

Abortion

Pro-Choice or Pro-Life?

Ashley D. Luxton
2022

Introduction

In the aftermath of the historic overturn of Roe vs Wade on June 24, 2022, there has been a significant increase in the discussion regarding abortion.

There was one brief phase of my life where I started to believe some of the pro-choice arguments. Apart from that phase, I have largely been pro-life. However, when the conversations about abortion became more frequent, I found myself in an awkward position of not knowing how to confidently defend my pro-life position. I knew that people shouldn't be killing unborn babies, but when faced with the onslaught of pro-choice arguments, I didn't know how to respond.

Therefore, I did my research. I read multiple books, I watched YouTube videos, I read the news, and I even looked up the primary sources cited in the books I was reading. The overwhelming conclusion that I came to is that the pro-choice arguments simply do not hold up. This document I have created is simply a collection of the information I have learned to explain why the pro-choice position does not work and why I am therefore pro-life.

Even though the majority of the conversations about abortion has been focused on what is happening in the United States (U.S.) with the recent overturn of Roe vs Wade, I do not live in the U.S. I live in New Zealand (NZ) where we have some of the most extreme and barbaric abortion laws in the world. While I will still reference the U.S., I will be focusing more of my attention on NZ laws and organizations.

I am writing this from the perspective of a Protestant Christian and also as a registered nurse with over five and a half years' experience in emergency, urgent care, and general practice nursing.

Pro-Abortion

Those in favour of abortion have called themselves "pro-choice". After all, it sounds much more palatable than "pro-abortion". However, calling oneself "pro-choice" then begs the question: pro-choice for *what*?

Therefore, I will no longer refer to those who are in favour of abortion as "pro-choice", because the answer to the question "pro-choice for what?" is *abortion*. I will from here onwards refer to the pro-choice movement as *pro-abortion*. Because that is exactly what it is.

Why Pro-Life?

Following are the most common pro-abortion arguments along with the facts explaining why these arguments are invalid.

Argument 1:

Outlawing abortion does not get rid of abortions, it just gets rid of *safe* abortions.

Why they say this: “If abortion is illegal, women will return to “back-alley, coat-hanger” abortions where women will suffer a plethora of complications and even die.”

The Facts:

1. There is no such thing as a safe abortion.

Potential physical and psychological complications of abortion include:

- **Acute haemorrhage, septic shock, and a perforated bladder or bowel**¹, the latter of which can cause a life-threatening condition called peritonitis.
- Increased risk of **pelvic inflammatory disease (PID)**, especially if the woman had an STI at the time of an abortion. All it takes is one episode of PID to lead to complications such as infertility, ectopic pregnancies, abscess formation, and chronic pelvic pain.^{2 3}
- Surgical abortions, especially those using D&C, can lead to a condition called **Asherman’s syndrome (uterine adhesions)** which is associated with pelvic pain, abnormal vaginal bleeding, and fertility issues.⁴
- From a meta-analysis of 22 peer-reviewed studies (15 from the USA and 7 from other countries); looking at mental health problems such as alcohol use/misuse, marijuana use, anxiety, depression, and suicidal behaviour, and used a total of 877, 181 participants, of whom 163,831 had experienced an abortion, the analysis discovered that women who had an abortion had an **81% increased risk of mental health problems**. 10% of mental health problems were directly caused by the abortion.⁵
- A 2019 German study discovered that there was a definite link between abortion and subsequent **miscarriages and infertility**.⁶
- A 2018 literature review acknowledged that there were varying viewpoints regarding the effects of abortion, but that both the pro-life and pro-choice sides agreed that abortion is consistently linked to **higher rates of mental illness** in comparison with women who had never had an abortion.⁷

¹Sajadi-Ernazarova, K.R., & Martinez, C.L. (2021) Abortion complications. *SatPearls*. Retrieved from National Library of Medicine.

² Compass Care (2022) Abortion risks and side effects. Retrieved from <https://www.compasscare.info/health-information/abortion/abortion-risks-and-side-effects/>

³ Ring-Cassidy, E., & Gentles, I. (2002). *Women’s health after abortion: The medical and psychological evidence*. Toronto: The deVeber Institute for Bioethics and Social Research.

⁴ Cleveland Clinic (2022) Asherman’s syndrome. Retrieved from <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/16561-ashermans-syndrome#:~:text=Asherman%27s%20syndrome%20is%20a%20rare,the%20room%20smaller%20and%20smaller.>

⁵ Coleman, P.K. (2011). Abortion and mental health: quantitative synthesis and analysis of research published 1995–2009. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 199(3), 180-186. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.bp.110.077230>

⁶ Jacob, L., Gerhard, C., Koster, K., & Kalder, M. (2019). Association between induced abortion, spontaneous abortion, and infertility respectively and the risk of psychiatric disorders in 57,770 women followed in gynecological practices in Germany. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 251. 107-113. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2019.03.060>

⁷ Reardon, D.C. (2018). The abortion and mental health controversy: A comprehensive literature review of common ground agreements, disagreements, actionable recommendations, and research opportunities. *SAGE Open Medicine*, 6. 1-38. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/2050312118807624>

- **Sexual dysfunction** has also been shown to occur in some women after an abortion. That dysfunction can include increased vaginal dryness, decreased libido, decreased ability to orgasm, and painful sex.⁸
- 5% of women who have an abortion go on to develop **breast cancer**, which is about the same rate at which the BRCA gene causes breast cancer.^{9 10}
- At least 49 studies have shown a significant link between **an increase in premature births or low birth weight risk** in women who have had abortions.¹¹
- Women who have abortions and then get pregnant again later are more likely to have complications such as *“bleeding in the first and third trimesters, abnormal presentations and premature rupture of the membranes, abruptio placentae, foetal distress, low birth weight, short gestation, and major malformations”*.¹²
- Women with a history of abortion are more likely to develop a serious complication in subsequent pregnancies known as **placenta previa**.¹³
- Other Resources: *The Cost of Choice* by Erika Bachiochi.

2. Historically most back-alley abortions were performed by trained doctors.

Mary Steichen Calderone, at the time medical director of Planned Parenthood,¹⁴ wrote in 1960 (pre-legalization of abortion in the U.S.) that: *“90 per cent of all illegal abortions are presently being done by physicians. Call them what you will, abortionists or anything else, they are still physicians, trained as such; and many of them are in good standing in their communities.”*¹⁵

She then added, *“Whatever trouble arises usually comes after self-induced abortions, which comprise approximately 8 per cent, or with the very small percentage that go to some kind of nonmedical abortionist.”*¹⁶

3. The mortality rate from abortion was very similar pre-Roe as it was after abortion was legalized.

“In 1957 there were only 260 deaths in the whole country attributed to abortions

⁸ Compass Care (2022) Abortion risks and side effects. Retrieved from <https://www.compasscare.info/health-information/abortion/abortion-risks-and-side-effects/>

⁹ Lafranchi, A. (2005). The science, studies, and sociology of the abortion breast cancer link. *Research Bulletin* 18(2). Retrieved from Hein Online.

¹⁰ Brind, J., Chinchilli, V.M., Severs, W.B., Summy-Long, J. (1996). Induced abortion as an independent risk factor for breast cancer: a comprehensive review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 50. 481-496. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/jech.50.5.481>

¹¹ Rooney, B., & Calhoun, B.C. (2003). Induced abortion and risk of later premature births. *Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons*, 8(2). 46-49.

¹² Linn, S., Schoenbaum, S.C., Monson, R.R., Rosner, B., Stubblefield, P.G., & Ryan, K.J. (1983). The relationship between induced abortion and outcome of subsequent pregnancies. *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*, 146(2). 136-140. doi: [https://doi.org/10.1016/0002-9378\(83\)91041-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/0002-9378(83)91041-4)

¹³ Ananth, C.V., Smulian, J.C., & Vintzileos, A.M. (1997). The association of placenta previa with history of cesarean delivery and abortion: A metaanalysis. *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*, 177(5). 1071-1078. doi: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0002-9378\(97\)70017-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0002-9378(97)70017-6)

¹⁴ Kessler, G. (2019, May 29). Planned Parenthood’s false stat: ‘Thousands’ of women died every year before Roe. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/05/29/planned-parenthoods-false-stat-thousands-women-died-every-year-before-roe/>

¹⁵ Calderone, M.S. (1960). Illegal abortions as a public health problem. *American Journal of Public Health Nations Health*, 50(7). 948-954. p 949. doi: 10.2105/ajph.50.7.948

¹⁶ Ibid.

of any kind. In New York City in 1921 there were 144 abortion deaths, in 1951 there were only 15.”¹⁷

“Even given the fuzzy nature of the data and estimates, there is no evidence that in the years immediately preceding the Supreme Court’s decision, thousands of women died every year in the United States from illegal abortions.”¹⁸

Argument 2:

Abortion is a medical issue, not a legal one.

Why they say this: “Abortion should be a private decision between a woman and her health care provider. Lawmakers should not be involved”.

The Facts:

1. There is significant legislation that controls and regulates the practice of health professionals. This legislation is in place to ensure the safety of the public. It is not possible to have safe health care without proper legislation. For example, in NZ we have health care laws including but not limited to:
 - Health Practitioners Competency Assurance Act 2003
 - Regulates the qualifications and registration for health professionals.
 - Misuse of Drugs Act 1975
 - Protects against the abuse of controlled drugs (drugs that have the potential to be highly addictive such as morphine, fentanyl, and ketamine) in the health care setting.
 - Privacy Act 2020
 - Ensures that an individual’s health records remain confidential.
 - Mental Health (Compulsory Assessment and Treatment) Act 1992
 - Sets out guidelines for assessing and treating those who are mentally disordered and pose a significant risk of harm to themselves or others.
2. Just because a decision is made privately does not make it legal or right. For example, a man can decide privately between himself and a hitman to kill his wife, but that doesn’t make it right. A paedophile could molest a child in private, but that also does not make it legal.
3. Just because something is legal does not make it morally right. For example, adultery.
4. The right to privacy does not and cannot supersede the right to life.
5. As per the NZ Bill of Rights Act 1990, everyone has the “right not to be deprived of life” and the “right not to be subjected to torture or cruel treatment”.¹⁹

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Kessler, G. (2019, May 29). Planned Parenthood’s false stat: ‘Thousands’ of women died every year before Roe. The Washington Post. Retrieved from: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/05/29/planned-parenthoods-false-stat-thousands-women-died-every-year-before-roe/>

¹⁹ New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990. Retrieved July 2, 2022 from <https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1990/0109/latest/DLM224792.html>

Argument 3:

Abortion is health care.

1. What is health care?

According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, health care is defined as “*efforts made to **maintain or restore** physical, mental, or emotional well-being especially by trained and licensed professionals*”.²⁰

What is abortion?

Merriam-Webster defines abortion as “*the termination of a pregnancy after, accompanied by, resulting in, or closely followed by the **death** of the embryo or fetus*”.²¹

How then, are health care and abortion the same thing?

2. The Hippocratic Oath specifically condemns abortion:

“I will give no deadly medicine to any one if asked, nor suggest any such counsel; and in like manner I will not give to a woman a pessary to produce abortion”.²²

The exact phrase “first do no harm” is not specifically found in the Hippocratic Oath, but it is one of the underlying principles of the oath.²³

Argument 4:

What truly decreases abortions is proper paid parental leave, adequate education and childcare, and affordable health care.

Why they say this: “It is selfish and cruel to bring a child into the world who will live in poverty or not be well-looked after, especially when parents are not well-supported by the government.”

The Facts:

1. There is a significant amount of support for new parents in NZ. For example:

- <https://www.kiwifamilies.co.nz/articles/life-with-a-newborn/> list **51** NZ services for new parents.
- Paid parental leave is available in NZ for mothers. Women can be paid to take time off for 6-12 months depending on eligibility.²⁴

²⁰ Health Care (n.d.) In Merriam-Webster’s online dictionary. Retrieved from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/health%20care>

²¹ Abortion (n.d.) In Merriam-Webster’s online dictionary. Retrieved from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/abortion>

²² The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica (n.d.) Hippocratic Oath. Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Hippocratic-oath>

²³ Gill, N.S. (2019). Is 'First Do No Harm' Part of the Hippocratic Oath? Retrieved from <https://www.thoughtco.com/first-do-no-harm-hippocratic-oath-118780>

²⁴ Employment New Zealand (2022). Parental leave and payment eligibility table. Retrieved from <https://www.employment.govt.nz/leave-and-holidays/parental-leave/eligibility/eligibility-table/>

- After a midwife has finished seeing a newborn, Well Child Tamariki Ora services are available up to the age of 5 years.²⁵
- Most GPs provide free medical care for children under 13 years of age.²⁶
- Government funding for 20 hours a week of early childhood education (ECE) is available in many ECE centres.²⁷

2. Does poverty or difficult circumstances truly justify ending the life of a child?

While poverty does exist, we should be focused on helping those who *are* suffering rather than *eliminating* those who *might* suffer.

Poverty will never be fixed by killing those who live or will live in poverty.

The pro-abortion arguments here sound eerily similar to the infamous fictional character Ebenezer Scrooge in Charles Dickens' novel *A Christmas Carol*. When asked if he would generously donate money to the poor at Christmastime, the wealthy businessman Scrooge replied,

“Are there no prisons? . . . And the Union workhouses?”

Scrooge then stated he would not donate any money to the cause, saying,

“I can't afford to make idle people merry. I help to support the establishments I have mentioned – they cost enough: and those who are badly off must go there.”

Those who were trying to collect money replied,

“Many can't go there; and many would rather die.”

*“If they would rather die,” said Scrooge, “they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population”.*²⁸

3. History is filled with many people who were born into poverty or difficult circumstances but then went on to live successful and fulfilling lives.

4. A person's worth is not determined by whether they are convenient.

- There is no God-given right to convenience. Even if there was, the right to convenience will never supersede someone else's right to life.²⁹

²⁵ Ministry of Health (2018). Well Child Tamariki Ora visits. Retrieved from <https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/pregnancy-and-kids/services-and-support-you-and-your-child/well-child-tamariki-ora-visits>

²⁶ Ministry of Health (2017). Health services for your child. Retrieved from <https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/pregnancy-and-kids/services-and-support-you-and-your-child/health-services-your-child#:~:text=Most%20practices%20provide%20free%20health,to%20you%20about%20choosing%20one>.

²⁷ Ministry of Education (2022). 20 Hours ECE. Retrieved from <https://parents.education.govt.nz/early-learning/early-childhood-education/20-hours-ece-2/>

²⁸ Dickens, Charles (1915 edition). *A Christmas Carol*. London: William Heinemann. p 13-14.

²⁹ Alcorn, R. (2012). *Why Pro-Life? Caring for the Unborn and Their Mothers*. Hendrickson Publishers Marketing LLC. Peabody, MASS.

Argument 5:

Outlawing abortion means that women will no longer be able to receive treatment for miscarriages or ectopic pregnancies. Women will die.

Why they say this: In one word, *misinformation*. Those who are pro-abortion also say that “a D&C (Dilation and Curettage) is a surgical procedure used for both miscarriages and abortions and therefore doctors will be afraid to provide care for a woman who is miscarrying. Also, miscarriages are medically called ‘spontaneous abortions’.”

The Facts:

1. **Miscarriage:** Yes a miscarriage is medically known as a “spontaneous abortion”. And yes, a D&C is often (but not always) used in both an induced (ie intentional) abortion and a spontaneous abortion. **But the intention and purpose of each procedure is entirely different.** D&C is necessary in a miscarriage to remove “retained products of conception” (RPOC) to decrease the risk of hemorrhage, infection, and even death.³⁰ Cervical shock can also occur when RPOC block the cervix.³¹ The purpose of a D&C in an induced abortion, however, is to produce a dead baby.
2. **Ectopic pregnancy:** There is no chance of survival of the baby as it is growing outside of the uterus, usually in one of the fallopian tubes. It is a life-threatening condition for the mother if the ectopic pregnancy ruptures. Since there is guaranteed death of the baby and a high likelihood of death of the mother if the pregnancy is left to its natural course, the removal of the baby is justified.

Argument 6:

My body, my choice.

Why they say this: “A woman should have the right to bodily autonomy”. In a similar vein, pro-abortionists often say, “No uterus; no opinion”.

The Facts:

1. The baby is not the woman’s body. It is a separate human entity with its own unique DNA. Geographically it is located inside the woman’s body, but it is not her body.
2. Every aborted female baby loses the right to decide what is done with her own body.
3. There are plenty of laws that restrict what we can do with our own bodies, for example: indecent exposure, masturbating in public, public urination, driving under the influence of alcohol, trespassing, sexual assault, etc. Those laws restrict personal freedoms to protect the freedoms of others.

³⁰ Cleveland Clinic (2021). Retained products of conception. Retrieved from [https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/21512-retained-products-of-conception#:~:text=Retained%20products%20of%20conception%20\(RPOC\)%20refers%20to%20fetal%20or%20placental,minor%20surgery%20can%20treat%20RPOC.](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/21512-retained-products-of-conception#:~:text=Retained%20products%20of%20conception%20(RPOC)%20refers%20to%20fetal%20or%20placental,minor%20surgery%20can%20treat%20RPOC.)

³¹ Incomplete abortion. (2018). Retrieved from <https://gpnotebook.com/simplepage.cfm?ID=865730569>

4. Randy Alcorn in his book *Why Pro-Life?* gives an example: For the sake of the argument, he tells people that he is pro-choice because he believes a man has a right to do what he wants with his own body. Therefore, that means he has the right to rape a woman. When people are unsurprisingly shocked with that statement, he then asks them to explain what is wrong with his argument. The conclusion people reach is that in asserting his right to choose, he has violated a woman by doing harm to her. When Alcorn accuses them of being anti-choice, they then conclude that some choices should be restricted depending on what the choice is and whether it harms an innocent person. If this thought is carried to its logical conclusion, the choice to abort a baby is wrong because it violates the right of a baby to live. It is an example of somebody big/strong taking away the rights of the small/weak.³²
5. *“Slave owners were pro-choice. They emphasized physical differences to justify their claim to superiority over the enslaved. They said, “You don’t have to own slaves, but don’t tell us we can’t choose to own slaves”. Those who wanted slave-holding to be illegal were accused of being anti-choice and anti-freedom and imposing their anti-slavery morality on others”.*³³ This sounds disturbingly familiar to what pro-abortionists say.
6. “My body my choice” was what many people said in NZ when faced with vaccine mandates for the controversial Covid-19 vaccine. But if this argument wasn’t good enough to defend the freedom to choose (or decline) a vaccine, then why on earth is it a good enough argument to justify killing a baby?
7. Regarding “no uterus; no opinion” – it is perfectly logical to have an opinion about something that does not directly affect you. For example, I do not have to own a slave to know that slavery is wrong.

Argument 7:

What about rape or incest?

Why they say this: It will be too traumatic for a woman to be forced to bear the child of her rapist.

The Facts:

1. Statistically, rape/incest constitute only **1%** of all abortions.³⁴
2. The chances of getting pregnant under normal circumstances in a woman with a normal menstrual cycle are 0% outside a woman’s fertile window and anywhere from 3%-42% during the 6 day fertile window. Other estimates say the chance is only 20-38%.³⁵

³² Alcorn, R. (2012). *Why Pro-Life? Caring for the Unborn and Their Mothers*. Hendrickson Publishers Marketing LLC. Peabody, MASS.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Finer, L.B., Frohwirth, L.F., Dauphinee, L.A., Singh, S., & Moore, A.M. (2005). Reasons U.S. women have abortions: Quantitative and qualitative perspectives. *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 37(3). 110-118. Retrieved from <https://www.guttmacher.org/journals/psrh/2005/reasons-us-women-have-abortion-quantitative-and-qualitative-perspectives>

³⁵ Shirazi, T. (2018) How your chances of conception are affected by your cycle, age, birth control, health conditions (and more). Retrieved from <https://modernfertility.com/blog/chances-of-conception/#:~:text=In%20a%20cycle%20where%20ovulation,or%2020%25%20according%20to%20others.>

In one study, it was discovered that “the national rape-related pregnancy rate is 5.0% per rape among victims of reproductive age (aged 12 to 45)”³⁶.

Again, rape-related pregnancy is rare.

3. Abortion only perpetuates the violence. A violent act was committed against the woman, and by aborting the baby another act of violence is committed. In both rape and abortion, violence is committed by someone more powerful against someone less powerful.
*“Victims of sexual violence need counseling and care, . . . and plenty of time for healing. “To encourage a woman to have an abortion is to **add even more violence to her life**... Two wrongs will never make a right.””³⁷*
4. Abortion of a child conceived through rape is **misdirected anger and punishment**. The anger and punishment should be directed at the rapist, not at the innocent child. The child did not ask to be there.
5. Abortion of a child conceived through rape **destroys evidence** of the crime. By aborting the child, it is potentially letting the rapist walk free.
6. A person’s worth is not determined by the circumstances in which they were conceived.
7. The woman will already have suffered a significant amount of trauma due to the rape. Abortion has been shown to negatively affect the mental health of the woman, so getting an abortion after a rape will only add to her trauma.
*“What rape takes away from a woman, abortion cannot restore. Instead, though outsiders picture abortion as a quick and sanitary event behind closed doors, to the woman it is a **second assault**, one that disturbingly resembles the violence she has already endured.”³⁸*
8. Those who are pro-abortion are quick to say that a baby is the woman’s. Until there is rape involved, and then the baby is the father’s.
9. *“In the . . . book, “Victims and Victors” (Acorn Books, 2000), editors David Reardon, Amy Sobie, and Julie Makimaa draw on testimonies of 192 women who experienced pregnancy as a result of rape or incest, and 55 children who were conceived in sexual assault. It turns out that when victims of violence speak for themselves, their opinion of abortion is nearly unanimous — and the opposite of what the average person expects. Nearly all the women who conceived due to rape or incest, then had abortions, said that they regretted it. Of those giving an opinion, over 90% said that they would discourage other victims of sexual violence from having an abortion. On the other hand, of the women who conceived due to rape or incest and carried to term, **not one expressed regret** about her choice.”³⁹*

Other Resources:

Ryan Bomberger is a man who was conceived through rape. His mother courageously carried him to full term and he was adopted by a Christian family at birth. He is now an outspoken activist on several issues, especially abortion. He founded **The Radiance Foundation**, an organization whose vision is “to create a culture that believes every human life has purpose”.⁴⁰

³⁶ Holmes, M.M., Resnick, H.S., Kilpatrick, D.G., & Best, C.L. (1996). Rape-related pregnancy: Estimates and descriptive characteristics from a national sample of women. *American journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*, 175(2). 320-325. doi [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0002-9378\(96\)70141-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0002-9378(96)70141-2)

³⁷ Mathewes-Green, F. (2000). Abortion Politics and the “Rape and Incest” Exception. Retrieved from <https://blogs.ancientfaith.com/frederica/writings/abortion-politics-and-the-rape-and-incest-exception>

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ The Radiance Foundation (n.d.) Retrieved from <https://www.theradiancefoundation.org>

Argument 8:

What if the baby will be born disabled?

Why they say this: “It is selfish to bring a child into this world who will suffer and not have much of a life at all.”

The Facts:

1. Who are we to decide if they will have much of a life or not?
2. Sometimes doctors get it wrong. As a personal story, my mother was told while pregnant with my brother that he would be born with Down Syndrome. When he was born, he had no trace of the syndrome at all.
3. A person’s worth is not determined by their abilities or disabilities.
4. If we continue to abort potentially disabled babies, what message is that sending to those who are alive now with disabilities? It is telling them that they shouldn’t be here; that their lives are not worth living.
5. Aborting disabled children is pure discrimination/ableism.
 - On the surface, the pro-abortion argument sounds compassionate: “Aborting this disabled baby will prevent it from a life of suffering”. However, when you get down to the root of the issue, this pro-abortion argument is essentially saying that *only the able-bodied/mentally ‘normal’ have the right to live*. This belief is where you start to get into the dangerous territory of **eugenics**, which is essentially selective breeding among humans⁴¹.

Margaret Sanger, the founder of Planned Parenthood, was a known eugenicist. She is known for penning words such as the following: “*[Each] feeble-minded person is a potential source of endless progeny of defect; we prefer the policy of immediate sterilization, [so] that parenthood is absolutely prohibited to the feeble-minded*”.⁴²

Ben Wiker (2008) writes, “*Sanger’s book [The Pivot of Civilization] is one long rant against the existence – and worse, the breeding – of the “feeble-minded” in general, and the “moron”, “imbecile”, and “idiot” in particular, those “who never should have been born at all”. Against these menaces, Sanger proposes “Birth Control” as the “very pivot of civilization,” meaning that the future of civilization depended upon birth control to severely reduce – if not eliminate – feeble-mindedness from the human population*” (p. 129).⁴³

Other Resources:

Jesse Alexander Brand is a baby who was determined in utero to have a condition known as anencephaly – a condition in which the brain fails to develop properly and the baby is missing a large part of its brain. Sadly, many of these anencephalic babies die either in utero or shortly after birth.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Eugenics (n.d.) in Merriam-Webster’s online dictionary. Retrieved from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/eugenics>

⁴² Sanger, M. cited in Wiker, B. (2008). *10 Books that screwed up the world: And 5 others that didn’t help*. Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing. pp 127.

⁴³ Wiker, B. (2008). *10 Books that screwed up the world: And 5 others that didn’t help*. Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing.

⁴⁴ Anencephaly. (2019) Retrieved from <https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/anencephaly/>

The parents found out about this diagnosis only shortly before the baby's due date. Jesse survived the birth and the parents had the opportunity to hold him. Sadly, he did not live long. The family was Catholic, and at the funeral, the Priest said the following:

*"I bet you are all wondering why this happened. Why was this life taken away before it began, seemingly meaningless? We never know what the big plan is. Many of you with successful children will brag, my son's a lawyer, my son's a doctor, my son's a professional athlete. Well John and Amy can brag that there [sic] son is a saint!"*⁴⁵

The parents of Jesse have a website that includes helpful resources for other families who have a baby with anencephaly, including a support group for parents who choose to carry their anencephalic babies to term. See <https://www.anencephaly.info/e/index.php>

Henri Nouwen and Adam: Henri Nouwen was a Dutch Catholic priest, professor, writer, and psychologist. He was a professor of psychology and theology at universities like Notre Dame, Yale, and Harvard before leaving academia to become the pastor at a community for people with intellectual disabilities.⁴⁶ It was in this community that he was a caregiver for a young man named Adam, a man with severe mental and physical disabilities. Henri Nouwen wrote in his book *Adam: God's Beloved*,

*"Adam was sent to bring Good News to the world. It was his mission, as it was the mission of Jesus. Adam was—very simply, quietly, and uniquely—there! He was a person, who by his very life announced the marvelous mystery of our God: I am precious, beloved, whole, and born of God. Adam bore silent witness to this mystery, which has nothing to do with whether or not he could speak, walk, or express himself, whether or not he made money, had a job, was fashionable, famous, married or single. It had to do with his being. He was and is a beloved child of God. It is the same news that Jesus came to announce, and it is the news that all those who are poor keep proclaiming in and through their very weakness. Life is a gift. Each one of us is unique, known by name, and loved by the One who fashioned us. Unfortunately, there is a very loud, consistent, and powerful message coming to us from our world that leads us to believe that we must prove our belovedness by how we look, by what we have, and by what we can accomplish."*⁴⁷

Argument 9:

It's just a clump of cells.

Why they say this: "If it's just a clump of cells, then it's not really a human and therefore abortion is purely a sterile medical procedure that is not morally wrong".

The Facts:

1. Technically speaking, we are all clumps of cells. (Some of us are a bit clumpier than others!)
2. A 2018 study discovered that overall, **95% of biologists agree that life begins at conception.** The study was unbiased – those 95% included "biologists that identified as very pro-choice

⁴⁵ Jesse Alexander Brand. (2019). Retrieved from <https://www.anencephaly.info/e/jesse.php>

⁴⁶ Who was Henri Nouwen? (2022). Retrieved from <https://henrinouwen.org/about/>

⁴⁷ 1 Adam: God's Beloved Quotes & Sayings with Wallpapers & Posters. (n.d.) Retrieved from <https://quotes.pub/adam-gods-beloved-quotes>

(69-90%), very pro-life (92-97%), very liberal (70-91%), very conservative (94-96%), strong Democrats (74-91%), and strong Republicans (89-94%).”⁴⁸

3. Calling a baby a “clump of cells” is a way of **dehumanizing**. Another dehumanizing term is “product of conception”. Dehumanization has been used to justify many injustices in the past. For example, Blacks were deemed to be sub-human in order to justify slavery, and Jews were also deemed sub-human as a way to justify the Holocaust.
4. The prenatal stage is simply a **stage of human development**. It has 3 main sub-stages known as the germinal, embryonic, and foetal periods.
Germinal Period – occurs from 0-2 weeks pregnant. This is when the sperm and egg have united and have formed a new and unique genetic code called a zygote. This is a genetic code that has never existed before and will never exist again. Cell division happens rapidly. It takes around one week for the rapidly dividing cells to travel from the fallopian tube to the uterine wall. Eventually it forms what is known as a blastocyst which has 3 layers. These 3 layers then go on to form 1) the skin and nervous system (brain and spinal cord), 2) the digestive and respiratory system, and 3) the muscle and skeletal system.
Embryonic Period – occurs from 3-8 weeks pregnant. This is when the embryo starts looking like a human and by week 8 has all vital organs.
Foetal Period – occurs from 9 weeks pregnant until birth. The already-formed foetus continues to develop and grow.⁴⁹
The prenatal period of human development is the same as saying that adolescence is a period of human development.
5. That specific genetic code that is created at conception is a code that forms a human being. It will not form a monkey, elephant, or a fish.
6. The baby doesn’t become a human when it exits the womb. There is nothing magical about the birth canal that somehow turns a foetus into a human being. It has been a human all along.
7. What makes a baby in utero human: a) it is a genetically unique individual (from day one at conception), b) it came from human beings and c) it is alive and growing.⁵⁰
8. There are only four differences between a baby inside the womb and outside the womb (SLED):
 - A. Size
 - B. Level of development
 - C. Environment
 - D. Level of Dependency

Do any of the above things remove the humanity of the baby or justify ending its life?⁵¹

Toddlers are smaller than adults. Does that mean we can kill toddlers?

Pre-pubescent children are less developed physically, mentally, and emotionally than adults. Does that mean that we can kill 10 year olds?

⁴⁸Jacobs, S.A. (2018) Biologists' Consensus on 'When Life Begins'. *Social Science Research Network*. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3211703>

⁴⁹Cherry, K. (2020). Stages of Prenatal Development. Retrieved from <https://www.verywellmind.com/stages-of-prenatal-development-2795073#:~:text=The%20process%20of%20prenatal%20development,known%20as%20the%20fetal%20period>

⁵⁰Alcorn, R. (2012). *Why Pro-Life? Caring for the Unborn and Their Mothers*. Hendrickson Publishers Marketing LLC. Peabody, MASS.

⁵¹Ibid.

Why can we not kill infants that are one day old but we can kill foetuses that are due to be born the next day?

The elderly who have Alzheimer's are at a higher level of dependency than adults without the disease. Do we have a right to kill the elderly with Alzheimer's?

A teenager who is in a coma and on life support after a car accident is also at a high level of dependency (he will probably be a patient in what is called an Intensive Care Unit or a High Dependency Unit!). But does that still give us the right to intentionally kill him?

Argument 10:

Abortion is a feminist issue.

Why they say this: "I'm sick and tired of old white men making decisions about women's bodies"

"Taking away abortion rights is a way to control women."

"Abortion allows women to earn more money by getting education or moving up the ladder at work".

"Abortion is a woman's right".

The Facts:

1. Old white men were among those who initially passed Roe v Wade in 1973.
2. Abortion is a **human rights** issue. Remember that according to the NZ Bill of Rights, everyone has the right not to be deprived of life.
3. Abortion perpetuates misogyny and abuse of women by, for example, letting rapists and womanizers walk free with no consequences for their actions.
4. Does getting an education or getting a promotion at work truly justify taking human life?
5. Early suffragettes were utterly opposed to abortion. – Susan B. Anthony called it "child murder".⁵² Alice Paul said, "Abortion is the ultimate exploitation of women".⁵³
6. The pro-abortion attitude makes women into victims by essentially saying that women are utterly unable to cope with a child and motherhood. That is hardly empowering, is it?
7. Aborted babies are mostly female babies. How does this promote women's rights?
 - In India in 2011, nearly 50,000 female babies were aborted **every month**.
*"This is not about pro-life or pro-choice," Aravamudan said. "This is about pro-women, anti-women. I'm not against abortion. This is a crime against women and I am against that."*⁵⁴
 - The above trend is continued not only in India, but also in countries like Pakistan, China, South Korea, Taiwan, and Malaysia. *"In China, abortions are legal, but gender tests*

⁵² Anthony, S. B. (1869). *The Revolution*. 4(1):4

⁵³ Buchanan, E. (2013). Viewpoint: Pro-Life and Feminism Aren't Mutually Exclusive. Retrieved from <https://ideas.time.com/2013/01/03/viewpoint-pro-life-and-feminism-arent-mutually-exclusive/>

⁵⁴ Goldberg, A.B., & Dooley, S. (2011, December 8). Disappearing Daughters: Women Pregnant With Girls Pressured Into Abortions. *ABC News*. Retrieved from <https://abcnews.go.com/Health/women-pregnant-girls-pressured-abortions-india/story?id=15103950>

strictly forbidden. Says one official: We cannot afford to let people know what sex the fetus is because all the girls would be aborted.””⁵⁵

- *“In 2005 males under the age of 20 exceeded females by more than 32 million in China, and more than 1.1 million excess births of boys occurred.”⁵⁶*

8. It is totally possible to be both a feminist and be pro-life. Look up <https://www.feministsforlife.org/>

Other Resources:

“Femism: Bewitched by Abortion” by Rosemary Bottcher in *“To Rescue the Future”* edited by Dave Andrusko (New York: Life Cycle Books, 1983).

“Adam and Eve after the Pill” – Mary Eberstadt

Argument 11:

What if an abortion is medically necessary to save a woman’s life?

The Facts:

- As previously discussed, an ectopic pregnancy would be the main circumstance in which terminating the baby’s life would be necessary in order to save the mother’s life. However, as has already been said, due to the guaranteed death of the baby and the high likelihood of the mother’s death in the case of a rupture, then it is still consistently pro-life to terminate the ectopic pregnancy.
- Another instance in which an abortion may be medically necessary would be in the very rare case of a fast-spreading uterine cancer. The baby would not have enough time to develop to the point where he could live outside of the womb and if left to its natural course, the fast-spreading uterine cancer would inevitably kill the child. Therefore terminating the pregnancy would be necessary to provide life-saving treatment for the mother. This again is consistent with being pro-life.⁵⁷
- Complicated or dangerous pregnancies might necessitate **early** delivery of a baby, but not the death of it.
- *“An eminent Irish oncologist, professor and politician wrote . . . that he has never encountered a situation in which abortion was needed to save a mother’s life.”⁵⁸*
- *“In the rare but tragic situations where a pregnancy puts the mother’s life at risk, there are medical procedures for compassionately separating the mother and her baby and*

⁵⁵ Women - an endangered species (1987). World Development Forum, 5(21). 1-2. Retrieved from <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/12269045/>

⁵⁶ Zhu, W.X., Lu, L., & Hesketh, T. (2009). China’s excess males, sex selective abortion, and one child policy: analysis of data from 2005 national intercensus survey. *British Medical Journal*, 338. doi <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.b1211>

⁵⁷ Alcorn, R. (2012). *Why Pro-Life? Caring for the Unborn and Their Mothers*. Hendrickson Publishers Marketing LLC. Peabody, MASS.

⁵⁸ No case where abortion was ‘necessary to save mom’: Eminent Irish oncologist (2012, February 22). *LifeSiteNews*. Retrieved from <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/no-case-where-abortion-was-necessary-to-save-mom-eminent-irish-oncologist/>

working to save both lives. . . The only intent of an abortion is to produce a dead baby”.
59

- Dr Anthony Levatino, a former abortionist who later had a dramatic conversion, said, *“We hear all the time how abortion, including especially late- term abortion, is necessary to save women’s lives. Nothing could be further from the truth,”* Levatino told LiveAction founder Lila Rose in 2019. . . *“I spent nine years working at a tertiary medical center. There are only certain hospitals in the country that are designated to take care of the really, really high-risk pregnancies. . . Albany Medical Centre in Albany, New York, where I worked, was one of them,”* he said... *“I saw hundreds of cases of really severe pregnancy complications – cancers, heart disease, intractable diabetes . . . toxemia pregnancy, out of control. In those nine years, I saved hundreds of women from life-threatening pregnancies, and I did that by delivering them, by ending their pregnancy by delivery – either induction of labor or cesarean section”.*⁶⁰

Argument 12:

Pro-lifers don’t care about the child after they are born.

Why they say this:

“Those who are pro-life of caring only that the mother has her baby. But after the baby is born, the mother is left on her own without any support from pro-life groups”.

The Facts:

There is a significant amount of pro-life pregnancy support centres in NZ. Many of these centres provide support both during and after the pregnancy. Many also offer counselling for women who have previously had abortions.

1. Nationwide

Pregnancy Counselling Services
Pregnancy Help
Bellyful
Parent to Parent (support for disabled children)
Pro Love

2. North Island

Gianna’s Choice (Auckland and Wellington)
Crisis Pregnancy Support (Wellington)
The Pregnancy Centre (Palmerston North)
House of Grace (Hamilton and Wellington)

⁵⁹ Prestigiacomo, A. (2022, July 1). Don’t Believe Pro-Abortion Misinformation: What to know about ectopic pregnancy, miscarriage, and more. The Daily Wire. Retrieved from <https://www.dailywire.com/news/dont-believe-pro-abortion-misinformation-what-to-know-about-ectopic-pregnancy-miscarriage-and-more>

⁶⁰ Prestigiacomo, A. (2022, July 1). Don’t Believe Pro-Abortion Misinformation: What to know about ectopic pregnancy, miscarriage, and more. The Daily Wire. Retrieved from <https://www.dailywire.com/news/dont-believe-pro-abortion-misinformation-what-to-know-about-ectopic-pregnancy-miscarriage-and-more>

Hōkai Tahi (Wairarapa)
0800 U Choose (Auckland)
Pregnancy Choice Kukunetanga Kowhiri (Northland, Manawatu, Tauranga)
Greenstone Doors Charitable Trust (Wellington)
Haven Pregnancy Support (Auckland)
Mummys in Need (Auckland, Hamilton, Taranaki)

3. South Island

Crisis Pregnancy Support (Nelson)
Here 4 U Pregnancy Centre (Christchurch)
Te Ao Puawai Pregnancy Support (Invercargill)
Pregnancy Choice Kukunetanga Kowhiri (Christchurch and Dunedin)

4. Post-abortion Support

The Buttons Project
Rachel's Vineyard
Pregnancy Counselling Support
Gianna's Choice
Kukunetanga Kowhiri
Crisis Pregnancy Support
Greenstone Doors Charitable Trust
Hōkai Tahi
Haven Pregnancy Support

5. Adoption Support

Jeremiah Trust
Kukunetanga Kowhiri

And finally, don't forget that <https://www.kiwifamilies.co.nz/articles/life-with-a-newborn/> list 51 services that can help new parents.

Argument 13:

Foetuses don't feel pain.

Why they say this:

"If a foetus can't feel pain then it doesn't matter if they are aborted."

The Facts:

1. How do you know? Pain is a subjective experience, it cannot be objectively measured.
2. Biologically, foetuses have all parts of the nervous system necessary to experience pain at 26 weeks.⁶¹

⁶¹ Derbyshire, S.W.G. (2006). Can fetuses feel pain? *British Medical Journal*, 332(7546), 909-912. doi <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.332.7546.909>

3. Some experts recommend giving foetuses anaesthesia for open foetal surgery (surgery that is done on a foetus while still in the uterus) as early as 21 weeks.⁶²
4. If pain is experienced by foetuses from 21 weeks onwards (and we don't know if they experience it earlier), then late term abortions are going to be extremely painful for the baby.

Argument 14:

Abortion prevents child abuse

Why they say this:

"If a baby is going to be born into a broken family, then abortion would mercifully prevent them from experiencing child abuse."

The Facts:

1. Abortion is the earliest child abuse.
2. It is as logical to say that abortion prevents child abuse as it is to say that killing one's wife prevents wife abuse.
3. In a study done by Edward Lenoski, 90% of abused children were wanted and planned pregnancies.⁶³
4. The risk of child abuse **increases** with a history of abortion.
 - One study found that women with a history of abortion had a 144% increase in the risk of physical abuse of children.⁶⁴
 - *"Abortion history was associated with more frequently maternal slapping, hitting, kicking or biting, beating, and use of physical punishment in general."*⁶⁵
 - *"Although permissive abortion has been advocated on the grounds it will reduce the prevalence of child abuse and infanticide, there is no evidence to prove it has. There is a growing concern that it may have contributed to the problem. . . There is evidence that an abortion results in depression which hinders mother-infant bonding in a subsequent pregnancy."*⁶⁶

Argument 15:

Pro-choice and pro-life positions can be held simultaneously.

⁶² Mayorga-Buiza, M.J., Marquez-Rivas, J., Gomez-Gonzalez, E. (2017). Can fetus feel pain in the second trimester? Lessons learned from a sentinel event. *Child's Nervous System*, 34 (2): 195-196 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00381-017-3677-6>

⁶³ Lenoski, E. (1980) A Research Study on Child Abuse. *Heartbeat*. 16-17

⁶⁴ Abuse risk linked to abortion (2005, November2). *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2005/nov/2/20051102-110138-9468r/>

⁶⁵ Coleman, P.K., Rue, V.M., Coyle, C.T., & Maxey, C.D. (2007). Induced Abortion and Child-Directed Aggression Among Mothers of Maltreated Children. *The Internet Journal of Pediatrics and Neonatology*, 6(2). Retrieved from <https://rupetacerea.ro/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/eChild-directed-aggression.pdf>

⁶⁶ Ney, P (1979). Relationship between abortion and child abuse. *The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, 24(7). doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/070674377902400705>

Why they say this:

“I personally don’t like abortion and I wouldn’t have an abortion myself, but I still think the woman should have the right to choose”.

“I am fighting for life and justice but I am also fighting for abortion”.

The Facts:

You simply cannot have it both ways.

If you say you say, “I personally don’t like abortion and I wouldn’t have an abortion myself, but I still think the woman should have the right to choose”, I will have to ask you, “the right to choose *what?*” The answer, of course, is abortion. If you don’t like abortion and wouldn’t have one yourself, then you know deep down inside that abortion is not the answer. So why are you advocating that another woman put herself through the mental and physical trauma of an abortion?

This belief is based on another belief that *there is no absolute truth* – “what is true for me may not be true for someone else”. Logically that is impossible. The sky will always be blue no matter what your opinion is. Abortion can only be always right or always wrong. There is no middle ground. If you are pro-choice, then at least be honest with that position and say that you are pro-abortion no matter the circumstances.

Regarding the second statement, “I am fighting for life and justice but I am also fighting for abortion”, it doesn’t take a rocket scientist to see the extreme lack of logic here. Abortion is the very opposite of life and justice. Abortion results in the death of babies, and it is incredibly unjust by a) stripping an innocent child of its right to live and b) subjecting innocent women to predatory and harmful abortion services.

Argument 16:

Criminalizing abortion is a violation of the separation between church and state.

Why they say this:

“Keep your rosaries off my ovaries”.

“The pro-life movement is a religious one. They should keep their religion to themselves and not enforce it on the rest of us”.

The Facts:

1. Abortion is not about religion, it’s about science.
 - Remember that 95% of biologists agree that life begins at conception – therefore abortion is still scientifically the intentional ending of human life.
 - This document has already shown several scientific studies that have shown the risks of abortion and the scientifically-proven links to adverse physical and mental health outcomes.
2. Science tells us that life begins at conception. Religion is what gives human life dignity and value.

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you”.
– Jeremiah 1:5 (ESV)

“My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.” - Psalm 139:15-16

Religion is not the problem.

It is the pro-choice/pro-abortion movement that has stripped the value, dignity, and sacredness away from human life.

It is the pro-choice/pro-abortion movement that has dehumanized human life in order to justify the intentional killing of it.

It is the pro-choice/pro-abortion movement that has acted in favour of eugenics, convenience, money, career, comfort, and so-called feminism over human life.

It is the pro-choice/pro-abortion movement that has used the façade of compassion to mask deadly intentions of cruelly taking away human life.

Conclusion

I hope you have found this document helpful.

If you are pro-choice, I want to first thank you for taking the time to read through this document. You may have a lot of questions and you may still disagree with the evidence I have presented. You may even be angry. But can I ask you something?

Why exactly are you holding on to pro-choice ideas? Is it because of what your family taught you? Your political stance? Your own feelings? Your desire to be considered a feminist? Please do your research. Make sure you know exactly why you hold to whatever beliefs you have and that you have solid evidence to back them up.

Secondly, if after doing your research are still pro-choice, then please be intellectually honest and call yourself pro-abortion.

If you are pro-choice but are realizing that being pro-life might be the better option, then there are plenty of passionate pro-lifers out there who will happily have a chat with you to discuss this further and answer your questions. Thank you for having an open mind.

If you are pro-life, please use this document to further empower your stand on the issue of abortion. I hope it encourages you to continue speaking up for the value of human life. But don't let it stop you there. Get out there and actively support pro-life charities and organizations. Let these women feel loved and important and cared for.

