
Adoption is a better alternative to abortion.

A woman should be able to decide for herself. Some women do choose adoption, but many more choose single parenthood. Adoption is a difficult route for anyone to take, and it is not fair to demand that women make such a sacrifice. For a married woman, giving a baby up for adoption is virtually impossible.

Most unwanted pregnancies become wanted children. Women who have abortions regret their mistake later.

Many unwanted babies are abused and neglected, and suffer lifelong developmental and social problems. Many women make mistakes in having babies they don't want and can't love or care for. A few women may come to regret their abortion, but this should not be a reason to deny choice to all women.

Abortion causes psychological damage to women. They suffer guilt feelings all their lives.

The American Psychological Association has concluded that abortion rarely causes any long-lasting or severe psychological after-effects. Many negative feelings are related to the unwanted pregnancy, not the abortion, which usually brings feelings of relief. Psychological problems such as post-partum depression are more common in new mothers.

There is no abortion law in Canada. Women are having abortions right up until the ninth month of pregnancy.

No doctors in Canada perform abortions past 20 weeks, except for compelling health or genetic reasons. It is an insult to women to imply that they are casually aborting their 9-month old fetuses.

The baby feels intense pain when it is killed in abortion.

The brain structures and nerve-cell connections that characterize the thinking and feeling parts of the brain are not completed until between the 7th and 8th months of gestation. Only after 30 weeks do the brain waves show patterns of waking consciousness when pain can be perceived.

Since abortions are elective procedures, they should not be paid for out of provincial health insurance plans.

Abortion is a necessary medical procedure, and one that cannot wait, unlike elective surgery. Lack of funding causes delays and increases health risks. When abortions are not covered by medical insurance, poor women can't afford them. This means one law for

the rich, another for the poor. It costs taxpayers far more to pay for the pregnancy and birth of an unwanted child.

Abortion is genocide---another Nazi holocaust. Six million abortions are the same as six million Jews; a life is a life.

Hitler used racial grounds to exterminate Jews and other "undesirables." In the reproductive rights movement, no one is out to kill all embryos. It is an insult to the memory of human beings murdered by the Nazis to equate them with embryos for anti-abortion propaganda. The anti-choice don't really believe their own propaganda---some former abortion doctors, such as Dr. Bernard Nathanson, are heroes to the anti-choice movement, despite the fact that they are guilty of "genocide" according to the movement's own definition.

The "abortion mentality" leads to infanticide, euthanasia, and killing of mentally disabled and elderly persons.

This "slippery slope" argument has no merit. In countries where abortion has been legal for years, there is no evidence that respect for life has diminished or that legal abortion leads to killing of any persons. Infanticide, however, is prevalent in countries where the overburdened poor cannot control their childbearing and abortion is illegal.

If abortion were made illegal again, women would not return to coat-hanger abortions or back-alley butchers. Safe, modern technology will be available to non-physicians, and it would be relatively easy to get an abortion.

If abortion were illegal, well-intentioned but unskilled practitioners would perforate uteruses, misjudge the length of gestation, do incomplete abortions, and otherwise botch the procedure. Women's health would suffer and the death rate soar. Further, women would once more be forced to break the law to receive necessary medical care, and their dignity would be lost in the process. Also, this argument, by admitting that abortions would continue under anti-abortion laws, exposes the real goal behind recriminalizing abortion---to punish women.

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Misconceptions About Abortion

Human life begins at conception.

There is no scientific consensus as to when human life begins. It is a matter of philosophic opinion or religious belief. Human life is a continuum---sperm and eggs are also alive, and represent potential human beings, but virtually all sperm and eggs are wasted. Two-thirds of human conceptions are spontaneously aborted by nature.

Abortion is the murder of a person.

Personhood at conception is a religious belief, not a provable biological fact. Religious communities have differing ideas on the definition of "person" or when abortion is morally justified. In the Canadian courts, however, a fetus has consistently been found not to be a person with legal rights.

Abortion is morally wrong.

Most people reject the position that abortion is always wrong. In fact, abortion often has positive benefits for women's lives and health. Many people believe that bringing an unwanted child into the world is a crime, and that forcing a woman to have a child against her will is morally wrong. Many who are opposed to abortion for religious or moral reasons believe that it is wrong to impose their values by civil law on everyone.

The fetus should have rights under the law.

If fetal rights were enshrined in law, women's bodies, rights, and health would be subordinated to the protection of embryos. The legal consequences of such a law would be catastrophic. The best way to protect the fetus is to promote the health and well-being of women.

Abortion should not be legal and must be stopped.

Laws have never stopped abortion, but only made it unsafe for women. Abortion is a universal practice that has been with us since the beginning of time, whether legal or illegal.

Most Canadians believe that abortion should be illegal. The majority rules in a democracy.

About 78% of Canadians believe that abortion is a private matter between a woman and her doctor. Human rights are guaranteed for everyone and are not subject to the whim of the electorate. Even if only a minority believed in freedom of choice, that right should be protected from the tyranny of the majority.

Pro-life is pro-family. Pro-abortionists are anti-family. Abortion destroys the family.

Legal abortion helps parents limit their families to the number of children they want and can afford. This strengthens and stabilizes the family unit. Therefore, pro-choice is pro-child and pro-family. Anti-abortion laws can cause stress and hardship for families with insufficient resources to raise unwanted children. Families with unwanted children often consist of a child and her child, living at the lowest levels of society.

The right of the unborn to live supercedes any right of a woman to "control her own body."

Margaret Sanger said, "No woman can call herself free who does not own and control her own body." This concept is fundamental for women. Bearing a child alters a woman's life more than anything else. Other women's rights are hollow if women are forced to be mothers. Being born is a gift, not a right. People don't ask to be born, and some even wish they weren't.

If a woman has sex, she must pay the consequences. Too many women have abortions for convenience or on a "whim."

This vindictive, self-righteous attitude stems from a belief that sex is bad and must be punished. Motherhood should never be punishment for having sex. Forcing a child to be born to punish its mother is the ultimate in child abuse. Anti-abortionists trivialize motherhood and childbirth by dismissing pregnancy as a mere inconvenience. They ignore or belittle the needs of the woman and the conflict she endures in making her decision. Guilt is inflicted when compassion is needed.

Opposition to abortion is common in all segments of society. It is not a campaign by religious groups trying to foist their beliefs on everyone else.

The Catholic Church and the "religious right" are the backbone of the anti-abortion movement. Pro-choice religious people see anti-abortion laws as a violation of religious liberty. Abortion is a religious issue, because the stated basis of opposition to abortion is the theological question of when personhood begins. Also, religious doctrines that dictate female subservience and a childbearing role for women are the real hidden agenda of opposition to abortion.

Many women are coerced into having abortions. Abortion clinics push women to have abortions, and don't inform women about alternatives to abortion.

Partners, parents, or friends may sometimes urge a woman to have an abortion, even if she is unsure or would prefer to have the baby. Therefore, abortion clinics provide compassionate counseling to all patients, to make sure the woman's own concerns and needs are dealt with. Options counselling provides women with full information on alternatives to abortion. If women seem ambivalent about abortion, or feel pressured by others, counselors will encourage them to take more time to think about their decision.

Abortion is dangerous and medically risky. It is not as safe as natural pregnancy. Abortion increases the risk of miscarriage in future pregnancies, and infertility.

The risk of dying from childbirth is about 13 times that for early abortion, and the overall abortion complication rate is extremely low, about 25 times lower than for childbirth. First-trimester abortion has become one of the safest and simplest medical procedures of all, one that can be quickly and routinely performed even by nurses as well as doctors. Having an abortion will not adversely affect a woman's future reproduction. Legalized abortion has had a positive impact on the health of American women by providing them with a safer way to terminate their pregnancies.

Abortion increases the risk of breast cancer.

Scientific studies show there is no link between abortion and higher rates of breast cancer. This is the conclusion of major health organizations in North America, including the Canadian Cancer Society.

There are too many late abortions. Women wait too long.

Virtually all abortions are done in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy, and only a few after 16 weeks. Most late abortions are done for health reasons. Ironically, anti-choice harassment, laws, and defunding cause delays and lead to increased numbers of late abortions.

The anti-abortion movement is not opposed to contraception.

The same people who oppose legal abortion often oppose contraception as well. This position is irresponsible and hypocritical. If anti-abortionists used their well-funded organizing power to promote contraception and sex education instead of fighting legal abortion, they could likely cut the abortion rate in half within a few years.

Making contraceptives and abortion available only encourages teenagers to have sex.

Teen sex has complex societal causes, including sexually-oriented TV, movies, and ads. Studies have shown that where birth control, abortion, and comprehensive sex education are readily available (such as in the Netherlands), teenagers have less sex, not more, and abortion rates go down. Further, abstinence-based sex-ed programs in schools don't stop many teenagers from having sex; instead, they increase the likelihood of unsafe sex. Reality dictates that birth control and abortion be available to help prevent teens from becoming parents.

Minors should have their parents' consent before having abortions, and wives should have their husbands' consent.

Mandatory parental involvement laws obstruct exercise of the abortion right. Such laws are bad for several reasons: they cause girls to delay seeking medical care, and they do not exempt girls with abusive, ill, absent, or anti-abortion parents. It is not possible to legislate good family relations. The right of privacy allows women to be free of government interference in decisions about childbearing. Courts have said that when a couple disagree, only one view can prevail, and that it should be the woman's because she physically bears the child and is more directly affected by the pregnancy.