

Pro-choice Activists Admit Abortion Takes a Life

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It is sometimes assumed in the abortion debate that the fundamental difference between the pro-life and pro-choice position is conflicting views on when human life begins. Pro-lifers believe that life begins at conception. The fetus in the womb is a human being. Pro-lifers use science and reason to back up this premise. Pro-choicers, on the other hand, are thought to believe that a baby in the womb is not a human life. They think life does not begin at conception. Or they may believe that a fetus, while physically alive, is not a baby.

Many pro-lifers think that if we can just convince pro-choicers that a preborn fetus is a human being, they will change their minds and embrace the pro-life cause. Sadly, for many, if not most, this is not true.

More and more pro-choice activists are admitting that a preborn baby *is* a living human being. Their pro-choice stand is based not on the belief that the baby is not a human being, but rather on the belief that killing the baby is justified.

This opinion was expressed in Naomi Wolf's essay "Our Bodies, Our Souls: Rethinking Pro-Choice Rhetoric." Her essay, which appeared in the October 16, 1995, issue of *The New Republic*, contains this passage:

It was when I was four months pregnant, sick as a dog, and in the middle of an argument, that I realized I could no longer tolerate the fetus-is-nothing paradigm of the pro-choice movement. I was being interrogated by a conservative, and the subject of abortion rights came up. "You're four months pregnant," he said. "Are you going to tell me that's not a baby you're carrying?"

The accepted pro-choice response at such a moment in the conversation is to evade: to move as swiftly as possible to a discussion of "privacy" and "difficult personal decisions" and "choice." Had I not been so nauseated and so cranky and so weighed down with the physical gravity of what was going on inside me, I might not have told what is the truth for me. "Of course, it's a baby," I snapped. And went rashly on: "And if I found myself in circumstances in which I had to make the terrible decision to end this life, then that would be between myself and God."¹

Many pro-life readers found this revelation shocking, and some pro-choice activists criticized Wolf. Having a fellow activist suddenly proclaim that yes, a fetus has been a baby all along, was jarring to them. They saw her rhetoric as a threat to abortion rights. But despite the outcry from some pro-choicers, others have echoed her sentiments.

One example is abortion supporter Judith Arcana. Arcana was part of the group JANE. JANE was a group of feminists that was established before abortion was legalized. JANE started as a referral service that connected pregnant women with illegal abortionists. Later, the members of JANE, who had no medical degrees, performed abortions on women themselves. They did illegal abortions in all three trimesters of pregnancy. Arcana, therefore, is both a pro-abortion activist and a former illegal abortionist. She says:

I performed abortions, I have had an abortion and I am in favor of women having abortions when we choose to do so. But we should never disregard the fact that being pregnant means there is a baby growing inside of a woman, a baby whose life is ended. We ought not to pretend this is not happening.²

Arcana readily admits that abortion kills a baby. She clearly feels that abortions are justified, even though they kill babies. She has no problem with believing a woman has the right to murder her baby for personal reasons.

In an interview, Arcana was asked whether pro-choice activists should show pictures of starving children to illustrate the need for abortion and argue for legal abortion. She felt they shouldn't, because, "Surely the outcome of that approach is to make the case less woman-centered. *Surely the child is really irrelevant to the issue* (emphasis added)."³

It is clear Arcana sees a preborn baby as a child, just like pro-lifers do. She just supports killing that child.

Julia Black echoed these sentiments in an interview in which she discussed *My Fetus*, a pro-abortion documentary that she directed. In an interview with ABC's Tony Jones, she said, bluntly, "[The idea of] dismembering a baby and pulling it out in pieces ... is obviously horrific. But at the same time, it is easy to get caught up in that emotion."⁴

Julia Black implies that while abortion does indeed kill a baby by dismemberment, this act is nothing to be concerned about. There is no need to get "caught up" in an emotional reaction to the baby's murder. The baby's dismemberment is of no consequence. What is important is the mother's desire not to be pregnant. Those of us who are troubled by the thought of a baby being violently torn apart are overreacting and overemotional. We should just get over it and accept abortion.

Black also acknowledged that babies are killed by abortion when she said:

Having looked at the facts, uncomfortable as they are, you have to make up your own mind as to which life takes priority. That decision is a moral one, that only you can make.⁵

Choosing abortion means sacrificing a life, acknowledges Black. But it should still be a woman's choice.

Is this callous attitude limited to only a few pro-choice advocates on the fringe? To answer that question, one needs to look no further than to Faye Wattleton, the former president of Planned Parenthood.

Planned Parenthood is the leading provider of abortions in America. Its legal arm is active in fighting pro-life legislation on both the state and federal levels. Planned Parenthood has successfully campaigned against parental notification bills, laws requiring a woman to be offered a chance to see her sonogram before consenting to an abortion, and even bills requiring abortion clinics to be licensed and regulated. However, Wattleton, who served as president of Planned Parenthood for years, has written the following in her book *How to Talk to Your Child about Sexuality*:

There are many sperm cells in the [seminal] fluid. If one of them meets an egg cell inside the mother, new life can begin to grow ... if one of your friends is pregnant, ask her to let your child feel the baby move ... [A] baby grows in a special place inside the mother, called the uterus—not in her stomach. In nine months, it is born.⁶

Wattleton, who presided over arguably the most aggressive pro-abortion organization in the country, one that is, in fact, the country's number one provider of abortions, freely admitted that a baby is developing in a woman's womb—not a clump of cells or tissue. Of course, in this case she is talking about a wanted baby. But she clearly knows that a baby in the womb is a baby. Despite knowing this, she fought to keep abortion legal and promoted legislation to keep women uninformed of its true nature.

Wattleton campaigned against informed consent laws, which make sure a woman has all the facts about her pregnancy before she submits to an abortion. We can only imagine how vehemently she would have fought against a law requiring the abortionist to tell women they are pregnant with a "baby." Yet in her book, she uses that very term.

This quote from Wattleton, once one of the most prominent pro-choice activists in the United States, shows that movers and shakers in the pro-choice movement are well aware of what abortion really is. They are increasingly unafraid to say it.

Wattleton is also known to have said, "Women are not stupid ... Women have always known that there was a life there."⁷

Wattleton also said the following in *Ms. Magazine*:

Some people seem to believe that we cannot talk openly, honestly, and with confidence in making the case for late-term abortion and expect that the American people will be with us, that we cannot say that abortion is killing.⁸

In 2003, another pro-choice advocate, Kathleen McDonnell, wrote in her pro-abortion book, "Abortion is in some sense an act of violence, and indisputably results in the termination of a life."⁹

McDonnell continues to support legalized abortion despite this admission.

The trend of pro-choice activists admitting in public that abortion kills babies is not unique to America. In Australia, pro-choice author Leslie Cannold stated in her book *The Abortion Myth: Feminism, Morality, and the Hard Choices Women Make*: "Any woman who has felt a baby stir inside her [and] any man who has seen the tiny heart pulsing on an ultrasound screen knows that abortion is about ending a life."¹⁰

Leslie Cannold also said the following at the end of her book:

My mother and stepfather recently came over from the United States for a visit. This was the first time either had seen their youngest grandchild, an active, happy baby who likes to smile a lot. After an afternoon of beaming at grandma and grandpa and getting lots of cuddles in return, the baby was bundled off by my husband for a nap.

With just the adults around the table, the subject of this book came up. "It would be so much harder to have an abortion after you'd had one," my mother opined, nodding in the direction of the baby's room. "You know what you're doing. I mean, it's a *baby!*"

This took me aback. Remember, she was the one I was stuffing envelopes with for the pro-choice movement way back when and—to risk stating the obvious—she had been a mother herself.

"Yes," I said, "but that's precisely the reason you'd have an abortion—if you couldn't be in it body and soul. Because you know all that's involved. *Because it's a baby.*"

My stepfather got it straight away, but my mother was close behind. "That's true," she said, nodding her head slowly, "that's definitely true."

It is because our babies are so important—and in order that they remain so—that women must be given the legal right and be trusted with the moral responsibility to say about becoming a mother "yes," "not now," "not ever," or "not again."¹¹

The same book quotes British author and pro-choice activist Eileen Fairweather saying: “It is possible for people to support a woman’s right to choose whether they believe that abortion is killing or not.”¹²

The implication is that abortion should be permitted even if it’s killing a baby. These women believe it is perfectly acceptable to kill babies in their mothers’ wombs. One needn’t even bother trying to hide the fact that abortion kills a baby. The public should just accept that abortion is fine—even knowing that it is murder.

Penny Lane, creator of *The Abortion Diaries* says the following in an interview in *Salon*:

Most of the abortions in America are about convenience. People need to accept abortion for what it is: a valid part of the reproductive spectrum. I want it to be seen as normal; if 1.3 million women in this country have one every year, it’s gotta be normal.¹³

Yet later, in that same interview, she says:

I remember feeling conflicted about the magic of being pregnant. I felt electricity running through my body. Not for a minute did I not think of it as a life. I knew it was a baby.¹⁴

In one breath, abortion is an acceptable, common, *normal* occurrence that shouldn’t bother anyone. In the next, it is the killing of a baby.

One prominent pro-choice activist is Jennifer Baumgardner. She is the creator of the “I Had an Abortion” T-shirt and the campaign surrounding it. The T-shirt campaign encouraged women to wear shirts proclaiming that they had abortions. They were encouraged to speak about their abortions with pride.

Baumgardner frequently speaks at pro-choice functions and fundraisers. She describes what happened to her at one such event in her book *Abortion & Life*:

I had my own moment of truth during my fifth month of pregnancy in May 2004. A small moment, but it changed me. I was speaking to a group from Barnard’s College Students for Choice when I referred to the object in one’s uterus when one is pregnant as a “baby.”

A nurse practitioner who was speaking after me interrupted “Fetus, you mean. You said baby, but it’s a fetus.”

“Oh, right,” I stammered, blushing. “Oops.” I felt foolish, caught in an ignorant mistake. Later, though, I realized that I had always thought of my pregnancy as carrying a baby—that was the word I wanted to use—and I was forcing myself to say “fetus” out of fear.

... I thought of other phrases that I forced myself to use too, like “so-called partial birth abortion” and “anti-choice.” These phrases suddenly struck me as legal jargon, words in the service of arguments that weren’t themselves always meaningful. Suppressing language, policing ourselves so we don’t slip up and say “baby” continues the split between our politics and our lives.¹⁵

Jennifer Baumgardner, one of the most active new faces in the pro-choice movement, is continuing a trend that is becoming more and more blatant in that movement. They have gone from denying the obvious—that a preborn baby is a developing human being—to advocating homicide outright, admitting that abortion kills babies and saying that’s perfectly fine.

Pro-choice leader Loretta Ross, who is the national coordinator of SisterSong: Women of Color Reproductive Health Collective, is also quoted in Baumgardner’s book saying:

Every woman who is pregnant wonders if she has a bedroom for that child; can she afford to take off the time to raise that child? ... When women don’t have jobs or health care, where is the choice? There is nothing worse than a woman aborting a baby she wanted because she couldn’t support it.¹⁶

It is commendable that Ross speaks out against women being pressured to abort their children due to poverty. Pro-lifers have been talking about this for years. In fact, pro-lifers have a long tradition of helping poor pregnant women. Crisis pregnancy centers have been offering clothing, housing, and baby items to poor women since before abortion became legal, and there are many examples of individual pro-lifers helping women.

But notice that Ross refers to “aborting a baby,” and uses the word “child” twice. She seems to know that abortion kills a child.

Lifelong pro-abortion activist Gloria Steinem says, “How can [the law] differentially apply to two people who may be legally separate, but who actually inhabit the same body?”¹⁷

She refers to both the mother and the baby as “people.” Obviously, Steinem knows a fetus is a baby.

In an issue of *Time* magazine, Frances Kissling, former leader of the pro-abortion group Catholics for Free Choice, says, “Abortion is not like having your tooth pulled or having your appendix out. It involves the termination of an early form of human life. That deserves some gravitas.”¹⁸

Kate Michelman was the head of NARAL Pro-Choice America, one of the most extreme pro-abortion groups in the country. In her book, she recalls how she decided to have an abortion when she was younger:

When I did squarely confront abortion as a possibility, it was a very difficult decision. I had to weigh the responsibility I felt for the developing life within me against the moral, material, and practical responsibilities of my [born] daughters' well-being ... I have never, not once, questioned my choice to have that abortion.¹⁹

She may not have questioned her choice to take her baby's life, but she knows that it *was* a life. It's sad that after the death of her son or daughter, Michelman went on to devote the rest of her life to promoting abortion.

Authors Joanna Brien and Ida Fairbairn wrote a book called *Pregnancy and Abortion Counseling* which presented case histories of women who came in for abortions and gave instructions to abortion workers about how to talk to such women. The authors also interviewed a number of abortionists and clinic workers. This is a very pro-choice book, written for clinic workers and others interested in providing abortions.

At one point, the authors refer to abortion clinic workers whose job it is to do sonograms on women prior to their abortions. Most clinics do sonograms on each woman before their abortions because this helps date the pregnancy accurately and rules out the possibility of an ectopic (or tubal) pregnancy.

Referring to "the sonographer who has to date the pregnancy using ultrasound," Brien and Fairbairn say, "She witnesses the vibrant life in the womb and knows it is to be terminated. From our meeting with women who report their conversations, this is not easy."²⁰

These pro-abortion authors refer to the baby on the sonogram as "a vibrant life." They admit that it is hard for a sonographer to see the baby and know the child is about to be aborted. If a preborn baby was just tissue or nonhuman uterine matter, it would not be emotionally hard to see a pre-abortion sonogram. Do surgeons suffer emotional angst before they remove a tumor? But seeing the baby right before he or she is killed takes an emotional toll on the sonographers. There is no denial here that abortion takes life.

NARAL Pro-Choice America sent a letter to its members revealing that its leadership knows the truth about abortion. As I mentioned above, NARAL is possibly the most extreme anti-life group in the United States. They oppose all abortion restrictions and even fought the Born Alive Infant Protection Act. This Act requires abortionists to give care to any baby that survives the abortion process. NARAL is so extreme it wants abortionists to be able to kill or lethally neglect babies born alive after botched abortions.

When the Act was before Congress, NARAL released a press release saying in part:

The basic tenets of Roe v. Wade were the subject of yet another anti-choice assault today, as the House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution held a hearing on H.R. 492, the so-called “Born-Alive Infants Protection Act.” The Act would effectively grant legal personhood to a pre-viable fetus—in direct conflict with Roe—and would inappropriately inject prosecutors and lawmakers into the medical decision-making process. The bill was introduced by well-known abortion opponent Rep. Charles Canady (R—FL) and has been endorsed by the National Right to Life Committee....

The bill also attempts to inject Congress into what should be personal and private decisions about medical treatment in difficult and painful situations where a fetus has no chance for survival. It could also interfere with the sound practice of medicine by spurring physicians to take extraordinary steps in situations where their efforts may be futile and when their medical judgment may indicate otherwise.

This is not the first time we’ve seen Rep. Canady and his anti-choice colleagues attempt to chip away at the foundation of Roe v Wade in just this manner. Last year, the same subcommittee held a hearing on the so-called “Unborn Victims of Violence Act” ... With all these bills, anti-choice lawmakers purposefully set America on a path that they believe will ultimately lead to the overturn of Roe v. Wade. In keeping with this goal, the subcommittee has put the “Born-Alive Infants Protection Act” on the fast track and has scheduled a markup for Friday, July 21, 2000.²¹

NARAL has continued to oppose all attempts to protect living babies born after botched abortions since. They want the choice to kill a living, breathing, fully born baby that survived an abortion to be a “personal and private decision” for the woman and the abortionist.

Incidentally, not all babies born alive after abortions are “pre-viable.” Babies have been born alive during abortions and gone on to survive and thrive. Melissa Ohden was one such baby. In 1977 her mother went to St. Luke’s Hospital in Sioux City, Iowa, and was injected with saline solution, which was supposed to kill the infant Melissa. The mother failed to go into labor and was induced five days after the saline was injected. Melissa was born alive. Melissa’s maternal grandmother, who had pressured her mother into the abortion, demanded that she be left to die. In fact, the policy at St. Luke’s was for babies born alive after abortion to be placed in a utility closet and submerged in a bucket of formaldehyde, which soon killed the child.

But two nurses found out about the born-alive baby girl and fought to get her medical care. The infant Melissa received medical treatment. She was then adopted and is now a mother herself. She made a complete recovery from the abortion and is able-bodied. She reconciled with the woman who aborted her and wrote a memoir in which she describes meeting her birth mother. The memoir is entitled *You Carried Me: A Daughter’s Memoir*.

Another survivor of a saline abortion is Gianna Jessen. She was born alive when her 17-year-old mother went to labor after a saline injection on April 6, 1977. Jessen credits her survival to the fact that the abortionist was not on duty when she was born, and the nurses took pity on her. She lives with cerebral palsy as a consequence of her abortion.

Had these two abortions taken place today, they would likely have been done by Dilation and Evacuation. Jessen and Ohden would have been dismembered with little chance of being born alive.

As we've seen, NARAL is so extreme it opposes laws that would make it a crime to kill a born baby. But in 2015, NARAL referred to a child in the womb as a "baby" and even said that the baby feels pain, a claim pro-choice activists constantly deny.

NARAL released a letter to its supporters signed by NARAL supporter Dana Weinstein, asking for donations to NARAL to fight HR 36, the Pain Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, which would ban abortions after 20 weeks (5 months).

The letter began:

When I was more than 20 weeks pregnant, my doctor discovered our baby had horrifying severe fetal anomalies that could not have been discovered earlier in pregnancy.

If I'd carried our wanted and loved baby to term, she would have survived only for a short time, in a world of immense suffering. So, we chose to end our baby's pain.²²

NARAL used the term "baby" to describe the preborn child not once, but twice! Of course, this was a wanted baby. An unwanted baby would not be called a "baby" but instead a "fetus" or "tissue" or "a collection of cells." It is completely illogical to assume that the fetus is a child in a wanted pregnancy but not in an unwanted one. The biological fact of human life does not change based on whether the child is wanted or not.

To say that an abortion would "end our baby's pain" implies that the baby was in pain in the womb. Pro-choice people nearly always deny that babies in the womb feel pain. But here is NARAL tacitly admitting that these children do feel pain. If babies can suffer in the womb, they can definitely suffer while being dismembered. NARAL has contradicted the typical pro-choice narrative.

Pro-choice politician Joe Biden, who served as Obama's vice president and is now running for president, voted against anti-abortion bills many times in his career. He helped defeat numerous pro-life initiatives and always supported the pro-abortion agenda. He is now running

on a platform of abortion on demand. But in one interview, he admitted that he believed human life begins at conception. In an interview in *National Review*, Biden said:

I'm prepared to accept that at the moment of conception there's human life and being, but I am not prepared to say that to other God-fearing [and] non-God-fearing people that have a different view. Abortion is always wrong. All the principles of my faith, [which] I make no excuse for attempting to live up to – I don't all the time. But I'm not prepared to impose doctrine that I'm prepared to accept on the rest of [the country].²³

If Biden truly believes that a unique, individual human life begins at conception, but still supports legal abortion, he is advocating for the killing of human beings. Does Biden believe that the life of a baby begins at conception only if the woman herself believes that it does? Does he mean to say that if the mother is pro-life, her baby is a human being from conception but if she is pro-choice, her baby is not?

When life begins is a scientific fact. Scientific facts do not change based on whether a person believes them. The sun revolves around the earth whether I think it does or not. In the same way, the life of an individual human starts at conception – regardless of whether a person acknowledges this.

Camille Paglia, a pro-choice activist and writer for *Salon*, says:

[I] have always frankly admitted that abortion is murder, the extermination of the powerless by the powerful. Liberals for the most part have shrunk from facing the ethical consequences of their embrace of abortion, which results in the annihilation of concrete individuals and not just clumps of insensate tissue. The state in my view has no authority whatever to intervene in the biological processes of any woman's body, which nature has implanted there before birth and hence before that woman's entrance into society and citizenship.

On the other hand, I support the death penalty for atrocious crimes (such as rape-murder or the murder of children). I have never understood the standard Democratic combo of support for abortion and yet opposition to the death penalty. Surely it is the guilty rather than the innocent who deserve execution?²⁴

Paglia comes right out and admits that abortion is murder. However, she supports this murder. Her comment on pro-choice people who support killing preborn babies but oppose the death penalty is notable. Many pro-lifers are also confused by this strange contradiction, the position of promoting death for the innocent and opposing death for the guilty. Paglia feels that both the guilty murderer and the innocent baby should die. She is pro-death in both instances. She even tacitly admits that the child, as a murder victim, is innocent.

Ann Furedi is not only a pro-abortion activist, but the director of a large chain of abortion clinics. She is the head of the British Pregnancy Advisory Service, which runs multiple abortion facilities. BPAS is in fact the largest abortion provider in Great Britain. In an article defending late-term abortion, Furedi says:

Many women, who would have few qualms about opting for a pregnancy to be terminated in its early weeks, balk at the thought of ending a life they have felt move inside them.²⁵

At another time, Furedi said:

We can accept that the embryo is a living thing in the fact that it has a beating heart, that it has its own genetic system within it. It's clearly human in the sense that it's not a gerbil, and we can recognize that it is human life... the point is not when does human life begin, but when does it really begin to matter?²⁶

According to Furedi, abortion is ending a human life. How does she feel about presiding over an organization that takes tens of thousands of lives a year? She makes all her money through abortion, i.e., through taking life. This does not trouble her conscience.

In 2013 Salon ran an article entitled "So What If Abortion Ends a Life?" which starts with the words "I believe life starts at conception. And it's never stopped me from being pro-choice."²⁷ The article is by pro-abortion author Mary Elizabeth Williams. She writes:

While opponents of abortion eagerly describe themselves as "pro-life," the rest of us have had to scramble around with not nearly as big-ticket words like "choice" and "reproductive freedom." The "life" conversation is often too thorny to even broach. Yet I know that throughout my own pregnancies, I never wavered for a moment in the belief that I was carrying a human life inside of me. I believe that's what a fetus is: a human life. And that doesn't make me one iota less solidly pro-choice.....

Here's the complicated reality in which we live: All life is not equal. That's a difficult thing for liberals like me to talk about, lest we wind up looking like death-panel-loving, kill-your-grandma-and-your-precious-baby storm troopers. Yet a fetus can be a human life without having the same rights as the woman in whose body it resides. She's the boss. Her life and what is right for her circumstances and her health should automatically trump the rights of the non-autonomous entity inside of her. Always.²⁸

Power to the strong! If you are small and helpless, you are on your own. Only born people matter, and if it's convenient for them to kill you, they should. To Williams, pro-lifers are wrong to protect the helpless baby—women are justified in killing.

Another feminist who promotes this philosophy is Kathleen Quinn. She wrote the following in *Mother Jones*:

Even though it kills a human life, abortion is, in fact, the moral choice to make when would-be mothers ascertain that their present circumstances do not enable them to raise a would-be child responsibly.²⁹

This touches on a common pro-abortion argument. Some pro-choicers claim a child is better off being aborted than being raised in a less-than-ideal situation. They say that it is better for a child to be aborted than to be abused, or better for a child to be aborted than to grow up poor.

Pro-lifers may ask them if we should also round up and kill all the children of abusive parents. Should we round up all the poor children and shoot them to save them from being poor? One doesn't save another person from abuse by killing them. Killing a person *is* abuse.

This twisted argument also devalues the lives of those who were abused as children and are now adults. Most people, even most people who had difficult childhoods, are glad they weren't killed.

To make the decision that a child is better off dead than in what one considers a bad situation is to exercise terrible power over an innocent human's life. If we murder people to protect them from being unhappy, why should we stop at fetuses? There are plenty of people with potential suffering in their futures.

Pro-abortion author Katie Roiphe writes the following in *Slate*:

The idea that "life begins at birth" is useful politically, but as many have pointed out, in the age of sonograms, of cloudy little hands and feet coming into focus at nine weeks, how many people actually believe it?

Our language betrays our desire. A cluster of cells that is wanted is a "baby," and one that is unwanted is a "fetus." One never hears excited parents-to-be referring to the "fetus"; the leap of imagination from fetus to baby is so ordinary, so automatic, so universal that we cannot pretend, even in the realm of political expediency, that it is not so. We can't try to argue that some clusters of cells are not "life" if we are, say, busy calling our own cluster of cells a baby....

Let's imagine a scenario in which we admit that abortions may involve an obliteration of something that could legitimately be called life but that they are done to protect something that could also be called life. Planned Parenthood is, after all, in the business of protecting women's lives, their futures, their ability to pursue education, to establish

security, to have homes filled with future children, and their freedom to decide how best to use their short time on earth.³⁰

The pro-life group Live Action has documented Planned Parenthood covering up the rape and abuse of minors, and women have died after botched Planned Parenthood abortions. One woman who died after an abortion at Planned Parenthood is Cree Erwin-Sheppard, a 24-year-old mother from Battle Creek, Michigan.³¹ Another is Edrica Goode, who was a student at Riverside Community College.³² Both women were African American. Obviously, Planned Parenthood did not protect the lives of *those* women, or any of the others who died or were maimed after abortions at Planned Parenthood. (Ironically, no woman has ever died in a crisis pregnancy center, although Planned Parenthood is determined to shut all of them down.)

But in any case, Roiphe acknowledges that abortion kills human lives. The justifications she gives for these killings include letting women pursue an education or become more “secure.” Are these valid reasons to kill a person? If a woman’s three-year-old daughter is interfering with her mother’s education by crying loudly when the mother wants to study, should the mother kill the child?

Here is a quote from pro-abortion feminist Naomi Ruth Lowinsky:

[T]hose who support a woman’s right to choose abortion also need to face the truth.... Abortion is not merely a medical procedure. It is the tearing from the womb of our own flesh and blood. It is a sacrifice of life, hopefully for life.³³

Lowinsky is referring not to preserving a woman’s physical life, but preserving a woman’s life exactly as she wants to live it, with no changes due to a new baby. Aside from ectopic pregnancy, there are very few conditions where the life of the baby needs to be sacrificed to save the life of the mother. Even a pro-choice abortionist who has done tens of thousands of abortions, Don Sloan, has said:

If a woman with a serious illness—heart disease, say, or diabetes—gets pregnant, the abortion procedure may be as dangerous for her as going through pregnancy ... with diseases like lupus, multiple sclerosis, even breast cancer, the chance that pregnancy will make the disease worse is no greater than the chance that the disease will either stay the same or improve. And medical technology has advanced to a point where even women with diabetes and kidney disease can be seen through a pregnancy safely by a doctor who knows what he’s doing. We’ve come a long way since my mother’s time...The idea of abortion to save the mothers’ life is something that people cling to because it sounds noble and pure—but medically speaking, it probably doesn’t exist. It’s a real stretch of our thinking.³⁴

Also, no pro-lifers I have ever known have advocated banning surgery to save a woman's life in an ectopic pregnancy. Other cases where a pregnancy must be ended to save the life of the mother before viability are extremely rare. Today, women can be seen through pregnancy with all kinds of medical diagnoses. In a situation where both mother and baby are sure to die if the pregnancy doesn't end, labor can be induced or a C-section done. The pregnancy can be ended without directly killing the baby through dismemberment or poisoning. Many pro-lifers don't consider inducing labor to save the woman's life to be a true abortion, because the baby is not directly killed. There are few pro-lifers who would demand that a woman die with her baby in the very, very rare cases where a woman's life is genuinely in danger.

Abortions aren't done to save pregnant people's lives, they are done because pregnant people don't want raise a baby and don't want to place a baby for adoption. They would rather eliminate the baby entirely, although many may not realize or believe they are actually killing their child.

David Noonin wrote a book defending the right to abortion. He spends 366 pages arguing that abortion should be legal and a woman's choice. Yet in the introduction to the book he says:

In the top drawer of my desk, I keep [a picture of my son]. This picture was taken on September 7, 1993, 24 weeks before he was born. The sonogram image is murky, but it reveals clearly enough a small head tilted back slightly, and an arm raised up and bent, with the hand pointing back toward the face and the thumb extended out toward the mouth. There is no doubt in my mind that this picture, too, shows [my son] at a very early stage in his physical development. And there is no question that the position I defend in this book entails that it would have been morally permissible to end his life at this point.³⁵

If Noonin is able to contemplate the death of his own child and find it to be acceptable, even hypothetically, what other moral atrocities might he accept?

Pro-choice writer Jason Deparle says:

In fact, we need neither The Silent Scream nor a degree in fetal physiology to tell us what we already know: that abortion is the eradication of human life and should be avoided whenever possible. Should it be legal? Yes, since the alternatives are worse.³⁶

Are the alternatives to abortion really worse? What are the alternatives to abortion? In 96% of cases, the alternatives are a healthy mother and a healthy baby. In roughly 4% of cases, there is a disabled baby, who nevertheless is a valuable human being and nearly always capable of giving and receiving love and enjoying life on at least some level. (Cases where the baby would die after birth make up only a fraction of one percent.)

In some cases, mother and baby will face obstacles that may make life difficult, at least for a short time. Is this worse than the death of the baby? The results of abortion are death for the child and, all too often, heartbreak for the mother. Why are these results of abortion better? Why is dismembering or poisoning a baby better than allowing one to be born?

Kirsten Moore of the pro-abortion Center for American Progress was quoted saying the following in *Newsweek*: “Women who are thinking about ending a pregnancy are not asking, ‘Is this a life?’ They know that it is. They are asking, ‘Can I take care of this baby?’”³⁷

There has never, to my knowledge, been a study or series of interviews done of women about to get abortions that asked them whether they believed they were killing babies. Some women may acknowledge that there is life within them but feel their circumstances are so desperate that their fear outweighs their commitment to the new life.

Other women may be deceived by abortion workers. Some women know nothing about fetal development, although with the advent of the internet this may be less common than before. A woman who searches can easily find pictures of preborn babies online, as well as pictures of aborted ones. Nevertheless, many women have talked about believing abortion workers who told them they weren’t carrying a baby, but just “tissue”.

A smaller group of women may know they are killing a baby, but just don’t care. To them, killing a baby is acceptable if it helps them meet their own life goals and avoid motherhood.

Indeed, some post-abortive women have no guilt and see no problem with their actions. One post-abortive woman writes:

I had an abortion in March, at the age of 32. I’m perfectly at peace with what I did, that it wasn’t the right time for us—BUT I am also aware that it was a baby. It was completely a matter of competing needs—and the ones of my life, and my relationship, won out.³⁸

Another post-abortive woman wrote:

Mostly, this must seem selfish, when I had an abortion a decade ago, I knew I was killing. There was no other way to think about it, to describe it... But I was killing a very small piece of life in favor of my bigger life. That’s important, it makes you get your priorities straight.³⁹

Another woman who had an abortion wrote:

I feel proud of myself that I made the choice to have an abortion and finish college. I never made a decision before that said I was the most important person. Choosing

abortion is about empowerment. It's about making a choice in favor of myself and my own future. It was giving myself a vote of confidence.⁴⁰

These three women are perfect disciples of the pro-abortion movement, which claims that preborn children are expendable and only the woman's wishes, hopes, and desires matter.

It would be unfair, however, to paint most women having abortions as being cold or casual about their choices. Many women considering abortion are in crisis, in bad situations, struggling to find a way to cope with their unintended pregnancies. It can be an intense period of fear and loneliness, especially when women don't have the support of their partners. Many times, another person, such as the father of the child, is pressuring them to abort.

One counselor who sees post-abortive women says:

Of the many women I've counseled, I would say that well over 90% of them aborted their babies to please someone else: their husbands, boyfriends, parents, or peer group... It's a mockery to talk of a woman's right to choose when she's not the one doing the choosing.⁴¹

For a 2013 study in *Complications: Abortion's Impact on Women*, Dr. Angela Lanfranchi, Dr. Ian Gentles, and Dr. Elizabeth Ring-Cassidy asked 101 women to share their abortion stories. When they were asked whether they were "coerced or pressured into having the abortion," 48% of the women answered, "Yes." These women said that the pressure or coercion was in the form of violence or threat.⁴²

The late Alan Guttmacher, former president of Planned Parenthood and lifelong defender of abortion, once claimed that 30% of women who have abortions were pressured into them by someone else, usually the man involved.⁴³ Another study showed that 64% of abortions involved coercion of the woman.⁴⁴

One abortion clinic worker commented on coercion when she said, "Some men come in to be supportive, but some come to make sure the woman has the abortion – in other words to keep up the pressure on her."⁴⁵

Abortionist Don Sloan, who has done thousands of abortions, says, "It's never simple. But when it comes to a choice between the man and the pregnancy, many women yield. They do with the man wants."⁴⁶

Women are also pressured to abort by life circumstances. If a woman can barely afford to feed her children, and another baby would push her into homelessness or abject poverty, what kind of choice does she have? And since there is legal abortion, institutions don't have a reason to change in order to make it easier on pregnant women and new mothers. An employer can get

away with pregnancy discrimination because “she can just abort.” The mentality “it’s the woman’s choice” frequently becomes “it’s the woman’s problem.” She is on her own with the decision as to what to do. There is so little support for women who are pregnant and want their children, but are facing losing their income, schooling, housing, or jobs.

Anne Finger is a former abortion worker who is still pro-abortion. She wrote the following about the women who came to her clinic for abortions:

Each day at the clinic I confronted what it meant to have some control over our wombs and less control over our social circumstances. You can decide to no longer be pregnant, you can walk into a clinic and plunk down your Medi-Cal card...or two hundred dollars in cash, but you can’t decide not to be poor anymore, or to have support so that you can finish school, or to have a partner who wants to raise a child with you...

We’ve won the right [to legal abortion] however tenuously, but now control of reproduction is expected; we are expected to have children when we can afford them, to schedule our pregnancies to coincide with the demands of education and employment....Our victories are always partial ones; we win part of what we wanted, and then find our victories turned into something else.⁴⁷

A pro-choice doula, who comforts women during abortions, says that many poor women feel they have no choice but to get abortions. Their life circumstances force them into abortions they might not really want. They are not empowered by their “choices” but feel trapped and think they have no other options:

For many low-income women, getting an abortion can feel like the only option. A doula tells me a story about a woman who wanted to continue the pregnancy but had lost her job, run through all her savings, and was living in a homeless shelter. “I can deal with this, but I’d never do it to a baby,” she said. Patients talk about how impossible it is to find jobs, childcare, a safe place to live, health care.⁴⁸

Many women who have abortions are victims of our pro-abortion society which does not value women or welcome children into life. In a society with deep economic inequality and so few safety nets for single mothers and poor families, it is not surprising that abortion is as common as it is. Pro-lifers must be there to help provide better alternatives for women, even if this means taking in a homeless pregnant woman, finding affordable baby-sitting for a poor family, or arranging prenatal care for a woman without insurance.

Wendy Davis is a pro-abortion politician who filibustered a pro-life law in Texas that would have banned late-term abortions and forced abortion facilities to meet the same safety standards as other surgical centers. She successfully filibustered the bill, but it was later passed in another state legislative session. Davis defended keeping abortion legal through all nine months of pregnancy for any reason. She has a staunch pro-abortion voting record, opposing any bill that would limit abortion in any way. However, in her memoir, she reveals that she knows preborn children are human beings.

Early in the book, she refers to the filibuster, and the material she read before the Texas Senate. One thing she read to the assembled lawmakers and visitors was a letter from a woman who had an abortion after her baby girl was diagnosed with a potentially fatal condition. Davis says:

As I was finishing my third hour on the floor, I began to read another letter aloud... This particular letter, from a woman named Carole, described how she learned 20 weeks into her pregnancy that the precious little girl she was carrying was dying in her womb of a rare and fatal prenatal condition...

It was a heartbreaking letter, so raw and honest and painfully sad that I could barely get through the reading of it. Each paragraph and detail of Carole's tragic story and her eloquent plea to consider the emotional well-being of parents facing such devastating choices and losses as well as the *humanity of the unborn baby*, undid me, and I had to stop several times to wipe my eyes and to regain my composure [emphasis mine].⁴⁹

"The humanity of the unborn baby" is not a phrase often spoken or written by pro-abortion politicians. Davis knows the baby in that woman's womb was a human being.

Davis aborted her own baby, who she named Tate, when the child was diagnosed with Dandy-Walker syndrome. Dandy-Walker syndrome is a malformation of the brain. Many children with this fetal defect go on to live fulfilling lives, but many are mentally challenged. Davis chose to abort her afflicted baby and wrote about the process:

The following morning, after spending my last night with Tate, talking to her, sobbing as I felt her tiny body tremble inside mine, I managed to rise, to dress, to take Jeff's hand as he helped me into the car and drove me to the doctor's office...

In our doctor's office, with tears flowing down both our faces, Jeff and I looked at our baby daughter's beating heart on the sonogram screen for the last time. And we watched as her doctor quieted it. It was over. She was gone. Our much-loved baby was gone.⁵⁰

Davis held and photographed her dead baby's body:

Afterward I accompanied my doctor to the hospital and delivered Tate Elise Davis by cesarean section... The following day a dear friend who was a nurse in the unit where I delivered Tate brought her to me. She dressed her in a tiny pink dress and placed a knit cap on her enlarged head. On her feet were crocheted booties, and next to her was a small crocheted pink bunny. Jeff and I spent the better part of the day holding her, crying for her and for us. We asked an associate minister from our church who was a trusted friend to come and baptize her. We took photographs of her, and we said our goodbyes. The next day, as I lay in the hospital sobbing, my hand over my now empty womb, Tate's lifeless body was taken away and cremated...

[W]e have the precious memories of seeing Tate, of holding her, baptizing her, photographing her. And I'm so very thankful for those memories, as bittersweet as they are. In a wooden memory box given to me by Patty, with Tate's name carved on its top, mementos of her are stored: the photographs, the program from a private memorial service we held for her at our home surrounded by a small group of our closest family and friends, cards sent by people who reached out to us to provide comfort, and that little crocheted bunny. Each year, on the anniversary of that terrible spring day, I take them out and open myself to the grief and the comfort they bring.⁵¹

Later, Davis and her family participated in an event to honor Tate's life:

The following fall we participated as a family in "Walk to Remember," writing Tate's name and the date of her birth and death on a small card that we attached to a tree in Trinity Park. It was important to all of us to memorialize her, to recognize that she *was*. That she was loved, and is still loved, and always will be loved by us.⁵²

Davis greatly mourned the disabled baby she had killed. Though Davis feels the abortion was justified, she nevertheless knows that her baby was a person.

Davis must realize her support of legal abortion up until birth would allow women to abort babies Tate's age for any reason. If a preborn child is a person, a child, and valuable enough to mourn, why does Davis support unlimited abortion? Davis goes to great lengths to make sure it is legal to kill babies the same age as her daughter. Davis recognized the humanity of her own child, but she believes women should have the right to kill their children if those children are unwanted.

Does Davis believe other women's preborn babies are expendable but hers was precious, by virtue of being hers? Does Davis believe that Tate was a person only because she was wanted, whereas unwanted babies are not people? Does she believe a child's humanity depends on the mother's acceptance of that child? It's hard to believe a person as well-educated as Davis (she went to a Harvard) could use such faulty reasoning. We can only assume she knows abortion kills babies, babies who are people, like her daughter. She still supports killing them.

In a series of undercover videos by the group Live Action, Planned Parenthood workers assure a prospective abortion patient that she is not carrying a “baby.” The patient was actually an actor hired by Live Action who was wearing a recording device. Another actor, posing as the pregnant woman’s friend, accompanied her.

In Indianapolis, Indiana, the Planned Parenthood counselor assured the Live Action actors that “it's not a baby, it's a fetus.”⁵³

In Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the Planned Parenthood worker said, “There's not a baby at this point.”⁵⁴

In Appleton, Wisconsin, the conversation went like this:

Planned Parenthood worker: A fetus is what's in the uterus right now. That is not a baby. A baby is what's born at 40 weeks. A fetus is what's in your uterus right now.

Patient: So, when does it become a baby?

Planned Parenthood worker: At birth.⁵⁵

Later, an abortionist assured the pregnant woman, “it's not a baby at this stage or anything like that.”⁵⁶

Yet in an educational film on YouTube meant to teach parents how to talk to children about “where babies come from,” Planned Parenthood says:

With younger children you can keep it simple and direct. For example, you can say: “A baby grows in a parent’s belly and comes out of their vagina.” That may be all it takes to satisfy their curiosity. If they ask, “How does the baby get in the belly?” You can say something like, “Most women have tiny eggs in a special part of their belly. Most men have very tiny seeds, called sperm. If sperm and egg meet, they can grow into a baby.”⁵⁷

So Planned Parenthood does seem to know that women are pregnant with babies and not watermelons or spiders or “tissue.” They just don’t tell vulnerable women considering abortions that. It is easier to convince a woman to have an abortion if you can convince her she is not carrying a baby.

Reverend Howard Moody founded the Clergy Consultation Service before abortion was legalized. This huge network of ministers, pastors, and rabbis referred women to abortionists before and after Roe v. Wade. Moody had an indirect hand in hundreds of thousands of abortions.

This “man of God” was quoted saying:

Conception is life—let’s say that, finally, take that approach—and yes, you’re taking it away. And then we have to develop the rationale for the taking of it, as we develop the rationale for taking life elsewhere—in war, in capital punishment. [Asked if he had any regrets] Regrets? About our stand on abortion? No, no, no. Only for the ones we didn’t get to help—and for them, our work is in front of us.⁵⁸

Moody also founded an abortion facility that did over 70,000 abortions just in the few years that former abortionist Dr. Bernard Nathanson directed it. Nathanson, of course, later became pro-life.

In a speech promoting abortion, Moody said:

My understanding of free choice is that the right to choose is a God-given right with which persons are endowed... Freedom of choice is what makes us human and responsible. And for women, the preeminent freedom is the choice to control her reproductive process. Any theological or moral arguments that subordinate a woman’s freedom to the imaginary screams of a fetus... will be less than human, no matter how much talk there is about the preciousness of life.⁵⁹

A baby in the womb may not be able to scream in the same way a born child can, but his or her life still has value. Moody’s comment on “imaginary screams” is meant as a reference to the famous pro-life movie, *The Silent Scream*. This film, taped by former abortionist Dr. Bernard Nathanson, showed a child being aborted via ultrasound. The child struggled against the suction machine and opened his mouth in what Nathanson called “a silent scream” as he was torn apart. This is what Pastor Moody is mocking in his quote. But preborn children are not imaginary, and their deaths are not imaginary.

Sometimes pro-abortion politicians accidentally admit that abortion is killing. At a Fox News Town Hall in the early summer of 2019, Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (who was, at the time, pursuing the Democratic nomination for the presidency) defended her pro-abortion position. Gillibrand is from New York, one of a growing number of states where it is legal to end the life of a preborn child through all nine months of pregnancy. Gillibrand said, “The facts are that women in this country have had a constitutional right for over 30 years to make this fundamental life and death decision.”⁶⁰

She concedes that abortion is a life or death decision. Whose death are we talking about in an abortion? It is the preborn child who suffers a gruesome death in every abortion.

Alabama representative John Rogers, also a pro-choice Democrat, raised eyebrows when he admitted that aborted babies are “kids” you “kill.” He made the following statement while arguing against a pro-life bill:

Some kids are unwanted, so you kill them now or you kill them later. You bring them into the world unwanted, unloved, and you send them to the electric chair. So, you kill them now or you kill them later.⁶¹

This type of admission from a pro-abortion politician is rare, but very telling.

Some of the pro-abortion individuals and organizations quoted in this chapter have explicitly acknowledged that children in the womb are human beings. Others have used language that implies they recognize the humanity of preborn children. Consistently maintaining the notion that children in the womb are just “cells” or “tissue” seems to be difficult for them. Yet they all still support women’s choices to kill preborn children

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