

Today, teens and young women are challenged in ways unheard of in the last decade, or even in the last century.

Our society oversexualizes vulnerable teens and young women.

Abortion providers, advocates, predators, teen media, entertainment industry executives, and their allies—including legislators—have worked hard to blur the margins of

- what is *good*,
- what is *acceptable*,
- and what is *expected*.

Girls Deserve Better®.

Teen girls deserve a safe space to be empowered and protected; informed and inspired.

They deserve a place to gain self worth and mental health support, learn about healthy relationships and sex trafficking and prevention.

A place to know they are FOREVER PRICELESS.





Introducing our newest website, Girls Deserve Better.org!





The website offers four sections for teen girls and others to get support and dig deeper into the issues that most affect them.

“Women You May Not Know” introduces teens to our Feminist Foremothers and other Remarkable Pro-Life Women®:

Featured Articles

<h4>Self-Worth</h4>  <p>Find Friends Who Value You for Who You Are</p> <p><small>by Clare Hettich</small> Have you felt alone—even in a crowded bus or cafeteria? Have you thought</p>	<h4>Mental Health Support</h4>  <p>What to do if You Know that a Teen is Homeless</p> <p><small>by Bella Fechter</small> If you find out that a classmate or peer is homeless, you may feel sad,</p>	<h4>Healthy Relationships</h4>  <p>What to do if You Hear That Someone Is About to be Bullied</p> <p><small>by Clare Hettich</small> Reporting bullying can be scary. You might worry that</p>	<h4>Sex Trafficking Prevention</h4>  <p>A Letter to Teens</p> <p><small>by Joyce McCauley-Benner</small> I hope this message of “You are FOREVER Priceless” touches you deeply. I hope that you can hear it, live it, and spread it. The world you have to navigate in is filled</p>
--	--	--	--

Women You May Not Know

 <p>Susan B. Anthony</p> <p><small>“Forget conventionalisms; forget what the world thinks of you stepping out of your place; think your best thoughts, speak your best words, work your best works, looking to your own conscience for approval.”</small></p>	 <p>Julia Ward Howe</p> <p><small>Abolitionist. Suffragist. Poet. Creator of Mother’s Day.</small></p>	 <p>Dr. Mabel Ping Hua-Lee</p> <p><small>This Chinese-American suffragist marched in 1912 at the age of 16.</small></p>
--	--	---

The website also features our Girls Deserve Better Instagram feed:

Treat a special girl in your life to our Girls Deserve Better merchandise! Order at <https://www.feministsforlife.org/covetable-stuff/>



FEMINISTS FOR LIFE
OF AMERICA

PO Box 151567
Alexandria, VA 22315

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**Good dads lift up their kids
and make them soar...**

**...and catch
them as
they fall.**

**Honor
fathers.**

