

Name

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Title

For the last several years there have been a lot of heated discussions regarding abortion between pro-choice supporters and pro-life supporters in America. This work will argue against legal banning of abortion and will try to find another solution to the issue.

The most common point against legal prohibition of abortion is related to the most extreme situations which are pregnancy caused by rape and pregnancy that will lead to the death of a woman. The fact that these arguments are valid and serious can be proved by statistics. World Health Organization performed research of rape-related pregnancy in the United States in 1999-2002 and came to the conclusion that rape led to pregnancy in about 5 percent of cases causing over 32,000 pregnancies each year (162). According to FBI, there were approximately 90,185 reported rape assaults in 2015, which is 6.3 percent higher than in 2014 (*2015 Crime in the United States: Rape*). So it can be assumed that there also was a significant number of rape-related pregnancies that year, and there is a tendency for the increase of this number. Children conceived in rape are obviously unwanted. They are a constant reminder to their mothers of the terrifying experience in their lives. Most likely such children will lack love and care which will have negative consequences on their psychological state and ability to become a healthy, happy, and useful member of the community when they grow up. It can be argued that children conceived through rape should be born and then adopted, but there are two significant objections to it. First of all, such a child will bear genes of a rapist, and there is a chance it will affect the child's behavior or the behavior of his/her descendants. Secondly, - and this is also a general argument against the



statement that it is better to give birth to a child and then give it away for adoption than to make an abortion, – a great number of children in foster houses wait for adoption for a long time which also leads to psychological trauma of a child. According to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 101,840 children waited for adoption in public foster care on September 30th, 2013. We should also consider the state of a biological mother. Not only will she have to relive the rape experience during the 9 months of pregnancy, but she will also get a lifelong trauma of having forsaken her child. Another situation is when pregnancy and giving birth will end in a woman's death because of pregnancy complications. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention inform that more than 50,000 women in the USA suffer severe maternal morbidity every year. In such a situation forcing a female to give birth to a child will be equal to killing her.

Often single women and couples decide to proceed with abortion because they cannot afford to raise a child (or one more child). As of 2015, 43.1 million Americans lived in poverty, according to the U.S. Census Bureau (“What Is the Current Poverty Rate in the United States?”). It is also possible that harsh financial situation prevents people from constant usage of effective contraceptives.

Many pro-life activists claim that a fetus is already a living human being, and it should be granted the right to life. But medical findings disagree with this statement. In medicine, human life is defined by brain activity of a human being. So it starts on the eighth week of gestation, when a fetus's brain begins sending pulse signals to the body, and ends with brain death (Goldenring 198). Lack of brain activity leads not only to the absence of consciousness, but also to the inability of feeling pain in an embryo. Thus, abortion cannot be considered an act of sadism towards a fetus.

But probably the most important pro-choice argument is that banning abortion deprives a woman of control over her body. People cannot be obliged to donate their organs



to a dying relative, even if their refusal leads to the death of a patient. But a pregnant woman will be forced to let a fetus use her body in a similar way to live. So anti-abortion law will actually grant more rights to an embryo than to a born individual (a hypothetical patient who requires a donation), while completely ignoring the rights of a pregnant woman. Many pro-choice activists argue that banning abortion is not really about saving lives of fetuses, but about “punishing” a woman and keeping her constrained. Pregnancy is not an easy process which causes a lot of physical and emotional suffering. Forcing a woman to go through it without her consent can be considered a torture. Pregnancy and raising a child also changes a female’s life significantly. She cannot work or continue education for at least some time during pregnancy. It makes a woman dependent on people who support her and leads to fewer and poorer job offers for her in future. Anti-abortion law undermines the very concept of Planned Parenthood. It leads to unwanted children being born to unwilling parents. Everyone suffers in this situation: the child, the parents, and the society in general. Also, banning abortion will not lead to no abortions. As examples of many countries who tried to apply such laws show, the rate of abortions does not drastically change from banning them. Women will still undergo abortions, but the procedures will be illegal, without the necessary medical care and beneficial conditions. Such abortions are extremely dangerous and lead to high percentage of severe health complications and female mortality.

Although pro-choice activists support the right to abortion, it does not mean that they consider abortion a positive phenomenon. But decreasing abortion rate cannot be achieved by banning the procedure. Such means will have only negative consequences for health and well-being of individuals and society. On the other hand, comprehensive sex education and available contraceptives will be efficient in significantly decreasing abortion rates without violating anyone’s rights.

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