Why Abortion Cannot Be Justified

Approximately 42 million women choose to abort their unborn child each day (The Center for Bio-Ethical Reform, 2009). They have many reasons – such as fear of having or raising a child, rape or insufficient money – to abort. Regardless of the situation, the government should ban abortions for three reasons.

Some pro-choice advocates argue that, if abortion is made illegal, many women will still try to obtain abortions illegally and many will likely end up at back-alley butchers or will attempt to perform abortions on themselves and suffer serious injury. In response, one could debate this point statistically. Prior to legalization in America, most illegal abortions were secretly performed by licensed doctors. Relatively few women were really injured or killed. For example, in 1972, the last year before abortion was legalized, 39 women died from illegal abortions (Johansen, 2000). That is 39 tragedies, of course. However, with legal abortion today, many women are still injured and some die in botched abortions. If abortion were illegal, fewer women would have abortions, so the total number of injuries and deaths might well go down. However, citing statistics is really beside the point. It does not follow that an act should be made legal because some people might suffer harm while breaking the law. No doubt some
bank robbers are injured or killed in automobile accidents while fleeing the scene of the crime. Does this mean that bank robbery should be made legal? The answer is no, for a rational society does not make laws for the convenience of lawbreakers.

Still other pro-choice advocates contend that opposition to abortion is based on religious beliefs. However, by this reasoning, almost all of society’s laws would have to be thrown out. For example, all major religions clearly prohibit stealing. Does this mean that all laws against theft are attempts to impose a religious view on others and, thus, should not be permitted? The Native American Church is said to include great respect for the natural environment. Does this make all anti-pollution laws an attempt to impose Native American religious beliefs on others? Almost every law embodies principles that are consistent with some religious or ethical teaching. If laws against abortion are imposing someone's religious beliefs on others, should laws against murder, rape, and robbery be repealed?

Finally, most pro-choice advocates claim that a woman should have the choice whether or not to have an abortion. A first glance, this argument appears valid. Upon closer examination, however, one sees that it is based on faulty logic. The following example may prove this point: "The question is not whether rape is right or wrong but rather who decides: the individual man or the government? If people are opposed to rape, they should not rape anybody. However, they should not try to impose your morality on others. Rape is a personal choice between a man and his sex therapist."

There is an additional problem with the logic of the critics’ argument about a woman has the individual freedom to choose whether or not to abort her unborn child. Although
Americans have a great tradition of individual freedom, they also have an old saying: "You have the freedom to swing your arm back and forth all you like, but your freedom ends where my nose begins." In other words, freedom does not include the right to deliberately harm innocent people. The law does not allow a man to decide for himself whether he thinks rape is acceptable because the woman he might choose to rape also has rights. Likewise, society should not allow each woman to decide for herself whether abortion is acceptable because the child she might choose to abort also has rights.

As can be seen, legalization of abortion can only be justified if facts and logic are ignored. The 1972 Supreme Court decision that struck down the ban on abortion was the same as creating a law for the convenience of a few individuals who wish to break the law. Furthermore, prohibiting abortion does not impose someone else’s religious values on a pregnant woman seeking to abort her unborn child, and most importantly, moral values dictate that a baby should not be held responsible for an unwanted situation a woman may find herself in. The truth is that facts and logic mandate that Congress vote to ban abortion.

Adapted from *Why women should not have an abortion* and *A summary of pro-choice arguments.*
Resources

