

Position Paper: Abortion

Introduction

Feminists Choosing Life of New York (FCLNY) opposes abortion as part of a [consistent life ethic](#) that actively opposes all types of violence, particularly the state sanctioned lethal violence of abortion, war, capital punishment, euthanasia and unethical scientific research on human beings. Opposition to abortion is at the core of FCLNY's commitment to the philosophy of pro-life feminism, the belief that all human beings have a right to live without violence throughout the lifespan and as such we refuse to discriminate based on size, location, medical diagnosis, or circumstances of conception. FCLNY finds the prevailing celebration of abortion [deeply troubling](#). Societies that render abortion illegal have substantially less abortions. Abortions kill humans. Making abortion illegal forces accountability. FCLNY opposes placing women in jail or prison for aborting children, but the law is a teacher. FCLNY believes that the taking of human life is a legal matter.

FCLNY objects to elective abortion procedures but does not object to necessary interventions like treatment for ectopic pregnancy or emergency delivery of a fetus to save a woman's life. We work to educate the public so that our society might begin to recognize the humanity of the child and offer abundant, loving, non-violent alternatives to both mother and child. We seek to change cultural and community attitudes regarding life and death and to alter social constructs so that women will choose life for their unborn children. In embracing pro-life feminism, FCLNY acts in the tradition of early American feminists who opposed abortion, and adhered to the tenets of nonviolence, nondiscrimination, and justice.

Impact

Abortion violently destroys human life. The violence of abortion is global. In 2020, more than [42 million](#) human beings lost their lives to abortion worldwide. The [United States](#) reports approximately [800,000-900,000](#) abortions each year and ranks twelfth out of 50 reporting nations with Russia ranking number one and Mexico ranking fiftieth. [New York State](#) has the second highest abortion rate in the country next to the district of Columbia and accounts for [12.2%](#) of all abortions performed in the U.S.

Physical Health

Post-abortive women often suffer short and long-term consequences from abortion that directly impact their lives. Following an abortion, women may experience heavy bleeding, damage to the cervix or uterus and in some cases, a second procedure is required to remove remaining fetal parts. Significant pre-term birth of subsequent pregnancies is also a risk. A woman undergoing abortion may also experience infections that, if left untreated, can develop into [Pelvic Inflammatory Disease](#) which can increase the risk of infertility or ectopic pregnancy.

Mental Health

Post-abortion women often experience negative feelings or mental health issues following an abortion. These [mental health consequences](#) vary widely among women and depend on many factors including

prior abortion history, circumstances surrounding the abortion (coercion, feeling trapped or lack of support), whether or not she is already a mother of living children, stage of gestation at the time of the abortion or feelings of attachment to the aborted child. They may experience temporary or perpetual sadness, anger, anxiety or relationship problems or more serious mental illnesses including depression, suicidal ideations, substance abuse, flashbacks, eating disorders or new compulsions.

Familial Impacts

Although abortion is framed as a private matter between a woman and her doctor, the loss of life through abortion impacts not only women but men, siblings, and grandparents. [Fathers](#) who later learn of a partner's abortion report, rage, regret, grief, and feelings of powerlessness. [Sibling](#) survivors may have an overwhelming drive to "parent-please" or set impossible expectations for themselves and suffer survivor guilt or feelings of impending doom. Siblings of those who have been aborted fall victim to the fallout of a post-abortive mother's difficulty bonding or the dissolution of the parent's relationship and ultimately, may grow up to repeat the cycle. Even [grandparents](#), depending on their degree of involvement in the abortion, feel a deep sense of loss, guilt and feeling of lost legacy. Like a stone thrown into a pond, the ripples of abortion violence reverberate into every interaction in every community in every part of the world.

The Abortion Procedure

First trimester [surgical abortions](#) are performed by inserting a small-bore cannula which kills the developing human being by dismembering and vacuuming her out of the uterus. During a second trimester abortion or incomplete first trimester abortion, a semi-sharp cutting tool called a curette may be used to cut arms, legs and head, from the body trunk prior to manual or suction removal from the uterus. In 2007, Partial Birth abortions were banned. This procedure entailed killing the fetus in utero and collapsing her head with a sharp instrument prior to removal from the vagina. Today, during late stage abortion procedures, in place of Partial Birth abortion, abortionists inject potassium chloride into the fetus and may cut her umbilical cord to produce death.

A Word About Autonomy

FCLNY argues that because the [majority of abortions follow consensual sex](#), women do in fact have bodily autonomy without abortion. Except for instances of rape, women and men can choose with whom and when to have sex and whether to take precautions against pregnancy. However, after fertilization, the scientific reality is that a new human being is present and deserving of its own bodily autonomy.

The first premise of universal human rights is that all members of the human family have human rights. Sex is known to potentially create new and completely dependent human children (meaning parents freely caused the dependency of the child). In the law, parental obligations do not arise from continual and ongoing consent, but from an affirmative duty to care for their children. The first duty parents have to their children is not to harm them. Every human being has the most basic right to live free from violent destruction.

Solutions

Feminists Choosing Life of New York proposes a four-pronged solution to the violence of abortion in the United States: Educate on the realities and impacts of abortion; Work to reduce intimate partner violence, sex trafficking, poverty and racism; Provide information about pregnancy resources and abortion alternatives; Build bridges and collaborations between people and organizations, regardless of religious or political ideology, that empower women and children, born and unborn.

According to the Guttmacher Institute, formally the research division of Planned Parenthood, up to 75% of women seeking abortions are [poor](#). Through support of programs and policies that address poverty and income inequality at the local, state, and federal levels, women experiencing unplanned pregnancies will be more empowered to carry their children to term and will feel more equipped to provide necessities for their families.

As the number of [pregnancy resource centers](#) continue to grow, women have more resources available to them than ever before. PRC's served almost 2 million women last year and provided services ranging from pregnancy tests and ultrasounds to prenatal care, nutrition advice and childbirth classes to Pap smears, well-woman visits, parenting classes, and post-abortion healing. FCLNY is actively involved with spreading the word about these rich [resources](#).

[Collaboration](#) between women is essential. Often, women who experience emotional pain related to their abortions are ignored by society and pro-life women are actively excluded from conversations about wider women's issues in academia, politics, mainstream media and so called "women's" organizations. By creating space for all women to be heard and feel accepted, regardless of ideology or other factors, women can begin to heal the long-standing rift within the women's movement, set an example of acceptance for our daughters and work together to solve the greater social inequalities that drive women to abortion or keep them trapped behind barriers. Men can also offer valuable insight within this type of collaboration.

In addition to reaching across the aisle in support of all women, FCLNY seeks to provide [prolife answers](#) to common pro-choice questions through educational essays, events and social media. By sharing ways to uncloak dehumanizing language and confront inconsistencies we become better able to touch others with our message.

FCLNY position on birth control or means by which to prevent unplanned pregnancies is nuanced, as is the organization's position on abortion exceptions. FCLNY finds several resources, including Charles Camosy's book titled, Beyond the Abortion Wars, rich with interesting, logical insights regarding these particular topics. Please be on the look out for FCLNY's position paper on 'birth control' and abortion bans exceptions.

Conclusion

FCLNY opposes abortion as part of a consistent life ethic and embraces pro-life feminism in the tradition of early American Feminists who adhered to the tenets of nonviolence, nondiscrimination, and justice. Abortion has far-reaching consequences and is inconsistent with any attempt to achieve peace in the

world. FCLNY seeks to address legal abortion by educating on the impacts of abortion, including by lobbying, working to reduce domestic violence, sex trafficking, and racism; disseminating information on pregnancy resources as well as by building networks of people and organization that empower women and their children, including children in utero. Abortion is an act of violence that steals a life away and discriminates against a group of human beings based on their size, location, medical diagnosis, or circumstance of conception. The targeting of this vulnerable group of the human family who cannot defend themselves and cannot flee, represents a grave injustice. In the words of Martin Luther King Jr., “Injustice anywhere, is a threat to justice everywhere”.

Did you Know?

Prior to legalization of abortion, 90% of abortions were performed by physicians. The term “[back-alley abortion](#)” refers not to where abortions were happening, but to the door where women were instructed to enter the office so as not to raise suspicion.

Resources

APFLI (2015, Apr). [Abortion Affects Siblings | Physicians for Life](#)

Elliot Institute (2018). [The Truth About "Back Alley" Abortions • AfterAbortion.org](#)

Guttmacher Institute (2019, Sept.). [Induced Abortion in the United States | Guttmacher Institute](#)

Guttmacher Institute (2020, Sept.). [State Facts About Abortion: New York | Guttmacher Institute](#)

Human Life International (2013, July). [Men & Abortion | Human Life International \(hli.org\)](#)

Lozier Institute. *Pregnancy Centers Stand the Test of Time* (2020). [Pregnancy-Center-Report-2020_FINAL.pdf \(lozierinstitute.org\)](#)

Masse, S. (2020, Oct.). Ramah’s Voice. [Legacy Lost: Healing Abortion's Heartache in Grandparents - Abortion Recovery Blog Sydna Masse \(ramahsvoice.com\)](#)

Ney, P.G. (1983). National Institute of Health. [A consideration of abortion survivors - PubMed \(nih.gov\)](#)

Number of Abortions-Abortion Counter (2020). [Number of Abortions in US & Worldwide - Number of abortions since 1973](#)

Rehumanize International. *Abortion*. [Rehumanize | On Abortion \(rehumanizeintl.org\)](#)

Trupin, S. M.D. *Explanation of the Procedures*. E-medicine Health. [Abortion: Get Facts About the Procedure and Statistics \(emedicinehealth.com\)](#)

World Population Review. *Abortion Rates by Country 2020*. [Abortion Rates by Country 2020 \(worldpopulationreview.com\)](#)

World Population Review. *Abortion Rates by State 2020*. [Abortion Rates by State 2020 \(worldpopulationreview.com\)](#)